

# Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

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*The institution demonstrates strong commitment to a mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning and to communicating the mission internally and externally. The institution uses analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished.*

## **IA. Mission**

*The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and the commitment to achieving student learning.*

Santa Monica College is a large urban institution of higher education established to serve the communities of western Los Angeles County. Over the past 80 years, as local, regional and global needs and challenges have changed, the College has grown and evolved to meet these needs. Today, the College enrolls students from all over the greater Los Angeles area, all 50 states and over 100 countries. Santa Monica College offers one of the largest international education programs in the country and a rapidly growing distance education program. As the campus community has responded to these changing needs, its leadership has also responded by ensuring that the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals and Institutional Learning Outcomes reflect and support these changes.

At the core of Santa Monica College's mission, included in the Introduction to the accreditation self-study report, is the commitment to "create a learning environment that both challenges students and supports them in achieving their educational goals." The College's mission statement reflects the institution's commitment to a variety of programs designed to serve the needs of its diverse student body and of business and industry. The vision reflects the collective wisdom of the learning community, adheres to the mission of the College, and identifies a visualization of the College over the next five to seven years. Like many community colleges, Santa Monica College is a resource for students from all levels of the educational ladder, ranging from recent immigrants who have not yet mastered the English language to high school valedictorians seeking guaranteed admission to the University of California, Los Angeles through the College's Scholars Program. The mission also guides the College in providing high quality career technical programs designed to meet the needs of entry-level workers as well as skilled professionals looking to enhance their qualifications. By focusing on each student's educational goals, the College has developed a truly learner-centered mission.

To fulfill its mission, Santa Monica College provides open and affordable access to high-quality programs that “prepare students for successful careers, develop college-level skills, enable transfer to universities, and foster a personal commitment to lifelong learning.” The College is internationally recognized for its strong transfer program and consistently ranks among the top transfer institutions in the state. Moreover, the College offers a variety of career technical programs designed to address the workforce development needs of west Los Angeles County, particularly in the entertainment, health care, early childhood education and computer technology industries.

In addition, the College has a large developmental skills program that offers students the opportunity to improve their basic skills in mathematics and English so that they are better prepared to perform well in their college-level courses. Each of these instructional programs is supplemented by an array of student support programs that further provide students with the skills and resources they need to successfully pursue their academic goals.

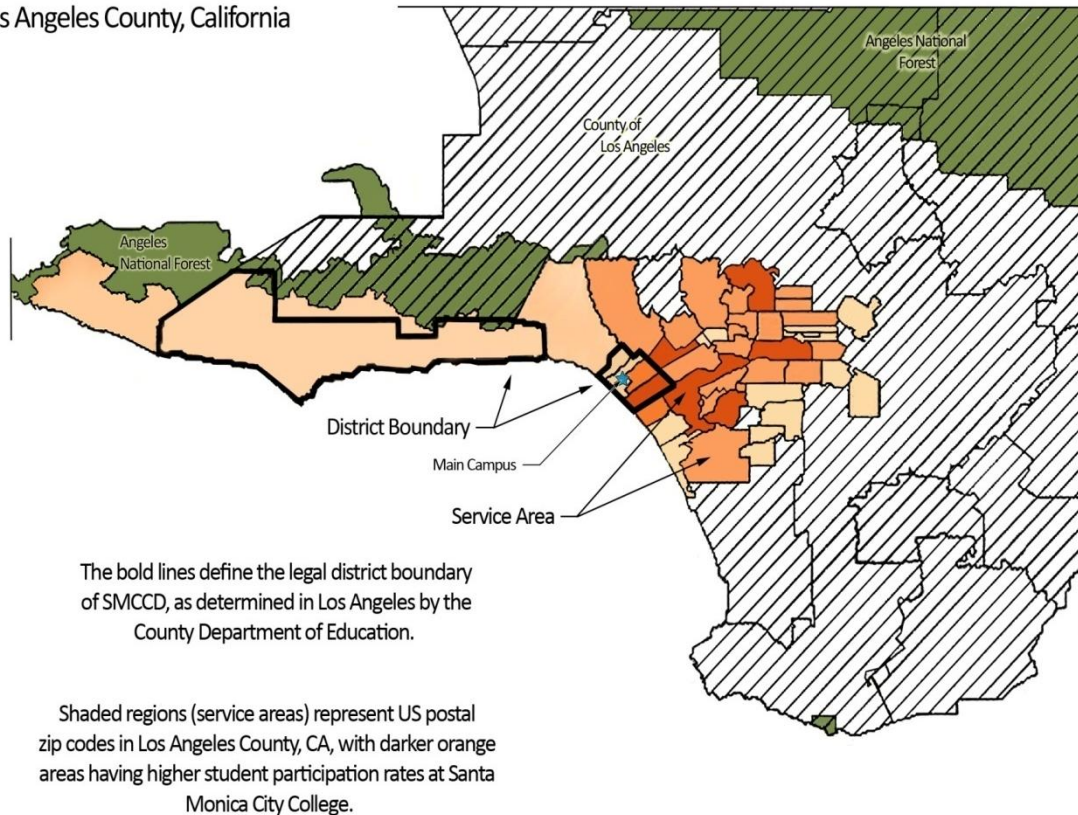
Santa Monica College is committed to the overall mission of the California Community College system, which is to respond to the educational and training needs of the communities it was established to serve. However, as an open access institution, the College also serves students from outside its district boundaries as exhibited in Figure IA-1.

The broad appeal is the result of the College’s ongoing communication, coordination and collaboration with local, regional and national groups to identify and address the area’s most pressing educational concerns and the student populations most in need of educational services. An example of how Santa Monica College has responded occurred in the past ten years when the College acknowledged the growing number of Hispanic students in the greater Los Angeles region who were underserved by the regional higher education system. Recognizing that many of these students and their families were unaware of the postsecondary options available to them, the College expanded its outreach program to high schools outside the district. The College offers placement tests, campus tours and dual enrollment programs to ensure that these students are aware of and have access to the high-quality transfer-oriented programs that the College offers. As a result, the College’s Hispanic enrollment has increased so that Santa Monica College is now, by federal definition, a Hispanic Serving Institution (i.e., more than 25 percent of Santa Monica College’s students are Hispanic).

Santa Monica College has established programs for other targeted populations as a result of its work with the local community and the identification of underserved populations. Such populations include new and emerging small business owners and high school dropouts and/or those who have failed to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The College has a history of partnering with community groups and organizations such as the City of Santa Monica and the Pico neighborhood to create the Pico Partnership program, which serves low-income potential first-generation college students residing in Santa Monica’s Pico neighborhood. An increase in the veteran population has been the catalyst for a partnership between the College’s Center for Students with Disabilities and the Greater Los Angeles Office of Veterans Affairs to better serve the educational needs of servicemen and women returning from duty. The success of this partnership resulted in a “best practices” accreditation commendation given to the

Greater Los Angeles Office of Veterans Affairs during their own accreditation process by the International Commission on Rehabilitation Facilities. Another recently recognized population is the steadily increasing number of first-time college students of all ages who lack foundational skills in mathematics and English and do not test into college-level courses.

Santa Monica  
Community College District (SMCCD)  
Los Angeles County, California



**Figure IA-1: Santa Monica College Students Residing in Los Angeles County**

In an effort to better serve all students and ensure their success, Santa Monica College has continued to develop a variety of support programs such as the annual VIP Welcome Day, originally created five years ago. This is a special day of activities which brings new students and their families on campus just before the start of the fall term to provide orientation and exposure to the many programs and services available to them at the College. A friendly and festive atmosphere is created that lets students know the College indeed welcomes them into the Santa Monica College family.

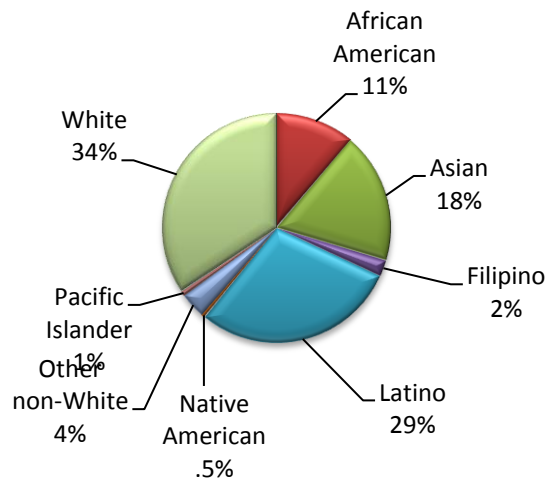
Parking on campus has historically been insufficient to meet peak demand and has therefore been viewed as a continuing impediment by students. Thus, the new partnership with the local public transportation system to provide low-cost public transit is an example of creative and innovative

student support. The “Any Line, Any Time” program, funded by both the District and the Santa Monica College Associated Students, allows Santa Monica College students to ride the city’s Big Blue Bus for free. Daily ridership of approximately 7,500 students attests to the success of this program. Evidence that parking problems on campus are the main reason for participation in the program are the boarding patterns, which indicate students take the bus from their homes in lieu of driving to campus, parking nearby (such as at a satellite site) and shuttling to the main campus.

The fact that the College enrolls a large number of students from outside its service area is a testament to its responsiveness to community needs, the challenges that face the region, and the success of its unique offering of programs and services. The diversity of Santa Monica College’s student body and their willingness to bypass many other community colleges on their way to Santa Monica College attests to the College’s commitment to its students and to meeting their educational needs.

The student population of Santa Monica College is diverse in both demography and goals. As shown in Figure IA-2, the percentages of various ethnic minority groups enrolled at the College continue to climb and now exceed 65 percent, allowing Santa Monica College to be designated as a Minority Serving Institution and, since 1998, the College has been designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Other student body demographic data include the following statistics:

- For more than a decade, the percentage of female students (currently 54.87 percent) has exceeded that of the male population.
- Approximately 65 percent of Santa Monica College students identify transfer as their educational objective.
- Approximately 70 percent of Santa Monica College students are under 25 years of age.
- Approximately 30 percent of Santa Monica College students attend full time.

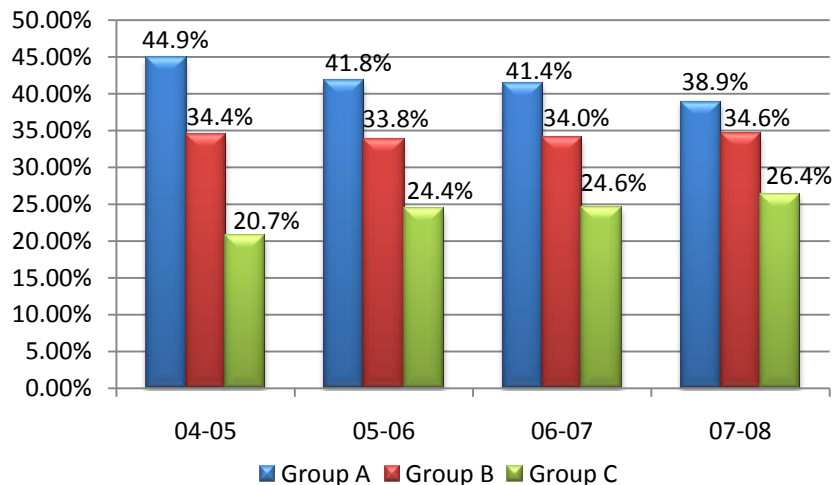


**Figure IA-2: Distribution of First Census Credit Students by Ethnicity**

Since the last accreditation period, the College has experienced increases in the number of students underprepared for college-level work. Figure IA-3 and Figure IA-4 illustrate the enrollment growth in English and mathematics courses by level.

As Figure IA-3 demonstrates, the share of students enrolling in basic skills level English courses (Group C) increased by nearly six percent between 2004-2005 and 2007-2008. The percentage increase in actual student enrollments between 2004-2005 and 2007-2008 was slightly more than 50 percent, moving from 2,511 enrollments to 3,790 enrollments during this period.

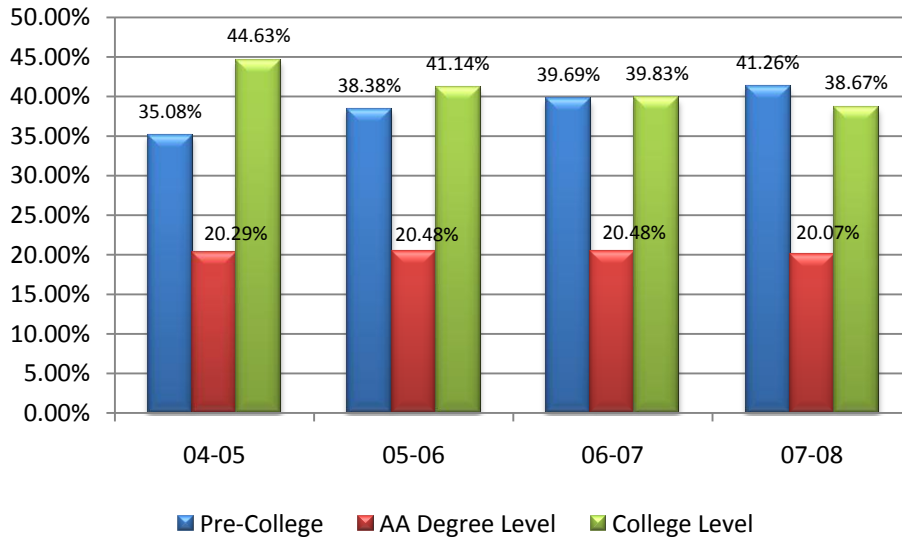
Although the share of students enrolling in English courses one level below college level (Group B) remained relatively stable during this period, the actual student enrollment growth in English courses one level below college level (Group B) increased by approximately 19 percent, moving from 4,171 enrollments to 4,967 enrollments. Enrollment in college-level English courses (Group A) has declined six percent over the same period.



**Figure IA-3: Distribution of English Enrollments by Course Level 2004-05 to 2007-08**

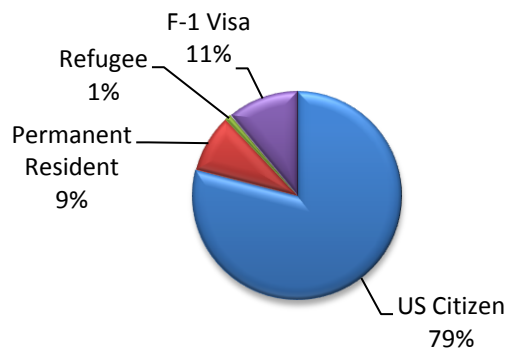
As demonstrated in Figure IA-4, the number of students enrolling in pre-collegiate mathematics courses increased by nearly six percent between 2004-2005 and 2007-2008. The percentage increase in actual student enrollments between 2004-2005 and 2007-2008 was slightly more than 18 percent, moving from 5,752 enrollments to 6,821 enrollments during this time period. Pre-collegiate level mathematics courses refer to courses that do not transfer to the Baccalaureate degree level and are not Associate in Arts degree applicable; the courses include Basic Arithmetic (Math 81), Pre-Algebra (Math 84) and Elementary Algebra (Math 31). Associate in Arts degree level mathematics courses are those that satisfy the Associate in Arts degree requirement but are not transferrable to the Baccalaureate degree level; Associate in Arts degree level courses include Intermediate Algebra for Statistics and Finite Mathematics (Math 18) and

Intermediate Algebra (Math 20). College level mathematics courses are those that are transferrable to the Baccalaureate degree level; these courses include Finite Mathematics (Math 21), Elementary Statistics (Math 52/54), Mathematics for Elementary School Teachers (Math 41), Functions and Modeling for Business and Social Science (Math 26) and all Calculus courses (Math 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 28 and 29).



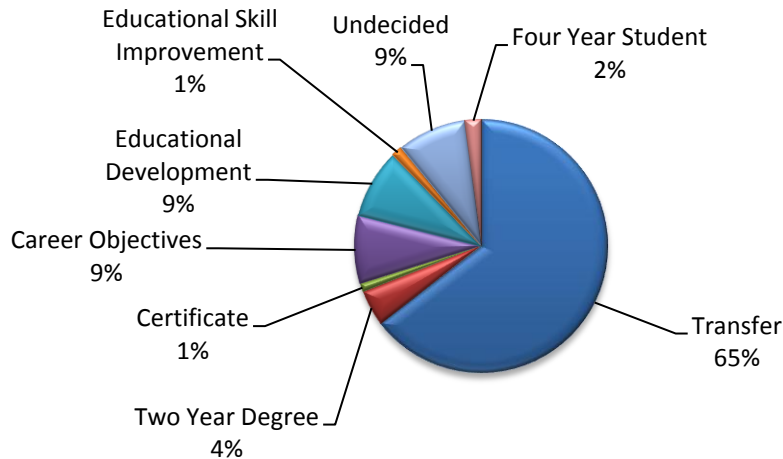
**Figure IA-4: Distribution of Math Enrollments by Course Level 2004-05 to 2007-08**

The student population at Santa Monica College reflects its cosmopolitan surroundings and the desire of the College to serve a global community. Figure IA-5 represents the distribution of students by citizenship status for Fall 2008. As is demonstrated in the chart, although US residents comprise 79 percent of its total student population, the College has a substantial population of international students (11 percent) and students who are not US citizens but permanent residents (9 percent).



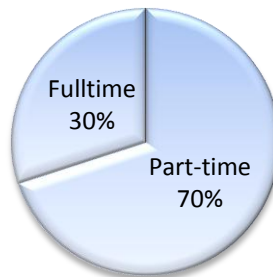
**Figure IA-5: Fall 2008 Enrollment of Credit Students by Citizenship Status**

The College has a national and international reputation for transfer to world-class universities, which is reflected in the stated educational goals of its students. Nearly 65 percent of Santa Monica College students indicate that their goal is to transfer to a four-year university as shown in Figure IA-6.



**Figure IA-6: Fall 2008 Student Enrollment by Stated Educational Goal**

As shown in Figure IA-7, the majority of Santa Monica College students attend part time (nearly 70 percent). The average number of units that Santa Monica College students carry during a term is 8.257.



**Figure IA-7: Fall 2008 Student Enrollment by Unit Load**

### College Planning

Since the last self-study, Santa Monica College has emerged from a trying period, triggered by a serious budget crisis that resulted in the discontinuance of some programs and layoffs of faculty and staff. Changes in the leadership of the College, combined with the desire of the majority of

the college community to put deep-seated acrimony and mistrust behind, have helped move the College to a more transparent and participatory method of governance and a renewed commitment to its mission. While not an easy transition, there is ample evidence that the institution continues to address its problems and move forward in support of its mission.

Foremost has been the creation of a new participatory governance structure. Launching the current planning body, the District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC), was, at times, challenging. Deliberations were open and transparent and involved the entire campus community. At the time, the only structure that would have achieved full participation and buy-in was one that included representatives from all members of the college community. DPAC membership is equally distributed among administration (appointed by Administration and the Management Association), faculty (appointed by Academic Senate and Faculty Association), classified (appointed by California School Employees Association) and students (appointed by Associated Students).

Each group has two votes on DPAC, and its strength lies in broad participation by members from the entire college community. DPAC is now recognized by the campus community as the group that makes recommendations to the Superintendent/President and it has the support and strength to modify its charge as the need to do so becomes apparent, a testament to its effectiveness. Minutes from DPAC meetings document that DPAC continually evaluates and modifies its structures and practices with an eye to improved planning and more effective campus communication.<sup>i</sup>

As the primary college planning body, DPAC ensures that planning supports institutional efforts to foster collegewide commitment to student learning. DPAC itself exemplifies the College's long tradition of openness to and support for innovation, its willingness to try new strategies and develop new programs, and its desire to respond to the changing needs of the students and community. The dramatic enrollment recovery after the severe cuts of 2003-2004 is one measure of the effectiveness of the commitment to student learning as students chose to return to Santa Monica College to meet their educational needs. The passage of three bond measures in recent years (2002, 2004, 2008), for a total of \$590 million, testifies to the high degree of community support the College enjoys, in large part because the College's commitment to student learning is long-standing, effectively communicated and highly valued.

In 2007, DPAC established a Strategic Planning Task Force to evaluate the College's planning process, develop strategic initiatives and action plans, and review the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements. Co-chaired by the Executive Vice President and the Academic Senate President, the task force was composed of representatives from the various college groups and organized a number of collegewide forums and presentations. In addition, the College utilized several institutional flex day workshops to gather input from as many of its members as possible. The work of the task force was embraced by the college community and resulted in several key revisions to the College's mission statement. The most significant revisions were the inclusion of the "global community" in the College's credo (*Changing Lives in the Global Community through Excellence in Education*) and the addition of a Values statement, a high-profile renewed commitment to democratic principles, effective communication and collegiality.



Santa Monica College has always recognized that providing excellence in education helps change individual lives, but the recent addition of “the global community” to the credo specifically acknowledges that what occurs at Santa Monica College has broader implications that connect our students to each other, to their communities, to their countries and to the world.

This credo is not simply a feel-good marketing slogan; rather, it is a statement of purpose that clearly declares that Santa Monica College is a community of believers and doers. We believe that we can and do make a difference, not only at the local or individual level. We believe in the far-reaching transformative effect we have on the lives of our students and that, through them and our own individual actions, we can indeed influence global change. This is what drives us to continually look for new and better ways to address the changing needs of our students. It is also what helps us get through difficult times. With the determination of the “little engine that could,” the College and its leadership across campus have persevered and emerged from difficult times stronger and even more committed to our students.

This commitment to helping students succeed at the individual, community and global level is reinforced in the College’s mission statement and has been concretely institutionalized through its four Institutional Learning Outcomes, formulated through a process spearheaded by the College’s Academic Senate and included as goals within its Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. The Institutional Learning Outcomes state that Santa Monica College students will:

- *Acquire the self-confidence and self-discipline to pursue their intellectual curiosities with integrity in both their personal and professional lives (individual transformation).*
- *Obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to access, evaluate, and interpret ideas, images, and information critically in order to communicate effectively, reach conclusions, and solve problems (community transformation).*
- *Respect the inter-relatedness of the global human environment, engage with diverse peoples, and acknowledge the significance of their daily actions relative to broader issues and events (global transformation).*
- *Assume responsibility for their impact on the earth by living a sustainable and ethical life style (individual, community, and global transformation).*

The College continually reviews and assesses its Institutional Learning Outcomes through a participatory governance process that includes all college members. The College’s Institutional Learning Outcomes and Supporting Goals and the Mission, Vision and Values statements reinforce each other, demonstrating the desire of the College to clearly articulate the interconnectedness and relevance of its mission and vision to the process of student learning. Taking the commitment to fostering global citizenship even further, and a clear example of improved collegiality at the College, the Academic Senate and the Office of Academic Affairs collaborated on creating the new global citizenship Associate in Arts degree requirement. This was formally vetted through the College’s curriculum review process and was initiated in Spring

2008 with the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee's approval of the first of a growing list of courses that meet this requirement.

That the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals are deeply embedded in the institutional ideology is further evidenced by the processes and activities of the College. For example, the subheading of the 2008-2009 *Master Plan for Education* annual update is "Achieving the Santa Monica College Vision," and the introduction states that: "A review of the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements resulted in a substantive revision through which the four Institutional Learning Outcomes have become the central focus of institutional goals." Along with the four Institutional Learning Outcomes, five broad supporting goals that drive institutional planning in support of the vision and mission have been identified. All of the annual objectives included in the *Master Plan for Education* annual update are linked to the supporting goals thereby providing specific activities to enhance and improve these guiding principles.

### ***Supporting Goals***

#### *Innovative and Responsive Academic Environment*

- *Continuously develop curricular programs, learning strategies, and services to meet the evolving needs of students and the community.*

#### *Supportive Learning Environment*

- *Provide access to comprehensive student learning resources such as library, tutoring, and technology.*
- *Provide access to comprehensive and innovative student support services such as admissions and records, counseling, assessment, outreach, and financial aid.*

#### *Stable Fiscal Environment*

- *Respond to dynamic fiscal conditions through ongoing evaluation and reallocation of existing resources and the development of new resources.*

#### *Sustainable Physical Environment*

- *Apply sustainable practices to maintain and enhance the College's facilities and infrastructure including grounds, buildings, and technology.*

#### *Supportive Collegial Environment*

- *Improve and enhance decision making and communication processes in order to respect the diverse needs and goals of the entire college community.*

Clearly, Santa Monica College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals and its Institutional Learning Outcomes demonstrate its commitment to student learning and success. Teaching by example over the last ten years, the College has displayed a strong resolve to move forward

despite numerous challenges. Continuing and invasive building construction, for example, has sometimes created adverse learning conditions. Similarly strife and turmoil within the college community has sometimes resulted in anguish and despair. However, the College has learned from each experience, has grown, and has succeeded in overcoming such difficulties. These are the same skills the College hopes its students will demonstrate when they leave the College and which are enunciated in the Institutional Learning Outcomes. The College has not only defined what it intends students to gain from their experience here but is also actively engaged in the process of measuring and assessing the effectiveness of its efforts to achieve the stated outcomes at all levels.

The college community engages in dialogue to foster a collegewide commitment to student learning in a number of ways. In 2005, the Academic Senate Joint Student Learning Outcome Task Force was created to further the development and implementation of course, program and institutional student learning outcomes and to provide leadership and guidance to the members of the college community. Dialogue among and between academic departments continues to occur regularly, and in 2008, the task force was replaced with the Academic Senate Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee. In fact, all Academic Senate joint committees have student learning at the heart of their charges. Academic Senate joint committees such as Curriculum, Program Review, Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes, Environmental Affairs, Career Technical Education, and Professional Development as well as program/project committees such as the Basic Skills Initiative, Global Citizenship, and Student Equity communities are all focused on improving student learning.

To engage the broader college community in the dialogue, flex day activities and town hall meetings have been utilized since 2005 as the primary strategy for raising awareness of student learning. Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes, strategic initiatives, and instructional effective practices are just a few of the recurring topics focusing on student learning that have been included in the opening and flex day activities for the past several years.

***IA.1 The institution establishes student learning programs and services aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population.***

***Description—IA.1***

For Santa Monica College, regular review and revision of the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals is more than an activity that must be performed during each accreditation cycle. It is a deeply engaging process through which the entire college community comes together to reaffirm its *raison d'être* and to seek new and meaningful ways to further its mission and better challenge students. In addition, the college community uses this time to revisit and reaffirm its commitment to improving the lives of its students and the global community.

The most recent review and revision to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals began in 2007 with the creation of the Strategic Planning Task Force, which included representatives from the entire college community. New directions or areas of focus such as the Basic Skills Initiative, the Global Citizenship Initiative and the College's focus on sustainability have emerged since the

previous review of the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. There was a collective desire by the various campus groups to determine if these new initiatives, as well as existing ones, directly supported the most current views of the college community with regard to the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals.

The task force began its review and revision of the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals in October 2007. From the beginning, the process was highly collaborative and inclusive. Through a variety of activities including the distribution of collegewide surveys, department specific and program specific focus groups and institutional flex day programming, the task force elicited feedback from all college constituencies. By December 2007, the task force had completed its information gathering and had drafted revisions to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements.

These revisions were sent to DPAC and provisionally approved in January 2008. During the March 4, 2008 Institutional Flex Day, task force members conducted several workshop sessions to share the revised Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements with the college community and to obtain their feedback. This feedback was reviewed and incorporated into the final version. After approval by DPAC at its March 12, 2008 meeting, the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements were reviewed and revised by the Superintendent/President on April 18, 2008 and approved by the Board of Trustees on May 12, 2008.

This process affirmed several long-standing values of the College including its desire to remain among the top transfer-oriented community colleges in California. During nearly every discussion that involves the College's key planning bodies, the subject of transfer is addressed. Santa Monica College is recognized regionally, nationally and internationally as a leader in community college transfer, particularly to the University of California system. In his 2008 keynote address at Santa Monica College's graduation ceremony, University of California, Los Angeles Chancellor, Dr. Gene Block, noted that of all of the educational institutions that transfer students to UCLA, including both secondary and postsecondary institutions, Santa Monica College transfers the greatest number: 10,000 Santa Monica College students have transferred to UCLA in the last 25 years, more than three times as many than from any other institution.<sup>ii</sup>

Throughout the many discussions of the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements and outcomes, it is apparent that the college community wants to continue to focus on student transfer. This is reflected in nearly everything that the College does from hiring the highest qualified faculty to developing career pathways and "2+2+2" articulation agreements. Transfer success is an ongoing institutional priority that is reflected in the mission statement and in the activities and programs that the College supports.

### **The Mission Statement**

The Santa Monica College mission statement encompasses elements specific to student learning including: "a learning environment that both challenges students and supports them in achieving their education goals;" "open and affordable access to high quality associate degree and certificate of achievement programs" that "prepare students for successful careers, develop

college-level skills, enable transfer to universities, and foster a personal commitment to lifelong learning;” and “educational opportunities which embrace the exchange of ideas in an open, caring community of learners.”

In these words, the character and purpose of Santa Monica College are clearly defined. The College exists to serve as a resource for all students, regardless of their educational needs and/or intent, and to provide the high quality instruction and supportive services necessary to ensure student success in an environment that embraces diversity and fosters lifelong learning. This character and purpose provide the foundation of the College’s academic programs and student services.

Santa Monica College boasts many successful and ongoing programs that support the College’s mission and that demonstrate its character and purpose. Since the last accreditation visit, as of Spring 2009, the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee has approved 176 new courses and accepted changes/revisions to 814 courses. While the majority of new courses are proposed in response to changing student and industry needs, many provide additional depth to already strong general education disciplines. Instructional departments/programs are required to update curriculum as part of the program review and student learning outcome processes ensuring that all curriculum is reviewed on a regular basis. On a larger scale, these reviews generate new degrees and certificates as well as revision to existing ones. Thus, in the same time period, twenty-six new certificates, five Associate in Arts degrees, and five noncredit certificates of competency have been approved, while revisions to several existing Associate in Arts degrees and more than twenty certificates of achievement have been accepted. Together, this effort provides clear evidence of the College’s and the instructional programs’ commitment to a cycle of constant review and improvement.

One of the most exciting changes that has occurred since the last accreditation review and a direct result of revisions to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals is the expansion of the degree requirement to include global citizenship in addition the original American Cultures requirement for all students pursuing an Associate in Arts degree. This requirement states:

*A student meeting the Global Citizenship Associate in Arts requirement will develop an awareness of the diversity of cultures within the United States and/or an appreciation for the interconnectedness of cultural, ecological, economic, political, social and technological systems of the contemporary world. This prepares the student to make a responsible contribution to a rapidly changing global society. The student must take a minimum of three units in one of the following areas: American Cultures, Ecological Literacy, Global Studies, Service Learning or Study Abroad Experience.*

As of Fall 2009, 34 courses have been approved by the Curriculum Committee to meet the new Associate in Arts degree requirement, and many disciplines are currently in the process of submitting courses for approval (see Standard IIA for a listing of approved courses). In addition, the College is expanding its Study Abroad program offerings to ensure that as many students as possible participate, including those traditionally under-represented in study abroad experiences

such as Hispanic, African-American and career technical education students. Santa Monica College has developed course proposal guidelines to ensure that the courses proposed to meet the global citizenship degree requirement are relevant to the needs of the entire student population and address the College's character and purpose as outlined in its mission statement, specifically with regard to rigor and the exchange of ideas among a diverse group of learners.

Since the last self-study, the College has initiated a number of innovative, challenging and/or supportive programs to further its mission and to support students, utilizing an array of local, regional, state, and national resources to develop, implement, and institutionalize these programs. These include:

- **Basic Skills Initiative** (Student Success Initiative) – Funded by the State of California, this initiative supports the identification and implementation of effective practice interventions to improve student success in basic skills mathematics, English, and ESL courses.
- **Supplemental Instruction** – Acknowledging international recognition of an effective practice for supporting student success in historically difficult classes, the College is using federal funds from the US Department of Education's Title V Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions grant program to implement a Supplemental Instruction Program designed to improve student success in basic skills mathematics and English.
- **Teacher Academy** – Another project originally funded by a US Department of Education Title V grant, the Teacher Academy was designed to increase student interest and enrollment in education courses and the teaching profession. External funding for this project ended but elements of the program have continued (see Standard IIA).
- **Small Business Development Center** – Utilizing a combination of both federal and state funding sources, the Small Business Development Center offers services to address the needs of new and emerging regional small businesses and other entrepreneurial activities.
- **SMC/SMMUSD Collaborative** – Through a joint program with the Santa Monica/Malibu Unified School District, Santa Monica College provides classes and support services to high school students, including the Young Collegians program, which targets underprepared students.
- **CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam) Program** – With a grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, this program helps students who did not pass the state mandated high school exit exam gain the knowledge and skills they need to pass the test and/or complete additional coursework required for a high school diploma.
- **Welcome Center** - This one-stop resource center, designed especially to meet the needs of new students, was institutionalized in Fall 2009.

- **Veterans' Resource Center** – This one-stop center for veterans, established in Fall 2009, offers counseling, peer tutoring, post traumatic stress disorder support groups and a “safe zone” where veterans can meet and socialize.
- **Upward Bound** – This US Department of Education TRIO program helps selected low-income high school students persist to college by providing broad support.
- **Any Line, Any Time** – This community partnership between the College, the City of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica College Associated Students provides free access to the local public transportation bus system.
- **BOGmobile** – A mobile financial aid station that moves around campus to where students congregate during peak enrollment periods, allowing students to apply for Board of Governors fee waivers on the spot.

In addition to the development of new programs and initiatives, the recent review of the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals resulted in the expansion and/or institutionalization of several programs mentioned in the previous self-study. Programs that have been expanded, incorporated into other programs or institutionalized in some other fashion as a result of the College's efforts to address its mission and meet the needs of its students include:

- **Distance Education** – The Distance Education program has expanded dramatically in the past five years and now accounts for 12.5 percent of the College's Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES), in large part due to the fact that it facilitates access for students bound by place or time.
- **Student Success Project** – At the conclusion of this state-funded project, the College incorporated many of the project's most successful elements (including peer mentoring, the Summer Bridge program and the “Back-to-Success” initiative) into other programs, including the various Title V grants and the Counseling Department's programs and activities.
- **Specialized Curriculum Optimizing Retention in Education (SCORE)** – This project preceded the Basic Skills Initiative. Its purpose was to expand the dialogue on issues relevant to developmental education between mathematics, writing and reading faculty.
- **Early Alert** – Several years ago, this project was largely dormant because it was a cumbersome pencil and paper process; however, the process has recently been revitalized through an online collaboration between the Matriculation and Management Information Systems departments, which provides instructional faculty greater opportunity for a timely and more comprehensive intervention at any point in the semester.
- **Emeritus** – This noncredit adult education program, aimed at older adults, has gained a permanent home since the last accreditation report and now serves over 3,000 students.

Programs which have experienced reductions through loss of funding, institutional prioritization, or external factors include:

- **Dual Enrollment** – Recent changes to Title 5 have severely limited the options for offering dual enrollment courses outside district boundaries, which previously accounted for the majority of the College’s dual enrollment offerings.
- **Service Learning** – Dormant for several years, this effort is at a point of rebirth with faculty leadership partnering with the Career Services Center to encourage student participation beyond those enrolled in the two courses that currently contain a service learning component: Sociology 1S (Introduction to Sociology) and Sociology 2S (Social Problems).

In addition to the established programs previously described, the College has undertaken several initiatives in the past few years to strengthen its capacity to achieve its mission, particularly in regard to ensuring that students have the skills necessary to attain successful careers and/or transfer to a university. In 2004, the College, under the leadership of counseling and instructional faculty and with the support of academic administrators, developed a Student Equity Plan which highlighted major demographic shifts in the College’s student population.<sup>iii</sup>

In particular, the report’s data revealed that between 1992 and 2002, Santa Monica College experienced a decline in the percentage of white students attending and a rise in the number of Hispanic students while the percentage of African-American and Asian students remained fairly constant. Even more striking were the success rates of the students: Asian and white students consistently achieved the highest success rates in basic skills and transfer-level courses over other ethnic groups. As a result, the English, Mathematics, Counseling and English as a Second Language departments reviewed their courses and developed strategies designed to increase student success rates for all students.

Evidence from the Student Equity Report was also used to support the College’s application (in conjunction with El Camino College) to the US Department of Education for a Title V Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions Cooperative grant, the focus of which is to improve student success in pre-college mathematics and English. For the past three years, this project has worked cooperatively with the College’s state-funded Basic Skills Initiative (Student Success Initiative) to examine ways in which to improve the success rates of the increasing numbers of students entering college with pre-collegiate skills.

These efforts on the part of faculty and staff from the English, Mathematics, Counseling and ESL departments, as well as other interested parties, have led to the development of a Basic Skills Initiative plan that clearly outlines actions the College will take to improve student performance. In addition, Title V funding has facilitated a number of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, focusing on nationally recognized effective practices such as Skip Downing’s On Course strategies. The Basic Skills Initiative/Student Equity workgroup continues to identify and develop opportunities to help faculty become more effective instructors



and to provide students with the skills and resources necessary to progress in their educational journey.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Institutional effectiveness is assessed through a number of processes. Planning and engaging in the accreditation self-evaluation process has been an effective tool for the College, particularly in the identification of areas in need of improvement and strengthening. Self-reflection from an impartial observer's perspective helps the institution gain appreciation for the uniqueness of Santa Monica College's culture, programs, and achievements. Self-evaluation also helps to redirect the College's efforts to quantitatively assess and demonstrate that which it knows about itself qualitatively and intuitively. Many changes and innovations to processes over time have been the direct result of the self-review undertaken during accreditation.

The new processes established for developing and assessing course, program and institutional student learning outcomes are another method by which the institution assesses its effectiveness. The Institutional Learning Outcomes are linked to planning processes as well as course and program student learning outcomes. As the assessment phase has only recently begun, it is too early for definitive measures and assessments to demonstrate effectiveness, but the College has clearly signaled its intent to integrate the assessment of its Institutional Learning Outcomes across processes and programs.

The longest-standing and most broadly-based internal tool for assessing institutional effectiveness is the College's program review process. Every instructional and student service program, and every administrative and operational area of the College is reviewed on a six-year cycle. Additionally, career technical education programs are required to submit interim reports every two years. The Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee includes members from both faculty and administration, many of whom serve multiple terms thus providing historical knowledge and exemplary training to new members.

At the time of the last accreditation, the program review process was evolving from a show-and-tell model to a self-evaluation model in which the committee expects to see evidence of reflective dialogue aimed at program improvement, assessment and evaluation of course and program learning outcomes and measures of program effectiveness. The committee has developed guidelines to assist programs undergoing review in the form of appendices tailored to the type of program: instructional, occupational, student service or administrative service.<sup>iv</sup>

Programs submit a written self-evaluation to the committee, which carefully reviews the document. Program representatives then meet with the committee to answer any questions that arise from the report. Subsequently, the committee prepares an executive summary, providing the program with commendations for outstanding practices or improvements, recommendations by the committee for program improvement, and recommendations for institutional support where the committee feels such support is needed.

The Program Review Committee also conducts a self-reflective review of its processes at the end of each academic year resulting in improvements to the program review methods, provision of

better guidance to programs, and linkages between its recommendations and college planning processes. An annual Program Review report is presented to DPAC. The report is also shared with the Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees. In addition to providing an overview of the process and the executive summaries of all programs reviewed during the year, the committee report has also, for the past six years, included a list of broader recommendations emerging from overarching institutional issues of concern to more than one program. DPAC and other college entities then consider these recommendations during their respective planning processes. In Spring 2009, several of the program review recommendations were incorporated as institutional objectives for 2009-2010, further evidence of the growing linkages between various bodies and institutional planning.

Indeed, DPAC itself was created in response to an assessment of the effectiveness of the previous governing structure, the Collegewide Coordinating Council. During the previous accreditation visit, team members observed a Collegewide Coordinating Council meeting, a portion of which was devoted to the ongoing process of evaluating its functions and relationships to other college planning committees. After several months without progress in the evaluation process and deterioration of effective and collegial communication, the Collegewide Coordinating Council ceased meeting. In Summer 2004, the Superintendent/President agreed to a proposal made by the Academic Senate leadership to form an *ad hoc* workgroup to develop a new planning and governance structure for the College. DPAC was the result of the workgroup recommendations and began serving as the collegewide governing body in 2005.

At the end of each academic year, DPAC prepares an annual report that includes a review of all actions taken and recommendations made. The process of preparing the report involves dialogue and input from the entire college community and serves as an assessment of the group's effectiveness.

Updates to the *Master Plan for Education* establish annual objectives and action plans to improve institutional effectiveness. As part of this annual process, the objectives for the current year are evaluated and assessed to determine whether or not they have been achieved. Beginning with the Spring 2009 review of the 2008-2009 objectives and preparation of the 2009-2010 objectives, all the objectives are mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes, thus adding an additional measure of assessment of institutional effectiveness.

The Strategic Planning Task Force, active during 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, is another example of a process that assessed institutional effectiveness as part of its charge. From the beginning, the task force worked assiduously to engage the entire college community in the planning process. Surveys and focus groups were employed to solicit input on institutional effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. As information was gathered and action plans developed, two-way communication was ongoing, and multiple venues including flex days were employed to maximize engagement, ensure the broadest assessment of institutional effectiveness and gain collegewide commitment to the action plans.

Santa Monica College historically has favored qualitative assessments for the majority of its processes. This type of assessment has been the outgrowth of the institutional culture. However,

the College recognizes the need to expand the use of quantitative measures and develop mixed-methods approaches to evaluation and assessment as it moves forward. This will require broader participation in research efforts. Although the College's Office of Institutional Research has suffered from inconsistent staffing in recent years, which has impacted the College's ability to institutionalize and systematize institutional assessment, the office is working towards stability in staffing and is currently in the process of rebuilding, recently adding a full-time research position to support the existing Institutional Research Dean.

Despite these challenges, the College has moved forward with its efforts to develop and implement assessment strategies of institutional effectiveness through:

- longitudinal research design to assess Institutional Learning Outcomes,
- in-depth study of the effect of counseling and support services on student persistence and achievement,
- evaluation design to assess the effectiveness of the Basic Skills Initiative (Student Success Initiative), and
- ongoing monitoring and reporting of collegewide indirect learning outcomes such as successful course completion rates, course retention rates, and student progress and achievement rates.

Thus, the College is moving toward greater capacity to systematize institutional assessment through more comprehensive engagement of the college community in all of the various assessment processes.

### ***Evaluation—IA.1***

An especially dynamic institution, Santa Monica College works diligently and consistently to address the needs of its student population through the development of new programs and strategies as well as through the enhancement of existing programs and services, examples of which have been outlined in the Standard IA.1 Description. The College maintains a tradition of facilitating student learning, progress and achievement of educational goals by grounding program development and enhancement in effective practices and the most recent scholarly research.

This process of developing and enhancing existing programs takes place through extensive dialogue that occurs through a network of campus committees and throughout the college community. Although this process can be lengthy and often occurs over a period of one or two years, it is based on the organizational culture of Santa Monica College, which is one that honors process. Any attempt to circumvent this process is fraught with peril. At Santa Monica College, for any initiative to succeed and be sustained, it must meet the demands of the organizational culture and be fully discussed and agreed upon by a broad group of representatives from the college community.

Santa Monica College is committed to transparency of process and inclusiveness of the college community. The College structures its planning and dialogue processes to encompass the entire college community, including students. The level of participation and engagement may vary depending on the issue; not surprisingly, budget and governance garner the most broadly-based participation. However, in recent years, it would be hard for any group to convincingly argue it had not had the opportunity to participate in the planning process, and any lack of awareness would most likely be attributed to apathy.

These ongoing discussions and communications inform and shape how the College identifies and addresses the differing needs of its various student populations. To the extent possible, students are actively engaged in the dialogue surrounding the development and implementation of new programs, activities and teaching and learning strategies. The involvement of students is monitored by an active Associated Students government that appoints student representatives to Academic Senate joint committees as well as to collegewide, issue-driven task forces such as the Basic Skills Initiative Task Force and the Global Council. The Associated Students Board of Directors offers \$200 stipends to students who participate on college committees and this incentive has had a marked effect on the level and consistency of student involvement on committees and in the discussions that help shape the College's planning processes.

In addition, student retention and achievement data serve as barometers for measuring how the College is meeting student needs. These measures serve as catalysts for much of the dialogue that takes place around meeting the needs of the different student populations. Even when discussions occur that do not include direct input from students, the dialogue is rooted in staff and faculty knowledge of effective practices collected from their participation in local, regional and national conversations on effective teaching and learning. There are numerous examples of institutional use of research-based effective practices for ensuring student success, which include:

- implementation of a Supplemental Instruction Program – modified group-tutoring targeting students enrolled in courses with historically low success rates;
- training basic skills instructors in Skip Downing's On Course teaching and learning strategies, a learning-centered model designed to increase student success;
- use of faculty mentors to assist new online instructors in maintaining the high quality of the Distance Education program;
- What Makes a Great Teacher series – a series of presentations by in-house and outside experts (e.g., Uri Treisman) designed for faculty to share effective practices and pedagogical tools;
- ESL curriculum changes based on data collected regarding the most frequent topics for which students seek tutoring (e.g., creation of an English as a Second Language course, Academic Vocabulary Skills (ESL 28), and revisions to individual course modules);

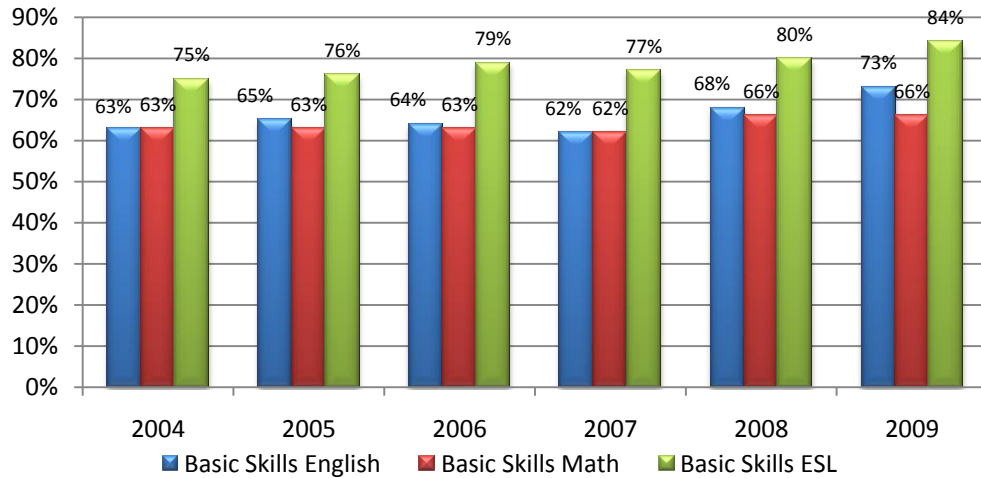
- mathematics course sequencing and revisions based on intended major or transfer goal (e.g., mathematics sequences for liberal arts or social science majors versus sequences leading to required advanced mathematics and science courses); and
- creation of a second writing center – the original writing center was created to address the required lab hours in the lowest level basic skills English classes; the new center focuses on helping the highest level basic skills students get to college-level English.

Development of programs and services to meet student needs occurs in a number of different ways. Some are developed, expanded and improved based on student demand. For example, as a result of current US military commitments, the College has experienced an increase in the enrollment of veterans with needs for new services; thus, the Veterans' Resource Center was established in Fall 2009 to provide expanded services to meet those needs. Business and industry provide input on changing needs or new jobs, which results in program development and changes to prepare students for the job market. In the past few years, the College has worked with its industry partners to develop instructional programs in logistics, solar technology (and other green technologies) and insurance.

Many initiatives arise from the faculty such as the Global Citizenship Initiative and its subsequent activities. In this case, faculty realized that, for students to function optimally in today's rapidly-changing world, they need to understand global cultures, global markets and the relationships and impacts among them. The Global Citizenship Initiative provides a means to address the need for students to be prepared to live in an increasingly interconnected global culture and economy. From initial discussions among faculty and staff, the dialogue expanded to include the larger campus community, which led to inclusion of this initiative in the College's most current strategic action plan, developed by the Strategic Planning Task Force. The College took this initiative one step further by allocating funds in the district budget to support activities recommended by the Global Council.

Another example of the College's responsiveness to student needs is in the area of basic skills. Since the last self-study, Santa Monica College, like many other community colleges, has experienced an increase in the number of students who are in need of basic skills preparation. This is evident not only in the data collected (e.g., Accountability Reporting for the Community College and the Basic Skills Initiative) but in the large percentage of students who place, based on their assessment test scores, into basic skills classes each year, as shown in Figure IA-8.

With the creation of the Welcome Center, the College has been able to receive more immediate feedback on student course needs and to address them quickly. Through efficient collaboration between Welcome Center staff and the Office of Academic Affairs, sections of high demand classes (primarily basic skills) have been added almost instantaneously so that students are enrolled in the classes they need before they leave the Welcome Center. Due to the ongoing budget crisis and the College's reductions in course offerings, this process has been necessarily limited but is still functioning.



**Figure IA-8: Percentage of Students Assessing at the Basic Skills Levels of English, Mathematics and English as a Second Language**

Before departments submit their requested schedule each term, the Office of Academic Affairs prepares a current list of high enrollment and low enrollment courses and uses the list to suggest appropriate distribution of the allotted weekly teacher hours. High enrollment courses include Freshman Reading and Composition (English 1), Student Success Seminar (Counseling 20), General Psychology (Psychology 1) and Intermediate Algebra (Math 20). These are courses with multiple sections that are in high demand due to their degree, transfer or certificate applicability and other factors. Low enrollment courses (course sections with census enrollments of less than 18 or less than 50 percent class size) include courses that are typically offered sporadically or are advanced level courses and thus do not garner high enrollment numbers but are no less important to the students who enroll in them. Examples of disciplines that have low enrollment courses include music, cosmetology and education.

The Office of Academic Affairs, in consultation with department chairs, responds to and tracks enrollments by course, ensuring that departments schedule their courses to meet student needs rather than faculty preference. Over the years, the high and low enrollment courses have changed, sometimes significantly, serving as a road map for student-need-driven change. An example of this change is the creation of the Student Success Seminar, Counseling 20. Over ten years ago, Santa Monica College was an innovator in developing this course, which addresses issues outside the classroom that impact student success: study strategies, health issues and lifestyle choices, relating and communicating in a diverse world, time management, career exploration, and educational planning. When first offered, this was a low enrollment course. Over time, more and more students enrolled in it, and by Fall 2008, Counseling 20 had the second highest enrollment of all courses offered at the College, second only to enrollment in English 1, Freshman Reading and Composition.

Santa Monica College has a wealth of programs and services developed in a climate that encourages innovation. Each adds value to the student's experience at the College and is a gem in its own right. As a relatively new administrator to the College put it, "I keep discovering program pearls scattered throughout the College. We just need to do a better job of stringing them together into a more coherent, accessible structure for students." While it is true that the College has many wonderful programs and services, it could strengthen the linkages between them and to the planning processes. An example of strong inter-departmental/program linkage is the close collaboration and sharing of resources to support students that exist between the Office of Financial Aid and Extended Opportunity Programs and Services. Linkages between and among programs and planning is becoming stronger, but there is room for continued improvement.

The myriad programs and services offered at Santa Monica College are legendary for their breadth and innovation. Each was developed based on a passionate belief that it would make a difference, and all of them add to student success. Santa Monica College is particularly distinguished by its large number of student service and support programs and the high degree of integration between instruction and these programs and services. That the College devotes significant resources to student services programs testifies to a commitment that has become integrated into the college culture so that student services and instruction are viewed as equal partners in contributing to student success. This level of partnership is not the norm at most community colleges and is an aspect of the Santa Monica College structure of which the institution is justifiably proud and for which it is admired by others.

Students still overwhelmingly come to Santa Monica College with the stated goal of transferring, but the College recognizes that increasing numbers of students arrive unprepared to do so in a timely fashion and has developed many support services and programs to help these students achieve their goals:

- **Black Collegians** – a program dedicated to promoting, encouraging and increasing retention, transfer, academic success and graduation of African-American students.
- **Pico Partnership** – a joint effort between the College, the City of Santa Monica, and Virginia Park designed to provide educational counseling and financial assistance to underserved youth living near the College.
- **Adelante** – a support program that focuses on academic achievement, cultural awareness and personal growth, and that offers classes that accentuate the Latino experience.
- **The Welcome Center** – a one-stop resource for first-time enrollees that ensures students enroll in appropriate courses.
- **Veterans' Program** – a program that includes the new Veterans' Resource Center, Veterans' Advisory Board and acceptance of veterans under the provisions of the new GI Bill, Chapter 33.

- **Young Collegians** – a collaborative program between Santa Monica College and the Santa Monica/Malibu Unified District to engage academically underprepared students.

Because many of the College's new and emerging programs have been researched nationally, it is assumed that they will prove effective at Santa Monica College in addressing the needs of the student population. However, many of these programs, such as Supplemental Instruction and the Welcome Center, also implement some form of student assessment to determine just how effective the programs are at meeting the needs of the students they serve. For example, comprehensive program evaluations are currently being implemented to assess the effectiveness of:

- **The Welcome Center** – in the form of student satisfaction surveys to determine the utilization and satisfaction of services received as well as the relationship between service utilization and program completion.
- **Supplemental Instruction** – through utilization of pre- and post-testing of study skills and test-taking skills and the relation to course success before and after participating in the tutoring offered through Supplemental Instruction.
- **Mathematics Cohort Faculty** – by implementing pre- and post-testing of study skills and test-taking skills within individual instructor's courses after the instructor has implemented pedagogical innovations.

The College understands that an effective assessment strategy will include evaluation not only at the program level but also at the course and institutional level. At this time, the College is still in the early stages of developing and implementing a comprehensive evaluation plan to determine how well, at the macro level, it is addressing the needs of its student population. This is one of the College's most pressing tasks and will be spearheaded by the recently expanded Office of Institutional Research.

### **Assessing Institutional Effectiveness**

Currently, Santa Monica College's Institutional Learning Outcomes are structured more as goals of what the College would like to achieve than as measurable learning outcomes. They are the result of an inclusive collegewide dialogue and reflect the idealism of the College; however, they are not easily assessed. Continued dialogue to establish institutional learning outcomes that are more easily measured and to develop effective measures is needed, and the College is firmly committed to achieving greater congruence and alignment of its mission with its Institutional Learning Outcomes.

One of the substantive issues that must be addressed as the College develops its research and evaluation capacity into one that is systematic and institutional in scope, centers on the institutional culture and the value placed on the research function in assisting the *entire* institution to meet its objectives. In terms of assessing individual program effectiveness, the College does the best job with categorically-funded programs, largely because assessment is built into the grant requirements. At times, the assessments developed for categorically-funded



programs can be applied to other programs and services. For example, the Title V, Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions grant project teams are structuring their evaluations so that the data collection and analysis instruments may be used to assess the effectiveness of other aspects of developmental education. This also illustrates how the grant programs are aligned with institutional goals and objectives.

However, while there is broad understanding about the value of data to enhance decision-making and demonstrate the effectiveness of programs and services, there is not yet broad-based understanding about the need for the entire institution to *systematically* assess its effectiveness. In addition to conducting systematic research studies, the Office of Institutional Research needs to provide leadership to empower programs to understand and use data regularly to create an institutional culture conducive to meeting the new demands of accountability, assessment and evaluation of effectiveness. This will require additional human and technological resources, a challenge under current fiscal constraints.

As noted in the description, Santa Monica College has a history of conducting individual program assessment, sometimes on an *ad hoc* basis or at the end of a project period when there is little or no time to use the assessment to improve the quality of the program. The College must transition from engaging in program assessment that is largely disconnected from the needs of the greater campus community to a more systematic research agenda that links program assessment with student and institutional assessment. This will yield a stable, systematic approach to research and evaluation that is based on the needs of the entire institution rather than individual and categorically-funded programs and services.

Recognizing that the College's evaluation needs will probably always exceed resources, the Office of Institutional Research has developed and promoted a philosophy and approach to evaluation and assessment that is: 1) grounded in participatory evaluation models, meaning that all program stakeholders are active participants in the evaluation process and that evaluation and assessment are not exclusively the domain of the Office of Institutional Research and 2) based on standardization of data.

This has been a slow and challenging process given the College's focus on program assessment rather than institutional assessment. To develop the evaluation capacity and infrastructure necessary for the institution to systematically assess its progress and effectiveness, individual programs need to be given the tools and support to become independent program evaluators. Furthermore, these tools need to be part of a systematic process and commitment to evaluation and use of standard sets of data on the part of individual programs.

At this time, the College is still in the early stages of implementing a comprehensive evaluation plan to determine how well the College, at the macro level, is addressing the needs of its student population. With regard to moving toward systematic evaluation of institutional effectiveness, several initiatives are underway. First, the Office of Institutional Research recently released an institutional effectiveness report drawn from student achievement measures in several key areas related to the mission of the College. Some of the measures included are:

- progress and achievement through the basic skills curriculum
- fall to fall persistence
- percentages of transfer-prepared students
- degrees and certificates conferred
- persistence of students who enroll in Counseling 20 (Student Success Seminar)

The results are impressive. The study found that students enrolling in the Student Success Seminar (Counseling 20) in their first term were 29.7 percent more likely to persist to the following fall term than students who were not enrolled in the course. Other student support services (described fully in Standard IIB) were also positively associated with persistence:

- Students who participated in VIP Welcome Day experienced a 49 percent higher persistence rate as compared with students who did not participate.
- Students who completed orientation experienced a 32 percent higher persistence rate as compared with students who did not participate.
- Students who participated in Extended Opportunity Programs and Services experienced a 50 percent higher persistence rate as compared with students who did not participate.
- Students who participated in the Scholars Program experienced an 88 percent higher persistence rate as compared with students who did not participate.

The study also revealed that the strongest predictors of higher first-term grade point averages are participation in the Scholars Program and completion of orientation. Also influencing grade point averages are participation in the Pico Partnership Program, US Department of Education-funded TRIO programs (Upward Bound and Student Support Services), Extended Opportunities Programs and Services, Athletics, and the number of general counseling contacts.

In a separate study which looked at the impact of a Santa Monica College program for probationary students (Back-to-Success, described more fully in Standard IIB), program participants persisted (fall to spring) at dramatically higher rates than students who elected not to participate in a workshop. Furthermore, Back-to-Success participants had lower rates of continuing on probation.

A third study that looked at the College's Summer Bridge Program (funded through a Title V, Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions grant) determined that students who participated in the program tended to benefit socially and affectively. In other words, these students were more likely to feel accepted on campus and connected to campus activities.

Additionally, the College is developing, through its Academic Senate Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee, a systematic approach to learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional level. A framework for assessing institutional learning outcomes at the course level is currently being discussed, and if accepted by the broader campus community, will likely be tied to the grade submission process. This would allow the College to

assess course level learning outcomes for every course and student each term. The process of assessing outcomes at the course level naturally connects program and institutional level outcomes to activities that are occurring in the classroom.

In terms of assessing the effectiveness of student support services, these units have or will be developing and implementing a combination of data collection strategies connected to their learning outcomes. Some units such as Extended Opportunity Programs and Services/Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education, the Office of Financial Aid, the Counseling Department, and the Office of Admissions and Records have already implemented student surveys directly connected to their Student Learning Outcomes. The plan for these units is to continue to develop these data collection strategies and regularly review the assessment results.

With respect to classroom-based and student support unit assessment activities, the Office of Institutional Research began offering a series of workshops in Spring 2009 to help participants develop assessment plans. Faculty and program staff members attend workshops and receive assistance in refining their Student Learning Outcomes and developing measurement and assessment tools. At the end of the workshop, the anticipated outcome is that participants will have acquired the tools they need to engage in robust, systematic assessment of student learning outcomes.

Finally, recognizing the need for robust assessment of the Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes, the Office of Institutional Research, working with the Academic Senate Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee, is developing a broad-based assessment designed to measure the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes from a longitudinal perspective. The philosophy behind this initiative is that holistic assessment of students, in addition to classroom-based assessments, is required for the institution to fully understand the ways in which it helps students develop. The institution recognizes that conducting only cross-sectional, classroom-based assessments is not sufficient to capture the full growth, learning and development of students that take place at the College.

***Plan—IA.1***

- The College will integrate its current institutional effectiveness initiatives into comprehensive evaluation cycles that systematically measure and document how well the College, at the macro level, is addressing the needs of its student population.
- The College will formalize the process for reviewing and revising the mission statement to ensure that the process is systematic and corresponds to the needs of the institutional culture and valid, accepted practices for research and evaluation.
- The College will formalize and implement the framework for assessing learning outcomes at the course, program and institutional level.

**IA.2** *The mission statement is approved by the governing board and published.*

**IA.3** *Using the institution's governance and decision-making processes, the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary.*

**Description—IA.2 and IA.3**

Traditionally, Santa Monica College reviews the mission statement on a six-year cycle, at a minimum, generally aligned with the self-study process. However, the 2008 review occurred prior to the start of the self-study process and was triggered by the activities of the Strategic Planning Task Force. This body was formed under and reported to the DPAC. DPAC's original charge or purpose was, and continues to be, to:

- establish a comprehensive strategic planning capability at Santa Monica College, including the development of an evolving strategic plan to coherently focus the College's attention on critical needs, and
- promote a shared commitment to the common good of the College, including the strengthening of existing organizational frameworks to foster more collaborative decision-making about strategic concerns.

From the beginning, it was assumed the task force would operate for at least two years, gather perceptions and feedback, establish a timeline, and structure and set strategic goals for the College for the next several years. At the point the Strategic Planning Task Force was beginning to discuss possible strategic initiatives, the need to review the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements became apparent, so, with the approval of DPAC, the Strategic Planning Task Force took a slight detour in its charge and led the process of reviewing and revising the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements. After much discussion, revisions were drafted and circulated among the college community and feedback was solicited. Throughout late Fall 2007 and Winter 2008, the Strategic Planning Task Force continued to make revisions based on the feedback gathered.

After the Strategic Planning Task Force finalized its recommended changes to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, the document was forwarded to DPAC, which reviewed, revised and approved its version in March 2008. As with all DPAC recommendations, these were forwarded to the Superintendent/President for response. To ensure complete agreement with the proposed Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, before responding to DPAC, the Superintendent/President gave the Board of Trustees the opportunity to individually comment. This informed further modifications made to the document by the Superintendent/President before responding to DPAC. DPAC endorsed the changes, and the Board of Trustees approved the final version in May 2008. The approved revision to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals was then posted to the college website.<sup>v</sup>

### ***Evaluation—IA.2 and IA.3***

While review of the mission statement follows a regular cycle that tends to align with the self-study cycle, it is not necessarily the only trigger for review as demonstrated by the way the Strategic Planning Task Force acted as a catalyst for the most recent review and revision. The structure for participation in the review process is inclusive. Communication is primarily through members of the college community and collegewide activities such as flex day presentations. The assumption has been that the process is most effective if everyone has the opportunity to participate and provide feedback. Thus, broad efforts have been made to encourage participation, and the process has been public and transparent.

Moreover, in an attempt to determine how clearly the most recent revision to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals of the College were communicated, recently hired faculty and staff were asked to share their perceptions of what the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals said about the College as an institution and whether their initial experiences at the College reflected an institutional commitment to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. The following comments articulate particularly well the general perception and the overall commitment of the entire college community to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals and demonstrate an accurate sense of what Santa Monica College strives to accomplish:

*“I believe that the mission of Santa Monica College . . . is general enough to be inspiring, and, at the same time, is specific enough to be operationalized.”*

*“The mission defines what this institution strives to achieve. . . . It strives to create a learning environment . . . . To me that means Santa Monica College recognizes that the learning process requires both the teacher who instructs and the learner who learns . . . and hints at the shift in US public education from merely teaching a lesson to ensuring that the teaching actually results in students learning the material.”*

*“By emphasizing the effort of ‘creating a learning environment,’ Santa Monica College recognizes that its success as a public institution depends on students’ willingness and effort as much as on its own efforts.”*

*“The learning environment the College strives to create is one that ‘both challenges students and supports them in achieving their goals.’ This is recognition of the necessity for exposing students to advanced knowledge and high academic standards while, at the same time, providing strong support through student services and counseling.”*

*“That ‘students learn to contribute to the global community as they develop a personal understanding of their personal relationships to the world’s social, cultural, political, economic, technological and natural environments’ says that Santa Monica College understands the personal nature of the learning process . . . that learning is a dynamic process and that new knowledge becomes available as industry changes, innovations in technology become available, and the globalization forces become stronger; [and] that*

*the effectiveness of an individual in this world depends on the capacity to perceive this change and . . . their personal contribution to and in this society.”*

*“The mission specifies how Santa Monica College intends to accomplish its mission – by providing ‘open and affordable access to high quality associate degree and certificate of achievement programs.”*

*“The mission defines the broad domains for the outcome measures and indirectly states the institution’s intended population. These programs ‘prepare students for successful careers, develop college-level skills, enable transfer to universities, and foster a personal commitment to lifelong learning.’ Thus, successful careers, improvement in college-level skills (basic skills), transfer, and community education (foster a personal commitment to lifelong learning) are defined as domains for which this organization wants to be held accountable. Students who seek to improve their job skills, improve basic skills, have a goal of transferring to a four-year college, seek certificate program, etc. are defined as the intended population.”*

*“The mission acknowledges the institution’s intent to embrace diversity, encourage open exchange of ideas in a caring community of learners, and recognizes the importance of each individual’s contribution to the achievement of the College’s vision.”*

**Plan—IA.2 and IA.3**

- The College will formalize the process for reviewing and revising the mission statement to ensure that the process is systematic and corresponds to the needs of the institutional culture and valid, accepted practices for research and evaluation.

**IA.4 *The institution’s mission is central to institutional planning and decision making.***

**Description—IA.4**

The culture of Santa Monica College is based on an idealistic, philosophical construct: that we change the lives of students through our programs and services. We tend to start with broad, global statements that reflect our core beliefs in our mission and in ourselves. We firmly believe that we make a difference. This deeply held belief is intrinsic to who we are; it is what drives us to innovate and take risks. On the other hand, this deep-rooted belief in ourselves and the success of what we do also makes us so certain that we have an impact that we don’t always take the necessary steps to document and provide empirical evidence of the efficacy of our programs and activities. It takes us longer to connect our ideals to specific activities that are measurable and that demonstrate our ability to deliver on the promises stated in our mission, and the more general tone of our mission reflects this.

During the last self-study, in response to the state budget and the College’s own internal budget crises, Santa Monica College was undergoing painful alterations that included reduction in

course offerings, elimination of several career technical education programs, and cuts in staff. Enrollment dropped from an all-time high (in terms of enrollment headcount) of 34,513 in Fall 2002 to 26,466 in Fall 2003. Until that time, California's Budget Act provided community colleges three years of stabilization funding to grow back to base, an assumption from which the difficult decisions to cut derived. Unfortunately, changes made in July 2003 to the Budget Act reduced the time period allowed for stabilization funding to one year. Thus, the College needed to recover approximately 6,000 FTES in 2004-2005.

The College embarked upon an ambitious recovery plan, but its goal to recover 6,000 FTES in one year proved unattainable. However, at the core, Santa Monica College is a community of believers in the impossible, those who know from experience that if you tilt at windmills long enough you will slay the giants. Despite some hard feelings engendered by the impacts of the cuts, the college community joined together to craft and implement multiple strategies to restore enrollment levels and increase retention. At the same time, in 2004-2005, the statewide decline in community college enrollment peaked, making recovery efforts even more challenging but perhaps providing greater impetus for development of creative strategies.

During the years it took for these strategies to prove effective, the College embarked on a risky budget plan of borrowing enrollment from successive summers to reach the base. Various hurdles emerged along the way, but the College's deep belief in its mission carried it over them, sometimes in unexpected ways. For example, in Spring 2006, the accreditation status of neighboring Compton College was pending determination, and it turned to Santa Monica College for help.

Notwithstanding the College's own problems of struggling with enrollment recovery and still emerging from a period of rancor and deep mistrust, the college community, led primarily by faculty and administration, demonstrated again an innate ability to trust in principles and beliefs that compel it to see beyond itself. When asked to help, the College could not stand by and watch a neighboring community college collapse, leaving its students abandoned. In a matter of weeks, Santa Monica College faculty and staff reviewed and approved equivalencies for Compton College's courses to ensure they met Santa Monica College's course standards. In addition, the Compton College offerings were supplemented with a small number of Santa Monica College courses and an array of professional development activities were developed for Compton College faculty. All of these activities occurred rapidly and in time to support Compton College's students through the summer session.

This was a labor of love and commitment for which Santa Monica College's only request in return was a guarantee that it would not lose money while the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office sought a permanent solution for Compton College's dilemma. In the end, this act of faith, coupled with good planning and an ability to react quickly to changing external circumstances, helped Santa Monica College's enrollment recovery efforts. By remaining loyal to its mission, Santa Monica College not only addressed the immediate needs of students and faculty at Compton College but was able to help meet its own institutional needs and objectives with regard to FTES recovery and fiscal stabilization.

At the student, program, and institutional level, the mission is central to the College's planning process. Whether the College is discussing new programs and initiatives or collegewide efforts to improve student success, Santa Monica College's fundamental commitment to student success underlies all of these discussions and decisions.

***Evaluation—IA.4***

Santa Monica College's mission statement serves as the foundation for nearly all of the College's initial planning and decision-making discussions. This is particularly the case as the College pursues external funding through grants and contracts, especially considering that many of the College's most successful new programs and initiatives, such as the Welcome Center, begin as grant-funded projects.

Another area in which the College's mission statement is central to the choices it makes can be found in the strategic initiatives that emerged from the work of the Strategic Planning Task Force. Addressing basic skills has always been a part of the College's mission statement, but as the need for this level of instruction and support has increased, greater planning and resources have focused on improving the College's response. Both the Basic Skills Initiative (also known internally as the Student Success Initiative) and the Global Citizenship Initiative are broad-based, complementary efforts to meet growing needs and to ensure that these aspects of the College's mission statement are effectively addressed. It is worth noting that these take a collegewide approach in an effort to reach the entire college population as opposed to many other valued Santa Monica College programs that focus on providing support for specific subsets of the student population.

The Global Citizenship Initiative is grounded in the College's mission statement, which states that the College prepares students to "contribute to the global community." Inclusion of a separate budget line item to support activities recommended by the Global Council is direct evidence that the mission statement prompts planning and decision-making.

In the crafting of the most recent revisions to the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, one of the supporting goals specifically identified to help the College achieve its mission is the creation of a Sustainable Physical Environment. While sustainability is incorporated into global citizenship through its inclusion in the Global Citizenship Associate in Arts degree requirement, it is even more broadly addressed through the many efforts made to incorporate sustainable practices such as recycling, water conservation, and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings across campus. This is further evidence that the mission statement is at the core of decision-making on both a small and large scale.

Beginning with the Spring 2009 update to the *Master Plan for Education*, all institutional objectives for 2009-2010 are linked to the Institutional Learning Outcomes, which support the college mission statement. These linkages are now spelled out in the planning documents and reflect the College's effort to make planning and decision-making more transparent and to communicate the connection between the mission statement and specific actions.



External funding is often the catalyst that enables the development of new initiatives and programs. Although the College has several offices that have resource development as part of their responsibility, each engages in a review of the mission statement prior to pursuing new funding. As an example, the Grants Office works with proposal developers to ensure that each new proposal is aligned with one or more of the Institutional Learning Outcomes. The proposal planning team also assesses each project's relevance with regard to the College's strategic initiatives to determine if the project truly addresses a priority need. If a proposed project does not address an institutional priority, then it may be passed over in favor of another project that does.

A good example of this process occurred in Spring 2009 as the College planned for its next Title V, Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions grant project. This is one of the most coveted grants in the community college system because its purpose is to strengthen the institution in whatever manner the institution determines is most pressing. Although not funded in the recent biennial competition, the proposed grant activities revolved around a comprehensive development plan in which the College identified its strengths and weaknesses.

Given the flexible nature of this grant, there is a tendency to pursue grant funds to support special projects or pet initiatives. However, for this recent Title V project, the College's senior administration convened a team of faculty, staff and administrators to facilitate a discussion regarding the focus of this project. The mission statement, its corresponding Institutional Learning Outcomes, and the strategic initiatives identified in 2008 served as the starting point for this conversation. The team reviewed all documents and identified gaps in service delivery and resource allocation, focusing on those needs that were not currently being addressed in another area and did not already have financial support.

Identifying unfunded priorities is an important step in this process. One of the College's most pressing concerns is student performance in basic skills courses, and thus one might logically assume that the next Title V grant would focus on basic skills. However, the College is already receiving significant state support to address student success in basic skills. Therefore, in this planning process, the team looked at priorities that were not currently funded, specifically the development of a Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, which would address the College's Strategic Initiative to provide collegewide professional development and which is currently an unfunded institutional priority.

The recent planning for the next Title V project is not the only example of mission-based planning and decision-making at Santa Monica College. In fact, individuals, departments, and/or programs that pursue external funding through the Grants Office must complete a grant prospectus that asks how the project will help the College address its mission statement. This process ensures that the College only pursues funding that is in alignment with its mission statement and supportive of institutional priorities.

The mission also plays an integral role in the choices made by the College. The annual update to the *Master Plan for Education*, which is based on input received from constituencies and planning bodies, is prepared and approved by DPAC. The identified objectives link directly to

the supporting goals found in the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements with each area writing action plans that support those goals. The *Master Plan for Education* annual update describes the outcomes of each action plan thereby serving as documentation of the effectiveness of the plan. Each proposed objective is mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes and includes a narrative and the estimated budget implications and links to recommendations emanating from the program review process. Thus, the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals serve as the guiding principles of this and other planning processes.

Processes that fall under the purview of the Academic Senate all link to and support the mission statement. Even when the link is not so clearly indicated in the process itself, it is central to the dialogue that leads up to the recommendations made by the various committees. Known informally as the 10+1 List, these are processes for:

- curriculum, including establishment of prerequisites
- degree and certificate requirements
- grading policies
- educational program development
- standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
- college governance structures related to faculty roles
- faculty roles and involvement in the accreditation process
- policies for faculty professional development activities
- program review
- academic personnel matters
- institutional planning and budget development

It is sometimes difficult to maintain the mission as the polestar for decision-making when the process is one that relies on participatory governance, especially when budget issues are involved, due to the nature of roles played by the representatives of the participating groups. However, the College is making strides in requesting, if not requiring, that recommendations from all participatory governance bodies include some description linking the recommendation to the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, the Institutional Learning Outcomes, and/or the Strategic Initiatives.

Overall, the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals serve as guiding principles in college decision-making. A significant example would be all the actions and decisions relating to the supporting goal of a sustainable physical environment by which the College not only demonstrates its commitment to the goal but also models choices and behavior. Beginning in 2007 when the newly opened Humanities and Social Sciences building attained a LEED silver certification, the College has made a commitment to attain LEED silver or higher certification for all new

buildings. Thus all buildings both currently being planned and in the future will be designed to meet LEED silver standards or higher. Other efforts include a 75,000 gallon rain catchment system in the new quad area; a multi-million dollar effort to increase energy efficiency, which includes the installation of a large solar panel; one of the highest solid waste diversions in the state; and a large-scale vermiculture recycling program that uses worms to convert food waste and cardboard into castings utilized on campus for fertilizer and pesticide. These are just a few of the efforts that demonstrate the long-term, large-scale commitment of the College to be an educational leader in sustainability.

The College recognizes the need to strengthen the links and connections between processes and decision-making to ensure the mission and student learning are prioritized in a way that is more clearly defined. To this end, the College has already begun developing a planning calendar/timetable, based upon planning documentation, that links budget with various planning processes, thus ensuring that recommendations made by different planning bodies move forward aligned with the budget planning process.

***Plan—IA.4***

None



## **I.B Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

*The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.*

### **Introduction**

Santa Monica College engages in many activities designed to support and improve student learning. Current leadership fosters a collaborative environment in which faculty and administrators routinely engage in dialogue and mutually agree upon plans that address institutional improvement. This environment, fairly uncommon among community colleges, encourages innovation and risk-taking and provides the degree of freedom and support needed for faculty and staff to pursue novel approaches. The result is that some plans may work while others may not, but the process itself creates a climate of constant reexamination and striving towards improvement.

While somewhat unconventional in structure, the College's process of evaluation is in fact aligned with the principles of formative evaluation processes that seek to improve programs and services. This relatively flexible method of assessing effectiveness works well within the college culture of innovation and ongoing change. If an approach is not achieving the expected results, it is adjusted and modified until it yields the desired outcome at the course, program and/or institutional level. This may result in a change in direction or a shift in priorities deemed appropriate at the time. The College is currently developing resources that will assist faculty, staff and program administrators to follow this quality-improvement process including, for example, workshops on designing effective assessment instruments to measure achievement of student and institutional learning outcomes and access to research reports. Development of these resources will expand institutional support for assessment.

Since the last accreditation review, Santa Monica College has made significant strides in better understanding the importance of a comprehensive and systematic approach to assessing institutional effectiveness at the course, program and institutional level. In response to this understanding, the College has increased its capacity to engage in a comprehensive, systematic review process. The last accreditation review, along with the imperative to establish student learning outcomes, served as the impetus for this change in perspective.

In 2005, Santa Monica College embarked on the process of developing student learning outcomes. One of the first activities was a session at the March 2005 Flex Day devoted to "Navigating Curriculum and Demystifying Student Learning Outcomes," which was designed to

engage the college community in a discussion of student learning outcomes. By June 2005, the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force had convened. Initially, the student learning outcomes process was not universally embraced, and some viewed it as yet another externally-imposed exercise of dubious value to the College. To increase understanding for the importance of developing student learning outcomes and to generate enthusiasm within the college community, the Academic Senate Joint Professional Development Committee, composed of faculty and administrators, initiated a collegewide awareness plan. Through a variety of training sessions, the Professional Development Committee engaged faculty, staff and administrators in conversations regarding student learning outcomes. The kick-off event occurred during the Fall 2005 Opening Day flex activities.

In an effort to shift the college climate, this event focused on student learning. Facilitators informed workshop participants that “collectively we will be taking an important first step designed to bring the college community together and ultimately promote student success.” Following these activities, throughout Fall 2005 and Spring 2006, the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force met with representatives from each academic department to aid in the development of course student learning outcomes.

Flex days continued to be a prime venue for continued collegewide discussion. In Fall 2006, the Opening Day session, “A Conversation about Student Learning Outcomes Experiences,” expanded student learning outcome development to include program level outcomes. At the Fall 2007 Opening Day, the college community focused on developing institutional learning outcomes via “Campuswide Institutional Goal Setting Workshops.” The four resulting institutional learning outcomes were developed through an iterative process characterized by dialogue across the college community. Subsequently, during the Spring 2008 Flex Day activities, follow-up sessions on the Institutional Learning Outcomes were presented and the dialogue continued through the Fall 2008 Opening Day, when the proposed Institutional Learning Outcomes were included in the discussion of the College’s Mission, Vision, Values and Goals.

Years of effort and activities undertaken to develop student learning outcomes, at the course, program and institutional levels have broadened the college community’s awareness of and engagement in the student learning outcomes development process. Student learning outcomes have been written for all courses, and the assessment phase has begun; although departments and programs are at various stages of the process, they are all engaged in the work and progressing in developing and implementing assessments. Institutional learning outcomes have been developed and are included in the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, and other initiatives and planning activities are being mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes. The College is currently revisiting its program outcomes. Initially tied to each academic discipline, it has become clear that the definition of program outcomes is broad and also appropriate for administrative and support services, especially those that do not provide instruction or deliver direct services to students.

In general, the process of creating an assessment and outcomes-oriented culture at the College is one that invites thinking and rethinking and reflects extraordinary flexibility, risk-taking and regeneration. This continuing effort, spanning nearly four years, has resulted in varying levels of

knowledge and participation among faculty and staff; however, the evolution towards an assessment mindset continues.

With the development of student learning outcomes at the course, program and institutional levels, has come the understanding of the need for ongoing review, assessment and quality-improvement. This dialogue has expanded over the years to the point of having now become ingrained in institutional thinking. The degree to which each department has achieved understanding and implementation of the learning outcome review cycle varies. The best examples of understanding and integrating the process, not surprisingly, are found in mathematics and the sciences, which are inherently empirically-based disciplines. Similar examples exist in disciplines where students take a sequence of skills-building courses such as English as a Second Language. These programs created student learning outcomes early on. The mathematics and science programs share common assessment tools while ESL instructors utilize common rubrics to facilitate their assessments.

The Physical Sciences Department engages in ongoing assessment and revision to improve student learning. Through administering standard exams in most courses, they generate longitudinal data that inform their intensive review and analysis. They have developed a model timeline for student learning outcomes analysis, and their response to findings has been deemed exemplary by the Program Review Committee as witnessed by the following comments in 2008:

*This was a model program review in terms of the level, depth, and breadth of self-reflection and responsiveness to the findings. The Physical Science department has divided each discipline (Chemistry, Physics, and Engineering) into subsets, each of which has a faculty leader. Full-time faculty are all fully engaged in an impressive array of constant and ongoing activities, self-evaluation, and assessment. Enormous efforts are made to engage and include part-time faculty and to ensure consistency among courses and outcomes.*

*The success of the departmental structure for continuing self-evaluation is evident in the depth of the ongoing assessment and subsequent revisions to the course and program student learning outcomes. Each program subset engages in stringent analysis of the assessments, asks tough questions of themselves, and is clearly open to making changes in teaching strategies, employment of technologies, and revising assessments. As a department, Physical Science really “gets” the student learning outcomes process and is committed to using it to improve their teaching and therefore student success.*

As the College moves forward with its development of systematic and comprehensive learning outcome review processes, all areas will look to mirror the rigor and systematic outcomes assessment that characterizes the physical sciences courses in a manner that still allows each department to create its own template and structure.

The student learning outcomes development process is at the core of the College’s assessment process. Indeed, the Academic Senate joint committees and task forces require evidence of student learning outcomes in numerous processes. For example, the Academic Senate Joint

Curriculum Committee requires that student learning outcomes be included with every new course proposal, and the Program Review Committee expects to see evidence of student learning outcomes assessment and mapping to Institutional Learning Outcomes in each program's self-analysis. The Academic Senate Joint New Faculty Hires Ranking Committee requires that programs requesting new full-time faculty hires present evidence of student learning outcomes assessment and mapping to Institutional Learning Outcomes. Moreover, institutional learning outcomes are directly tied to each objective included in the annual update to the *Master Plan for Education*. Departments requesting increases in budget allocations must show compliance with the outcomes development process to have their request considered. In sum, compliance has been institutionalized across planning processes.

Currently, the ability of faculty to access, collect and meaningfully interpret data related to learning outcomes and achievement directly impacts their use of data in the assessment and program improvement process. Developing this capability is the cornerstone of the philosophy and approach to building stakeholder evaluation capacity and ensuring a culture of outcomes assessment appropriate to a learning organization. However, the College must overcome several barriers to achieve this goal and will proceed in stages as explained in the following response to Standard IB criteria.

There is general agreement that the College could do a better job of connecting processes. The challenge is doing that without suppressing the culture of risk-taking and innovation or causing a seismic shift away from the College's principles. The allocation of resources necessary to increase institutional research staff positions in the past six years demonstrates the College's commitment to institutional effectiveness and its understanding of the need for ongoing data collection and analysis to be used for continuous program and institutional improvement. However, the College also intends to move forward with its plans to develop and implement a more formalized assessment process that actively engages faculty, staff and administrators. The College is proceeding in a concerted and deliberate manner to make progress in this area.

***IB.1 The institution maintains an ongoing collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.***

***Description—IB.1***

Santa Monica College has a number of processes and venues that serve to maintain an ongoing dialogue focused primarily on improving student learning. This dialogue occurs both internally and externally to ensure that the entire college community has the opportunity to provide input and feedback regarding the overall direction and effectiveness of the College. Leadership from the Academic Senate and the Offices of Academic Affairs and Student Services spearhead the dialogue, meeting weekly to discuss topics related to student learning and institutional improvement. As described in the Introduction to Standard IB, the collaborative outcome of these discussions is the inclusion of sessions on institutional flex days specifically designed to elicit feedback from the larger college community on a variety of topics that impact institutional effectiveness and student learning.



Members of the college community meet to decide areas to be addressed, develop plans and engage in activities designed to solicit feedback and maximize collegewide participation. In addition, the Academic Senate joint committees lead college dialogue. For example, recent discussions within the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee and approval of the global citizenship requirement demonstrate both the process and the outcome of student learning-centered dialogue. Another example is the full-time faculty peer evaluation form, recently revised and implemented to include a student learning outcomes-related question. The portion of the evaluation covering professionalism, to be completed by the department chair or designee, rates the faculty member on his/her participation “at the appropriate level in creation, assessment, and/or discussion of student learning outcomes.”

The global citizenship requirement is the result of long-running dialogue which led to incorporation of several burning issues into one comprehensive requirement that reflects the passions and commitment of the college community. As often seems to happen at Santa Monica College, change occurs as the result of seemingly unplanned synergy that merges issues across different planning bodies. In this instance, the discussions surrounding the mission statement, which resulted in the inclusion of global citizenship and sustainability, prompted the College to address the finding that the American Cultures Associate in Arts degree requirement was a primary impediment to increasing the number of Associate in Arts degrees awarded; in fact, too few classes had been approved to fulfill the requirement.

Initially, the dialogue centered on improving student success and improving student learning by ensuring that students were exposed to concepts the college community felt were vital for a well-rounded education in today’s world. At the same time, dialogue on sustainability and ecological literacy and global citizenship resulted in the College making a commitment to support global citizenship initiatives through allocation of budget resources. This resulted in a Global Citizenship Associate in Arts degree requirement that embraces American cultures, sustainability and service learning, providing students with many more options to meet the requirement.

The Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee is engaged in a similar process towards development of an interdisciplinary studies initiative. The discussions have led to significant dialogue, and research of similar programs in California and the nation has been conducted to help determine the content of the proposed new program. The outcome of the process is expected to prove as positive as that which led to the global citizenship requirement.

The Program Review Committee is another forum for identifying and addressing the needs of students, ensuring meaningful departmental self-evaluation, and reviewing and analyzing evidence of improvements in student learning. Likewise, the recently-formed Academic Senate Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee serves as a platform for dialogue, a resource for training, and a guide for monitoring the development, assessment and review of learning outcomes. This committee helps integrate and coordinate the work on learning outcomes of the Curriculum, Program Review, and Career Technical Education committees.

Wherever dialogue occurs, it is expanded to the wider college community by the Academic Senate Joint Professional Development Committee through its institutional flex activities

(referred to as Opening Day in fall and Flex Day in spring). This is the primary time when the full college community has an opportunity to join together for broad discussion. In recent years, the committee has shifted from a menu-driven format to one that is topic-driven, scheduling multiple concurrent workshops and activities devoted to a single topic and using homerooms to address such topics as communication and collegiality, learning outcomes development and assessment, strategic initiatives, the College's mission, and accreditation. All of these activities have included a mechanism for gathering input and providing feedback to participants after the information gathered has been aggregated.

An especially popular addition to these collegewide opening and flex day activities has been the presentations by former students who share their memorable experiences at Santa Monica College. These stories are always inspirational and set the tone for the homeroom discussions that follow. For example, one student described how, in the evenings, he studied for hours in the college cafeteria and how, during times of despair, the custodian would urge him not to give up. This story is a reminder that student learning and achievement are products of many experiences at the College, not only those that occur in the classroom.

The District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC) acts as yet another catalyst for effective dialogue, particularly regarding budget and resource allocation. For example, in Fall 2007, there were many discussions regarding fiscal planning, and a variety of scenarios were postulated including that of borrowing summer FTES (Full-Time Equivalent Students); this resulted in the decision to maximize the College's funding base by going into stabilization with a detailed and realistic enrollment recovery plan. Such discussions underscore the vast improvement in collegial relations and the power of inclusive dialogue to bring the community together. Later events have proven the prescience of this decision as the College established a higher, and maintainable, base that is helping it weather the current budget instability and has achieved enrollment recovery beyond the base level, well ahead of the plan's timeline.

Dialogue can also occur within specific college community groups. For example, in 2005-2006, the Academic Senate engaged all faculty in a vigorous discussion of the pros and cons of plus/minus grading. The merits of retaining the current single-letter grade policy versus adding plus/minus to the grading system were researched and discussed by a task force and then presented to the full faculty through special forums. At the conclusion of the dialogue, all faculty, both part-time and full-time, were asked to vote to keep or to change the current grading policy. The majority voted to retain the current policy of issuing single letter grades without plus or minus qualifiers. As grading policy falls under the purview of the Academic Senate, only faculty participated in the discussions and the vote.

Dialogue with the external community is equally important to ensure that the College engages in activities that promote continual improvement in student learning and institutional processes. External dialogue occurs with a number of outside groups, especially those in business and industry, and other workforce development partners. Each of the College's career technical education programs (also known as occupational or vocational programs) has an industry-based advisory board that meets regularly to ensure that students graduate from the program possessing the skills necessary to address workforce needs. This dialogue is vital to the success of the

career technical education programs, as students' ability to obtain and retain employment upon completion is an essential outcome. Advisory board discussions lead to the identification of new workforce needs, changing skills sets, and other concerns that may foster course or program development.

Dialogue also takes place with local public schools, spearheaded primarily by the programs and offices that work directly with middle and high schools. For example, the Young Collegians program provides academically underprepared high school students the opportunity to experience college and encourages them to choose college as an educational goal. The success of the program depends, in part, on expanding the dialogue about student learning and working collaboratively and reflectively to improve the educational experience for, and outcomes of, the students in the program.

Santa Monica College has a deep connection to the local community, which has shown its support for the College and belief in its mission and student outcomes through its approval of three bond measures since 2004. Through various means, the College engages the local community in dialogue about institutional effectiveness. Two community groups that support the College—the General Advisory Board and the Santa Monica College Associates—provide regular opportunities for the community to learn about specific activities and programs and to provide feedback. Feedback is also provided through each of the three recent bond measures by a community-based, bond oversight committee.<sup>vi</sup>

With a relatively small urban main campus and multiple satellite sites, most of which are contiguous to residential areas, the College is acutely aware of its impact on the local community and regularly engages in dialogue with individuals and neighborhood groups. The College works assiduously to ensure that commitment to its mission and institutional effectiveness is managed to have the least possible negative impact on the community. Mitigations (e.g., strategies to relieve traffic congestion) are frequently undertaken to maintain strong and positive relations with the community and the City of Santa Monica.

The many partnerships between the College, the City and the Santa Monica/Malibu Unified District testify to the success of ongoing dialogue related to institutional effectiveness. The city pool, located on the College's main campus, the shared use of the College's Corsair Field and the John Adams Middle School athletic field, and the proposed joint child care center and Early Childhood Education laboratory school at the Santa Monica Civic Center are just a few examples of collaboration with the understanding that institutional effectiveness and community effectiveness are interdependent.

The College completed its original *Comprehensive Facility Master Plan* in 1998, an effort which included gathering input from discussions taking place at more than 30 community meetings. All the projects in the original master plan are either completed or underway. Moreover, the College is currently updating the *Comprehensive Facility Master Plan*, a process that will include many opportunities for the local community and the college community to participate in planning and to provide input.

Many members of the college community participate in statewide and national organizations, which provide opportunities for broader dialogue that is brought back to the College and incorporated into local dialogue. While Santa Monica College is frequently viewed as an innovator to be imitated, ideas for innovative programs or strategies that improve student success also come from discussions held at the state or national level. Santa Monica College is happy to share its ideas for improving student learning or institutional effectiveness and is open to adopting successful practices of other institutions.

The success and impact of dialogue are felt across the College. The strategic initiatives developed by the Strategic Planning Task Force (described in Standard IA.2 and IA.3) and approved in 2008 were the direct result of broad-based discussion. The impact on student learning can already be seen in the development and support of the global citizenship activities and the creation of the Global Citizenship Associate in Arts degree requirement. The Institutional Learning Outcomes are the product of extensive dialogue, debate and discussion, as are the revised Mission, Vision, Values and Goal statements.

The Student Learning Outcomes dialogue occurred across the institution as the College deliberated how best to proceed. In the end, in keeping with the institutional culture, it was decided that a grassroots approach would be most effective, with each department/program/area developing its own course and program learning outcomes. Programs have always been dedicated to student success and engaged in assessment and review of practices, so beginning with course level student learning outcomes seemed natural. This led to development of program level student learning outcomes, culminating in institutional learning outcomes that reflected the College's Mission Vision, Values and Goals. The process fit the institutional culture and garnered broad-based support from members of the college community.

Student support services also play a role in student success and therefore are an integral part of the dialogue. Santa Monica College excels at developing and implementing innovative support services. These range from programs that support small or specific populations to broad-based programs that support all students.

The Welcome Center is an example of the latter that emerged from collaborative dialogue and enjoyed even greater success than anticipated. For many years, student services offices have been scattered across the main campus forcing students to travel back and forth across campus and around construction sites in search of information and services. As the College was developing strategies to restore enrollment after the 2003-2004 reductions, the concept of a one-stop shop for new students resulted in the creation of the Welcome Center, a single location where staff from every service necessary to complete enrollment in a single visit would be available. The serendipitous outcome was that counselors in the Welcome Center were able to immediately identify course selection deficiencies as soon as all sections of a course filled and communicate this information to the Office of Academic Affairs, which was able to add sections in a timely manner.

Convergent with the development of the Welcome Center was the College's implementation of a mandatory assessment policy and its response to the statewide Basic Skills Initiative. These

nearly simultaneous events provided counselors in the Welcome Center with the assessment data they needed to improve advisement services and a framework of appropriate courses in which to enroll students. The majority of course selection deficiencies identified during enrollment periods were in basic skills areas and having enough sections available was a key factor in supporting student success. Collaboration between the Offices of Student Services and Academic Affairs has traditionally been close at the College and proved to be a particular strength in responding to this newly-identified need. As soon as counselors realized sections of certain courses were filling rapidly in basic skills areas, they contacted the Office of Academic Affairs, and new sections were immediately added. Not only were students' needs met but departments were immediately aware of changes in student population, thus prompting adjustments in their longer-term curriculum planning and scheduling. This demonstrates the broad impact dialogue can have on improving institutional effectiveness, especially as it relates to student learning.

Focusing on environmental studies and the impact individuals have on the planet has been part of the academic program for many years through such changing programs and functions as the Environmental College, the Center for Environmental and Urban Studies, and the current Environmental Science and Environmental Studies Associate in Arts degrees. Recognizing that modeling and commitment have a positive impact on student learning, the College embarked on a number of activities which have increased sensitivity to environmental and sustainability issues at the College. One project that elicited dialogue and engaged members of the college community, including students, was the Environmental Audit, an effort that had its roots in the Environmental College and which was revisited in 2006. The resulting Environmental Audit document provided a baseline for the College in the areas of water usage, energy consumption, transportation, solid waste and recycling, purchasing, hazardous materials usage and disposal, food service, student engagement, and education. The document also resulted in a series of recommendations for improvement in each area, many of which have already been implemented or are serving as guidelines for future decision and policy-making.

At the same time the audit was conducted, the new Humanities and Social Sciences building was under construction. The College had already committed to establishing it as the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building on campus. The construction contract was also written to include the recycling of construction waste. The design of the new quad was also underway and included sustainable practices referenced in the Environmental Audit, and on-campus efforts to encourage recycling were increased. More recently, the Measure AA bond included infrastructure projects to improve the environmental impact of college operations such as the partnership with Chevron to install energy efficient lighting throughout the College and solar panels on the parking structures. All of these activities emerged from a dialogue that has helped institutionalize the values stated in the College's Mission Vision, Values and Goals.

While the College has engaged in ongoing dialogue regarding student learning and other evaluative activities that are programmatically based, there has been inconsistent staffing in the Office of Institutional Research, which has contributed to the practice of relying on individual and program-based evaluation and assessment. Given the resources that have recently been

allocated to support the research function, the dialogue over outcomes assessment and evaluation has expanded to include the Office of Institutional Research as a full partner in developing, shaping and framing of outcomes assessment, measures of effectiveness, and evaluation activities, which will allow the institution to integrate and better connect program-based evaluation with institutional efforts. This ongoing dialogue is instrumental in helping the entire campus community understand how data and research are used in the evaluation of student learning.

While the College is proud of the quality of its for-credit programs, comprehensive student services and the number of students who transfer, these are not the only subjects of institutional dialogue. Through internal discussions among faculty, staff and administrators as well as external dialogue with community-based organizations, the local municipalities, the local unified school district, business, industry and other workforce development partners and concerned citizens, the College has pursued initiatives beyond the traditional for-credit programming to ensure that it achieves its mission as the community's college. As a result, noncredit and workforce programs occupy a significant place in the overall commitment of the College to life-long student learning.

Described fully in Standard IIA, the largest and longest-running noncredit program at Santa Monica College is the Emeritus College, which provides lifelong learning to the senior adult population. Adhering to the highest quality of mandated and accepted standards, all Emeritus courses include student learning outcomes and are approved by the Curriculum Committee before they are submitted to the state for approval. An Emeritus College Executive Council provides input and recommendations on potential new curriculum and on the use of donations to improve the program. The Emeritus College has garnered loyal support from both its students, who have donated more than \$5 million to the program, and through the many partnerships and collaborations with other community groups and the City of Santa Monica.

Another noncredit area that is becoming increasingly significant is English as a Second Language (ESL). Previously a stand-alone program, the current noncredit ESL program is now a joint effort between Continuing and Community Education and the ESL Department, designed to serve the ever-changing language needs of the community. A full-time ESL Department faculty member oversees the noncredit ESL program, and the curriculum, revised in 2008, is coordinated and sequential between the noncredit and credit ESL programs. Consequently, students are better prepared to matriculate from noncredit to credit ESL and into the rest of the credit curriculum. This is yet another example of how changing circumstances built around ongoing dialogue between internal and external partners have resulted in a strengthened program.

The dialogue on student learning also encompasses Workforce Development. This is often the program through which the College first addresses emerging fields and local economic/workforce needs, primarily through industry-driven short-term training. A truly collaborative approach is taken as industry provides the content expertise and the College ensures that academic standards and student learning outcomes are appropriately addressed.

Workforce Development also works directly with local employers to provide training for their employees who need upgraded skill sets and professional development. An example of a particularly successful collaboration is the partnership with the Santa Monica Convention and Visitors Bureau, City of Santa Monica, and the local Chamber of Commerce, for whom the College provides diversity and customer service training to employees of different local hospitality businesses. Well over 1,000 local employees have been trained to date through the “I Am Santa Monica” program. This program is both responsive to local industry needs and serves to emphasize and support the College’s efforts to help students at all levels “learn 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.”

Thus, structured dialogue regarding the improvement of student learning in workforce development and career technical education programs occurs at many levels as the credit and noncredit programs are often interrelated. The current governance and committee structure ensures ongoing collegial dialogue through the Academic Senate Joint Career Technical Education and Curriculum committees. In addition, career technical program advisory boards and other community groups provide a more focused discussion on student learning in relation to industry-driven skill sets, emerging fields and local economic/workforce needs.

### ***Evaluation—IB.1***

There is an inherent tension in higher education generated by the need for consistency, outcomes, accountability, and assessment to demonstrate effectiveness, and differing perceptions of what and how the principles of academic freedom apply. Dialogue and process are the means by which Santa Monica College addresses these issues. Santa Monica College faculty not only embrace dialogue but are the catalyst and drivers of the dialogue. There is always at least one pressing issue under discussion, and the number of committees and task forces created attest to the ongoing desire for and engagement in dialogue.

The breadth and depth of dialogue regarding student learning and institutional processes has improved significantly since the last accreditation self-study. This is largely due to the improved climate and stronger sense of collegiality and a greater understanding that the entire college community contributes to the success of its students and the college mission. New committees, task forces and work groups that focus on student learning include Basic Skills, Interdisciplinary Studies, Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes, and Global Citizenship. Dialogue often inspires formation of a task force or work group that leads, in turn, to the establishment of a more formal or standing committee.

The dialogue surrounding student learning outcomes is an example of such formalization. It began in Fall 2005, initiated by the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force and the flex day programs planned by the Professional Development Committee, and has been ongoing ever since. Recognizing the need for a more permanent structure, the Academic Senate created the Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee. Since Fall 2008, the committee has worked with the Office of Institutional Research to develop training modules in the

assessment of student learning outcomes and to serve as liaison to the Curriculum and Program Review committees to ensure consistency among learning outcomes, assessment and review.

Since the last accreditation, every Academic Senate joint committee has re-evaluated its purpose, scope, and function, and, as appropriate, has integrated student learning outcome processes. For example, the Curriculum Committee requires all new course proposals to include student learning outcomes and assessments. The Program Review Committee has revised its guidelines for programs to include multiple questions that address student learning outcomes. The Environmental Affairs Committee addresses the Institutional Learning Outcome that states students will “assume responsibility for their own impact on the earth by living a sustainable and ethical lifestyle.” As the DPAC planning subcommittees regularly review their charge, members are reminded that student learning must be at the core of all discussions and recommendations. Each DPAC planning subcommittee’s list of charges includes a commitment to student learning that states the planning subcommittee will “support the goal to infuse student learning outcomes throughout Santa Monica College.”

Santa Monica College embraces dialogue and demands that it take place. Although it is time-consuming, the college community expects a commitment to dialogue and that members from all college community groups, various user groups and affected parties are included at some level.

The College has experienced firsthand the impact of circumventing dialogue. In 2003-2004, at the time of the previous self-study, the College’s budget was not sufficient to weather the state fiscal crisis. With virtually no budget reserve and insufficient time for in-depth discussion, the College took the painful step of limiting enrollment and cutting some programs and staff. The reverberations across the college community were immediate and resulted in tension and rancor among the various groups that comprise the college community.

However, through the efforts of the many members of the college community, dialogue and collaboration have improved significantly. In fact, relations between faculty and the administration have evolved to the point that recently the Academic Senate proposed the Women’s College and the Environmental College (see the Standard IB.3 Description for additional details about these programs) be sunsetted and that their charges be reassigned to a broader interdisciplinary studies effort. These actions were the direct result of improved relations among college community groups. Sufficient time was allowed for the dialogue to take place; as a result, it was clear to all that these actions were the result of careful evaluation, that the institution could effectively support these initiatives and populations in other ways, and that student learning would not be negatively impacted. The Academic Senate Interdisciplinary Studies Task Force was established, and as a result of the dialogue that occurred, two significant decisions were made. First, the College established the initial Global Citizenship Task Force and appointed faculty and staff to it. Secondly, the College invested financial resources to create the position of Project Manager of Sustainability. Both of these developments map directly to the Institutional Learning Outcomes and Institutional Strategic Initiatives.

Given the discontent among members of the various college community groups apparent during the last accreditation visit, the current relationship between the Academic Senate and the college



administration is exemplary and testifies to a deep institutional commitment to self-reflection, self-improvement, and student learning that typifies all that we do. Academic Senate leaders meet weekly with the vice presidents of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The discussions have resulted in collaboration on flex day activities and the utilization of formalized routing forms to track agreed-to changes to Administrative Regulations and the ensuing recommendations and policies.

To inform dialogue, evaluation and decision-making—all with an eye to improving student learning—the College collects a wide range of data from the institutional level to the course and instructor level. For example, departments receive The Instructional Management System (TIMS) report every semester. These reports, now available electronically, provide detailed student enrollment, success, and retention data by course, instructor, and department and are used to inform course scheduling and identify potential instructional issues for which intervention strategies may be needed.

In addition, enrollment data are gathered and presented in a variety of formats. Every semester, Academic Affairs provides each of the instructional departments with reports that identify the courses with the highest and lowest enrollments, courses with the largest enrollments, and all of the cancelled sections (primarily due to low enrollment). These reports identify trends and influence curriculum planning and scheduling. Course offerings reflect trends as well. For example, several years ago, business and computing courses were the most popular as reflected by the enrollments. Although enrollment in these disciplines remains solid, the current trend has shifted to liberal arts and science courses.

An example of how these reports affect planning is the increase in the number of Student Success Seminar (Counseling 20) course sections offered. Originally conceived as a vehicle for providing information and strategies for improving student success, the course content includes study skills, orientation to the College, an introduction to available services and support, time management, and strategies for being a successful student. Santa Monica College was among the first institutions in the state to offer such a course. Initially only a few sections were scheduled. However, development of this course was particularly timely when considered as part of the broader implications of combined mandatory assessment, significant increase of students testing into basic skills courses, and creation of the Welcome Center. It soon became apparent that enrollment in the Student Success Seminar could be of significant help to basic skills students in particular. By Fall 2008, the Student Success Seminar was the second largest offering, second only to Freshman Reading and Composition (English 1). This is an example of using output/need data to inform decision-making in an effort to increase the likelihood of student success.

The College regularly reviews and analyzes changes in demographics to accurately identify possible changes in need. One of the most significant demographic changes to occur in the past six years is an increase in the enrollment of Hispanic students. Since 1998, Hispanic students have comprised more than 25 percent of the College's for-credit student population, giving the College eligibility to pursue federal designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution, which has enabled the College to pursue federal grants set aside for Hispanic Serving Institutions.

Recognition of this milestone also provided the College with the data it needed to develop even stronger programs for Hispanic students. Similarly, more than 50 percent of the College's credit headcount are students from demographically diverse populations making the College eligible for some federal grants as a minority serving institution.

Another outcome of changes in demographic data is the development of the Basic Skills Initiative. The evolution of the Basic Skills Initiative is an example of the convergence of demographic changes and commitment to broad-based improvement in student success and institutional effectiveness. Small-scale support efforts for students needing basic skills had been incorporated into several specialized programs designed to meet the needs of academically underprepared students. The College, however, was not satisfied with these efforts alone and chose to reach out to all students who needed support and to develop services and strategies that could be supported more broadly. Fortunately, the College has been able to utilize both federal and state funding to implement these initiatives as the vision of scope has grown larger than the College alone could have realistically supported.

There is clearly a desire to better demonstrate the value and impact of efforts to improve student success, analyze and interpret the specifics driving any change, and inform decision-making. Many program faculty and staff have not been trained to formulate research questions and define parameters of data collection. This factor, coupled with the lack of sufficient research staff to support the many varied requests have inhibited progress in appropriate assessment activities. Providing comprehensive assessment support such as training in the use of data requires adequate staffing and collaboration between the Offices of Institutional Research and Management Information Systems. Although discernible progress has been made in developing a more self-service oriented system for accessing basic data, the demands on both areas are high. However, the College recognizes and supports the development and implementation of assessment and evaluation processes through staff training and increased availability of standardized reports related to student learning outcomes.

Programs that effectively incorporate data into assessment and evaluation are typically specialized, generally categorically-funded, and serve a narrowly-defined population. These programs have been given (by their funding sources) or have developed their own evaluation tools to respond to funding agency requirements for accountability. Continuously-funded programs (e.g., Extended Opportunity Programs and Services) or mandated programs (e.g., Disabled Students Programs and Services) are regulated by the state and federal government, with strictly-defined parameters for reporting.

Student and support services programs have found documenting their impact on student learning more difficult than the academic programs. While testimonials and anecdotal evidence abound and the College captures these in a variety of ways, it is neither systematic nor consistent in doing so. Students share their stories with faculty and staff, and employers and receiving institutions also share with us the experiences they have had with our graduates. Likewise, friends and neighbors communicate the impact Santa Monica College has had on their lives and/or the lives of their loved ones. Through these stories, the college community feels validated and invigorated and strengthens its resolve to improve student learning and success.

Capturing the impact and influence of Santa Monica College's programs and services has been a challenge. The College conspicuously demonstrates a fundamental belief in the value of student services by the depth and breadth of programs and staff, which are among the best-qualified in the nation. More problematic, however, is identifying which services have the most value and the greatest impact and whether a particular result is specific to a certain group or demographic. However, the Office of Institutional Research recently completed a triad of research studies conducted that revealed the College's student support services are having a significant effect on student persistence, grade point average and social integration (see Standard IIB, Evaluation).

The Counseling Department has also initiated a strategy to better track and quantify the relationship between service and success in the form of a computerized counseling appointment system that enables tracking of every student seen individually and the types of activities taking place during each visit. This is a significant first step in collecting data that, when aggregated with other information, will help the institution analyze the impact of student services and influence its decision-making.

The College recognizes that data alone do not serve members of the college community. Data need to be imbued with relevance within the context of the institutional culture. In cooperation with faculty and staff, the Office of Institutional Research plays a substantive support role in creating meaning for the institution. By supporting a culture of systematic inquiry that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the College expects to strengthen its commitment to ongoing systematic assessment, resulting in improved programs and services.

An example of an area that would benefit from more effective use of existing data is the program review process. Programs, primarily instructional, have general student achievement data available to them, which they are expected to use in the program review self-evaluation process. However, many programs require training in data analysis and interpretation. Weekly workshops conducted by the Office of Institutional Research have begun and plans to increase access to training in the use of data are expected to improve the program self-evaluation process.

### ***Plan—IB.1***

- The Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee will produce comprehensive rubrics for evaluating outcome statements, assessment plans and assessment reports for departments/programs to use in reviewing their own student learning outcomes, assessments and reports to achieve sustainable and continuous quality and improvement.
- The Office of Institutional Research will lead in the development of a systematic evaluation process that ultimately moves the institution from program-based assessments to those that are institutional in scope.
- The Office of Institutional Research will expand training modules and assessment workshops to ensure all areas of the College are proficient in the use and interpretation of data to inform self-evaluation and decision making.

**IB.2** *The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. The institutional members understand these goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.*

**Description—IB.2**

The institutional goals are clearly expressed in the College’s Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. The College has identified four Institutional Learning Outcomes and five Supporting Goals that are consistent with its mission statement. The Institutional Learning Outcomes and Supporting Goals are the result of collegewide dialogue: the Supporting Goals were developed by the Strategic Planning Task Force, and the development of the Institutional Learning Outcomes was spearheaded by the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force (which later evolved into the Academic Senate Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee. Both the Strategic Initiatives and the Institutional Learning Outcomes are meant to be long-term and serve as inclusive statements that drive the development of objectives included in the annual update to the *Master Plan for Education*.

The annual update to the *Master Plan for Education* is developed through a collaborative and participatory process and is the primary document for communicating college progress and effectiveness in supporting the institutional goals. Input used for setting the annual objectives is provided by the Board of Trustees (from its annual Goals and Priorities), administrative units, the DPAC planning subcommittees (through their recommendations to DPAC), the Program Review annual report, the *Comprehensive Facility Master Plan* annual update, *Technology Master Plan* annual update, and members of the college community. All input to the *Master Plan for Education* annual update is reviewed by DPAC. Thus, the annual preparation of the *Master Plan for Education* update requires broad discussion, ensuring more widespread understanding of and commitment to the goals. Further, the DPAC structure requires wide collaboration.

The Supporting Goals form the framework within which each annual objective is placed. This has been the structure of the *Master Plan for Education* annual update for a number of years. Now that the Institutional Learning Outcomes have been established, each objective is also mapped to at least one of them, demonstrating the College’s commitment to strengthening the linkages between planning processes and to integrating and imbedding goals and processes throughout the institution. Further illustration of the College’s efforts to link processes and planning is the new requirement to include narrative description of the budget impact, if any, of each proposed objective.

As noted previously in this document, the entire college community participated in developing the College’s Institutional Learning Outcomes and the Supporting Goals. The Supporting Goals outline how each area of the College will achieve the Institutional Learning Outcomes and included input from Academic Affairs, Student Services, Fiscal Services, and Facilities and from the various groups that comprise the college community. As the Supporting Goals were developed, each group had the opportunity to provide input, suggest changes, and state

specifically how it intended to help achieve the Institutional Learning Outcomes. This level of involvement helps ensure broad-based understanding of the institution's goals.

Acknowledging that there may be individuals who chose not to or were unable to participate in the process that led to the development of these goals (e.g., part-time faculty and staff), the College's planning bodies, specifically the Academic Senate Joint Professional Development Committee, have included discussion of the Institutional Learning Outcomes and the Supporting Goals in nearly every institutional flex day program since work on them began. In addition, instructional and student support departments regularly discuss these goals during departmental meetings, particularly when developing their program level student learning outcomes, which must be mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes. The cycle proposed by the Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee directs programs and departments to assess one Institutional Learning Outcome per year.

Given the numerous opportunities to become informed about Institutional Learning Outcomes and to comment on their relevance to the mission of the College, the majority of members of the college community should, by now, be aware of the institution's goals. The same may be said of the processes for implementing the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes and Supporting Goals. The college community develops annual objectives that are linked to the Institutional Learning Outcomes and Supporting Goals. These objectives are included in the annual update of the *Master Plan for Education*. All administrative areas and the programs/departments under them are expected to meet to discuss and review area goals and to prioritize their actions for the coming year. These actions become the objectives for the *Master Plan of Education* annual update. The administrative units must achieve consensus on these action plans as they will be required to report to the Board of Trustees the progress made in achieving these objectives. If they are unable to complete an objective, they must indicate the reason. This level and degree of accountability demands that objectives are developed with careful, deliberative and thoughtful discussion.

The College identifies its goals as the Institutional Learning Outcomes and Supporting Goals previously described. These are long-term comprehensive visionary goals that are not necessarily measurable as formulated. Instead, they were written holistically, with the expectation that they would remain relevant to the College's mission for many years to come. However, the College recognizes the need for measurable goals and objectives, and the annual update of the *Master Plan for Education* incorporates measurable objectives.

### ***Evaluation—IB.2***

The process that the institution uses to develop its long-term, comprehensive goals and annual objectives is inclusive of the entire college community. These goals and objectives are the result of consensus-building efforts that ensure that the entire college community is committed to the path the College is following. Through the objectives, each member of the college community has a role in moving the College forward, thus ensuring support and commitment for future progress.

The goals identified by the College serve as guiding principles for improvement of institutional effectiveness. As written, the College's goals are fairly broad and overarching. The *Master Plan for Education* annual update identifies the specific objectives for the following year along with the administrative area(s) responsible for completing each objective. In addition to setting out the objectives for the next academic year, the *Master Plan for Education* annual update includes a response regarding the achievement of the previous year's objectives. Should the administrative area responsible decide upon an alternative activity to the one stated in an objective, the report will indicate the reasons for the change as well as the outcome.

Beginning with the 2009-2010 update, every objective is mapped to at least one Institutional Learning Outcome, creating further visible linkage between planning and implementation and evidence of the institutional commitment to achieving identified goals. As a public document, the *Master Plan for Education* annual update communicates the College's accountability and future activities broadly and beyond the immediate—and sometimes differing—desires of members of the college community.

Since the last self-study, the budget-planning process has been revised to include and facilitate greater input through the DPAC Budget Planning Subcommittee. Recommendations from various college bodies that have budget implications are forwarded to the Budget Planning Subcommittee for consideration. All recommendations that emerge from DPAC planning subcommittees are reviewed by DPAC and, if approved, are forwarded to the Superintendent/President, who responds to each recommendation. Those that have a budget implication are then included in the budget-planning process.

DPAC is an evolved structure that has been functioning for several years and that is beginning its first self-evaluation process. Included in the evaluation process are a review of each planning subcommittee's function, the alignment of the timeline for each process (to ensure timelines among planning subcommittees integrate appropriately to inform decision-making, especially budget-planning), and the effectiveness of each committee in providing the information needed for DPAC to make informed recommendations.

An example of recommendations from other college bodies that are included in planning is the Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee's annual report. The report includes executive summaries, which may contain recommendations for institutional support for a particular program or area. More importantly, the program review process generates an annual list of overarching issues that surface through the review process and that impact more than one program. These are reviewed by DPAC, which may choose to act upon them by including them in the *Master Plan for Education* annual update. Those with budget implications may be referred to the DPAC Budget Planning Subcommittee. Others of an operational nature are referred to the appropriate administrative area. The inclusion of overarching issues in the annual Program Review report has been formalized since the last self-evaluation and has proven to be an effective means of identifying concerns that might not otherwise have surfaced through the normal committee and planning processes. Not all overarching issues are addressed each year, and some may be listed for several years before a recommendation of support is made.

Santa Monica College implements its Institutional Learning Outcomes and Supporting Goals through the objectives identified in its *Master Plan for Education* annual update. Generally, the College successfully completes all or nearly all of its annual objectives. This success rate demonstrates the College's ability to implement its goals and objectives. Some notable accomplishments include the following:

- In 2004-2005, Objective 12 was established to initiate an institution-wide dialogue about student learning outcomes and processes to facilitate student learning at the course, program and degree levels and to define and begin implementation of course level student learning outcomes. In Fall 2004, the Academic Senate President and the Superintendent/President convened a group of faculty leaders and the vice presidents of the Offices of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to set goals and establish guidelines to meet this objective. Agreeing to use Alverno College's *Student Learning: A Central Focus for Institutions of Higher Education*<sup>vii</sup> as a framework for discussion, the group decided to focus on two key committees to discuss and develop student learning outcomes: the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee and the Department Chairs Committee. In Spring 2005, members of the Curriculum Committee attended a conference on student learning outcomes and facilitated two workshops for faculty and others. Moreover, the committee established the requirement that new course proposals must include at least two student learning outcomes. The Academic Senate Joint Program Review Committee also participated by requiring that instructional departments undergoing review submit evidence of student learning outcomes and mapping to Institutional Learning Outcomes as part of their self-analysis.
- In 2005-2006, Objective 14 built on the previous objective by continuing the transformation of individual courses to incorporate student learning outcomes and begin the process of defining student learning outcomes at the program and institutional levels. In Fall 2005, the Academic Senate formed the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force to act as a clearinghouse and resource for faculty members and departments developing their student learning outcomes, to educate the college community about student learning outcomes (including their assessment), and to begin the task of establishing the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes. This group trained representatives from every academic department and discipline to lead their colleagues in developing and revising course level student learning outcomes.
- In 2006-2007, Objective 9, to use point-of-service surveys to measure student learning outcomes for all student services areas, and Objective 10, to begin assessment of student learning outcomes for the student support areas of the College, built upon the work of the previous two years. Currently, more than 90 percent of the student services programs have student learning outcomes and a majority of the programs are assessing those outcomes.
- In 2007-2008, Objective 3 was to develop institutional learning outcomes and incorporate them into the revision of the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. The Fall 2007 Flex Day activities gathered collegewide input on "student take-aways" to be used to

develop the Institutional Learning Outcomes. The Student Learning Outcome Task Force compiled the results and made four recommendations, which were approved by the Academic Senate, DPAC, and the Superintendent/President and were presented to the Board of Trustees in November 2007. The College's revised Mission, Vision, Values and Goals document features the four Institutional Learning Outcomes, along with five Supporting Goals and provides a framework to ensure that the annual institutional objectives address the achievement of one or more of its Institutional Learning Outcomes.

- In 2007-2008, Objective 18 was to increase services for distance learning and online counseling. In response, the College increased distance learning enrollment from 18,000 in 2006-2007 to more than 20,000 in 2007-2008. This increase helped the College meet its supporting goal to “continuously develop curricular programs, learning strategies, and services to meet the evolving needs of students and the community,” by specifically addressing the needs of students who are time-constrained and/or place-bound. To support this increase, the College provided 24/7 support through the online helpdesk (provided through eCollege, the online course management system used by the College) as well as online counseling services.
- In 2007-2008, Objective 11 was to develop and implement a comprehensive, web-based student early alert program to identify and assist students who are underprepared academically and to return them to successful standing by providing essential follow-up activities. In response, the College revised and updated its existing system to facilitate the identification of underprepared students at any point throughout the semester. This new system, used by faculty and counselors, helps the College achieve its supporting goal of “fostering a supportive learning environment.”
- In 2008-2009, Objective 6 was to infuse the ideas of global citizenship throughout the curriculum and expand the number of courses that satisfy the Global Citizenship Associate in Arts degree requirement through the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum Committee approval process. The Global Citizenship requirement has been in effect since Fall 2008. It broadened the prior American Cultures requirement to include Ecological Literacy, Global Studies, Service Learning and Study Abroad, and supports the fourth Institutional Learning Outcome, which states that “through their experiences at Santa Monica College students will take responsibility for their own impact on the earth by living a sustainable and ethical life style.” More than 30 courses have been identified through the existing curriculum process as meeting the Global Citizenship requirement (see Standard IIA for a list of the courses identified as meeting the requirement).

These are just a few examples of how effectively the College supports its goals by achieving its annual objectives. Additional examples are available in the summary reports included in the annual updates of the *Master Plan for Education*.<sup>viii</sup>

Santa Monica College has historically relied more on anecdotal evidence and qualitative data and less on quantitative data to measure effectiveness. This has proven successful, as evidenced by



the recognition for excellence that the College has received and is compatible with the institutional culture of innovation and risk-taking. However, there is increasing awareness across the College that more quantitative measures are necessary to provide the most accurate and detailed information on which to base sound planning and decision-making.

In addition, the College tends to be output-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. That is, the majority of the objectives identified in the *Master Plan for Education* annual update are process-focused in that they identify a specific action that must be taken. Once the College accomplishes the activity, the objective is considered to have been met. For example, Objective 37 for 2007-2008 was to complete the feasibility study for converting college electrical systems to solar power and to consider the results in future planning. This objective is in line with the College's supporting goal to "develop a sustainable physical environment by applying sustainable practices to maintain and enhance the College's facilities and infrastructure." It is measurable in that, once the feasibility study has been completed, the objective has been met.

However, the objective lacks a description of the impact of its completion. Questions such as why it is important for the College to conduct a feasibility study for converting its electrical systems to solar power, what the College expects to achieve by completing the task, and what will change as a result of achieving this objective, are left unanswered. The College hopes to achieve:

- a ten percent increase over the previous year in the use of sustainable practices;
- a decrease of five percent over the 2005-2006 baseline year in the College's carbon footprint; and
- a decrease from the previous year of \$20,000 in the amount spent on electricity.

By focusing on outcome-oriented objectives, the College will be better-equipped to develop measurable objectives. With measurable objectives, the College will be positioned to more accurately assess the true impact of its activities.

The College is undoubtedly successful in achieving its goals. For example, Santa Monica College:

- consistently ranks among the top transfer-institutions in the state, transferring the greatest number of students to the University of California, Los Angeles of any other educational institution in the country;
- has one of the largest international education programs in the country, with over 2,900 students, ranking in the top ten of community colleges;
- has completed (or is in the construction process for) all the facilities projects listed in the 1998 *Comprehensive Facility Master Plan*, many of which have won awards for outstanding design (e.g., Science Complex, Library, Bundy site, Theatre Arts, Quad, Performing Arts Center);

- has responded to new and emerging technologies by creating curriculum in areas such as logistics and photovoltaics;
- boasts a Small Business Development Center that achieved top center status last year through its efforts to support its clients, raise revenue and ensure that it is addressing the economic needs of this region;
- includes faculty and staff who frequently receive state and national accolades for their skills, expertise and contributions.

In addition to these accomplishments, positive feedback from students (who continue to enroll in increasing numbers), parents (who encourage their high school students to concurrently enroll), the community (which has supported three bond measures since 2004 and donates time and money to the College), all attest to the quality of services provided by the College. This level of support would not exist if the College did not meet its goals, deliver high-quality instruction, and maintain exceptional services.

However, because the College currently relies on process-oriented objectives and outputs as well as qualitative measures to assess its effectiveness, it is not able to state quantitatively the impact that it has had on members of the college community. Implementation of both outputs and outcomes coupled with both qualitative and quantitative assessment strategies will significantly expand and enhance the College's ability to achieve its overarching goals.

***Plan—IB.2***

- The College will better document its planning processes, formalize the evaluation of planning outcomes, and institutionalize planning and evaluation by emphasizing outcomes as well as outputs.

***IB.3 The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. Evaluation is based on analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.***

***Description—IB.3***

Santa Monica College follows the practice of ongoing planning. In keeping with the culture of innovation, planning takes place continually throughout the College. In fact, the consultant who facilitated the work of the Strategic Planning Task Force remarked on the depth and breadth of “random acts of planning” at the College and suggested that the college community should exploit this strength.

An institution of creative thinkers and innovators creates its own informal structure for developing, implementing and assessing institutional effectiveness and meeting goals. The

willingness to take risks often includes following an unconventional approach. While “random acts of planning” at Santa Monica College frequently result in successes to be proud of, once continuation is ensured, innovators turn their attention to the next new idea. The College, while strong in planning and implementation, is less successful in completing the cycle with comprehensive evaluation and re-evaluation. Instead, the College tends to move in arcs, at times leaving a new program at the apex of the arc without providing the necessary support to complete its full implementation through evaluation.

This trend can be beneficial in that these programs either continue until there is universal acknowledgement that they are no longer beneficial, or, if they have faded, may be revisited and incorporated into a new and stronger program. An example of the latter is the current effort to create an interdisciplinary degree. This is a similar concept to one created many years ago, the Center for the Humanities, which was envisioned as an interdisciplinary grouping of courses and faculty in a physical space. While the new interdisciplinary degree will not occupy a physical location, the revitalization of the concept demonstrates that constantly searching for ways to improve institutional effectiveness may include reformulating an earlier idea.

Another illustration is the former Environmental College (truly an idea before its time) conceived as sections of identified courses in which environmental topics would be the vehicle for conveying the content. For example, an identified Freshman Reading and Composition (English 1) section might use environmentally-focused literature as the basis for the course. This aggregation of courses hung in the arc for a long time until sustainability gained traction and grant opportunities led to the development of the Center for Environmental and Urban Studies, a new sustainability program, and inclusion in the interdisciplinary degree. These newer programs have a stronger structure than the Environmental College and have been institutionalized as a result the general public’s greater awareness of and commitment to environmental sustainability. However, it is unlikely that the new programs would have emerged as quickly or garnered such strong support had the College not had previous experience in this area with the Environmental College. The former Women’s College is another program which hung in the arc for some time, losing traction, but which has been reinvigorated by its inclusion in the new interdisciplinary offerings.

Identifying needs is part of most discussions that takes place at the College. The dialogue generally continues for some time as many ideas are considered and discarded. Once a project or strategy reaches the planning stage, planners have already determined the best approach, assume it will be not only successful but continued. Once success is evident, the planners are ready to move on to addressing the next need. To some extent, state systems and structures contribute to this pattern through seesawing funding cycles, budget reductions, and the constant stream of new grant opportunities, which foster swings in planning cycles as the College continues to search for funding sources to maintain and improve institutional effectiveness. However, the College recognizes the need for maintaining a balance between its innovation and openness to new ideas, which result in program improvements, and the need to complete the evaluation cycle to document effective practices and ensure that these become institutionalized.

While in theory this ensures wide support, the reality is that during times when the budget is threatened, new initiatives and special programs tend to be the first targeted for reduction or discontinuance by various members of the college community. This is not necessarily unwelcome as it is a catalyst for discussion and evaluation of program quality and impact and often results in strengthened programs that continue to receive support.

Since the last accreditation review, one planning process in particular—full-time faculty hiring—has evolved to become more collaborative and effective. The process includes consideration of the budget, budget projections, the number of vacated faculty positions and data-supported enrollment trends, all of which are reviewed to establish the maximum number of new full-time faculty hires possible. Departments submit new hire requests using a template that asks for specific supporting documentation. A committee composed of faculty (appointed by the Academic Senate) and academic administrators follows previously-agreed upon guidelines and measures as they evaluate each request and create a list that prioritizes the top requests (by discipline), which is then forwarded to the Superintendent/President for final approval. Salaries and benefits account for approximately 85 percent of the college budget, and most salaries are governed by contractual negotiations, with faculty accounting for the greatest percentage. This process begins with budget-planning and is one of the closest links between planning and allocation of resources.

Overall, the linking of planning and budgeting at the micro level is effective but is less so at the macro level. The budget reflects the College's commitment to its goals, and the budget-planning process, though not systematic, includes input from all the planning processes. The bulk of the budget rolls over from year to year and increases or decreases according to external factors. The large percentage of the budget allocated for salaries and benefits reflects the importance the College places on its faculty and staff and recognizes that people and their commitment to the institution ensure the success of programs and make Santa Monica College the excellent institution that it is. After maintaining existing commitments and obligations, there is little discretionary funding left to allocate. Of significance is the inclusion, beginning in 2007-2008, of a designated reserve of \$200,000 for three years to support the Global Education Initiative, an initiative supported by the entire college community, evidence that the College plans for and supports its Mission, Vision, Values and Goals.

Because available discretionary funds in the regular college budget are limited and variable, the more deliberative and complete processes are most evident in categorically-funded projects and programs. Even in years of strong funding, few funds are available for new efforts, so categorical sources are the first that planners look to when considering new initiatives. Categorical sources require deliberative and measurable accountability before multi-year funding is continued, so grant-funded programs typically include effective practices and measures. However, the College recognizes the need to include greater assessment and evaluation of all its programs and processes and has begun looking to the effective practices included in categorical requirements to better inform measures of institutional effectiveness.

Effective planning also requires the use of institutional data. The College uses indirect measures of student learning, or achievement measures, to identify institutional priorities and assess its

progress toward meeting institutional effectiveness measures. For example, the College regularly reviews and responds to the measures set forth in the Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges, the Basic Skills Initiative baseline data, and the Vocational and Technical Education Act Core Measures. Such indirect measures of student learning provide insight about areas in need of improvement. For example, in examining results of the above-mentioned measures, performance in the areas of basic skills and career and technical education was found to be less than desired. As a result, the Strategic Planning Task Force developed two initiatives that address these areas. These two initiatives were accepted by the Board, and resources to strengthen these areas have been allocated. Categorical funds (including those from the Basic Skills Initiative and various career technical education grant-funded projects) are sought and used to support important initiatives.

### ***Evaluation—IB.3***

In an institution that encourages innovative thinking, ideas for new approaches, strategies and programs percolate upward from all areas of the College. This further encourages all members of the college community to assume ownership of the process, implementation and results. Most strategies and programs are developed based on a perceived need, and funding is often first sought through grants, which in turn encourages a clear articulation of the need. Thus, the College is particularly strong in the areas of creative thinking and problem-solving, articulating needs, and proposing strategies and programs to meet those needs. However, the planning process needs to go beyond articulating needs and developing response strategies. Instead, the identified needs should be effectively linked to activities and outcomes and the assessment/evaluation process more thoroughly addressed as an integral part of pre-planning rather than post-implementation. In fact, assessment/evaluation/research outcomes need to be framed at the beginning of project planning to obtain the most valuable information and data. Historically, the Office of Institutional Research has been expected to provide the necessary support and data after the fact, without having had the necessary input regarding how the outcomes are framed or the data collected.

Santa Monica College is a process-oriented institution that has historically relied on effective practices to determine new directions and programs. While this has resulted in a number of successful endeavors, it rarely includes an implementation process with adequate pre-planning or the development of an assessment plan that incorporates effective measures of outcome. The College tends to embrace promising ideas, implement them, celebrate success and then look backward to document the success.

One way this is being addressed is through the establishment of stronger connections between the Institutional Research functions and resources to program development and implementation efforts. In this way, outcomes assessment and systematic evaluation are addressed up front and connected to institutionally-based processes already in place.

To ensure that decision-making is broad-based and effective, data need to be generated that provide information at the student, course, program/department and institutional level. Each level requires the user to understand the parameters of the data provided and their possible

interpretation. Despite the broad need for training in the effective use of data, a number of faculty are already highly proficient and would prefer a work order approach to getting data (i.e., submission of highly specific requests). Ideally, this would be possible, but to serve the needs of the wider college community, the Office of Institutional Research has concentrated on providing a series of self-service solutions and a series of standardized reports. The office provides training on research methods, data collection and interpretation, and use of results. Additionally, it offers training in developing high-quality, assessable outcomes statements, systematic inquiry, and the cyclical assessment processes.

Broad institutional data are available on the Institutional Research website including college reports (e.g., equal opportunity survey results, transfer, program completion and graduation reports, and persistence reports), enrollment reports, and grade distribution. These reports are accessible to anyone through the College's website and are invaluable to departments and programs preparing their program review reports and for use in grant applications.

Other reports that are regularly generated and used by academic departments in decision-making include:

- **The Instructional Management System (TIMS)** report, which provides grade distribution, retention, and success rates by course and for each faculty member.
- **High Enrollment Classes**, produced at census, which lists every class with enrollments greater than or equal to the assigned maximum class size.
- **Low Enrollment Classes**, produced at census, which lists every class with fewer than 18 students or less than 50 percent of assigned maximum class size.
- **Highest Enrollment**, which lists courses with the largest enrollment across all disciplines.

These reports are produced every semester and used by the Office of Academic Affairs and the instructional programs to plan the class schedules, maximizing classroom usage to meet current student need.

Data presented in a user-friendly format that accurately reflects the points being addressed are crucial to planning and evaluation processes. The presentation of data and their meaning can influence interpretation and decision-making. There has been a tendency for college reports to be presented in a basic printout format, and consideration needs to be given to enhancing format, presentation, and specific aggregations of data to render reports more comprehensible to users. In addition, training in the appropriate application and interpretation of the reports will enhance their utility. The first step in this process has been completed: The Instructional Management System (TIMS) report is now provided electronically to the college community.

The level of data available for decision-making has been limited. However, a more formalized structure for capturing and analyzing data is under development, which, when completed, will

help ensure that requests by departments for specific data for use in evaluating learning outcomes are met and data are made available to aid in decision-making processes.

Historically, the College has produced many standardized reports that have provided information used for decision-making. However, most reports are not available in electronic form and cannot be queried by individual faculty or staff members. There is a commitment to establish a regular timeline and to prioritize the reports made available in these formats. Until recently, the Office of Information Technology has directed its efforts to the Oracle upgrade/portal technology implementation. In the interim, the Office of Institutional Research has created a series of reports as PDF files and posted them on the College's research website.<sup>ix</sup> It is expected that reports such as grade distribution, successful course completion rates, retention rates, faculty workload, enrollment demographics by program, and full-time equivalent students by courses and programs, will be among the first reports and databases to become accessible through web-based architecture. This will allow members of the college community to regularly query and examine programmatic information, thus facilitating program improvement and effectiveness.

The strengthened Office of Institutional Research intends to play a substantive and meaningful role in assisting the institution, faculty and staff in understanding assessment processes, identifying and defining key measures for reports and databases, and facilitating the use of assessment results to achieve programmatic and institutional improvements. Previous staffing inconsistencies in the research area have resulted in the College's program staff designing their own surveys and attempting to gather relevant data. While varying levels of ability among departments to construct appropriate measures may, at times, have led to some questionable interpretations or assumptions, this desire for data and ways to assess program effectiveness demonstrates a broad-based institutional commitment to evaluation aimed at program improvement.

Qualitative data that emerged after the 2003-2004 budget reductions proved to be an unexpected catalyst for change and were eventually supported by quantitative assessment data. One impact of the 2003-2004 reductions was the larger than usual percentage of new students who enrolled as the College began re-growing. Along with the dramatic growth in numbers of new students came the realization that many were in need of basic skills preparation. Corroborating results emerged while, under a directive by the then-Superintendent/President, the College was already in the process of implementing mandatory skills assessment for all new students. Assessment testing validated the initial observations. These results emerged at nearly the same time as the implementation of the statewide Basic Skills Initiative in 2004-2005, and the subsequent statewide movement toward mandatory assessment—a convergence exemplifying how the College often recognizes and addresses trends early on.

Evaluation activities that assess the degree to which the College's evaluation and planning processes are effective across the institution are needed. For example, the College has expended tremendous effort creating a culture of learning and an infrastructure for the development and assessment of student learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes. When initially developed, these processes existed with little or no assessment of the quality of the proposed outcome statements, measures of assessment, or assessment plans. Thus, a key development

area is a systematic approach to assessing processes to answer questions about how effective the institution has been in developing capacity among program staff to execute a student learning agenda; what system allows the College to do so; and how effective the program review process is for the participants.

Indirect measures of student learning, or achievement measures, are used to identify institutional priorities and assess progress toward meeting institutional effectiveness measures. The College regularly reviews and responds to the measures set forth in the Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges, the Basic Skills Initiative baseline data, and the Vocational and Technical Education Act Core Measures. These indirect measures of student learning provide insight about areas in need of strengthening. For example, in examining performance in the areas of basic skills and career technical education, it was discovered that the College does not perform as well as it would like in critical areas of student success such as course and program completion. As a result, these two areas have been prioritized through the strategic initiatives developed by the Strategic Planning Task Force and approved by DPAC and the Board of Trustees in 2007. Because these are also statewide-supported initiatives, categorical funds administered through the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office support both basic skills and career technical programs. These serve as additional examples of identification of college needs that reflect broader statewide needs and the College's ability to avail itself of funding opportunities.

The Office of Institutional Research has produced a series of rubrics designed to ensure that the College moves toward continuous quality improvement regarding development of student learning outcomes at the course, program and institutional levels and their assessments. These rubrics include those for assessing:

- the quality of outcome statements developed by programs and units at each level of assessment;
- the quality of a program or unit's assessment plan; and
- the authentic engagement or overall quality of a program or unit's implementation of outcomes assessment.

These rubrics are being discussed institutionally as a mechanism for achieving continuous quality improvement that is systematic and grounded in utilization-focused evaluation theory. Given the College's decentralized approach to outcomes assessment, the rubrics will be critical to ensuring the same standards of quality exist across the institution.

In its role as the primary participatory structure, DPAC is developing more formalized tools to ensure that all constituencies not only understand and know what to expect through participation in its processes but also to help the college community understand the connection between processes. For example, maps and diagrams of the governance structure and how planning between the DPAC planning subcommittees and other bodies connects and flows have been developed (see Standard IVA). This led to recognition that, for planning to flow smoothly, a master planning calendar needed to be created to ensure all recommending bodies understood



how and when their recommendations would be considered. It has taken some time for DPAC and the various recommending bodies to recognize that accepting recommendations in isolation or outside the larger context (e.g., budget implications) hampers planning in the long-run. The 2009-2010 objectives for the *Master Plan for Education* annual update, which are an outgrowth of recommendations from various committees, now include a budget narrative and references to program review, if appropriate. Thus, the college planning processes are moving toward a more comprehensive and transparent structure that will enable members of the college community to better understand the College's planning processes.

***Plan—IB.3***

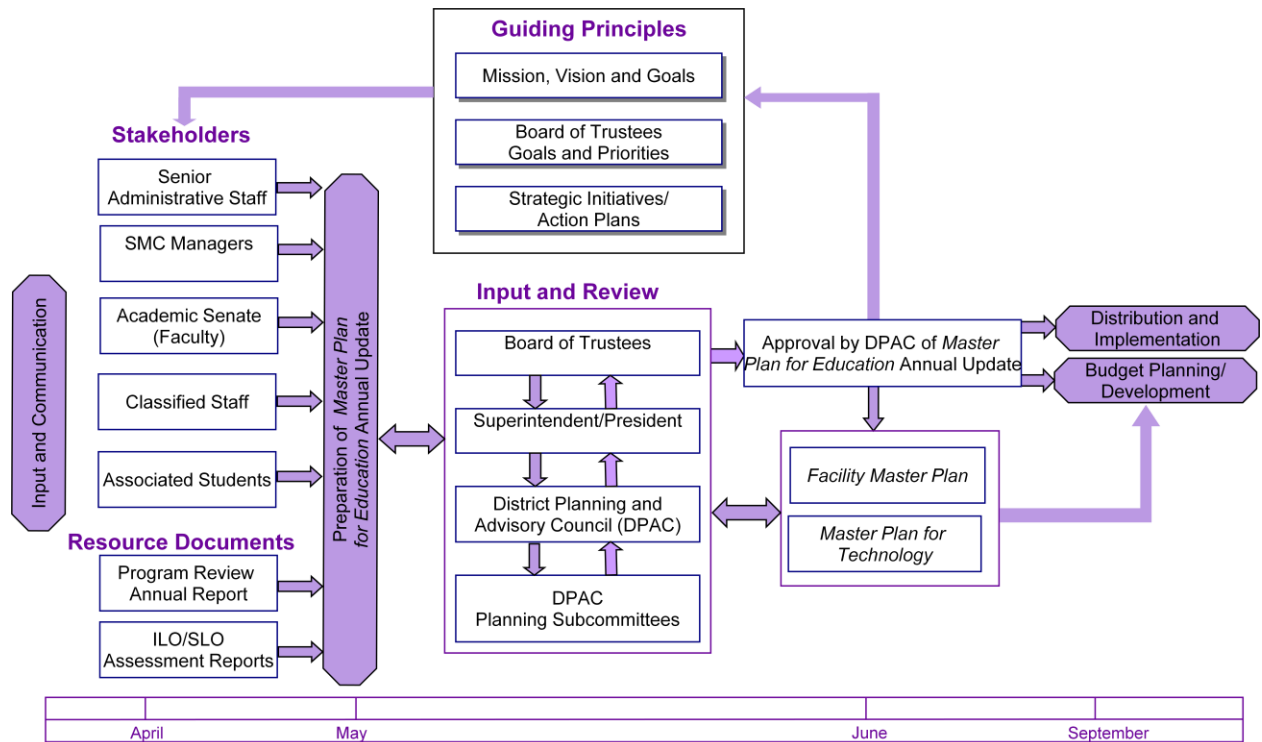
- The Office of Institutional Research will expand training modules and assessment workshops to ensure all areas of the College are proficient in the use and interpretation of data to inform self-evaluation and decision making.
- The College will integrate assessment and evaluation into the process for planning, developing and implementing new programs from their inception.
- The College will provide appropriate support to enhance the ability of the Office of Institutional Research to gather and analyze data and provide training in its use.

***IB.4 The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allows necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.***

***Description—IB.4***

The planning processes used to identify Santa Monica College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals are similar to the planning process utilized on an annual basis to identify college needs and concerns and subsequent objectives and activities. As shown in Figure IB-1, DPAC is central to the College's planning processes, but it relies on input from many different groups in making its recommendations to the Superintendent/President. In addition, there is substantial overlap among the College's various planning subcommittees, which ensures the participation of all constituencies.

The college community has ample opportunity to participate at all levels. In accordance with the Brown Act, all Academic Senate joint committee and DPAC planning subcommittee meetings are open to the public. In addition, DPAC planning subcommittees include representatives from all college constituencies including students, and any member of the college community may participate. In some instances, individuals are appointed or elected to serve on a particular committee; in other instances, individuals volunteer to serve.



**Figure IB-1: Master Plan for Education Annual Update Process**

The College’s planning process, as outlined above, includes representation from the entire college community; indeed, each committee has minimum membership requirements. Moreover, through the activities of these committees, specifically those of the Professional Development Committee related to Opening Day and Institutional Flex Day, the entire college community has the opportunity to participate.

Broad involvement is critically important to the College, as evidenced by the strife the college community experienced at the time of the last accreditation review. In creating DPAC, the College recognized that whatever the process, transparency in planning, decision-making, and resource allocation was imperative. The most effective method for achieving transparency was to develop a structure that mandated participation by all of the College’s primary constituencies, in particular faculty, classified staff, administrators and students. DPAC was developed with the expectation that it should include two members from each of the groups that comprise the college community. In addition, each of the five DPAC planning subcommittees has formal membership requirements to include faculty, staff, students and administrators.

Furthermore, the Academic Senate joint committees are responsible for promoting an inclusive process that guarantees broad involvement. Each of the joint committees must include one administrator for every two faculty members; typically, there are three administrators and six faculty members on these committees. Due to time constraints, classified staff are not required to sit on Academic Senate joint committees, but they are welcome to attend, with prior approval

from their supervisors. In addition, interested students are invited to attend most committee meetings. The college initiatives, *ad hoc* forums designed to address current issues, fall outside of both DPAC and the Academic Senate joint committees. At this time, there are two district committees: the Basic Skills Initiative and the Global Council, both of which include faculty, administrators, classified staff and students.

Committee membership changes each year, allowing every member of the college community the opportunity to participate. The Superintendent/President, through the vice presidents, assigns the administrators whose assignments are rotated every year or two. The Academic Senate President collaborates with committee chairs to recruit faculty, including those recently hired, each year. The Academic Senate assigns faculty to the committees, while classified staff are assigned by the leadership of the classified employees' bargaining organization (California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 36). The Dean, Student Life collaborates with the Associated Students leadership to recruit students to participate on these committees. As mentioned in Standard IA, the Associated Students now offers stipends to students who participate on committees. This incentive has resulted in consistent attendance and active participation on the part of the student representatives. This commitment to collegewide participation and broad-based representation helps ensure that all concerns and points of view are heard.

While it is sometimes tempting to maintain the same committee membership year after year, and to some extent desirable for consistency, continuity, and historical sense, doing so would decrease the likelihood of broad-based involvement and increase the risk of committees losing touch with the wider college community. Therefore, it is expected that, each year, committee membership will change to some degree. Some classified staff have voiced concern over the lack of opportunity to participate on committees, stating that some individuals who volunteer to participate are not selected by the CSEA leadership. Moreover, committee chairs who have attempted to recruit classified staff to their committees have been informed by CSEA leadership that they may not do so without CSEA approval.

During the most difficult days of the 2002-2003 budget crisis, with only a short time in which to act, the lack of full participation in college discussions left many believing that the culture of engagement had been repudiated in the decision-making process to reduce the budget. At that time, the College had a reserve of less than \$1 million and hard choices were made to maintain financial stability. While it is unlikely that broad-based dialogue would have changed the outcome, the absence of dialogue, together with the sense that the budget process was not transparent and therefore not credible, fomented most of the antagonism that permeated the college community during the last self-study.

Now, six years later, even though the College again faces significant budget problems, the culture and attitudes across the college community are markedly different. While the College faces a structural operating deficit, as of June 30, 2009, it has rebuilt the reserve to over \$19 million (including designated reserves), giving the College the time needed to engage in broad-based dialogue and deliberate decision-making. The process is still certain to entail hard choices, especially with 85 percent of the general fund budget consumed by salaries and benefits, leaving

little room to maneuver. However, the budget process is perceived to be far more transparent than it was six years ago with few questioning the veracity of the figures, which are made available to all. This enormous improvement is attributable to the creation and work of DPAC (especially its Budget Planning Subcommittee), the meaningful participation of the entire campus community, and the tireless efforts of the administration and Fiscal Services staff to disseminate and clearly communicate budget updates and developments.

Even with the clearly defined Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements—statements to which the College is thoroughly committed—budget and resources significantly impact the setting of priorities and decision-making. Faced with the latest budget crisis, in November 2008, the Academic Senate recommended that a budget summit meeting be held before the end of the semester. In lieu of a summit, the Superintendent/President convened a special meeting of DPAC and directed the group to develop recommendations for a budget plan that would include a reserve of at least \$15 million at the end of the fiscal year and, as mentioned above, the College has achieved that goal with a reserve exceeding \$19 million as June 30, 2009. Prior to the meeting, the Superintendent/President sent a memo to the college community in which he outlined an interim plan that listed six areas for expenditure reductions, and indicated that, as of that time and at present, no layoffs were being considered. These assurances allowed for calm and rational deliberation, unlike that which had taken place in 2003-2004, when the reserve was minimal and cuts had to be made quickly.

Although the college community recognizes the severity of the current budget situation and understands that the College is still in a mode of deficit-spending, it is not a simple problem for the DPAC Budget Planning Subcommittee to develop and recommend strategies designed to help the College bring income and spending in line. All meetings of the DPAC Budget Planning Subcommittee and other related groups fall under the Brown Act, which can sometimes hamper genuinely open dialogue and hinder compromise. While individual representatives may acknowledge broader needs and issues, the open forum places pressure on them to maintain a constituency-based position where less public discussions might lead to more willing compromise.

There are never enough resources to support all of the plans, needs or innovations proposed by the College's faculty, staff, students and community partners. Therefore, the College continually develops strategies for securing alternative sources of support. While many are inclined to define resource development as the acquisition of additional cash to support college programs and services, it is, in fact, much more than that. Resource development includes:

- grant development (local, state, and federal/public and private);
- private contributions (individual and organizational);
- endowment building (restricted and unrestricted);
- product and material donations including technology;
- volunteerism;
- in-kind services;

- state and federal legislatively-approved appropriations;
- fee-based services;
- shared resources including co-located services; and
- community partnerships.

This broadened definition of resource development recognizes that many goals can be accomplished without additional cash by building partnerships with other groups, both internally and externally, and by capitalizing on their individual strengths to the benefit of all.

Due to the complexity of the College's resource development efforts, no single office oversees all of these initiatives; indeed, the institution's effectiveness would be reduced if this were the case. The best fund-raising and friend-raising occurs at the program level through staff contact with interested contributors. Thus, many of the resources listed above, specifically volunteers, in-kind services, donations and shared resources, are generated by program staff as they connect with their community partners. The career technical education advisory boards are ideal for generating much of this valuable support. Local support of this type is essential as the College pursues larger cash contributions through grants or private gifts. An example of the partnerships between advisory boards and college programs is a successful grant application submitted by the Nursing Program. Aided by the active support of its advisory board, the Nursing Program secured funding through a new federal program entitled the Community Based Job Training Program. Santa Monica College was one of just 70 programs funded through this program across the state.

In addition, the College has formal entities assigned responsibility for specific functions regarding resource development. These include:

- **The Grants Office**, which oversees grant development and management (both pre- and post-award functions);
- **The Office of Workforce and Economic Development**, which develops and implements contract education and fee-based training, generating revenue through local business and industry;
- **The Santa Monica College Foundation**, which solicits private contributions from individuals and organizations in support of annual giving, planned giving, endowment building, special events and capital needs;
- **The Santa Monica College Associates and General Advisory Board**, college support groups which focus on community building and friend raising; and
- **The Governmental Relations Office**, which oversees institutional relationships with local, regional and national government offices.

Each of these offices successfully engages in activities that support the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals and strategic planning initiatives. (See Evaluation IB.4 below for a detailed description of these functions.)

***Evaluation—IB.4***

Throughout this narrative, the College has demonstrated the results of its implemented plans, from the small to the large and from the “must do” to the “wouldn't it be nice.” One of its most significant results is the creation of an environment that is collegial, supportive, and committed to moving forward in a positive manner. It was essential that the College create this environment through a planning process built on transparency, inclusiveness, and open and honest communication. It is the College's greatest achievement in the last six years, and as a result of this success, the institution has been able to move forward collaboratively on proposals and innovations that have resulted in additional accomplishments for the betterment of students, programs, and the greater college community.

A transparent, institution-wide planning process has raised awareness among the college community of the direct connection between planning and resource allocation. While developing annual objectives and action plans is a pleasant task, prioritizing objectives and activities, a necessary step due to the College's perennially insufficient resources, can be problematic. Despite the fact that the College has faced economic uncertainty for most of this accreditation period, representatives from the college community remain reluctant to make difficult decisions between funding pay increases and funding services needed to support student success. Indeed, the problem is complex and multifaceted.

However, progress is being made. The DPAC Budget Planning Subcommittee was recently directed to identify potential cost savings to respond to the College's operating deficit and the growing statewide budget crisis. This required the committee to prioritize competing concerns and interests. Input was solicited from the various members of the college community represented and the committee worked as a whole to develop a working list of potential budget reduction recommendations that were reasonable in scope and resulted in meaningful cost savings.

In addition, the annual update to the *Master Plan for Education* is used as a tool for allocating resources; however, there exists disparity between the timeline for developing the budget and the timeline for completing the *Master Plan*. In the past, the budget was often finalized prior to the completion of the *Master Plan*, making it difficult to modify the traditional resource allocation plan if a pressing need appears within the *Master Plan*. This is being addressed through DPAC and the Budget Planning Subcommittee to ensure that the College is allocating resources where they are most needed, especially during periods of budgetary shortfalls.

Since the last accreditation, the College has experienced several periods of economic downturn, which have prevented new initiatives from receiving the needed support. Thus, the College has turned to its resource development offices to identify alternative sources of support. One area of particular success has been in acquiring local, state and federal grant monies. The College's

Grants Office, established less than 15 years ago, has raised millions of dollars in support of college initiatives. Noteworthy awards include four Title III (Strengthening Institutions)/Title V (Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions) grants from the US Department of Education. These institution-wide grants are designed to strengthen the institution and may be used to support whatever the college community deems most essential based on a comprehensive review of institutional needs and weaknesses. Many institutions, including Santa Monica College, are now tying the focus of these grants to the results of the accreditation process. The College has received four of these grants over the past 10 years, for nearly \$8 million, demonstrating its ability to provide quality programs and services and attesting to its reputation for excellence at the national level.

In addition, the Office of Workforce Development has been successful in securing grant monies as well as in procuring fee-based contracts and services. Over the past 10 years, this office has received numerous grants and contracts, at a value of nearly \$5 million. Of equal importance, the Office of Workforce Development forms close relationships with business and industry and produces training packages that serve as building blocks for future degree and certificate offerings, examples of which include emerging programs in logistics and green technology. The College offers contract training and not-for-credit coursework in both areas and has collaborated with instructional faculty to develop for-credit degree and certificate options, including transfer track possibilities. The development of career pathways ensures that the College addresses the needs of employers and current and future employees. The relationships developed often yield additional resources, including cash, which enable the College to pursue new and/or enhanced initiatives, otherwise not possible.

Private fundraising has also proven successful over the years. While the Santa Monica College Foundation oversees the process, its staff work closely with program staff to solicit funds as close to the source as possible. A shining example of the success of this strategy has been the Emeritus College. The Emeritus College has long been effective at fundraising, largely from within its own student population, to support the program. Because Emeritus College classes are noncredit, students do not pay fees and many of the students donate the amount they would have paid as an expression of their satisfaction with course offerings and positive interactions with staff. Over the years the Emeritus College has raised several million dollars in donations and endowments, which have helped to furnish and equip the recently-purchased new building that houses the program.

The Eli and Edythe Broad gift of \$10 million to establish an endowment to support programming at the Broad Stage is yet another example of successful fundraising. The Broad Stage was developed with support from the local community and Santa Monica College alumni, among them, actor Dustin Hoffman. As the College does not have the resources necessary to operate a world-class performing arts center, especially under the current statewide economic crisis, the Eli and Edythe Broad endowment will enable the College to maintain it for the benefit of students and the local community for many years to come.

The Santa Monica College Foundation raises restricted and unrestricted funds to support college programs and faculty in a number of ways that enhance student learning. To date, the

Foundation has solicited earmarked endowments that support nine faculty Chairs of Excellence, a unique program which awards a \$15,000 stipend over three years to an individual faculty member to pursue excellence in his/her field with the goal of improving student success. Currently, there are Chairs of Excellence in the following areas: art, business, earth science, life science, music, nursing, performing arts, philosophy and social science, and physical science. The Foundation also utilizes its unrestricted funding from the annual giving President's Circle to distribute Margin of Excellence awards. These are mini-grants of up to \$5,000 that faculty or programs can request to enhance teaching and learning (e.g., equipment or other forms of programmatic support not covered by the College's budget). Direct impact on or involvement with students is a top priority. For example, in 2008, 19 awards totaling \$75,000 were awarded to support a variety of projects such as osteometric devices (used for measuring bones) for Earth Science, skull replicas and an electrocardiogram machine for Life Science, a sound system for Dance, fitness equipment for Kinesiology, and a microdermabrasion machine (used for facials) for Cosmetology. Finally, in addition to managing donations and endowments for specific college programs, the Foundation manages and distributes nearly 500 student scholarships every year. The amount of the scholarships varies depending on the income generated by the various endowments, but even in the recent low income-generating years, the annual total amount of scholarships awarded to students has averaged around \$350,000.

The Office of Governmental Relations also plays a key role in identifying alternative sources of support, specifically with regard to generating community support for three successful bond measures since 2004. In addition, this office helps to ensure that the College's relationship with the local municipalities is of mutual benefit, which has been particularly important as the College has expanded its physical size and requested additional services from both the cities of Santa Monica and Los Angeles. An example of this includes the acquisition of the Bundy site and the development of infrastructure to support additional students at that facility. By working with the cities, the College has been able to generate additional public dollars to support increased capacity at this site.

Finally, the Santa Monica College Associates and General Advisory Board build bridges with the local community, engaging local residents in campus activities and inviting them to become active members in the college environment. Specifically, the Santa Monica College Associates raise funds for faculty-led initiatives including the Distinguished Lectures Series. This friend-raising arm has helped to expand the impact of college services to non-traditional student groups and widen the College's resource base.

Each of these resource development initiatives works together with the College's various planning functions to identify and address the best strategies for securing resources for unfunded projects. In doing so, they are essential participants in the planning and resource allocation processes.



***Plan—IB.4***

- The College will develop a more formalized structure and a template to be applied to the proposal and resource allocation processes to document and track measures of institutional effectiveness, including:
  - Anticipated Outcomes
  - Measurability and Proposed Assessments
  - Resources and Sustainability

***IB.5 The institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.***

***Description—IB.5***

Santa Monica College provides members of the college community and outside parties with information documenting the College's effectiveness including data reported to both federal and state agencies, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, California's Accountability Reporting in the Community Colleges, The Instructional Management System, and the State's Basic Skills Initiative. In addition, to address internal needs, the Office of Institutional Research posts evaluative data on its website, including data on student enrollment by department, demographics, and student achievement.<sup>x</sup>

However, documenting assessment results via quantitative data is only one way in which the College affirms and communicates quality assurance. The College also tells its story through a more qualitative assessment of its effectiveness. Qualitative data collected by the College include student success stories; faculty and program awards and updates; fundraising accomplishments; business and industry satisfaction regarding the quality of college services; and testimonials of student satisfaction.

In addition, many of the College's programs collect a variety of assessment data unique to their programs to document program effectiveness. This is particularly true of programs that are categorically or grant-funded by external sources. These programs collect standard usage and attendance data as well as student achievement data, disaggregated by student demography, including race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, first-time college student, and enrollment status. Many of these programs engage in affective studies to determine the impact of their efforts on student achievement. In nearly all cases, this includes a survey of student satisfaction, self-report data regarding attitude and behavioral changes, and information regarding intent. In many cases, these data are used to make program improvements thus increasing effectiveness for the next cohort of students.

Besides the numerous reports and information disseminated to internal constituencies, the College is unique in providing a significant amount of information to external constituencies. The College's outstanding marketing efforts are rooted in communicating institutional effectiveness. In fact, the College has done a remarkable job of communicating its many successes.

Santa Monica College engages in an aggressive marketing campaign that highlights institutional effectiveness in achieving its mission and serving its various constituencies, including students, staff and faculty, business and industry, other educational partners, local and regional government and donors. Probably the single most conspicuous fact that communicates institutional quality and effectiveness is the College's consistently high transfer student numbers, which attests to its dedication to maintaining and improving effectiveness and the success of its many programs and services aimed at student success.

The College has initiated one of its most aggressive efforts to achieve recognition as the most successful transfer institution in the state. Through an active, multi-year initiative targeting local/regional media, the College has solidified its place as the top transfer institution in the state. These efforts have not only highlighted the College's success in this area but have yielded increased enrollment, particularly among students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education, and generated increased revenue related to grants and categorical funding. A commitment to disseminating the same message to many sources has helped the College achieve its goals at the student and institutional level. However, this is not the only means by which the College displays its effectiveness.

First and foremost, the College uses traditional media outlets to communicate accomplishments. The College has several offices that contribute to the flow of communication both externally and internally:

- **The Office of Public Information** is responsible for all press releases that detail institutional success of all kinds. In addition, its award-winning, online internal publication, *Missed Information*, highlights the accomplishments of the College's faculty, staff and students.<sup>xi</sup>
- **The Speaker's Bureau** provides insightful and entertaining presentations on a broad variety of subjects. Santa Monica College faculty and staff make themselves available to speak at community venues on wide variety of topics.
- **The Office of Community Relations** supports community organizations (internal and external) and serves as the liaison and public representative of the College, ensuring that the community is aware of the College's many programs and accomplishments.
- **The Marketing Department** produces and coordinates all other media efforts to tell our story, and many of its strategies such as the innovative bus transit campaign "Any Line, Any Time," have been imitated by other institutions.

The importance of these efforts is not always appreciated by all members of the college community, especially during times of financial stress when the cost of these activities may seem excessive to some. However, the offices mentioned above perform an invaluable service to the College by making the institution's excellence known to the wider community.

One popular media outlet is the College's public broadcast radio station, KCRW, for which Santa Monica College has always held the license. Nationally recognized as one of the premier public radio stations, KCRW has a vast and loyal following and today ranks as one of the most important public radio stations in the country. Many of KCRW programmers are local, and the station symbolizes the creativity and artistry representative of the local community. A showcase for its home town of Santa Monica and Santa Monica College, the quality of the programming, combined with multiple daily mentions of the College, provides another venue for communicating the effectiveness of the institution to a wider audience.

Despite the current trend toward communication through technology, print remains a viable medium. For more than 20 years, the College has annually published *The Santa Monica Review*, a critically-acclaimed literary review. *The Standard*, an informal state-of-education report, which covers both Santa Monica College and the Santa Monica/Malibu Unified School District, is published twice yearly by the College and distributed to all residences within the district.

In addition, highlighting student stories and comments in the schedule and on the college website serves to communicate institutional effectiveness. Graduation, opening day and flex day all feature students who have, against all odds, achieved success and serve to inspire the entire college community.

Community outreach, whether sponsored by the College (such as the Santa Monica College General Advisory Board) or through participation in non-college related community organizations, is another effective strategy for disseminating information. The College is an active partner with the community. The College recruits community involvement on several college boards, including the Santa Monica College General Advisory Board, which meets quarterly and receives updates on current and proposed activities, as well as presentations by different programs to build a broader base of understanding about the depth and breadth of college programs and services. In addition, each career technical education program has its own community-based advisory board as do many of the special programs. Community members sit on these committees to help ensure program quality for existing services and determine the direction of future programming.

The Santa Monica College Associates and the Santa Monica College Foundation are also instrumental in disseminating information about the College to the community and garnering support for college programs. Both have an advisory board of community members who contribute financial support to the College and encourage others to do the same. Through the support of these groups, the College is able to offer a number of value-added activities to complement and enhance existing instructional programs. Examples of programs that are possible due to support from the Associates include the Outstanding Speakers Series (focusing on topics in the areas of global citizenship, literacy, science and the environment), the London Stage Shakespeare residency (including master classes for English and Theater, outreach to public schools and public performances), and annual athletic awards.

In addition to advisory boards, the College communicates the quality of the institution by actively involving the local community in its programming. The College serves as a cultural

center for the community, building upon the strength of its instructional programming to develop high quality non-instructional community-based services. The public is invited to participate in a vast array of events on campus, many of which are free-of-charge and directly or indirectly linked to programs that involve students and/or faculty. The Pete and Susan Barrett Art Gallery showcases the work of students, faculty and well-known artists and enjoys regular attendance. This is equally true for both the Photo Gallery and the Emeritus College gallery. Each is located at a different site and all contribute to the College's reputation for high-quality gallery shows.

The Music, Dance and Theatre Arts programs all offer performances, which are well-attended, at a nominal charge to the community. Student performance groups from each program have been invited to perform nationally and internationally and have thus acted as ambassadors for the College and carried its message of quality:

- On two occasions, through the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, Santa Monica College Theatre Arts productions have been selected from regional performances to perform at the Kennedy Center. In fact, the student-written, directed, acted and designed production, *Slavery*, won the festival's playwriting award.
- The Jazz Vocal Ensemble recently won *Downbeat Magazine's* Outstanding College Performance Award in the jazz vocal group category and was honored with a special invitation to perform at the International Jazz Educators Conference in Toronto.
- Santa Monica College dance and music students have appeared as finalists on nationally-televised talent shows such as "American Idol" and "So You Think You Can Dance."
- In October 2008, the College was invited to participate in the 50th anniversary celebration of the Shandong College of Arts, located in the capital of Jinan, China. Santa Monica College students were invited to perform music from the quintessentially American art form of the musical theater in honor of the University's anniversary celebration. The students and the community participants served as global ambassadors for both the College and the community.

In short, there is no better way to demonstrate the quality of the College and its programs than through the participation of its students in national and international events such as these, which not only provide students with invaluable experiences but allow them to be recognized and rewarded for their hard work and achievements.

The Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center was the result of a dream to join college programs with a performance venue that would attract members of the greater west Los Angeles community as well as the college community. In addition to the Music program and Barrett Art Gallery, the site houses the new 500-seat, bond-supported Broad Theatre and a smaller performance venue, the Edge Second Space (used for both teaching and performance). Now in its second season, the theater has received rave reviews for both the venue and the quality of the performances, and the community's feedback regarding this particular use of bond money has been entirely positive. In addition to offering regular performances, the Center provides

educational programs for local schools, engaging children and youth in the arts while connecting these experiences with postsecondary aspirations. The quality of this center and the services and activities it offers were recognized by the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation through a \$10 million endowment gift to support center programming, a remarkable single donation for a community college.

Acting as a resource for the community serves to disseminate information regarding institutional effectiveness as well, and Santa Monica College has a long history of engaging in collaborative efforts with the Santa Monica/Malibu Unified School District including sharing facilities, coordinating the dual enrollment program for high school students and the recent SMMUSD/SMC Collaborative, a new effort to develop joint programs to improve student success. The Young Collegians program, implemented in Summer 2008, targets high school sophomores, providing them with the opportunity to attend college classes on the college campus during the summer. Participants continue to maintain contact with the College through workshops and seminars given throughout the school year, and as high school juniors and seniors, participants concurrently enroll in college classes for part of each school day. Malibu students are geographically too distant from the college campus to take advantage of this program, but dual enrollment classes are offered at Malibu High School. When the College completes its educational center in Malibu, the Young Collegians program will be expanded to include that population.

The College also maintains a close, mutually-supportive relationship with the City of Santa Monica, sharing assessment data and results with city staff in an effort to expand and enhance programming to better address mutual needs and concerns. One result of this relationship has been the contribution of redevelopment money by the City of Santa Monica toward the construction of the new Humanities and Social Sciences building. In addition, the jointly-operated city pool is located on the college campus. Another joint program, which receives support from the Rand Corporation, is the proposed new child care center, which will provide both daycare and a teaching venue for the Early Childhood Education program.

The College and the City of Santa Monica are also both known for their innovative sustainability efforts, some of which are the result of collaboration between the two entities. The College's Center for Environmental and Urban Studies, which also houses the city-supported Sustainable Works project, is one such effort, as is the demonstration garden (side-by-side native and traditional gardens) located on college property. Finally, the Big Blue Bus partnership between the College and the City of Santa Monica ("Any Line, Any Time") is highly successful, offering free public transportation to Santa Monica College students and staff, providing financial resources to the City in support of its public transportation programs, and ameliorating neighborhood complaints about parking problems and traffic congestion. It has been a win-win program that has had a positive impact on the environment and thus supports the stated mission of the College. All of these projects are the direct result of healthy ongoing communication between the College and the City of Santa Monica.

### ***Evaluation—IB.5***

The Offices of Public Information and Marketing effectively coordinate their messages of institutional effectiveness. Proof of their effectiveness in communicating to the public the high quality consistently achieved by Santa Monica College lies in the strong enrollment numbers and remarkable enrollment recovery after the 2003-2004 reductions. Aware of its exceptional transfer success rates, many students travel long distances to attend classes at Santa Monica College.

Even during times of economic hardship, students continue to respond to the College's message by enrolling in ever-growing numbers, often crossing other districts and bypassing other community colleges on their way to Santa Monica College. Their choices are conscious and thoughtful, and many students are pleased to publicly share their reasons for attending the College and tell their personal stories about the faculty, staff and programs that have contributed to their success. Originally placed in the printed schedules, some of these "Spotlight on" success stories are now posted on the front page of the college website, with hundreds more stored in the College's Profiles Archive.<sup>xii</sup>

Enrollment in noncredit programs is consistently strong as well. Opportunities for lifelong learning and personal enrichment abound at Santa Monica College. While many students return to take credit courses in a variety of disciplines, others avail themselves of community education and noncredit options. The college commitment to high quality is evident in student response to these programs. The Emeritus College Program is a prime example. Established over 30 years ago as a means of keeping seniors active, healthy and engaged in the community, the Emeritus College offers an impressive array of noncredit courses.<sup>xiii</sup>

Another example of the College's effectiveness in disseminating information about institutional quality is its ability to generate voter-support for its bond measures. In the last seven years, the College has attempted three bond measures. Before floating each, the College gauged the level of community support, not only for the bond measure but for the College in general. Numerous community-based focus groups were conducted to gather feedback on perceptions of institutional effectiveness as well as to present bond plans. In each case, the results of surveys indicated the College should go forward with the bond measures, and each of them was passed by a wide margin, indicating that the College successfully communicated its effectiveness to the residents of Santa Monica and Malibu.

As the College moves forward with updating the various master plans, community meetings constitute a major forum for communicating the plans and for soliciting feedback. The long-standing college community support group, the General Advisory Board, devotes a portion of each of its meetings to showcasing college programs. Feedback on the effectiveness of this method is uniformly positive and corroborated by attendance rates at these early-morning meetings. The Santa Monica College Associates contributes funding to provide extra activities (guest lecturers, performances, gallery exhibits) to support academic programs. Similarly, successful fundraising depends heavily upon effective communication and positive perceptions of institutional effectiveness. The number and amount of donations to and through the Santa

Monica College Foundation are further evidence that communication with the public has been effective.

Anecdotes related by college faculty and staff members who travel throughout the country provide further evidence that the institution's effectiveness is widely and successfully communicated. Frequently, they recount having met, on their travels, individuals who immediately recognized the name, Santa Monica College, and remarked on its reputation for excellence. Similarly, word of mouth is a particularly effective means of recruitment of international students. On several occasions, the Superintendent/President has publicly shared his memory of having been aware of the College's reputation for transferring students to the University of California system even while he was a high school student in Hong Kong in the 1960s. Given that respected reputations can more easily be destroyed than built, the College's consistent, long-standing reputation for excellence is a convincing qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of communication strategies that are frequently not under the control of the College itself and therefore even more impressive.

***Plan—IB.5***

None

***IB.6 The institution assures the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes by systematically reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle including institutional and other research efforts.***

***Description—IB.6***

The primary method by which the College assesses the effectiveness of its internal planning processes is through dialogue among constituencies. As noted, Santa Monica College has active and committed members of the college community including students, faculty, classified staff, board members and community partners, who regularly voice their concerns regarding how well the institution is operating and progressing. As a result of this ongoing dialogue, since the last self-evaluation, internal planning processes have undergone significant restructuring.

At the time of the last accreditation visit, the overarching planning body, the Collegewide Coordinating Council, poisoned by acrimony over the budget cuts of 2003-2004, had become immobilized. A significant number of college community members distrusted the decision-making and planning processes and, individually and collectively, they voiced their displeasure. This led to the development of DPAC, which replaced the defunct Collegewide Coordinating Council and which now successfully serves as the new overarching planning body. DPAC includes five planning subcommittees (Budget Planning, Facilities Planning, Human Resources, College Services and Technology), which regularly provide input and recommendations. In addition, four Academic Senate joint committees (Curriculum, Program Review, Student Affairs and Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes) provide input and recommendations to DPAC. DPAC also establishes task forces such as the Strategic Planning Task Force (now disbanded),

and the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment Task Force, all of which send recommendations to DPAC.

As in the past, the primary means for assessing the effectiveness of this new process is through dialogue and ongoing feedback from the members of the college community. Currently, evidence of college community satisfaction is not collected formally (e.g., through the use of surveys or focus groups) but informally through spontaneous conversations and during meetings.

In addition to recommendations from DPAC to the Superintendent/President, planning occurs at the program/department level and is communicated to the executive administration and DPAC via several annual planning documents including the *Master Plan for Education* annual update, the *Comprehensive Facility Master Plan* and the *Master Plan for Technology*. The effectiveness of these planning documents is assessed annually at the end of the year when the responsible parties review these documents and identify the status of each objective or activity. Objectives which have not been completed or achieved are modified, included in the next cycle or deemed irrelevant. This review is a collaborative process that comprises all parties involved in the initial identification and development of the objective. During these discussions, the team determines why it was not possible to complete the objective and what changes are needed to either achieve the objective or if the objective should be abandoned.

Resource allocation, or lack thereof, is often a factor in the planning process, particularly with regard to uncompleted and/or revised objectives. Identified needs and desires nearly always exceed resources. However, at this time, the College has not yet perfected the planning process so that it loops back immediately to the source when a plan includes activities that cannot be implemented as designed due to limited resources.

As a result of the dialogue and feedback from the 2008-2009 planning process, the College has identified several areas in need of improvement. To improve the effectiveness of future planning processes, the College is changing the format of the annual update to the *Master Plan for Education* to strengthen the link between planning and the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals. For 2009-2010, all objectives are mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes and provide a narrative that describes any link to an overarching issue raised by the program review process. Extraordinary efforts were made to engage the college community in the recent review and revision of the College's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals statements, and most members of the college community are now familiar with the College's mission. Linking each master plan objective to Institutional Learning Outcomes is yet another way to communicate the institutional commitment to its Mission, Vision, Values and Goals and strengthens the link between the different planning and review processes.

At the end of 2009-2010, the college community will engage in collegewide reflection of the effectiveness of DPAC, the *Master Plan* and other planning activities. The resulting dialogue will undoubtedly yield recommendations for additional changes and/or revisions to address identified weaknesses, oversights and challenges. While some may prefer a static and immutable planning process, this is unlikely to occur. The ever-changing circumstances and evolving needs



of the College can only be adequately addressed through ongoing review, reflection and revision of its planning processes.

### ***Evaluation—IB.6***

Santa Monica College is adept at “random acts of planning” as attested by the continuous development of new programs and strategies. Through the planning process, the College has identified its Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, developed student learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes to demonstrate its effectiveness, and prioritized the strategies by which it will carry out its mission. These strategies are further clarified through the development and implementation of annual master plans. In the end, the degree to which the College achieves its student learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes, as well as its annual performance outcomes, is indicative of the effectiveness of the College’s planning process for fostering improvement.

The effectiveness of the College’s planning processes is best demonstrated through its accomplishments, which include:

- the College’s continued status as the leading institution for transferring the largest number of students to the University of California system;
- the overwhelmingly high number of transfer students to the University of California, Los Angeles who achieve equal or higher success rates at UCLA compared with students who entered UCLA as freshmen;
- ongoing community support for bond measures;
- a Photography program that is rated within the top ten in the country by Bogen Imaging, Inc., a leading international distributor of state-of-the-art photographic accessories;
- employer satisfaction with and active recruitment of Santa Monica College graduates, particularly in traditional career technical fields such as nursing, early childhood education, cosmetology, and entertainment/design technology;
- substantial and consistent support from local, state and federal partners to support the College’s workforce development programs; and
- the Small Business Development Center state award for best performance.

As the College continues to move forward in its efforts to strengthen the planning process, it will develop a more direct means for aligning its accomplishments with the planning process and disseminating these successes to the college community.

Another example of the effectiveness of the College’s process for assessing institutional planning is the progress made toward integrating resource allocation with the planning process. The effectiveness of the link between the new planning process and institutional improvement is

evident in the budget-planning process. The DPAC Budget Planning Subcommittee has matured into a body that comprehensively, rather than selectively, reviews the budget and thoughtfully considers impact and makes recommendations for budget allocations or reductions as the fiscal situation warrants. Although there is still room for improvement, there is greater understanding among the members of the college community of the need for fiscal decision-making based on the institutional needs prioritized by the College rather than on the needs and concerns of the various members of the college community. This understanding has developed out of the dialogue on institutional planning processes that has occurred over the past five years. Given that changes in individual attitudes and behaviors are often the most difficult to achieve, the recent improvement in this area is a notable accomplishment.

Despite these accomplishments, there are still areas in need of improvement, specifically with regard to the timing of the planning process. Many college organizations and committees are engaged in planning or making recommendations. Most are structured around the academic calendar, which largely follows the fiscal calendar. Recommendations or plans issuing from these bodies vary in the effort and resources needed to implement them. Those that can be assumed under current structure and resources are generally forwarded to the appropriate administrative body. Others may require budget or staffing resources for implementation. Until recently, many of these recommendations were deliberated and forwarded based on committee timetables that were not necessarily aligned with other relevant planning processes. The College recently reviewed current committee timetables in an effort to establish a calendar that will better align committee processes and allow recommendations to come forward for consideration in time to include them in setting priorities for resource allocation as appropriate.

***Plan—IB.6***

- The Office of Institutional Research will lead the development of a systematic evaluation process that ultimately moves the institution from program-based assessments to those that are institutional in scope.

***IB.7 The institution assesses its evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, and library and other learning support services.***

***Description—IB.7***

The primary means by which the College gathers evidence about the effectiveness of programs and services is the program review process. All college programs complete the program review process every six years and career technical programs undergo an interim program review every two years. Programs collect both quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of sources and utilize this information to identify areas of strength and weakness. The Office of Institutional Research serves a primary role in ensuring that programs have access to the quantitative data necessary to assess effectiveness (e.g., data focused on enrollment, demographics and student success). However, the programs and departments are responsible for collecting most of the qualitative data themselves. This includes feedback from students, alumni, employers and other

community partners. The Office of Institutional Research has developed training tools to help programs collect, analyze and build upon available quantitative and qualitative data to improve program effectiveness.

Additionally, the College has begun to gather information on course and program student learning outcomes. Information on learning outcomes and support unit outcomes, including the results of assessments, is currently housed within each of the departments or units. Some departments and units have started to use the results of assessments to change their methods for delivering instruction, programs and services. As the College has only recently started to assess outcomes, the process has not been completely formalized. It is anticipated that the Academic Senate Joint Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee will develop and recommend to the College a set of formal expectations for assessment, the type of technological infrastructure needed to carry out assessment effectively, and minimum expectations for the cycle of assessment and the reporting of assessment results.

The Office of Institutional Research also serves as a college resource in developing program evaluations for targeted programs and services such as the Basic Skills Initiative and Student Support Services. The office evaluated several programs including the Title V-funded Math Cooperative and Supplemental Instruction program, the Welcome Center, and the Nursing program. Additionally, the office is developing a longitudinal assessment of student learning outcomes as they relate to the Institutional Learning Outcomes. In Fall 2009, the Office of Institutional Research completed and released an assessment of the effect that the College's counseling courses and student support programs have on student achievement and persistence.

### ***Evaluation—IB.7***

As part of the program review process, departments/programs must describe how they addressed the recommendations given by the committee during the previous review. While, in most cases, the last review probably occurred six years prior, the committee's recommendations generally include both short-term and long-term strategies for fostering program improvement. In the past, many programs would wait until their next program review before beginning to address these recommendations. However, as collegewide awareness of the need for evaluation, program improvement and ongoing assessment and accountability has grown, programs have begun to recognize the need to address these recommendations as soon as possible. Furthermore, they acknowledge that this will yield program improvements that will significantly impact the quality and effectiveness of the services provided to students. As the College further engages in student, program and institutional evaluation, it is expected that program review and other evaluation processes will engage the College in better-connected planning, and greater depth and breadth of review and analysis.

Although assessment of learning outcomes has begun collegewide, the College has set 2012 as its deadline to achieve the level of proficiency with regard to the assessment of learning outcomes, consistent with the Accrediting Commission's expectations. The College has a decentralized outcomes assessment process with departments and various committees (such as the Academic Senate Joint Curriculum and Program Review committees) sharing in various

responsibilities related to the outcomes assessment cycle. Currently, no collegewide technological solution exists to capture and report assessment data and results but the Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee is exploring possible solutions to meet this need. Additionally, understanding of outcomes assessment and the evaluation cycle is uneven among members of the college community, with some departments and units at a more advanced stage than others.

With this in mind, the Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee has developed several objectives for the 2009-2010 *Master Plan for Education* update, which include establishing minimum expectations for the cycle of assessment and evaluation for all instructional, instructional support, and operational programs as well as the identification and recommendation of a technological means for capturing and reporting assessment results. Over the past year, the Office of Institutional Research has also played a substantive role in building evaluation and assessment capacity among faculty and staff by developing and implementing a series of workshops and materials designed to foster systematic and rigorous research and analysis skills among faculty and staff and firmly establish a commitment to the cycle of assessment and improvement.

Additionally, because the College has adopted a decentralized model of outcomes assessment, the Office of Institutional Research has developed a series of rubrics—one for evaluation of outcomes statements, one for evaluation of assessment plans, and one for evaluation of assessment reports—to support institutional quality control efforts and ensure consistency of expectations in the outcomes assessment process. These rubrics are currently being pilot-tested by the Curriculum Technical Review Group and the Student and Institutional Learning Outcomes Committee; the Program Review Committee will also engage in the pilot test process in the near future.

***Plan—IB.7***

- The Office of Institutional Research will lead the development of a systematic evaluation process that ultimately moves the institution from program-based assessments to those that are institutional in scope.

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<sup>i</sup> District Planning and Advisory Council website:

<http://www.smc.edu/apps/pubs.asp?Q=2&T=District+Planning+and+Advisory+Council+%2D+DPAC&P=31>

<sup>ii</sup> UCLA Chancellor Block's speech at Santa Monica College:

<https://deimos.apple.com/WebObjects/Core.woa/BrowsePrivately/smc.edu.1189724802.01189724810>

<sup>iii</sup> Student Equity Plan:

<http://www.smc.edu/apps/pubs.asp?Q=1&T=Data%2C+Reports%2C+and+Links&P=187>

<sup>iv</sup> Program Review Documents: <http://www.smc.edu/apps/Pub.asp?Q=661&B=1>

<sup>v</sup> Vision, Mission, Values and Goals: <http://www.smc.edu/apps/comm.asp?Q=31>

<sup>vi</sup> Bond Oversight Committee: <http://www.smc.edu/apps/pub.asp?Q=546>

<sup>vii</sup> Doherty, Austin, Tim Riordan and James Roth. *Student Learning: A Central Focus for Institutions of Higher Education*. Edited Milwaukee, WI: Alverno College Institute, 2002

<sup>viii</sup> Annual Updates to the Master Plan for Education: <http://www.smc.edu/apps/docs.asp?Q=Projects/31>

- 2004-2005 Objectives and Report on 2003-2004 objectives: [http://www.smc.edu/Projects/31/EduPlan\\_July2004.pdf](http://www.smc.edu/Projects/31/EduPlan_July2004.pdf)
- 2005-2006 Objectives and Report on 2004-2005 objectives: [http://www.smc.edu/Projects/31/EduPlan\\_Sept2005.pdf](http://www.smc.edu/Projects/31/EduPlan_Sept2005.pdf)
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- 2008-2009 Objectives and Report on 2007-2008 objectives: [http://www.smc.edu/Projects/31/MPE\\_2007-08.pdf](http://www.smc.edu/Projects/31/MPE_2007-08.pdf)

<sup>ix</sup> Office of Institutional Research website: <http://www.smc.edu/apps/Comm.asp?Q=187>

<sup>x</sup> Office of Institutional Research Online Evaluative Data:

<http://www.smc.edu/apps/pub.asp?Q=1823&B=1>

<sup>xi</sup> *Missed Information*: <http://www.smc.edu/missedinformation/>

<sup>xii</sup> Student Profile Archives (“Spotlight On”): <http://www.smc.edu/schedules/archives/profiles/>

<sup>xiii</sup> Emeritus College website: <http://www.smc.edu/emeritus/default.htm>

