Merced College Administrative Department
Annual Program Review

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

DEPARTMENT: Information Technology Services


Merced College Mission Statement: In a rapidly changing and increasingly global society faced with great challenges, Merced College faculty, staff, and leadership are committed to continuously improving methods of providing an accessible, affordable, and relevant education that improves the quality of life for all students and their communities.

Recognizing that education is never a mistake, Merced College serves as a gateway to the future by welcoming all students from our richly diverse region. We prepare our students for the next stage of their lives by providing the following:

- A supportive environment
- Committed and caring faculty, staff, and leadership
- Mutually beneficial community partnerships
- State of the art facilities
- The latest technology

Approved by the Board of Trustees on September 6, 2011
The Annual Program Review is conducted by Administrative Services by each department and consists of an analysis of changes within a specific area. It should be submitted or renewed each year in anticipation of budget planning for the fiscal year, which begins July 1 of the following calendar year.

The questions on the subsequent page are intended to assist you in planning for your department. If there is no change from your prior report, you may simply resubmit the information in that report (or any portion that remains constant) from the prior year.

Please include pertinent documents such as service area outcomes assessment reports and data analysis specifically supporting any requests for new staff, facilities or equipment. You are encouraged to use lists, tables, and other formatting to clarify your requests and make them easy for large committees to review quickly. If there may be negative consequences for services, safety or other important concerns if the funding is not provided, please make this known in context.

Please retain this information for your department’s use and submit an electronic copy to Denise Butler (denise.butler@mccd.edu), Administrative Assistant to the Vice President of Administrative Services. She will post the documents to SharePoint for campus wide review.

Components of Program Review

Administrative Department Program Review contains the following sections:

1. Administrative Department Overview
2. Mission Statement
3. Administrative Department Functions
4. Changes to Department
5. Significant Changes
6. Five Year Planning Goals
7. Department plan to advance the strategic direction goals
8. Resource Needs/Financial Deficiencies
9. Report on previous year and current year Service Area Outcomes
10. Identification of Resources Needed to Achieve Goals
1. **Administrative Department Overview**

**INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

The College’s technology infrastructure is a Metropolitan Area Network (MAN), which encompasses connections to Merced County Human Resources, Merced County Sheriff’s Department, Merced County Financial Center, and Merced County Office of Education. All of these links are secure using SSL or SSH encryption to protect sensitive data in compliance with all state/federal regulations. A Wide Area Network (WAN) is also utilized to connect the main campus to the Los Banos Campus and the Business Resources Center (BRC) off-site facilities. These connections are made via an AT&T network technology called Switched Ethernet Service, providing the Merced campus with a port speed of 100Mbps and 50Mbps each to the Los Banos Campus and the BRC. AT&T guarantees a 10Mbps base bandwidth, with latent ports offering burst-up speed of 100Mps for each available port in the network. This provides robust and scalable bandwidth that allows for effective transmission of voice, video, and data throughout the network.

Internet connectivity is provided by our ISP which is the Corporate for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC) and is sufficient to support the Merced campus as well as the two remote centers. Recently, this transport to CENIC has been upgraded with new fiber connections utilizing diverse paths to main campus provided by CVNGBIP (Central Valley Next-Generation Broadband Infrastructure Project) and CVIN.

The District has invested and made several improvements to the network infrastructure in the past 10 years. A major reconstruction effort began in 2008 to improve network access to all District facilities.
In the first quarter of 2008, new fiber optic transmission cables were laid out to connect all buildings on campus to the Main Intermediate Distribution Frame (IDF) located in the Information Technology Services (ITS) building, creating a more reliable and solid base upon which to build all other technology services. Another commitment to technology the district has made is to refresh the core switching, routing, storage, and server infrastructure every 5 years by means of a lease through HP leasing services. The most recent deployment of Ethernet switches has significantly increased network access speeds. The new switching infrastructure provides many buildings with 20 Gigabit Ethernet interconnect speeds between the individual IDFs and the MDF at the core. The main distribution frame, located in the ITS building, is protected from fire, using a Halon system. Unauthorized entry is prevented using a keyless card entry system. Electrical outages are mitigated using a dual redundant UPS system, while prolonged electrical outages require using a generator with sufficient capacity to energize the entire building. Each of the 6 enclosed server and storage racks are redundantly powered, as well as each of the 3 core and distribution relay racks. The core server system is composed of 49 physical servers and 13 network appliances. VMware is used to manage an additional 112 virtual servers. Microsoft Server 2003R2/2008R2/2012R2, VMware 5.x, HP-UX, and Linux comprised the list of server operating systems. Data storage is housed within 3 HP Fiber Channel attached Storage Area Networks (HP SAN EVA6100 – 30TBs; HP SAN EVA4100 – 1.3TBs; HP 3PAR 7400 – 80TBs).

The Business Resource Center (BRC) location has been upgraded to a 10Gbps switching core with 7 physical servers and a 6.5TB Fiber Channel attached SAN. The Los Banos location has upgraded to support 20Gbps Ethernet links between buildings, 10 physical servers, and a 12 TB Fiber Channel attached SAN.

The Ellucian Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system also referred to as the Strategic Academic Enterprise (SAE) system is housed in a distributed environment. The front end enterprise software called Ellucian Colleague runs on a Microsoft Windows Server 2012 operating system. The backend database platform is Microsoft SQL Server 2012 running on a Microsoft Windows Server 2012 operating system.

**WIDE AND LOCAL AREA NETWORKS**

The Merced and Los Banos campuses and the BRC use a state-of-the-art Local Area Network (LAN). The LAN utilizes a redundant core switch connecting all 23 IDF closets across all buildings. The core switch is connected to each switch stack via a new fiber plant consisting of 12 multi-mode pairs and 6 single-mode pairs. The fiber is connected redundantly with the IDF switch stacks utilizing a spanning tree and proprietary bonding protocol. Connectivity between campuses or the WAN was also
upgraded. High-speed optical service was purchased from AT&T originally in 2009 and most recently in 2014 to replace and expand the capabilities provided by legacy T1 based circuits. The connection was also improved with the addition of routing hardware that allows for voice, data, and video transmission, as well as secures wireless services across the WAN. This increased the bandwidth available at the BRC from 3 to 50 Mbps and from 4.5 to 50 Mbps at the Los Banos Campus. The improvements also increased network stability, reliability, and security.

**WIRELESS**

Network improvements made it possible for the District to provide users with wireless network technology access. In 2007, the District deployed wireless network access points to some of the facilities on campus and at off-campus sites. Faculty and staff have the ability to access the same resources they would be able to access through a wired-network computer. Students are able to log in to their portal accounts, and guests may access internet services. With the introduction of the remote services from Colleague (allowing access to WebAdvisor on remote devices) the demand for wireless access is expected to increase substantially. Most recently, in 2014, we have completed replacing the aging IEEE 802.11g based wireless access points with the more technologically current IEEE 802.11n based devices which no longer route traffic through a controller, which had become a bottle neck in the old system. To date, 85 wireless access points have been installed providing faculty, staff, students, and guests secure access to network resources.

The use of wireless is continually monitored by ITS, and the need for additional wireless access points will be addressed according to the demand for these services. The wireless infrastructure was implemented to support the needs of students, staff, faculty and guests as they access network resources using portable devices. The system currently supports IEEE 802.11n Wi-Fi connectivity but is not limited to that technology. Our system supports adding the most current wireless technology as it becomes available. The next access points purchased will support 802.11ac at a similar price point as the 802.11n. The base components are strategically deployed and functional on the Merced and Los Banos campuses and at the BRC. The expected increase in use will test the bandwidth limits of some of these devices. These limitations will decrease as the District proceeds with further upgrades and deployment of additional access points.

**ELLUCIAN COLLEAGUE ERP SYSTEM**

The institution purchased and deployed the Ellucian (formally known as Datatel) Colleague ERP system in 1999. In 2012 Datatel merged with SunGard Higher Education to form Ellucian. Ellucian Colleague is a fully integrated Student and Financial management system used to manage and
administer student records, financial data, and human resources information. Colleague provides users secure, easy access to the information the institution needs on the Merced campus and off-campus centers. WebAdvisor is the online web solution that integrates with Colleague and is geared towards students and faculty. WebAdvisor provides access to critical institutional information featuring convenient single sign-on functionality through the portal. The software also allows students to enroll, check grades and GPA, request transcripts, and pay fees all through the web. Self-Service Student Planning was implemented in December 2013 and is focused on serving the student. Future releases with enhancements are released on a quarterly basis and are based on suggestions we have submitted. Student Planning provides a better advising experience, improves collaboration between counselors and students, is used to plan and register for classes, and has an easy to use interface available via the portal. More Self-Service options are on the way including Student Financial Aid, Finance View, Employee User Profile including time entry and leave requests, Parent Proxy Access, and Graduation Request.

MC4ME PORTAL

The District provides a number of critical technology services including access to the college’s online MC4ME portal. The portal simplifies information exchange for students, faculty, staff, and alumni by giving them a single, virtual doorway to many important academic and administrative resources including email (provided by Microsoft Office 365 cloud services), grades, enrollment information, financial aid advice, W2’s, 1098’s, et cetera. Other portal resources available to students include individual faculty and department web pages containing course-related information critical to their success, access to the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) through which students take online, virtual, and face-to-face courses, and access to the library full-text databases containing scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines as well as 23,000 full text e-books and a scholarly encyclopedia. The current student portal was implemented in January 2010 and has been very effective in providing network resources available to many students.

SECURITY

The security of all students, employees, and guests on campus is one of the District’s more important and critical priorities. ITS continues to support the augmentation and management of many security related systems on campus. Although ITS is not always the primary user of these systems we work closely with the users to ensure the systems are functional and accessible. Such systems include but are not limited to:

- Visiplex Public Announcement System – Campus Police
- Avigilon Video Surveillance System – Campus Police
Cisco Firewalls – ITS
Barracuda Email Firewall – ITS
Sourcefire Intrusion Prevention System – ITS
Symantec Endpoint Protection – All district PCs

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The District provides effective district wide communication channels to enhance productivity through the Portal and the College’s primary web site. The Portal is the main gateway to many network resources. The main site is used to provide a wide spectrum of important information about the District to the community and to all other stakeholders. The District now disseminates information using social media tools such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. These social networking sites are free and available to anyone who wants to sign on and find more information about Merced College. In the Spring of 2015, we embarked upon a project to completely rewrite the public website with an aim of increasing accessibility and expressing the experience of attending Merced College. In support of this project we have contracted a talented web designer and facilitator to complement our newly hired Internet Support Specialist.

The District provides a more robust online communication and collaborations channel in the form of the Microsoft SharePoint 2010 environment. It is planned to upgrade to SharePoint 2013 by the end of the 2015 calendar year. The MC4Me SharePoint site provides a number of information management tools that enhance collaboration and more effective information distribution. We are looking forward to launching the Ellucian Mobile App in the Summer of 2015, to yet increase accessibility to campus resources for students.

ALTIRIS

The institution utilizes a computer management software system that allows for effective management, maintenance, and software updates and upgrades to the 1,700 staff, faculty, and student PCs available in the District. The Altiris product purchased from Symantec gives ITS personnel the ability to manage 40 labs across all three sites directly connected to the LAN. Altiris tracks and inventories hardware and software for each of the District’s computer systems. The product also allows for remote imaging or re-imaging of systems. This is particularly effective in re-imaging the hundreds of computers available in the labs.
SUPPORT

Help Desk services are made available to all staff and students by two employees and tracked by the Altiris software. For Faculty and Staff, the average monthly number of tracked calls is 215. Faculty routinely uses the Help Desk line to route their call for AV support. For students, the average number of monthly tracked incidents is 550.

In addition to onsite support we have enlisted the services of the Campus EAI Blackbelt helpdesk services. This is a hosted service that provides phone based, full service helpdesk support for students afterhours, holidays, and weekends.

Colleague custom programming support is accomplished by one full-time programmer and a senior analyst responsible for a part-time effort in programming. It is very challenging meeting the demand of requests for fixes, changes, and enhancements involving the Colleague system. Additional requests supported include the following: creating ad hoc reports using the Microsoft Report Builder data tool (used for pulling useful information out of the Colleague database), refreshing the Colleague test environment on a quarterly basis (includes cloning the production environment and allowing users to test with current data), installing Colleague software updates on a biweekly rotation (for the test, development, and production environments), assigning Colleague permissions to business processing mnemonics, and configuring Colleague print queues.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

District hardware falls into a number of different categories, including instructional classroom computers, faculty office computers, lab computers, laptops, mobile devices, staff computers and various types of peripheral hardware. An annual inventory is conducted on the current status of computers to plan for appropriate replacements. The Altiris inventory currently shows 296 staff computers, 219 faculty computers, and 1,209 student computers out of a total of 2,177 district computers. A total of 240 network printers and 65 fax machines are also currently active on the network and distributed throughout multiple locations on the Merced campus and on off-campus facilities. Most recently, the District deployed 108 Virtual Desktops to support all labs in Los Banos and 83 Virtual Desktops in support of labs on the main campus.

District software falls into multiple categories, including a variety of software packages for operations and administrative support, student lab computer support, and instructional classroom use. Several of these packages are used by college staff to enhance institutional operation and effectiveness. These software packages available to faculty, staff and students include Microsoft Office and Adobe Creative
Suites, Ellucian Colleague Integrated Student and Financial Management ERP system, Blackboard Learning Management system, and SharePoint, a document collaboration and management system. All of these packages are used extensively throughout the District.

The ERP system, in use since 1999, is frequently used by staff to obtain information and manage financial accounts. Colleague integrates academic and administrative information, allowing for more productivity in processing student information requests (e.g. grades, fees, courses, etc.). Colleague also integrates with other software packages. Perceptive Software, for example, is an enterprise content management product that includes the ImageNow document management package which provides document imaging and workflow that integrates fully and easily with Colleague. Image-Now has improved student services by eliminating the long and tedious process of keying individual student record forms into the Colleague systems.

2. Mission Statement

The mission of Information Technology Services is to support institutional student learning outcomes and strategic planning initiatives of Merced College by providing students, faculty, staff and administrators with the tools necessary to build and maintain a viable learning experience.

3. Administrative Department Functions

The function of the ITS department is to provide overall support for the technology needs of the District.

- The Ellucian Technical team provides student information, accounting information, human resource information, and online registration tools for students
- The Help Desk staff provides assistance to faculty and staff by troubleshooting, diagnosing, resolving, and/or escalating service desk tickets, processes reports and produces documentation
- The Student Helpdesk staff provides information and assistance to students via phone and in-person
- The Web Design area creates and updates site content as well as assisting site contributors
- The Network Services team provides students, faculty and staff with access to critical resources including internet, portal, email, Microsoft Office products, SharePoint, SQL databases, wireless access and data repositories
- The Desktop Support staff installs new computers, maintains computer images, and troubleshoots computer problems
The Telecommunications Support personnel add, change, and maintain all telephone connections

The Student Lab area supports all student labs consisting of imaging computers, maintaining lab software and tracking use of software

The Learning Management System (LMS) educational technology support staff provides setup, assistance, and training for the LMS systems utilized by the District

Due to facility constraints, the ITS staff are located at various locations around campus. This configuration has impeded the department’s efficiency and ability to communicate with peers in a timely manner. In addition, as we look towards growing the department staff a larger facility will be required.

4. Have there been any changes in your department over the last year’s review which has had a significant impact on your program’s goals and/or effectiveness? If so, please explain the changes that have occurred and how the changes have impacted your program.

In 2011 Ellucian and Microsoft developed a partnership. We started the planning and feasibility stages for what would become the new Microsoft SQL Server database platform for Ellucian Colleague in the fall of 2015. The incentives were to invest in our future, migrate off of the Unidata database platform (70 year old technology), become a member of a California Community College consortium and receive a 30% port fee discount, adopt powerful data tools for creating reports, obtain better support and newer technology. In the fall of 2015 we successfully migrated to the new MS SQL Server 2012 database platform. Going forward this change will allow us to keep pace with the ever-changing technology, deal with priorities, and help improve how we solve problems and measure student outcomes.

The District will realize a total savings of $240,000 over the next four years after removing products and services from the Ellucian maintenance agreement deemed impractical. In addition, the contract was renegotiated back to a year-to-year agreement rolling back the Advantage Plus program to the Advantage program saving $25,000 annually. The yearly agreement allows for timely review of products and services and the ability to eliminate unnecessary products, services and expense.

Current technology considerations:

- Mobility
  - New students coming in are expecting it to be part of their experience. Students are constantly connected with something that knows who they are, what they are doing, what their courses are, what their schedules are and how they are doing in school. We are just beginning to leverage student’s mobile devices and the massive compute
capacity walking around our campus. This summer we plan to implement the Ellucian mobile app along with the TouchNet e-commerce implementation.

- **Cloud**
  - A computing paradigm shift. Ellucian is beginning to offer these services and we have begun looking into what they have to offer. We need to determine how we are going to use this technology to do more for the institution.

- **Business Analytics**
  - There is a tremendous amount of interest in data driven decision making. We have already begun thinking about how to get started and the impact data analytics can have on our institution. Using the data tools we already own for free and contracting with a business intelligence mentor, we are scheduled for the week of May 18th to begin working on an analytic system supporting the evaluation of the enrollment management process. We plan to develop a data warehouse, refresh the data in the warehouse, build reports, and design dashboards and key performance indicators as we work towards meeting our service area outcomes.

Although the demand for technology has increased, our staffing level has remained the same. This has resulted in longer deployments and delayed implementations.

5. **Have there been any significant changes in the external environment such as: enrollment, college programs, departmental services or environmental demographics that impact your department?**

Increasing reliance on technology across all departments and areas on campus has had a significant impact on the ITS department. Requests for ITS support include, but are not limited to:

- Implement electronic transcripts solution
- Website refresh
- Implement new software for check, student statement, and PO printing
- Implement new software for address validation
- Integrate new online orientation software with Colleague
- Probation rewrite - Completed
- Student Planning Self-Service System update - Completed
- Blackboard ILP to connect Blackboard to Colleague - Completed
- New CCCApply system implementation - Completed
- Automation of Progress Reports - Completed
- Implement a new e-commerce solution
- Implement Leave Plans (absence reports)
6. **Provide a status update on the 5-year Planning Goals identified in the most recent comprehensive program review.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Description</th>
<th>On Target to meet? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Still relevant? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Goal Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide current technology to faculty, staff and students through the life cycle funding process</td>
<td>Partially funded</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install and implement the new Citrix VDI System</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Completed for Los Banos and Merced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert Colleague Unidata to MS SQL</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **What changes does the department plan to make to advance the strategic direction goals? If your plan necessitates resource changes make sure those needs are reflected in the applicable resource request sections.**

**Goal One: Assure student access and success**

- **Achievements:**
  - Hired a permanent Distance Education Lead Technician
  - Upgraded 50 lab related computers
- **Plans Transpiring:**
  - Sign Blackboard hosted services 2-year renewal agreement
  - Upgrade 150 lab related computers

**Goal Three: Assure continuous quality improvement of technology and systems integration**

- **Achievements:**
  - Saved over $240,000 removing impractical items from the Ellucian Maintenance Agreement
  - Converted Unidata to SQL
  - Implemented a campus-wide virtual desktop pilot program
Plans Transpiring:
- Appropriate funds into sound investments and better return on investment that make sense, save time and resources and seamlessly integrate with Ellucian systems and their partners as evidenced with Student Planning, ILP, Portal, and Mobile

Goal Five: Promote a sustainable, supportive and safe learning environment
- Achievements:
  - Installed new firewalls and new spam and virus filters
- Plans Transpiring:
  - Implement Network Access Control for unassigned network port to provide Internet access with minimal risk to network resources

8. Resource Needs/Financial Deficiencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deficiency</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Status Update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITS Staffing</td>
<td>▪ User/department requests will not be met in a timely fashion</td>
<td>Partially met, System Analyst position has been created but remains vacant. A new organizational structure with additional positions is being developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITS Staff Training</td>
<td>▪ Unable to stay current with ever changing software and hardware advances</td>
<td>Partially met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiquated Phone Switch</td>
<td>▪ Current phone system is no longer manufactured</td>
<td>RFP in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Short life for maintenance, replacement parts are hard to find</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Unable to implement modern features</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoral of Budget Cuts</td>
<td>▪ Unable to purchase new hardware for testing or spare parts</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing data center is at maximum power capacity</td>
<td>▪ This means that no additional equipment can be added to the data center without potential power-loss and service downtime due to an overload event. This limits future service expansion as well as placing the District’s core infrastructure in a precarious situation.</td>
<td>Not Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff is located at various locations around campus</td>
<td>Impact of staff spread out across buildings reduces efficiency and communication within the department. No room for additional staff.</td>
<td>No change</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Directory and Exchange email services are outdated</td>
<td>Dozens of systems including Colleague, WebAdvisor, Student/Staff desktops, MC4Me portal, as well as many others rely on efficient authentication and directory lookup services provided by Active Directory. Exchange email services are critical to district communications. We have found it beneficial to upgrade these services as part of the same project in the past.</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SERVICE OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT UPDATE

9. Report on Previous Year and Current Year Service Area Outcomes for Administrative Department: *(specify)* *(Please provide a 1 page historical reference of last year’s outcomes)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Service Area Outcome (SAO)</th>
<th>Linked to Institutional Learning Outcome/ Strategic Goals and/or Department Goals</th>
<th>Assessment Criteria/ Method <em>(Specify Target Performance Level)</em></th>
<th>Completion (or anticipate completion) Results*</th>
<th>Improvement Recommendations/ Analysis (next step)*</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>The Merced College Community will have access to the services provided by Information Technology Services</td>
<td>Strategic Plan Goal 3</td>
<td>This will be evaluated by an online survey that polls users experience in accessing key IT services. Service downtime will be tracked.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>The Merced College Community will be able to perform data driven planning and decision making using modern reporting tools and real-time data.</td>
<td>Strategic Plan Goals 3 and 6</td>
<td>This will be evaluated within the same survey as above.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Identification of Resources Required to Achieve Goals (Staff, Supplies, Equipment, Facilities, Marketing/Outreach needs, Institutional Research needs, Other)

Note: Based on the department’s review, describe the department’s needs for resources (identified above). Itemize actions which the department is planning to take to meet challenges and improve service area outcomes.

To reach our goals, we will require additional staffing to maintain reasonable turn-around times and a respectable quality of service. We will require additional training to improve the skills of the staff we have in order to meet technology changes. We will need an infusion of one-time funding to replace outdated telecommunications equipment. Additionally we would need our budget restored and then augmented to meet current demands.

**Strategic Directions are:**

**Goal One:** Assure student access and success.

**Goal Two:** Foster a culture of positive communication, effective collaboration, and academic excellence throughout the District.

**Goal Three:** Assure continuous quality improvement of technology and systems integration.

**Goal Four:** Partner with the community.

**Goal Five:** Promote a sustainable, supportive, and safe learning environment.

**Goal Six:** Foster a culture of institutional effectiveness and excellence.