MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Institutional Self Study

2010

FACES OF MERCED COLLEGE

The black and white portraits found on each tabbed divider in the Self Study represent the work of student photographers enrolled in Photo 32—Studio Photography, a class taught by Art professor Jay Sousa. All of the subjects are Merced College students. The semester-long project, funded by the President's Circle during the fall 2009 semester, is meant to showcase the diversity of Merced College students. The goal of the project was to capture not only the personalities of the subjects, but their area of interest as students.

The student photographers are: Debra Blanchard, Joseph Erwin, Raymond Garavito, Silvia Gonzales, Timothy Grimes, Brittany Hemme, Wendy Her, Robert Mansfield, Lupe Martinez, Cynthia Ramos, Krystle Rhines, Jared Sousa, and Elise Torres.

FRONT COVER

The Business Resource Center, located in downtown Merced, opened its doors in January 2008.

BACK COVER

The grand opening of the new Los Banos Campus was celebrated on September 7, 2007.

DESIGN

Richard Manifest / Merced College Print Services.
using Palantino Linotype & Franklin Gothic

Certification of the Institutional Self Study Report

MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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Institutional Self Study Report
in Support of Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Submitted by

Merced College

3600 M Street

Merced California

95348

Submitted to

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Submission Date

December 2010

MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

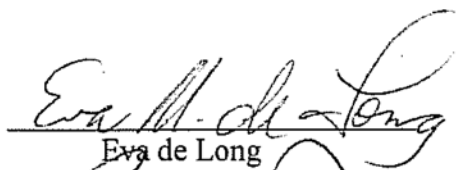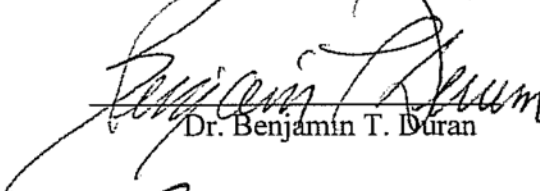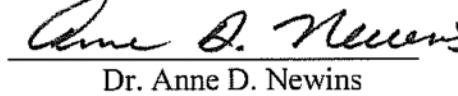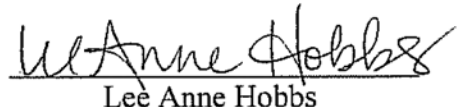## *Certification of the Institutional Self Study Report*
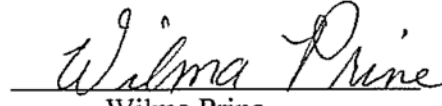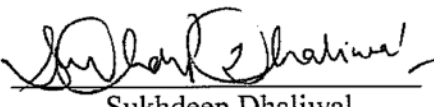
Date ___11/02/2010___

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
            Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Merced College
            3600 M Street
            Merced, CA 95348

This Institutional Self Study Report is submitted for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institution's accreditation status.

We certify that there was broad participation by the campus community, and we believe the Self Study Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

Signed:

Eva de Long   Chairperson, Board of Trustees

Dr. Benjamin T. Duran   Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Anne D. Newins   Accreditation Liaison Officer

Lee Anne Hobbs   Chair, Self Study Committee

Susan Chappell   President, Academic Senate

Wilma Prine   President, Classified Senate

Sukhdeep Dhaliwal   Student Trustee

Merced Community College District

Accreditation Comprehensive Self Study Report

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Introduction

Introduction

A. OUR HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The future arrived on February 27, 1962.

It was delivered with a vote of the people of the Merced and Le Grand Union High School districts, who approved the formation of the 2,184 square-mile Merced Community College District (District) **(INTRO1)**. The District is composed of Merced County, the Chowchilla Union High School District in Madera County, and the Dos Palos Joint Union Elementary School District. A single-college district, the main campus is located in the City of Merced on 269 acres. The new Los Banos Campus, an educational center completed in 2007, is located on 120 acres in the City of Los Banos.

Nearly 50 years after that historic vote, the promises of the future continue to be fulfilled each day for thousands of students served by Merced College. Their hopes and aspirations and their dreams of success begin here. As our mission states, "Students are our focus and we are known by their success." This simple declaration is Merced College's raison d'être and the guiding principle behind our institutional planning and collaborative partnerships.

From its humble beginnings in the barns and exhibition buildings of the Merced County Fairgrounds, where the first few classes were held on September 10, 1963, to the new Learning Resources and Business Resource centers, the renovated Science, Administrative Services, and Student Union buildings, and the new Los Banos Campus, Merced College continues to dream along with its students. For what is a future without dreams, and what is a college without the ambitions of its students?

Merced College balances both the need for stability and the desire for change, and the interplay between the two has resulted in focused leadership and flexible planning. Superintendent and President Benjamin T. Duran, Ed.D. has guided the College since 1997. Prior to his presidency, Dr. Duran was the College's vice president of Administrative Services for seven years. The average length of service among the Board of Trustees is 14 years. In contrast, about one-half of our full-time faculty has been newly hired since fall 2005. With the institutional memory of the administration and Board of Trustees, along with the relative vitality of the faculty, Merced College has been able to prepare for growth without sacrificing its ties to the local culture. Merced College remains committed to serving the needs of its local communities while acting as a catalyst for their unrealized potential. As expressed in our institutional vision statement:

> *". . . We set high standards to encourage students to reach their potential*
> *in a nurturing environment. Merced College is a leader in innovative*
> *instruction and cultural activities. We value and respect all members of*
> *our community and diversity is a strength of our institution..."*

Merced College offers a broad range of transfer and vocational/technical training programs, workforce and business development programs, and an extensive selection of life-long learning

opportunities for older adults through the non-credit Continuing Education office. Students can fulfill their lower division general education and major requirements for a university baccalaureate degree, obtain an associate of arts or associate of science degree, or complete a vocational program leading to immediate employment. The College's transfer curriculum is closely articulated with the California State University and University of California systems, as well as private four-year colleges and universities in the state.

College for Kids, now in its 38th year of providing a wide variety of educational enrichment experiences for young people ages 2-17, is directed each summer through college's Community Services office. Programs of study are offered in the humanities, physical education, natural and social sciences, agriculture, health sciences, computer studies, and many other areas.

Aside from College for Kids, Community Services offers many fee-based classes that provide opportunities for education and enrichment. The non-credit courses range from ceramics to fitness boot camp and from kid's camps to animal care. Students may also take advantage of the College's extensive basic skills and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Students who need a review of basic reading, writing, and math skills can find individualized attention in the computerized Developmental Education labs. ESL classes are taught in the College's downtown Business Resource Center in an open entry/open exit mode to meet the needs of the area's varied ethnic communities.

Merced College graduates work in their local communities as mechanics, heating and air conditioning technicians, welders, farmers, nurses and radiologic technicians, policemen and fireman, teachers, small business owners, and in many other occupations. Our classes are affordable and with a flexible schedule of day, evening, and non-credit classes, Merced College is the best option for higher education for the majority of residents in our service region.

For over four decades, Merced College trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff have been building positive relationships with the people, communities, institutions and other stakeholders. These relationships, both personal and professional, have allowed the College to go back to the voters with plans for future growth. In February 1973, voters approved the extension of a 25-cent tax to support the construction of an Olympic-size swimming pool with dressing rooms and spectator seating, a track and field facility, and an addition to the Student Union. Over the next seven years, the College constructed an addition to the Arts Building, and completed a welding building and an allied health center.

In November 2002, the communities of Merced and Los Banos approved the passage of local bond measures to finance the development of new educational facilities, renovation of existing facilities, and the creation of a completely new educational center on the westside of Merced County. Under Proposition 39, voters approved more than $53 million in bonds for the Merced campus and almost $12 million for the construction of a new educational center in Los Banos on 120 acres of donated land.

The District has successfully leveraged its local bond funds with state funds totaling almost $36 million. This has allowed the District to complete the majority of its facilities projects while maximizing all funding sources and making prudent use of taxpayer dollars.

The following is a list of the major educational facilities projects completed by the District through its Proposition 39 bond initiative:

- A new Learning Resources Center, completed in spring 2007
- A remodel of the existing Science Building, opened in fall 2007
- A new Business Resource Center located in downtown Merced, opened in spring 2008
- A remodel of the former Lesher Library into a centralized student services center, completed in spring 2008
- Renovations of the Barker Administration Building (completed in phases during 2009 and 2010) and Student Union building, (completed in summer 2009)

From 2002 to 2009, the District added 189,551 square feet of facility space. There are now more than 50 permanent buildings on the Merced campus and three new buildings at the Los Banos Campus. (*More complete information on the District's facilities projects can be found in Standard IIIB.*)

In addition to these projects, the District has constructed several outdoor spaces that have enhanced the student life environment. These include the Administration Building Amphitheater and the IAC Amphitheater. Both projects were partially funded through private donations secured by the Merced College Foundation. In 2005, the District renovated and repaired several existing infrastructure sites, including the installation of a co-generation plant at the pool, new boilers, a new chiller for the theater, and piping for the Learning Resources Center. The Welding Lab was remodeled in 2009.

Three facilities projects are currently waiting for state funding:

- The Agriculture and Industrial Technology Complex, a 35,000 square foot, $14 million, project combining two academic divisions (Agriculture and Industrial Technology). It is hoped that this project will be included in the Governor's 2010-2011 budget.
- The Vocational Complex Renovation/Expansion Project, with a new wing to be dedicated to the criminal justice program.
- The Theater/Arts Renovation Project

The District has also planned the following future maintenance projects: Communications Building HVAC economizers, and Theater Art Gallery HVAC replacement.

OUR COMMUNITY

Most recent U.S. Census Bureau estimates place Merced County's 2009 population at 245,321. Merced, the county's largest city and the county seat, has a population of 76,313. Other incorporated cities in Merced County are Los Banos (pop. 35,120), Atwater (pop. 26,198), Livingston (pop. 13,368), Gustine (pop. 5,225) and Dos Palos (pop. 4,898). About 84,199 people live in the unincorporated areas of the county **(INTRO2)**.

Merced County's ethnic breakdown is 34.3 percent White, 4.1 percent Black, 53.1percent Latino, 7 percent Asian (primarily Hmong), and1.9 percent other (More than 45 percent of the county's residents age 5 or older speak a language other than English at home, compared to 40

percent for California, and 18 percent for the U.S. **(INTRO2)**. Among the 86,895 multilingual Merced County residents, more than 52 percent or 44,975 residents report they speak "English less than well."

Located in the heart of California's north central San Joaquin Valley, Merced County occupies part of a region known for high levels of poverty, unemployment and lack of public funding for roads, schools and health care. A 2005 Congressional Research Service report, titled "California's San Joaquin Valley: A Region in Transition" compared the San Joaquin Valley region to Appalachia, and concluded that the Valley was significantly more "economically distressed" than the Appalachian region by a wide range of indicators **(INTRO3)**.

The San Joaquin Valley was the focus of an August 2009 Newsweek Special Report by Ken Light which characterized the Valley as "Ground Zero" of nation's economic decline **(INTRO4)**. In "Valley of Shadows: California's San Joaquin Valley in Economic Crisis," journalist-photographer Light captured both the magnitude of the region's economic problems and its devastating impact upon people's lives through a series of haunting still-life photographs, audio recordings and quotes from Valley residents struggling to survive. It's a harrowing look at one of the poorest counties in the nation.

The January 23, 2010 edition of The Economist contained a brief but troubling article on California's Central Valley entitled, "The Appalachia of the West," with the subtitle of "California's agricultural heartland threatens to become a wasteland" **(INTRO5)**. The article cited the region's economic woes due to insufficient water supply, population growth, and the poor economic, social and education status of Valley residents.

Merced College exists in a geographic area designated as U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Area 5-03100 (PUMA5), which encompasses the entire county of Merced, its urban hub, the City of Merced, along with an array of smaller cities and unincorporated residential areas separated by wide rural expanses **(INTRO6)**. PUMA5 poverty statistics indicate very high poverty rates, with an estimated 20 percent of the population living below the federal poverty level within these communities.

Merced's residents are poorer than other residents in the state and nation. The 2007 median household income for county residents was $43,789—27 percent less than the $59,928 statewide average **(INTRO2)**. Merced's per capita personal income of $23,182 was also among the lowest in the state and nation, ranking 52 out of 58 California counties and 2,560th among 3,111 counties nationwide **(INTRO 7)**.

While other areas of the state and nation are challenged during an economic downturn, Merced County residents face severe hardships during a tough economy, as the negative impact of a recession hits earlier, hits harder, and lasts longer for communities already teetering on the edge of survival. Merced County recently ranked first in the state in the number of foreclosures and sixth among more than 2,000 counties nationwide **(INTRO8)**.

Merced County's unemployment rate averaged 10.5 percent from 2001-2007, compared to the statewide average of 5.8 percent over the same period. While other areas of the state and nation are challenged during an economic downturn, Merced County residents face severe hardships

during a tough economy, as the negative impact of a recession hits earlier, hits harder, and lasts longer for communities already teetering on the edge of survival. Merced County's unemployment rates increased sharply during the economic recession of 2008 through 2009, continuing into 2010. While the annual national unemployment rate averaged 5.8 percent during 2008 and 9.3 percent during 2009, California's annual unemployment rate averaged 7.2 percent and 11.4 percent respectively. In contrast, Merced County's unemployment rate averaged 12.7 percent during 2008 and 18 percent during 2009. During March 2010, Merced's unemployment rate peaked at 22.1 percent—more than twice the national unemployment rate of 10.2 percent and 1.7 times California's rate of 13 percent for that month. Merced County's year-over-year unemployment is nearly the worst in the state, ranking 55th out of 58 California counties **(INTRO9)**.

A depressed housing market compounded by high mortgage default rates has contributed to a steady decline in non-agricultural jobs as well, such as housing construction, financial services and retail sales. The resulting reduction of property taxes, taxable sales and building fees leave local governments with serious budget shortfalls for schools and other public services.

Still, more people are moving into the Valley because the cost of living is lower here than in other areas of California and the U.S. Our regional population has grown 19 percent from a base of 1.22 million in 2000 to 1.45 million people in 2007. Even with our strained economy, Merced County's population grew from a base of 211,223 as of July 1, 2000 to 257,373 as of July 1, 2009, for an estimated increase of 44,891 residents or 21.8 percent over a nine-year time period, according to July 2008 California Department of Finance estimates **(INTRO10)**.

The economic crisis, entrenched poverty, and insufficient resources to support a rapidly increasing population have created an untenable environment—the "perfect storm," according to Newsweek and a host of policy makers, academics, and economists **(INTRO4) (INTRO5).**

Agriculture, Merced County's main source of taxable revenue, employs many workers directly or indirectly. Merced County is one of the state's top five farming and agriculture-based counties, producing deciduous fruits and nuts such as peaches, plums, nectarines and almonds among orchard crops, tomatoes, lettuce, broccoli, zucchini, corn and cabbage among row crops, and the County has the distinction of being the second largest dairy producer in the state **(INTRO11)**.

Yet this economic engine is slowing down at an alarming rate. This is due, in part, to insufficient water resources, as well as overdevelopment of prime agriculture land and its attendant urban sprawl. Farmland accounts for approximately 46 percent of county land, but it is decreasing rapidly due to conversion of high quality farmland to non-agricultural use or inefficient use. An average of 516 acres of Merced County land is converted to urban use annually. Merced County, ranked among the top ten agriculture producers of all California counties, accounted for approximately 63 percent or 6,898 acres of all high quality farmland urbanized from 1990-2004 **(INTRO12)**.

The region has also experienced significant declines in well-paying food processing jobs due to foreign competition and improvements in productivity via automation. These declines impact skilled and unskilled workers across our region. Regional employment in the food-processing sector has declined since 1990 and numerous plant closures have occurred since 2003. More

than 6,500 workers have been dislocated as a result of these closures. From 2003-2007, there were 33 food processing and related industry layoff events in the region **(INTRO13)**.

With fewer local job prospects and greater competition, many Merced area residents have no choice but to find jobs outside the county. More than 18,325 workers commute to jobs outside the county, many driving for hours daily to work at higher-paying jobs in the Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Fresno, and Sacramento **(INTRO2)**. This daily commuting workforce contributes to the region's poor air quality. Merced County's air quality, along with that of other counties located within the San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District, is rated "Extreme"—a dubious distinction shared by only one other air pollution control district in the nation **(INTRO14)**.

A significant segment of the Valley's regional workforce lacks the skills necessary to attract high wage industries, many lacking even the most basic literacy skills necessary for most jobs. Merced County has a significantly higher rate of adults with low literacy levels than the state average—58 percent compared to 46 percent—and a high school drop-out rate of 2.86 percent compared to 1.7 percent for the state. Hispanics are twice as likely, and African Americans three times more likely, to drop out of high school compared to Caucasians **(INTRO15)**. On the average, there are more high school dropouts and fewer college-bound students in the county than across the state. According to the Institute for Higher Education, Leadership and Policy, only 26.2 percent of 18-24 year olds in our region enrolled in college during 2000, compared to 35.4 percent for entire state. The region has fewer college graduates with a bachelor's degree or higher—only 14.6 percent compared to California with 28 percent **(INTRO16)**.

Despite the gloomy scenario pictured above, several recent community developments provide a positive counterbalance. With the 2005 opening of the tenth campus of the University of California in Merced, local residents now have a world-class institution of higher learning in their hometown. Not only will this provide more educational opportunities for area students, the university's economic impact on the region will continue to grow well into the future. The former Castle Air Force Base, which closed in 1995, continues to slowly develop as a regional transit hub and economic development center. Area residents also are looking forward to the advent of high speed rail.

OUR STUDENTS

Merced College students face unique and difficult circumstances that pose enormous challenges to successful academic achievement. Many Merced College students are non-native English speakers, the first in their family to attend college, have poor study skills, and are working/single parents with children. They often lack reliable transportation. Many of these potential students are unaware of or misinformed about available resources that can help them overcome those educational obstacles. Many lack personal confidence and the skills needed to effectively access these resources.

Merced College students are often less academically prepared than their counterparts across the state, and they are on average much poorer, as well. Statistics alone are unable to provide the depth of this human drama. The crushing impact on families from enduring high unemployment and its resultant poverty, high crime rates, and drug and alcohol abuse has greatly affected many of our students. While our students struggle to remain in school, the College must re-

spond to the adverse social and economic conditions facing our students with personal care and professional integrity.

"If a student hasn't had a good meal in days, or if transportation is a recurring issue, what is the likelihood for success in the classroom?" asks Dr. Anne Newins, vice president of Student Personnel Services.

Dr. Mario Cordova, director of the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) describes the program's students as primarily lacking in basic math and English skills. Aside from their academic unpreparedness, EOPS students often come from large households with 8-10 people residing in two-bedroom houses. "This is an indication of their poverty, and the result is poor self-esteem and an inability to cope with the demands of academic coursework," Dr. Cordova said. "How can you study when you have no quiet space at home to do so?"

Because the families of many EOPS students have no college experience, these students lack role models that would help them prepare for college. "Our students can't navigate through the layers of bureaucracy here and that's where we come in," Dr. Cordova said. "We empower them to take action and model for them what success looks like. We inspire them and motivate them. Without EOPS, many of these students could not succeed."

Some students face even greater challenges to academic success. "A lot of our students have economic problems that affect their studies," stated one Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) counselor recently, "There's no work available, and if you're physically disabled your chances of finding employment are severely reduced, " he explained.

"I have a student who is now homeless because he lost his part-time job," said another DSPS counselor. DSPS uses a case management model that works well for students despite their circumstances. While recent state funding reductions have eliminated staff positions, DSPS continues to produce successful results for students. "We see it every day," said this DSPS counselor. "Every student has a need. Everyone has a story, a physical challenge, health problems, family problems, this all affects their learning.

"But because we work with our students throughout their time here, we can provide a personal level of compassion and care that they don't get anywhere else," the counselor said. "We have students who've gone from having no appreciable academic skills to becoming much more highly functioning adults. Many have gone on to graduate from major universities. That's why we're here—to give them a second chance."

Since many of our students accomplish their goals despite experiencing enormous barriers, it is ample evidence of Merced College's commitment to its core mission, which is the pursuit of student success. With its commitment to ensuring student success and with innovative pedagogical practices, Merced College is a catalyst to positive change for the students and communities we serve.

B. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Enrollment

Merced College's student population generally reflects the rich ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity of California's San Joaquin Valley. The College enjoyed a record-breaking 10,290 full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment during the 2008-2009 academic year, representing approximately 21,082 unduplicated students. The fall 2010 semester began with even larger numbers, with over 11,300 credit students enrolled.

Merced College - Annual Unduplicated Headcount and
Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES), 2005-2006 to 2008-2009
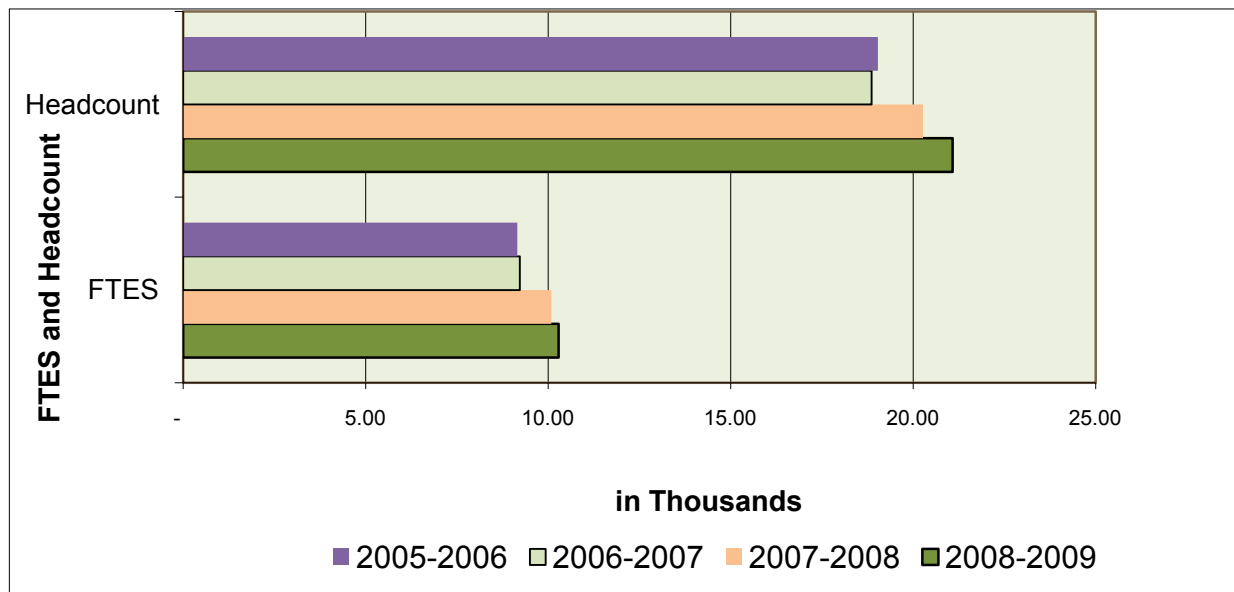
Headcount & FTES	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Headcount	19.04	18.86	20.27	21.08
FTES	9.16	9.23	10.09	10.29
in Thousands				

Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Merced College's student headcount and FTES have increased by more than 2,000 students and 1,100 FTES (respectively) over the past four academic years. This represents an increase of 10.7 percent in student headcount and 12.3 percent in FTES over this time period.

Age

The College serves people of all ages. During 2008-2009, Merced College's student population was predominantly aged 24 or less (49.1 percent), followed by adults age 25-49 (at 34.6 percent), and adults age 49 and over (15.6 percent). Our student age composition has remained relatively stable from 2006 onward, with a slight trend towards an increasingly younger student population.

Age of Students at Enrollment	2005 - 2006	2006 – 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009
19 or under	4,689	4,805	5,021	5,398
20 - 24	4,390	4,347	4,617	4,959
25 - 49	6,519	6,354	7,038	7,292
Over 49	3,216	3,145	3,446	3,295
Unknown	221	212	149	138
Total	19,035	18,863	20,271	21,082

Merced College - Age of Students at Enrollment, 2005-2006 to 2008-2009
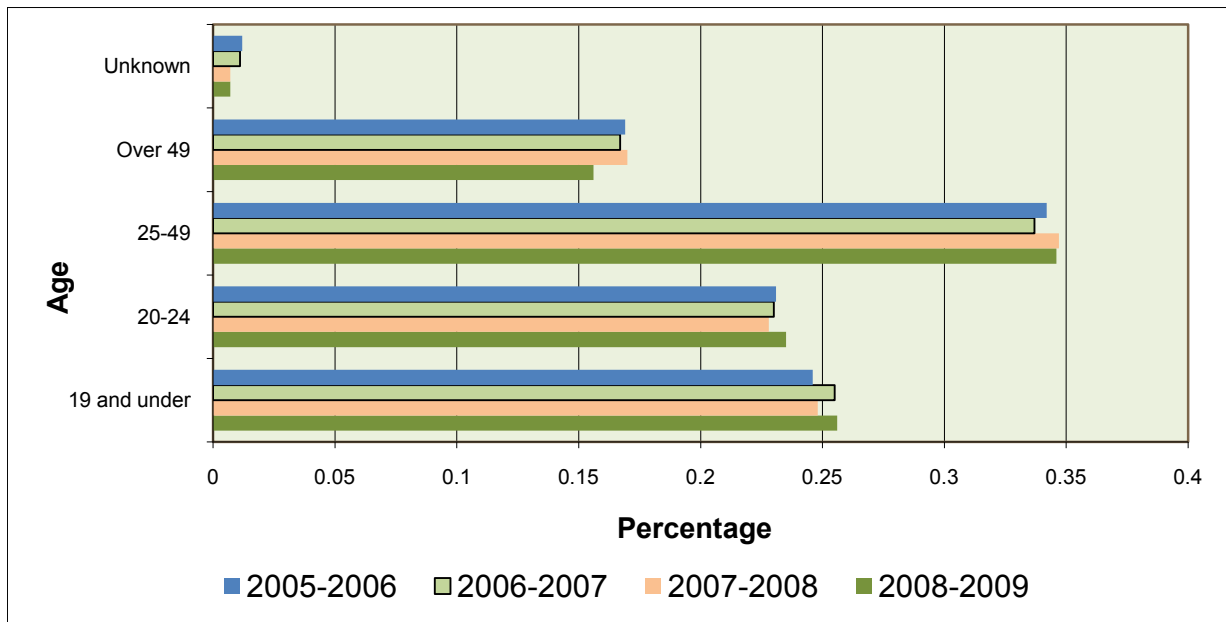
Age of Students at Enrollment	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
19 and under	24.6%	25.5%	24.8%	25.6%
20-24	23.1%	23.0%	22.8%	23.5%
25-49	34.2%	33.7%	34.7%	34.6%
Over 49	16.9%	16.7%	17.0%	15.6%
Unknown	1.2%	1.1%	0.7%	0.7%

Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Gender

Merced College's student population is predominantly female, hovering close to 60 percent of the total student population for the past several years.

Gender of Students	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007-2008	2008 - 2009
Female	11,443	11,203	11,776	12,224
Male	7,031	6,954	7,565	8,192
Unknown	561	706	930	666
Total	19,035	18,863	20,271	21,082

Merced College - Gender of Students, 2005-2006 to 2008-2009
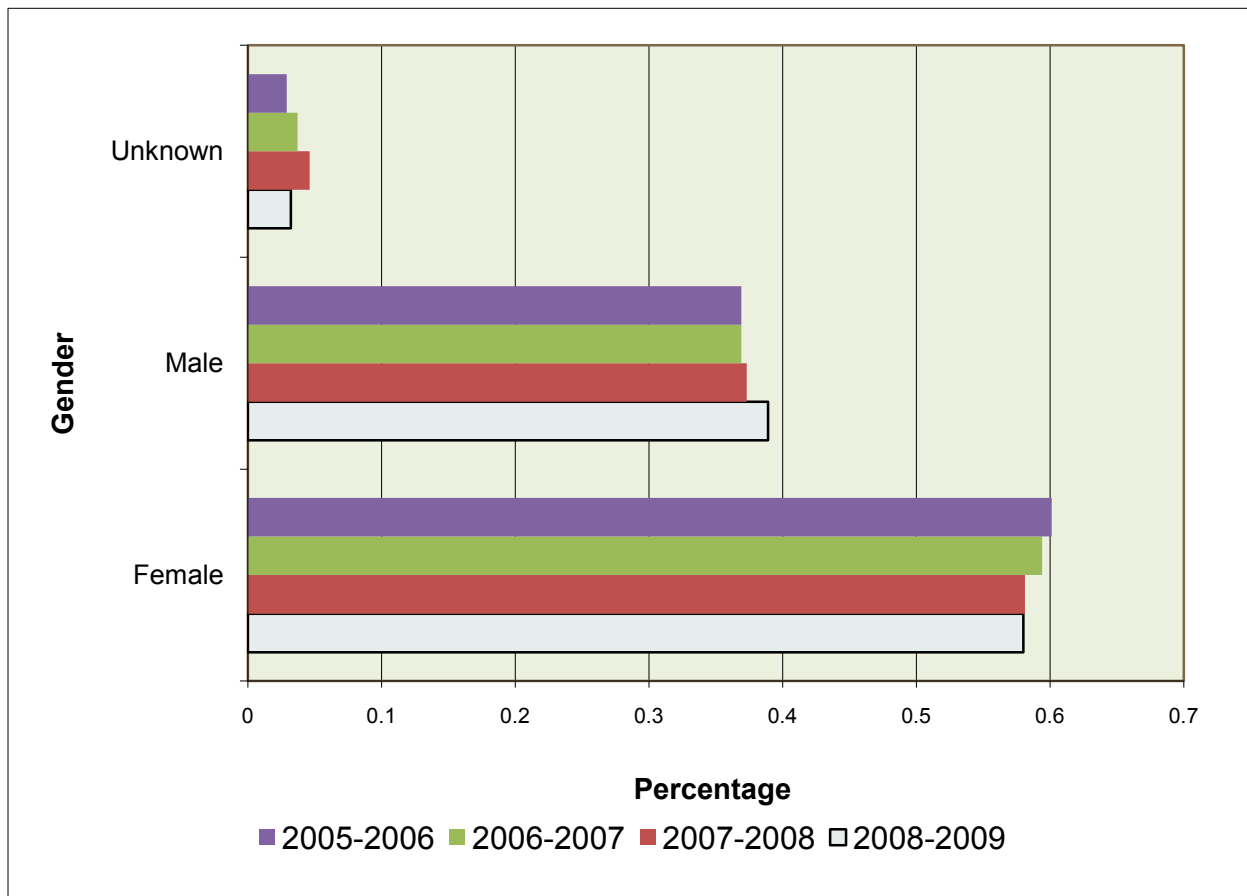
Gender of Students	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Female	60.1%	59.4%	58.1%	58.0%
Male	36.9%	36.9%	37.3%	38.9%
Unknown	2.9%	3.7%	4.6%	3.2%

Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Ethnicity

Federally recognized as an Eligible Institution under Title III and Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965, Hispanic Serving Institutions, the College has a bi-ethnic minority-majority student population with 41 percent of students self-identify as Hispanic/Latino and 30 percent Caucasian. In addition, 12 percent of the student population self-identifies as Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 5 percent as African American, 1 percent as American Indian/Alaska Native, and 10 percent race/ethnicity not reported.

Ethnicity of Students	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009
African American	1,039	979	1,011	998
American Indian/Alaskan Native	230	198	215	224
Asian	1,565	1,642	1,642	1,823
Filipino	214	221	221	227
Hispanic	7,059	6,967	7,352	8,004
Pacific Islander	128	118	133	128
Unknown/Decline to State	1,550	1,903	2,418	2,393
White, Non-Hispanic	7,250	6,835	7,279	7,285
Total	19,035	18,863	20,271	21,082

Merced College - Age of Students at Enrollment, 2005-2006 to 2008-2009
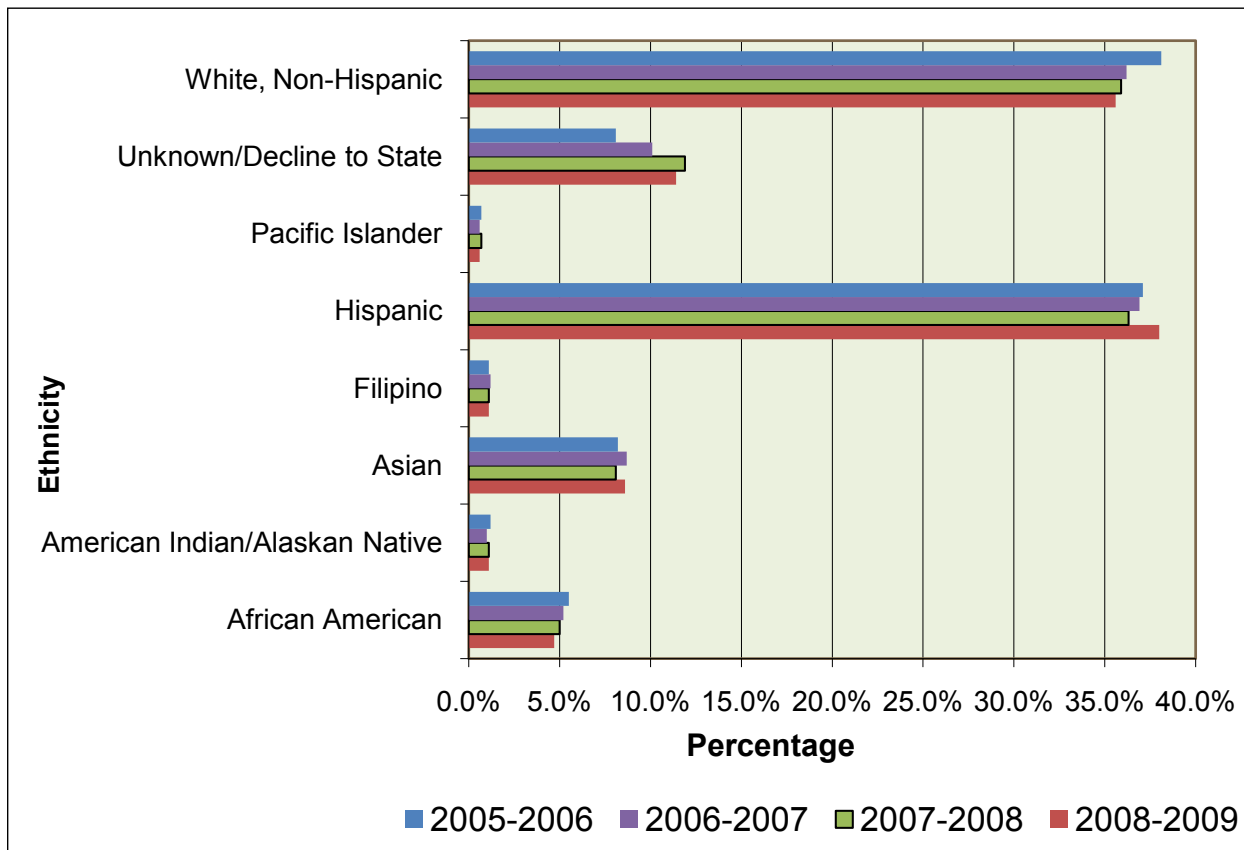
Ethnicity of Students	2005- 2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
African American	5.5%	5.2%	5.0%	4.7%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.2%	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%
Asian	8.2%	8.7%	8.1%	8.6%
Filipino	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%
Hispanic	37.1%	36.9%	36.3%	38.0%
Pacific Islander	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%
Unknown/Decline to State	8.1%	10.1%	11.9%	11.4%
White, Non-Hispanic	38.1%	36.2%	35.9%	35.6%

Our Employee Demographics

The College's workforce totaled 967 during fall 2008 and was composed of approximately 174 full-time faculty, 280 full-time classified staff, 467 part-time faculty and 46 administrators/managers. The staff was 53.4 percent female and 46.6 percent male during fall 2008. The ethnic/racial breakdown of staff during 2008 was 68 percent White, 18 percent Other Non-White, 6 percent Asian, 3 percent African-American, 3 percent Unknown, 1 percent Native American, and 1 percent Filipino.

Merced College Employees, 2005-2009
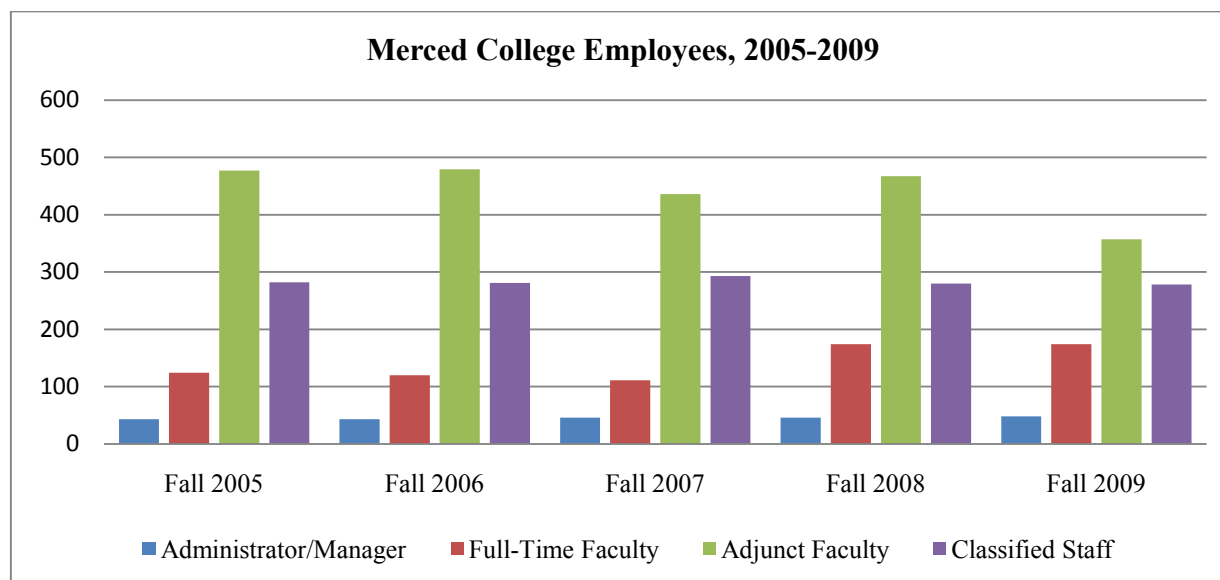
	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009
Administrator/Manager	43	43	46	46	48
Full-Time Faculty	124	120	111	174	174
Adjunct Faculty	477	479	436	467	357
Classified Staff	282	281	293	280	278
Total	926	923	886	967	857

Since the College's last self-study, about one-half of the full-time faculty has been newly hired. In addition, the College has hired a new vice president of Instruction and a new vice president

of Administrative Services. The Office of Instruction has undergone significant reorganization, moving from administrative oversight from department faculty chairs to an administrative structure overseen by divisional instructional Deans. Aside from the four new instructional Deans, one new Dean position has been created within the Office of Student Services.

C. RESPONSE TO ACTION PLANS FROM THE 2004 SELF STUDY REPORT

Update on accomplishments

The following tables contain succinct responses to each of the planning agendas that were identified in the 2004 Self Study. Many of these continue to play active roles in the life of the institution, particularly in the areas of student learning outcomes, program review, planning, and resource allocation.

Planning Agenda—Standard I Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A.3.

> **To encourage student participation, faculty will be asked to announce in their classes when planning committee meetings are scheduled. A member of each shared governance committee will serve as an ASMC liaison/mentor who will take reports of meetings back to ASMC to encourage students to add their voice to the decision-making process. The Management Team and the Classified Senate will be encouraged to work with the Faculty Senate to develop communication networks using the Faculty Senate as a model.**
>
> #### Response to Planning Agenda
>
> ASMC has taken the lead to place student representatives on master planning committees and on the Board of Trustees. Merced College hired a full-time counselor/ASMC advisor to assist in ensuring student representation.

Planning Agenda

B.1.

> **Institutional-level outcomes for students will be developed, adopted, and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee and the Educational Master Planning Committee, in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, Superintendent/President, and the Board of Trustees. The model of the Partnership for Excellence Committee's dialogue, assessment, and planning for institutional improvement using indirect measures such as transfer rates, statistics on diversity of staff and faculty, and graduation rates, will, on an institutional level, continue be the responsibility of the Educational Master Planning Committee.**
>
> #### Response to Planning Agenda
>
> Completed and approved by Board of Trustees on December 7, 2004

Planning Agenda

B.2.

> **The college should continue to implement the planning activities started in 2003-2004 to identify, assess, and evaluate student learning outcomes on various levels (including institutional, program, and course level) and use the results of this process to better determine how well it is meeting its goals and objectives.**

Response to Planning Agenda

The College has continued to advance in its assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional, program, and course levels with linkage to program planning.

Planning Agenda

B.3.

The college should incorporate the results of the student learning outcomes process that it started in 2004, using both direct and indirect measures of success, into its regular cycle of evaluation on through reevaluation.

Response to Planning Agenda

The College has continued to advance in its assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional, program, and course levels with linkage to program planning

Planning Agenda

B.5.

The Academic Senate and the Offices of Instruction, Student Personnel, and Administrative Services need to develop ways to post documented assessment results on the intranet. These same groups need to see that faculty and staff are trained in how to extract and analyze data, using the college's databases and other resources, that will enable them to better assess and assure quality in college programs and services.

Response to Planning Agenda

Results from area SLO assessments are posted to the intranet. In addition, each faculty member receives an SLO grades report each semester. Data analysis tools are present on the intranet.

Planning Agenda

B.6.

The Educational Master Planning Committee, along with the other master planning committees and key campus-wide shared governance committees, will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the planning process and make recommendations for improvement.

Response to Planning Agenda

EMPC and other master planning committees completed a strategic master planning process through a series of meetings which included annual retreats. This process was approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2009.

Planning Agenda

B.7.

The college will fully implement the new program review process, including the use of student learning outcomes.

Response to Planning Agenda

The program review process is completing its first full cycle for instructional and student services programs while developing an annual cycle for all programs, services and admin-

istrative units. Through the budget and resource allocation process, emphasis was placed on SLO assessment through the purchase of two software packages in support of data collection and report (CurricUNET for courses and programs and CurricUNET Program Review).

Planning Agenda—Standard IIA Student Learning Programs and Services

A.1.

Merced College does not yet have the ability to monitor student achievement outcomes for employment. The college's vocational faculty is working with their advisory committees to design a survey of employment for students. The general education students will be more difficult to monitor. Students at a community college attend for many different reasons. These include the desire to do a more effective job with their current employer, a wish to transfer, and for more personal life-long learning reasons. Successful program completion data is another area of need. The college's educational plan software has not been operational for three years, so student goal information is not available beyond the counselor's office. The Guidance Division will be implementing the new educational plan software, which will allow for better tracking of a student's success as compared to his or her stated educational plans. The Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC) has assumed the primary responsibility for defining, tracking, analyzing, and planning for student success at the institutional level. The Faculty Senate, which is by law responsible for curriculum, will monitor the IMPC's efforts. Final approval for all institutional goals lies with the Board of Trustees.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, formally termed vocational programs, in the Agriculture and Industrial Technology areas are addressing the evaluation of SLOs for employment using the following resources. Students from the automotive program complete a student information sheet each year that includes assorted questions to ascertain their employment goals within the automotive job sector. As the students progress through the program, employment information is gathered as they apply for and receive employment opportunities. The identified employers are then surveyed on the various job preparations their employees received through program at Merced College. Additionally, SLOs for employment are evaluated through data provided through the Chancellor's Office on core indicators on CTE program effectiveness in training students for job placement. The Counseling Cohort is using eAdvising software to better track student educational planning and performance.

Planning Agenda

A.1.a.

Merced College revised its instructional program review process in the 2003-2004 academic year (instructional program review presentation, Fall of 2003). The most important change was to bring the instructional program review from a division-level review to a program-level review. This revised process will allow for greater analysis and research within individual program areas and a greater emphasis on student learning outcomes. Merced College's Research Analyst will be participating in the evaluation, planning and improvement of the statistical analysis of the data for program review. Four division-level instructional program reviews have been completed since

the mid-term Accreditation review (Art Division, Agriculture Division, Developmental Education Division, and Guidance Division). The dialogue, which occurred during the division instructional program review process, has allowed for a snapshot of each division. It is now essential that the recommendations from those reviews are evaluated and measurements for their success be planned, and necessary improvements are made. One program, the Business Program, has volunteered to pioneer the new program review process. The faculty in this area are setting student learning outcomes for their program, determining the measures that will be used for those outcomes, and beginning the dialogue for designing improvements. The college's goal is to conduct two or more instructional program reviews every year, with two beginning in the fall of 2004. Merced College will work on analyzing and drawing conclusions from placement tests in order to better match our students with the proper level courses in math and English.

Response to Planning Agenda

After a re-evaluation of the program review process in fall 2008, a task force met to discuss possible updates to the College's instructional program review that would result in a more efficient process. In April 2009, the Academic Senate passed a resolution to create the Instructional Program Review Committee (IPRC) to function as a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee. The purpose of the IPRC is to provide support to areas completing program reviews. Membership includes faculty from each area (6), the SLO coordinator, program review facilitators (3), an institutional researcher, and a representative from Non-Credit. The committee began meeting regularly during fall 2009, during which several members of the English cohort met with an institutional researcher to determine cut-off scores for the placement test following the realignment of the English curriculum that took effect in June 2009. Merced College is on target with the timeline and all programs will have completed or have in-progress the first round of in-depth program review by end of the 2009-2010 academic year.

Planning Agenda

A.1.c.

Student learning outcomes for Merced College will be developed at the course, program and institutional level through a five-year plan adopted by the Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC) in Spring, 2004. The IMPC has been given the charge of coordinating the Student Learning Outcomes process on campus. The Student Learning Outcomes Director will facilitate the development of course-level and program-level outcomes with the discipline faculty. Program-level outcomes will be developed in coordination with the Program Review process. Institutional-level outcomes will be developed, adopted and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee, in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, the Superintendent/President, and the Board of Trustees. The course-level student learning outcomes plan allows for a graduated process, beginning with dialogue on course-level outcomes with discipline faculty, choosing a measuring tool and standards for levels of performance for each outcome, moving to norming sessions to assure acceptable inter-rater reliability, and cumulating with an evaluation of student performance, data collection and assessment of the process. The Director of Student Learning Outcomes, a campus faculty member, will oversee the process.

Response to Planning Agenda

In fall 2008, Merced College instituted a full-time SLO coordinator position. The coordinator has worked with all the disciplines to ensure that discipline SLOs were written, assessed, and that changes were implemented. The coordinator is also involved in training faculty about SLOs and the process Merced College has chosen to utilize. The coordinator, appointed on a two-year rotating position, is also the keeper of the records. The SLO coordinator is involved with SLOs at all levels and in all areas.

Planning Agenda

A.2.a.

Merced College faculty are gearing up to refine, implement, evaluate and revise student learning outcomes at the course and program level. Student learning outcomes for Merced College will be developed at the course, program and institutional level through a five-year plan adopted by the Instructional Master Planning Committee in the Spring of 2004. The IMPC has been given the charge of coordinating the Student Learning Outcomes process on campus. The Student Learning Outcomes Director will facilitate the development of course-level and program-level outcomes with the discipline faculty. Program-level outcomes will be developed in coordination with the program review process. Institutional-level outcomes will be developed, adopted and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee, in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, Superintendent/President, and the Board of Trustees. The course-level student learning outcomes plan allows for a graduated process, beginning with dialogue on course-level outcomes with discipline faculty, choosing a measuring tool and standards for levels of performance for each outcome, moving to norming sessions to assure acceptable inter-rater reliability, and cumulating with an evaluation of student performance, data collection and assessment of the process. The campus Director of Student Learning Outcomes will provide oversight for the process.

Response to Planning Agenda

Planning Agenda

A.2.b.
Student learning outcomes at Merced College will be developed at the course, program and institutional level through a five-year plan adopted by the Instructional Master Planning Committee in the Spring of 2004. The IMPC has been given the charge of coordinating the Student Learning Outcomes process on campus. The Student Learning Outcomes Director will facilitate the development of course-level and program-level outcomes with the discipline faculty. Program-level outcomes will be developed in coordination with the Program Review process. Institutional-level outcomes will be developed, adopted and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees. The course-level student learning outcomes plan allows for

a graduated process, beginning with dialogue on course-level outcomes with discipline faculty, choosing a measuring tool and standards for levels of performance for each outcome, moving to norming sessions to assure acceptable inter-rater reliability, and cumulating with an evaluation of student performance, data collection and assessment of the process. The faculty Director of Student Learning Outcomes will provide oversight of the process.

Response to Planning Agenda

In fall 2008, Merced College instituted a full-time SLO coordinator position. The coordinator has worked with all the disciplines to ensure that discipline SLOs were written, assessed, and that changes were implemented. The coordinator is also involved in training faculty about SLOs and the process Merced College has chosen to utilize. The coordinator, appointed on a two-year rotating position, is also the keeper of the records. The SLO coordinator is involved with SLOs at all levels and in all areas.

Planning Agenda

A.2.c.

Programs will continue to be evaluated on a regular six-year cycle using the college's instructional program review process, and curriculum matriculation review process, which is also on a six-year cycle. Merced College administration and faculty are enthusiastic about the opening of UC Merced in the fall of 2005. The proximity of this campus will, we anticipate, provide a more highly qualified pool of adjunct instructors in our community and also create a closer articulation with a neighboring research university. In addition, as budgets improve, we plan to restore faculty travel budgets for staff development.

Response to Planning Agenda

Merced College's program review process is in place with the first six-year cycle scheduled for completion in spring 2010 and the second cycle beginning in Fall 2010. All programs will do an annual update in between the in-depth program review process. Merced College has an excellent relationship with UC Merced and remains its largest feeder school. Travel budgets still present a challenge, but Merced College will continue to explore improvements to the faculty travel budget.

Planning Agenda

A.2.d.

Measuring the effectiveness of various methods of presenting course information has not been consistently done across the campus. Some faculty members solicit specific feedback regarding the use of multimedia in the classroom, using a supplemental questionnaire at the time of their faculty evaluation. The college, through its student learning outcomes processes, will evaluate faculty teaching methodologies to measure their effectiveness.

Response to Planning Agenda

Based on the planning agenda above there is no process for assessing a particular teaching method. The assessments being done are not focused on the method but on the outcome regardless of method.

Planning Agenda

A.2.f.

An intranet site with data on courses and programs is being created. This will enable campus staff involved in planning to have easier access to pertinent planning data and information. Faculty must first determine which learning outcomes for courses and programs are appropriate and how each outcome will be measured, and then determine how to collect that data. Training faculty on data use and management will need to be implemented. A grant to work with three math courses (Math 80, Math A and Math C) has been received, and will be implemented in the spring of 2004. This will allow for greater tracking of data on student outcomes at the individual student and course level, which in turn will be used to improve the overall math program at Merced College.

Response to Planning Agenda

An intranet site is available for all staff to view current and archival course and program descriptions. An SLO section within the intranet site posts information about SLOs, assessment, and examples. During summer 2009, Merced College launched CurricUNET and all available course and program information was imported into the CurricUNET program. This program allows access from home as well as on campus.

Planning Agenda

A.2.i.

Student learning outcomes for Merced College will be developed at the course, program and institutional level through a five-year plan adopted by the Instructional Master Planning Committee in the Spring of 2004. The IMPC has been given the charge of coordinating the student learning outcomes process on the campus. The Student Learning Outcomes Director will facilitate the development of course-level and program-level outcomes with the discipline faculty. Program-level outcomes will be developed in coordination with the Program Review process. Institutional-level outcomes will be developed, adopted, and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, the Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees. The course-level student learning outcomes plan allows for a graduated process, beginning with dialogue on course-level outcomes with discipline faculty, choosing a measuring tool and standards for levels of performance for each objective, moving to norming sessions to assure acceptable inter-rater reliability, and cumulating with an evaluation of student performance, data collection and assessment of the process. The faculty Director of Student Learning Outcomes will oversee the process.

Response to Planning Agenda

In fall 2008, Merced College instituted a full-time SLO coordinator position. The coordinator has worked with all the disciplines to ensure that discipline SLOs were written, assessed, and changes implemented. The coordinator is also involved in faculty training concerning SLOs and the SLO process. The coordinator is responsible for maintaining records submitted by each area and is involved with SLOs at all levels and in all areas.

Planning Agenda

A.3.b.

Merced College must first determine measurable student learning outcomes at the institutional level. Once these have been decided upon through the Instructional Master

Planning Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees, plans will be made to ap-
ply the measures to insure that general education outcomes are being met.

Response to Planning Agenda

Currently, institutional outcomes are not being measured directly. While assessing
courses and programs, instructors link the course or program to one or more institutional
outcomes.

Planning Agenda

A.3.c.

Merced College will continue to insure that ethics, cultural diversity, civic responsibil-
ity, and other related values are part of its general education outcomes. In addition,
Merced College will specifically explore global topics through our "Global Learning for
All" initiative.

Response to Planning Agenda

Merced College seeks various criteria of student learning as opposed to a single method.
Through its SLO implementation, faculty, in collaboration with the campus community,
have been able to identify skills and knowledge deemed valuable. Merced College em-
beds assessment of these skills within its curriculum. During 2008, several events took
place that supported "global and community consciousness and responsibility." Among
these events were "Long Time Comin'," a 45-minute play that chronicled the taking of
slaves from western Africa, their subsequent arrival and structured subordination in
America to-date, ending with the presidential election of Barack Obama in November
2009. Also, Merced College produced its annual Multicultural World Music and Dance
Festival in May 2009 featuring Mexican Mariachi, Black gospel choir, Cambodian tingle
dancers, and Tiko drummers.

Planning Agenda

A.5.

Merced College does not have a formal method for tracking our alumni as they enter
employment. This is a key element in assessing student learning outcomes that will
need to be developed. The Los Banos Campus will be evaluating which vocational pro-
grams will be most needed when the new campus opens in 2007.

Response to Planning Agenda

There are no formal methods in place for tracking alumni in academic areas, but methods
do exist in the vocational areas. The automotive area gathers employment information
from students and then surveys identified employers. Another tool utilized to gauge stu-
dent achievement outcomes for employment is the data provided through the Chancellor's
Office on core indicators on CTE program effectiveness in training students for job place-
ment.

Planning Agenda

A.6.

Merced College must provide an opportunity for dialogue on program and certificate
learning outcomes and objectives. The plan adopted by IMPC for course and program

level student learning objectives will provide an opportunity for this to occur. In addition, the instructional program review process is planned to reach all programs over a six-year cycle. Continued efforts will need to be made to provide students with information on student learning objectives.

Response to Planning Agenda

Programs and certificates undergo a review process that includes dialogue among faculty. The Instructional Program Review Committee (IPRC) will facilitate this process by reviewing submissions for evidence of coordination. Program review continues in its initial cycle while being transferred to an electronic system. IPRC is conducting an annual update of processes for all instructional and instructional support programs to address specific needs and budget requests.

Planning Agenda

A.6.b.

The Merced College Faculty Senate needs to address a program discontinuance plan in cooperation with the Administration and Board of Trustees. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges through Senate Resolution 9.04 (Spring, 2003) encourages all local senates to prepare plans for program discontinuance. Title 5 §51022 states that colleges should have policies for the establishment, modification, or discontinuance of courses.

Response to Planning Agenda

A program discontinuance plan was adopted by the Board of Trustees on February 29, 2008. The policy was revised on July 24, 2008. The policy is identified as "Administrative Procedure 4021-Program Discontinuance."

Planning Agenda

A.6.c.
Print publications will continue to be reviewed annually. The website will be evaluated following the procedures outlined in the TMPC document after they are adopted by the Board of Trustees.

Response to Planning Agenda

The catalog is reviewed by each area for accuracy in course descriptions and certificate and degree requirements. Additionally, representatives from the Office of Instruction collaborated with the CCC Chancellor's Office during summer 2009 to find and correct any discrepancies between the College's records and those kept by the CCCCO. Merced College also provides regularly printed schedules of classes with information pertinent to students in a clear and easy-to-follow format. Student services leaders examine the spring, summer and fall calendars for registration group dates, important semester dates, and student services hours of operation. An updated website, with improved features for students will be launched in 2011.

Planning Agenda—Standard IIB

B.1.

The Academic Senate recently requested that master planning committees discuss and provide a recommendation regarding their respective roles in student learning outcomes. On March 4th, 2004, the Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) adopted the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Model described by Drs. Rudmann and Gabriner in their "Learning Outcomes Assessment in Student Services" series. A March 25th SPEC retreat has been scheduled to include discussion of the steps each unit in Student Services must take in defining, establishing and evaluating student learning outcomes.

Response to Planning Agenda

Student Services began educating staff members regarding the development of SLOs during spring 2005. Student Services SLO and Program Review coordinators were identified and both developed a process that every program would follow. It was determined that each program would begin by creating a unique mission statement. The fall 2005 semester would be dedicated to the development of a learning outcome for each program, which would then be responsible for the assessment and the analysis of the SLO in spring 2006. The expectation is that all Student Services programs will continue this pattern every year. The Program Review Handbook, which was approved by SSMPC in Spring 2006, incorporated the SLO process as a component of program review. A program review schedule was created so that each unit would have an opportunity to identify at least one SLO prior to undergoing review. Although the programs were encouraged to relate their planning to SLO evaluations, acceptance of this process has been lagging. In response to this, the Three Year Plan component of program review has been revised numerous times. The current Three Year Plan, which every program must submit yearly, identifies the dependence of planning on SLO evaluation and the subsequent evaluation of changes created due to the outcome analyses. The chart in this plan emphasizes the on-going nature of SLO evaluation.

Planning Agenda

B.2.d.

Additional information about the Los Banos Campus needs to be included in the catalog and on the district web site. This should parallel the information available for the Merced Campus. The Student Handbook should be available in the Merced and Los Banos Campus bookstores as well as in PDF form on the web site. The Catalog as well as the Student Handbook should include the district policy regarding Academic Freedom.

Response to Planning Agenda

Links to student support services and general information regarding the Los Banos Campus and off-campus centers have been expanded on the college website to provide pertinent information comparable to the Merced campus. While additional information in the current catalog focuses on the Los Banos Campus's new location and facilities, no additional information has been included regarding services. Due to statewide budget cuts to community colleges, the Student Handbook is no longer published for all students on an

annual basis, but has been replaced by a New Student Orientation Handbook. The 2009-2010 College Catalog (pp. 12-13) includes the District policy on academic freedom.

Planning Agenda

B.3.a.

In response to the new accreditation standards' focus on student learning outcomes, the institution will be working on developing specific learning standards to ensure equitable access and comprehensive reliable services, regardless of location. The March 25, 2004, student services SPEC retreat discussed developing student learning outcomes and appropriate assessment measures as a means of evaluating programs and improving accountability. During the next several semesters, each unit in student services will reevaluate their mission and develop student learning outcomes that best measure and contribute to equitable access and student learning. Planning for the new Los Banos Campus has determined that three more technical support staff will be needed for the new facility. Planning for additional classified staff to support technology use on all on-campus and off-campus sites will continue in anticipation of additional funding.

Response to Planning Agenda

Student services are available to all eligible, currently enrolled students regardless of their location either in-person, by phone, or on-line. The college website provides program and service information, contact names and numbers, and hours of operation. Since the last accreditation visit, there have been many changes made to improve access for our students:

1. The majority of Student Services programs have moved to the former library building, now called the Lesher Student Services Center, creating a "one-stop" environment.

2. Student Service programs maintain common hours of operation with extended hours on Wednesdays.

3. At the new Los Banos Campus, Student Services are all located in Building A, allowing for "one-stop" access to services.

4. Continuing students can complete the orientation, application and register on-line using Webadvisor.

5. The College now offers information through a number of social networks, including Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter.

6. There have been changes in the areas of Technology and Institutional Research which have a positive effect on the ability of our students to use online resources and also create an environment of accessible information for both students and staff. Beyond replacement of staff in vacated positions in 2006-2007, a new position was generated for an Online Education Systems Manager, a Student Helpdesk Tech to assist students who request on-line assistance available 9 hours/day, and an Education Tech Specialist to help train faculty in the use of Blackboard. In 2008-2009, two new researchers were hired, and a 19 hr. Instructional Lab Tech position was increased to full-time. As an indication of the institution's recognition of the importance of this area, the associate vice president of Technology and Institutional Research position was created in 2006-20007 and the AVP was promoted to vice president in 2008-2009.

7. The technology support staff specifically assigned to the Los Banos campus has not increased.

8. While the number of students using Webadvisor has increased every semester (40 percent in fall 2009), it is unknown how many students are aware of all on-line opportunities. Therefore, a common SLO was developed for 2009-2010 that was distributed by all student service programs to evaluate the level of awareness and usage across the programs. The results of this assessment are to be made available in spring 2010 and changes can be made dependent on the evaluation.

Planning Agenda

B.3.b.

The Student Services Master Planning Committee has participated in a dialogue concerning the new accreditation standards. At the March 4, 2004 meeting, the group adopted the framework presented by Dr. Jerry Rudman and Dr. Robert Gabriner in the RP Group's SLO Workshop titled, "Learning Outcomes Assessment in Student Services" (Parts I and II). Prior to this, most information made available pertained to instruction, specifically course-related student learning outcomes. Rudman's and Gabriner's presentation outlines, in a step-by-step process, an SLO plan that Student Services can begin implementing. This spring semester each unit will start by examining the Board's mission and goals. Members have been encouraged to attend the institutional student learning outcomes information workshop, which will be offered during a flex day on March 19, 2004. With this foundation, the individual programs will begin moving forward in discussing their unit's mission statement, objectives, and goals. In the upcoming semesters, they will continue to evaluate their programs following the steps described in the works of Rudman and Gabriner.

Response to Planning Agenda

Every Student Services program has a mission statement that is learning centered and facilitates the development of appropriate learning outcomes. All Student Services programs have completed SLOs and a program review report since the last accreditation visit. In their program reviews, the programs respond to whether or not the institutional core values and beliefs are reflected in their mission statement. Programs are encouraged to define and measure student success in terms of SLOs. In the program review process, each unit is asked to link each SLO with the relevant portion of the Institutional SLOs. When a program identifies a deficiency with a request for new resources, it also must be based on an SLO. The Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) validates that resource requests are based on SLOs and program reviews before they are forwarded to the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC). Student Services will begin the next cycle of program reviews beginning fall 2010. The institutional planning process and planning calendar have been approved in the 2009-2010 school year. In the near future, the College's mission, goals, and Institutional SLOs will be evaluated and perhaps updated.

Planning Agenda

B.3.c.

Like other divisions, the Guidance Division is aware of the necessity to develop student learning outcomes. As one of the units represented in the Student Services Master Planning Committee, it will also adopt the process presented by Dr. Jerry Rudman

and Dr. Robert Gabriner. On Wednesday, March 10, 2004, the Guidance Division met to discuss how, given current budget constraints, we could appropriately respond to the needs of our students and provide services which would increases the likelihood of their college retention and success. The college has determined that new students will be able to register without counselor approval if the student accepts the placements recommended by the Accuplacer assessment test. With this in mind, the division brainstormed alternative delivery models. A letter was sent to the Vice President of Student Personnel with a specific recommendation that the college hire bachelor-level paraprofessionals as Merced College Reps to provide informational sessions to groups of students at the high schools and on our own campus. They would assist students in the registration process. If a student wished to discuss their course placement or simply desired more information, they would be directed to a counselor on campus. Other suggestions to be considered were: 1. Hire schedulers to be available during the entire registration time; 2. Increase the use of technology (on-line/video counseling, e-mail, instant message contacts, upgrading web page information, and teleconferencing); 3. Develop a cadre of instructional division academic advisors consistent with the four-year school model; 4. Identify all "counselors" as "generalists;" 5. Improve communications with the administration; 6. Make counseling presentations in classrooms/divisions; 7. Establish a "Dear Abby" counselor to help prevent students from dropping; 8. Develop a plan for counselor-initiated follow-up on progress reports. 9. Explore the possibility of mini workshops on retention-related issues. 10. Re-establish counselor liaison with and attendance at other divisions' meetings; 11. Provide drop-in services only during the early weeks; thereafter require Appointments; 12. Assign "drop-in" counselor duties on a rotating basis to provide "short answer" services. Initial response to these suggestions to the administration has been favorable, and they will continue to explore their viability.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Guidance Division completed its program review in 2000-2001. This report, referenced in the 2004 Self Study, made many suggestions as part of the planning agenda. The following are responses to the individual recommendations:

1. 1-A. Paraprofessionals were used to assist in high school outreach and registration for one school year. The practice was discontinued due to a perceived blurring of boundaries between the counselors and the paraprofessionals and budgetary limitations.

2. Schedulers are considered very helpful in the registration process. Counselors are able to use their time more effectively if schedulers are available to help students select open classes and create their semester schedule. Due to funding limitations, the schedulers have never been hired for an entire registration period, but they were in place during the peak periods (typically three weeks prior to the start of a semester). As there was a significant reduction in 2009-2010, a Counseling Task Force was created to examine alternative practices to provide services with fewer resources. The Counseling Cohort would like to encourage more students to register online by giving them the tools to do so. One suggestion is to have group sessions where students are trained in how to look up classes online and complete the registration process electronically. This will reduce the need to hire schedulers and will empower students. For the summer/fall 2010 registration period, Puente students will volunteer time to assist students in completing their class schedule after they have met with a counselor.

3. Video counseling was never made available but there is online assistance available through e-counseling. A general counselor has been given release time to respond to students online. The Counseling-Guidance website provides general information and links to each counselor's webpage, which includes their academic credentials, photo, academic discipline assignments, and contact information. The Counseling Cohort is in the process of developing an educational plan component through Datatel that students will be able to access online and there are three different Guidance courses that are currently offered online. All enrolled students have a college e-mail account and the institution communicates with them using this format frequently. Student Services is currently examining student usage of their e-mail account through an SLO.

4. Merced College rejected the creation of a position for an "Academic Advisor," stating that compensation issues would be too problematic. The Counseling Cohort currently uses three faculty members who are assigned to other Cohorts but counsel for either part of their load or as overload. These faculty members were grandfathered into Counseling before equivalency standards were revised. However, each of these counselors brings an expertise from their academic discipline.

5. EOPS, DSPS, and CalWORKs counselors and those assigned to Los Banos are considered "generalists." Discipline areas are still assigned to the non-categorical counselors with the expectation that these counselors will be responsible for curriculum changes to these specific programs. At times, counselors were encouraged to attend the discipline meetings to remain current and to bring back information to the other counselors. When counseling is on a walk-in basis, counselors will see all students regardless of their major. However, they will usually refer the student to see the "specialist" when they need an educational plan, or, in-depth programmatic advising.

6. With changes in the administration, there have been no complaints regarding lack of communication. The dean of Student Services attends Cohort meetings, and counselors are easily able to make appointments to see him when needed. The dean also maintains an open-door policy. The vice president of Student Services also attends Cohort meetings when requested or when there are institutional matters, such as the budget, that need to be discussed.

7. Counselors primarily make presentations outside of the Guidance courses or workshops offered through programs such as Study Central. They are invited periodically to make classroom presentations. There is not a "Dear Abby" counseling assignment.

8. Categorical programs receive progress reports about their students with follow-up appointments. All students on probation status are required to have a counselor approve their class schedule before registering. This intervention gives the counselor the opportunity to help the student become successful. When a student is in "dismissal status," they must complete a retention contract with a counselor in order to register. At the end of the semester, the counselor will check to see if the student met the conditions of the contract, and if not, the student will be dismissed for the subsequent term.

9. When a student is on first-level probation, they must attend a counselor-led workshop where they are presented with academic success strategies. Students are required to achieve a score of at least 70 percent on an exit quiz covering the workshop material. If

they are successful, a hold on their registration is lifted; if they are not, they must repeat the workshop.

10. Counselors act as liaisons and attend other discipline meetings on a sporadic basis. This suggestion should be re-evaluated.

11. Drop-in or walk-in counseling is available at the start of registration and through the first two weeks of the semester. Appointments are made for the remainder of the time. Exceptions apply to veterans who need appointments for VA education-plans as well as students who need an education plan in order to receive financial aid.

12. Express-counseling is offered during peak registration on an as-needed basis. General counselors are assigned a central location and see students who can be helped in five minutes or less. This relieves some of the congestion and waiting time for students who just need to have pre-requisites verified, etc.

Planning Agenda

B.3.d.

The college plans to review and revise its Board-approved Student Equity Plan in 2004- 2005.

Response to Planning Agenda

In 2008, Merced College filled a newly created position, the dean of Students/Special Programs. This position was created in part to oversee and coordinate campuswide efforts toward equitable outcomes in instruction and support services. A summary of student equity and diversity issues activities underway by the dean includes the following:

1. Collaboration with the director of Institutional Research regarding the following student equity indicators: access, course completion, ESL and basic skills completion, degree and certificate completion, and transfer rates.

2. Collaboration with the dean of Student Services to ensure equitable service to special populations such as EOPS and DSPS students.

3. Regular consultation with the vice president of Student Personnel regarding student demographics and participation rates.

4. Creation of a college equity committee during the 2010-2011 program year. The committee, in collaboration with all campus sectors, will draw from appropriate institutional quantitative and qualitative data bases to identify equitable and/or disparate student outcomes.

5. An update of the Student Equity Report has been delayed until revised guidelines are created by the Chancellor's Office.

Planning Agenda

B.3.e.

Merced College's Matriculation Advisory Committee (MAC) functions as a governance committee and reviews all areas and functions required under matriculation regulations. The MAC should serve as the college body that assures regular evaluation of admissions and placement instruments and practices in order to validate their effectiveness and minimize bias. The MAC should also continue to work toward continuous improvement by helping create a clearer understanding of the importance of admis-

sions and placement instruments as they relate to the learning outcomes approach.

Response to Planning Agenda

Although matriculation regulations have been relaxed through 2013, Merced College has continued to provide the same quality and quantity of services as was conducted prior to the policy change. Matriculation Advisory Committee (MAC) continues to meet, at least four times annually and as required by matriculation regulations, is represented by all college stakeholders. The below listed items specifically address the items denoted in the planning agenda:

1. Student background/profile questions were modified to eliminate redundancy and extraneous information. Based on MAC members responses, including student members, student background questions are less confusing, more culturally sensitive, and potentially less time consuming.

2. Readability has improved significantly in the test results displayed from Accuplacer. Based on counselor responses, Accuplacer results are more clearly presented.

3. The "Sample Diagnostic Test for Mathematics" was created by the math faculty to provide a math review for students prior to taking the assessment. This tool was well-received and highly regarded by the College's feeder high schools.

4. The Basic Skills Initiative/Student Success Initiative, currently titled the Student Success Committee, meets regularly and is composed of faculty from various academic disciplines, including math and English. However, assessment matters, including placement issues, are primarily addressed by MAC.

5. A comprehensive disproportionate impact study was conducted in fall 2009 titled "Prerequisite, Co-requisite, and Limitations on Enrollment Challenges Report Target Course Success Rates & Disproportionate Impact Study." This study was done in accordance with Title 5, §55003.

6. A comprehensive disproportionate impact study was conducted in spring 2009 titled "Prerequisite, Co-requisite, and LOE Challenges Report Target Course Success Rates & Disproportionate Impact Study." This study was done in accordance with Title 5, §55003.

7. A Matriculation Services Refusal Report was completed in February 2010.

Planning Agenda

B.3.f.

The college should investigate the feasibility of transferring its old microfilm images to the current document imaging system.

Response to Planning Agenda

The cost of digitizing all microfilm transcripts on file was deemed cost prohibitive due to statewide budget cuts. A fireproof safe was purchased to house the most used microfilm cartridges in the A&R department for convenient retrieval of student records. Microfilm rarely used is housed in a vault located in the Administration building. To further address quick access of microfilm records, a new viewing machine that displays records more legibly was also purchased.

Planning Agenda

B.4.

> **There is currently discussion in some of the master planning committees and the Faculty Senate that is focused on additional planning, evaluation, and improvement of student learning outcomes as they relate to student success. At their meeting in early March of 2004, the Student Services Master Planning committee adopted the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Model described by Drs. Rudmann and Gabriner in their "Learning Outcomes Assessment in Student Services" series. A SPEC retreat has been scheduled for March 25th, which would include discussion of the steps each unit in Student Services must take in defining, establishing and evaluating student learning outcomes for the institution.**

Response to Planning Agenda

All Student Services programs have established and assessed a minimum of three SLOs to date. All Student Services programs have completed a program review within the last five years. The component to which we are now directing our attention is the completion of the Three Year Plan which calls for the evaluation of changes made due to the SLO results and any revisions that need to be made. If resources are requested, a clear relationship to an SLO(s) must be present.

Planning Agenda—Standard IIC

C.1.a.

> **1—While there has been no formal measurable assessment of quantity, quality, depth, and variety of the library collection, there are policies and processes active to remove old and unused materials on an ongoing basis. To improve our evaluation of the quantity, currency, depth, and variety of library services, an ongoing statistical study will be implemented using the report-generating function of our online catalog system. SIRSI will allow for gathering of data, including number of materials held by subject area, number of various types of material held (e.g., video recordings, audio tapes, reserve books, etc.), frequency of use of materials by subject area, and age of materials by copyright date. This will allow for a closer monitoring of quantity, usage, and quality of the collection to better inform future collection development decisions.**

> **2—In the future, the college would like all learning support services to work together to provide the same level and consistency of training, access, and support for students. In addition, the college needs to develop a plan to analyze and evaluate the success of these services in relation to student learning outcomes. As part of this plan, LINC will devise a way to measure and track results in terms of Student Learning Outcomes and in conjunction with the district-wide efforts related to SLO's.**

Response to Planning Agenda

C.1. a

1. The LRC director and faculty librarians have developed formal measures to evaluate the quality, quantity, and use of library materials through two means: 1) The SIRSI automated library system has been used to develop reports on the number of materials held by subject area, number of various types of material held (e.g., video recordings, audio tapes, reserve books, etc.), frequency of use of materials by subject area, and age of materials

by copyright date; 2) In addition, the library subscribes to a collection evaluation service through OCLC which allows for assessment of the library collection by age and number across subject areas as well as comparing the Merced College collection to the collections of similar institutions. SIRSI reports have been used for collection development since 2005. The OCLC service has been used since 2007.

2. Learning support services are now partners in the Student Success Committee efforts. On the Merced campus, two deans are responsible for coordinating the efforts. Dr. Mario Cordova, Dean of Student Services, Special Programs, has responsibility for student services learning support within the EOPS area. Dean Thomas Ray has responsibility for the instructional learning support services such as the tutorial center. At this time, SLOs for those efforts fall within the purview of the program review of each area. The Student Success Committee has not taken the lead in SLOs for the overall learning support services.

Planning Agenda

C.1.b.

The new three unit LR30 research methods course, upon implementation in the Fall of 2004, will have new information competency exit skills which will align with those standards which have been issued by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. In addition, a pre and post test has been devised to measure student outcomes in library orientation classes. This quiz is currently being beta tested in selected key classes, particularly those meeting most or all of the required information competencies for graduation. The next step on the institutional level would involve revising the campus-wide information competency skills so that they also reflect the current Community College standards. The Curriculum Committee would be responsible for this institutional-level implementation. Currently, student learning outcomes for Merced College will be developed at the course, program and institutional level through a five-year plan adopted by the Instructional Master Planning Committee in the Spring of 2004. The IMPC has been given the charge of coordinating the Student Learning Outcomes process on the campus. The Student Learning Outcomes Director will facilitate the development of course-level and program-level outcomes with the discipline faculty. Program-level outcomes will be developed in coordination with the Program Review process. Institutional-level outcomes will be developed, adopted, and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees.

Response to Planning Agenda

LRNR 30 now has information competency skills aligned with the proposed Board of Governors standards within the course outline of record. The pre- and post-tests for library orientations have been given, assessed, and revised based upon the assessment every semester since 2005. In fall 2009, the Curriculum Committee voted to establish a task force to review institutional information and computer competencies. SLOs have been developed at the course, program, and institutional level. Institutional learning outcomes have been developed and adopted, but have not been evaluated.

Planning Agenda

C.1.b. cont.

LINC believes that the more faculty that are involved in Learning Support Services, the

stronger those services will be. Faculty can identify student difficulties and develop programs that directly support the specific needs of the students. We would like to encourage more faculty involvement with tutor training, study groups, and other programs that will give the students the skills needed for success.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Student Success Committee has had oversight over Basic Skills program funds from the State of California. Faculty have taken the lead to provide many opportunities for staff development in the area of learning support for full-time and adjunct professors, with programs such as learning communities, supplemental instruction, study central, and the writing center.

Planning Agenda

C.1.c.
Due to financial constraints there are no plans to increase access through either more open hours or more staff or equipment. The primary goal at this time is to make more of the databases accessible from remote (off campus) locations.

Response to Planning Agenda

The library temporarily increased hours during the 2008-2009 academic year using basic skills funds. All but one (98 percent) of the library databases are currently available to off campus students through the Merced College Portal.

Planning Agenda

C.1.c. cont.
LINC's plan is to use multiple strategies to change this perception, so that more students utilize the learning support services before they get into academic difficulty. The most immediate strategy will be to develop a common mission statement for the programs represented in LINC and distribute this message consistently to all students.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Student Success Committee developed a webpage of learning support services called "Want Good Grades" that provided information on programs available to the general student population. The SSPIRE grant provided funds for a Study Central location that sponsored workshops on learning strategies and provided a central location for students to obtain help as well as guidance on other services available on campus.

Planning Agenda

C.1.d.
1. Increase staff vigilance in out of sight areas and near stairwells.
2. Ensure that plans for the new Learning Resources Center help diminish these security issues.

Response to Planning Agenda

In the library, staff members walk through the entire building at regular intervals. The new library facility has more line of sight supervision over the student areas and a new theft prevention security system.

Planning Agenda

C.1.d. cont.

Recommendations for strategies to address the issues of intrusions and theft of our instructional support equipment are being developed by the Campus Security Committee and will be presented in May of 2004. In terms of technical support for the specific areas that have to share technical support hours, we will seek administration approval of a nineteen-hour a week position for a technical support person specifically for these areas.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Campus Security Committee did not complete the task of devising strategies for reducing and preventing theft of instructional support equipment. The 19-hour position intended to assist in providing support for shared technology was not developed or sent forward for approval.

Planning Agenda

C.2.

Merced College is currently beginning the process of implementing student learning outcomes campus-wide. The LRC director and faculty librarians will continue to play active roles in this process. The entrance/exit examination, currently in beta testing, will be refined and expanded to include a larger cross-section of orientation classes. Outcomes have already been incorporated into the learning resources curriculum, and planning is underway to determine how best to evaluate and track the outcome testing results. The ultimate objective is to develop a uniform, valid, and reliable testing instrument to measure achievement and teaching effectiveness and provide feedback to aid in improving the performance of instructors and students.

Response to Planning Agenda

The pre- and post-tests for library orientations have been given, assessed, and revised based upon the assessment every semester since 2005. LRNR SLOs have been developed and assessed every semester and the syllabus has been modified following this assessment and the dialogue of library professors and librarians.

Planning Agenda

C.2. cont.

LINC has a plan to document the evolution of college learning support programs so that staff will be able to develop a uniform system to evaluate the effectiveness of learning support services. The college wants to develop an evaluation system that addresses and maintains a consistent level of services for our students, but allows each program its own unique way of addressing student learning outcomes.

Response to Planning Agenda

The evaluation of the learning support programs continues to be completed through the program review of each area. The Carnegie, MDRC and SSPIRE grants offered an opportunity for evaluation of effectiveness of the various learning support programs they sponsored. Each had specific reporting requirements, and those results were shared widely across campus.

Planning Agenda—Standard III Resources

A.1.a.

1. The Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan should be reviewed and updated, since it was last updated in 1994. 2. Guidelines and specifications for the hiring of administrators (vice-presidents and deans) should be established in board policy in conjunction with the Faculty Senate.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. This was not completed, new Human Resources (HR) team will complete by 7/1/2011.

2. This was not completed, will be completed by 7/1/2011.

Planning Agenda

A.1.b.

Staff and administrator evaluations should be completed according to Board Policy 4024 and the schedule established by Human Resources.

Response to Planning Agenda

Faculty members under the direction of the Academic Senate president have formed a task force to propose a process of administrator evaluations that includes faculty input.

Planning Agenda

A,1.c.

As the college develops Student Learning Outcomes, the appropriate constituencies should discuss the matter of including them into faculty evaluations.

Response to Planning Agenda

A campuswide discussion on the use of SLOs has resulted in the inclusion of SLOs under professional duties of full-time faculty members. The College has determined that faculty who are responsible for curriculum and instruction should be full participants and facilitators of the self-reflective SLO process for the benefit of their students.

Planning Agenda

A.1.d.

The Faculty and Classified Senates and the Board of Trustees should discuss the creation of formal codes of ethics for faculty, staff, and administration.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Academic Senate has adopted a faculty code of ethics that ensures that faculty understand their professional duties and the decorum to which they are held. The code of ethics was disseminated to all personnel by way of an electronic message. A further recommendation is made to have the code of ethics printed in the faculty handbook beginning in 2010 academic year.

Planning Agenda

A.2.

1. Research the impact of potential retirements of faculty, administrators, and classi-

fied staff; 2. Consider staffing needs – custodial and otherwise – which arise from new buildings, expanded programs, and off-campus locations; 3. Hire enough faculty to meet the full-time obligation; 4. Avoid making future decisions on staffing until waivers are secured and state budgets finalized.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. This was not completed, but will be completed by 7/1/2010.

2. MCCD meets this obligation.

3. Currently MCCD meets this obligation.

4. MCCD is currently meeting this obligation.

Planning Agenda

A.3.a.
1. Complete updating Board Policies; 2. To better publicize hiring procedures, they should be included in both the faculty and classified handbooks.

Response to Planning Agenda

The hiring procedures are now included in the faculty handbook.

Planning Agenda

A.4.a.
1. Update the college's Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan; 2. Offer a Flex Day workshop to better train hiring committees and division chairs on diversity issues; 3. Investigate avenues for increasing diversity in the applicant pool and supporting the college's diverse personnel.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. This was not completed, but HR plans to complete by 7/1/2011.

2. Workshops were held to train hiring committee on diversity issues.

3. This was not completed, but HR plans to complete by 8/1/2011.

Planning Agenda

A.4.b.
1. Investigate avenues for increasing diversity in the college's staff; 2. Regularly assess and publish data on the diversity of college staff.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. This was not completed, but HR plans to complete by 7/1/2011.

2. This obligation is currently being met, annually this information is being sent to the Vice Chancellor's office.

Planning Agenda

A.4.c.
Publish student grievance procedures in the student handbook for easier access by students.

Response to Planning Agenda

The student handbook has been discontinued. Grievance procedures are available on the Merced College website.

Planning Agenda

A.5.a.

1. The college community needs to discuss expanding staff development opportunities that include travel; 2. The Board should consider allowing for flex credit during regular college operating hours since it encourages growth and development; 3. Continue the activities of the Teaching and Learning Academy.

Response to Planning Agenda

Merced College has modified its flex activity policy to allow faculty to participate in these activities when they are not scheduled to teach or during office hours. This allows faculty members to participate in professional development and research. This change in policy will encourage faculty members to participate in activities that take place during the traditional school week that would be beneficial to their development as instructors.

Planning Agenda

A.6.

1. Research the impact of consolidating and/or freezing positions on the efficiency and morale of college staff; 2. Hire enough staff to meet obligations as funds become available; 3. Avoid future decisions on staffing until state budgets are finalized.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. No research has been completed regarding the morale of the college staff.

2. Due to state budget cuts many positions have been frozen.

3. No future decisions on staffing have been made at this time.

Planning Agenda

B.

Merced College should continue to plan for both short and long-term physical resource needs.

Response to Planning Agenda

This is being done through the Facilities Master Planning Committee.

Planning Agenda

B.1.

Merced College will continue to explore alternative funding sources where applicable. The college will also explore options to extend the life of current equipment.

Response to Planning Agenda

Planning agenda is completed. Merced College requests funding for Capital Outlay Projects through the Chancellor's Office. In 2002, Merced College passed two bonds. The College actively competes for state funds to maintain and build new educational facilities.

Life cycle funding is provided to the amount available.

Planning Agenda

B.1.a.

The college will continue the master planning process to ensure that the building, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities occurs in a timely and orderly fashion.

Response to Planning Agenda

Planning agenda is completed. The College is in the process of updating its Facilities Master Plan and its Educational Master Plan. The District utilizes the FUSION system, a web-based suite of tools to support the integrated management and reporting on facilities throughout the state. The FUSION system integrates space inventory management, facilities assessment, enrollment forecasting, facilities planning, and project fiscal management.

Planning Agenda

B.1.b.

In the spring of 2004, construction will begin on the Business Resource Center, a 25,000 square foot facility located in the center of downtown Merced. This new facility will consolidate classes and programs from three different locations. The plans for the building are in the final phase and coordination with the Division of the State Architect will begin very soon. Occupancy of the building is expected in late 2005. During the summer of 2004, construction of the North Loop Road, a necessary infrastructure project, will begin. In January of 2005, the project to remodel the Science Building will begin as well as construction of the Learning Resources Center. Both of these projects will require approximately 12 to 18 months to complete.

Response to Planning Agenda

Planning agenda is completed. The North Loop Road was completed in 2005. The Learning Resources Center opened in spring 2007. The Science Building re-opened in fall 2007, and the Business Resource Center opened in spring 2008.

Planning Agenda

B.2.

Continue to conduct regular, preventive maintenance inspections. Provide funding for necessary repairs to maintain the physical plant in the condition necessary for quality education.

Response to Planning Agenda

Planning agenda is completed. The Maintenance Department staff conducts annual maintenance inspections districtwide. The director of Maintenance regularly requests funding to update and repair equipment through the scheduled maintenance process. The FUSION system is utilized to access deficiencies noted through the bi-annual facilities condition assessment program.

Planning Agenda

C.1.a.

  1. **Plans have been developed for a complete disaster recovery mechanism through a**

consortium of community colleges. If possible, these plans should be implemented; 2. The college should continue to engage in planning for the development of web-based registration and Web Advisor, which will more effectively help students plan their course of study and register for classes. Eventually, this will also help counselors and instructors better manage enrollment needs and issues, including waiting lists, prerequisites, and course sequence; 3. The college should continue its current efforts in re-evaluating and planning for a more extensive distance education program. The college recently secured two new servers, upgraded to a new edition of WebCT, and will be developing staff training workshops to cover the different aspects and needs of teaching online. There are a number of faculty members who have taken online courses offered by Cerro Coso College on teaching distance education. These faculty are now teaching online or are planning to do so. Recently, many faculty have expressed an interest in developing courses online, and flex workshops and informational meetings are now being planned. It is the intent of the college to increase its online offerings. The faculty senate has approved a resolution to support moving forward in planning for more distance education; 4. Also in the planning stages is a student help desk. Since student use of technology has increased on campus, and courses are increasingly requiring the use of technology to research and write papers and promote student presentations, the need to help our students with technology has become a more pressing need. Just as our faculty and staff have a help desk to help them in technology use, our students will soon be able to do the same. The work in this area should continue.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. An ITS disaster recovery plan is in place as of fall 2009.

2. Components and status of web registration are:

a. Single sign-on to the student portal providing access for students to library databases, college-sponsored email, student file storage and WebAdvisor.

b. CCCApply is in place and student data is being loaded into Datatel.

c. Students are notified via email that their application has been accepted and they may proceed to the next step.

d. An online orientation is available.

e. Proctored Accuplacer assessment is in place and student Accuplacer data is being uploaded to Datatel in a test mode.

f. Academic planning is being expanded via eCounseling and the use of eAdvisor software.

g. As WebAdvisor registration is taking place, Datatel pre-co-requisite checking is taking place except for complex combination exceptions.

h. Students may use e-commerce capabilities to pay registration fees and to par for and order textbooks.

i. Distance education course management software is being hosted by Blackboard.

j. A student help desk has been operational since fall 2006, providing technical support to students.

Planning Agenda

C.1.b.

1. Formalize specific surveys for administration, faculty, staff, and students, based on needs; 2. Formalize a specific survey for potential employers and transfer schools; 3. As we plan our student learning outcomes, it has become more evident that training in information technology, technology applications in the classroom, and technology as a powerful research tool are all necessary components of the college's education plan. Student learning outcomes in this area are directly related to student success (and college accreditation). The college should continue planning to discover the best methods for training for its students, helping to provide for their technology needs, and providing them with an online help desk as soon as possible.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. The District hired a staff member to train faculty in the use of the Blackboard course management system.

2. The Microsoft IT Academy has been acquired with over 300 courses in technology. Topics range from the use of Microsoft Office application software to SharePoint development, as well as server setup and configuration.

3. Training on Datatel is ongoing and has recently included the use of the Datatel Web Interface and accessing the Operation Data Store (ODS) database.

Planning Agenda

C.1.c.

1. Plans have been developed for a complete disaster recovery mechanism through a consortium of community colleges. These plans should be implemented soon; 2. With the continuing growth of technology and software use in the classroom, a campus wide plan for software and hardware upgrading should be developed and budgetary considerations established to address technological instructional needs. The college needs to set aside funds for the replacement of equipment, including hardware and software, in order to maintain reliable instructional and student service activities and programs. Consideration should be given to hiring additional technical staff at the Los Banos campus, particularly as they will be moving to a new facility and expect to expand their use of technology. The current technician does not have the time to take care of current needs; 3. Serious consideration should be given for additional technical staff to support the expanding discipline-related computer labs at the main campus. The current staff members are fully employed, and there are labs without dedicated technical support. Overall, the college must take into account the long-term costs of maintaining technology so that it works well enough to carry out the programs and services it offers its students. If we are committed to student learning outcomes, with that commitment must come technical staff and current equipment to make sure students reach those outcomes.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. The ITS disaster recovery plan is in place as of fall 2009.

2. A five-year life cycle refreshment of equipment is the standard at Merced College. An inventory of computers used throughout the District provides insight into the age of computers used by students, faculty, multimedia classrooms utilized by faculty members, classified staff, and managers. Recently, Technology and Institutional Research (TIR)

has been asked to address all computer technology within the District, both new and refreshed.

3. TIR now oversees all instructional labs throughout the District.

Planning Agenda

C.1.d.

The Technology Master Planning Committee (TMPC) is currently engaged in discussions about the possibility of the campus moving from its current digital telephone switch to voice over Internet protocol (VoIP). This functionally may provide enhanced services at reduced costs. Additionally TMPC is investigating the potential of using blade computers for instructional use, and, eventually, for all staff computers within the district. The investigation is preliminary but may provide direction for meeting future equipment needs while reducing equipment costs, enhancing services to end users, and allowing technical support staff to meet additional needs. This dialogue feeds into and is evaluated by EMPC, the committee to which TMPC reports. The goal is to insure sound applications of technology which reflects the educational master plan for the college.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. The phone switch is fully digital, allowing when and where appropriate, the District to take advantage of VoIP technology.

2. ITS is currently developing plans for one of the instructional labs, slated for hardware refresh, to be virtualized.

Planning Agenda

C.2.

1. We are continually using input from the above-mentioned areas to plan for the needs of the college and the integration of technology in all aspects of college activities. Even though money is presently limited, the planning process should continue to gather input from the different areas in order to satisfy the present and future needs of the college and the community it serves. Plans for future endeavors such as expanding distance education and college offerings to more of the community and the use of Web Advisor to better serve student enrollment and matriculation should continue in order to more efficiently serve present needs and to be prepared in the event of improved funding. Plans to consider and utilize the Total Cost of Operation model should be revisited in light of changing funding opportunities; 2. Assessment of all areas of planning, including technology, will be conducted as part of the Educational Master Planning Committee's cycle of evaluation, planning and assessment.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. Planning is an integral component of the Technology and Research Master Planning Committee (TRMPC). This includes searching for ways to upgrade currently used software, such as Windows 7, Office 2010, Datatel 18, or Server 2008. Installation of new programs, such as SharePoint or Datatel SharePoint Portal, takes place only after careful evaluation and planning.

Planning Agenda

D.2.a.

Regarding the allocation of funds for student learning programs and services, Merced College might consider making CBRR responsible for reviewing the annual budget and comparing the overall student-related allocations to other similar colleges. There are publications addressing this type of comparison, such as Financial Statistics for the Current Cost of Education.

Response to Planning Agenda

A change to the shared governance process of typing budget allocations with the priorities of the College's planning committees is proceeding. The annual program review process will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the budget allocation process in meeting college priorities. The Budget Committee, formerly CBRR, well review financial documents, such as the quarterly status report (CCFS-311Q), the annual District audit, and the Annual Financial and Budget Report (CCFS-311) to monitor the college's fiscal stability.

Planning Agenda

D.2.b.

Regarding budget information, Merced College should consider providing a detailed budget on the CBRR web page.

Response to Planning Agenda

The budget, as adopted by the Board of Trustees, is posted to the Budget Committee's website as well as to the College's web page. The College is in the process of updating its webpage using Sharepoint to be completed in 2010. The Committee Budget's web page is being redesigned to make the web page more user friendly.

Planning Agenda

D.2.g.

The college should consider assigning CBRR the task of reviewing the budget development process. CBRR could make annual recommendations on improving the process itself.

Response to Planning Agenda

The College is currently reviewing its shared governance process including tying the budget development process and the allocation of funds to address program review, SLOs and district priorities. The Budget Committee is reviewing the entire budget process tying it to the planning process.

Planning Agenda—Standard IV Leadership and Governance

A.1.

1. Complete construction of the presently incomplete web sites for Classified Senate, Program Review, and Facilities Master Planning Committee; 2. Update Student Services and Instructional Services Master Planning Committee web sites; 3. Provide more complete information about membership of the Committee for Budget Review and Recommendation on its MC Net site; 4. Develop an effective and accessible medium for communication for the MCFA.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. The Classified Senate site is still under construction. There is a Program Review website for Instructional, Student Services and Administrative Services Program Reviews. Facilities Master Planning Committee has completed its website.

2. The Student Services Master Planning Committee website has been updated. The Instructional Master Planning Committee website has been completely revamped and updated.

3. There is now complete and updated information about membership for the Budget Committee on the website.

4. There is now an effective, accessible, and up-to-date medium for communication for the Faculty Association, located on the website under organizations.

Planning Agenda

A.5

The institution will develop a systematic means of evaluating decision-making structures and processes.

Response to Planning Agenda

In spring 2009, all master planning committees had a retreat to revise the planning document and shared decision-making processes to coordinate with resource allocation structures. A new planning document was developed and refined during several Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) meetings. A subcommittee was then created in October 2009 to address creating a calendar for implementing the plan. EMPC has finalized the planning document (the Master Planning Handbook) that coordinates with resource allocation structures and the new plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2009.

Planning Agenda

B.1.f.

Although the previous methods for orienting Board members met their needs, it is believed that improvements will be needed if a trustee is elected who is not familiar with Merced College and/or the California Community College system. The Board of Trustees will develop a more formalized orientation system for new Board members.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Board was supposed to discuss its orientation system at its spring 2008 retreat, which did not take place. This topic was discussed during the Board's May 2009 retreat and again in June 2010. Since incumbent candidates have been re-elected, this issue continues to have a low priority because no new board members have been elected in over twelve years.

Planning Agenda

B.1.i.

The Board's self-assessment process will be reviewed to compare it with the new standards at their Spring 2004 Board Workshop. Their current self-assessment was created when the previous standards were in effect.

Response to Planning Agenda

The District received a new updated Board Assessment Guide which was reviewed in December 2009 and will be considered for adoption at a later date. Board Policy 2745—Board Self-Evaluation covers the procedure for the self-assessment process

Planning Agenda

B.2.b.

1. There is a need to perform additional research concerning the institution's effectiveness, student learning outcomes, institutional planning processes, and the resource allocation process; 2. It is recommended that a user-friendly mechanism be developed to allow faculty and other employees to learn how to access the District's databases. This will allow information to be extracted in a timely way, which does not require the assistance of the Research Analyst; 3. There does not appear to be a set mechanism in place that specifically evaluates research except when specially requested by the department head or the head of Research and Development.

Response to Planning Agenda

1. Technology and Institutional Research (TIR) proposed establishing institutional effectiveness measures through the use of a "balanced scorecard" with metrics established by EMPC. Each metric would include historic trend data, provide delineated measures of established goals, current status against the goal, and be graphically represented on the appropriate college website (internet and/or intranet). Examples of proposed metrics include: FTES, WSCH/FTEF, Student Success, Student Retention, Student Persistence, Online Enrollments, Fiscal Measures (budget and expenditures). A draft Balanced Scorecard of Institutional Effectiveness has been developed.

2. As the scorecard was developed a mechanism was also developed to automatically gather and populate metrics from Datatel. This system is user friendly, web-based, and allows for individuals to seek answers to research questions without direct assistance. Ad hoc requests for research continue to dominate the time of the researcher. The continued need for additional research has prompted recommendations from the Student Success Initiative focus groups to fund a second research analyst. As faculty develop course SLOs, there is a greater need to track student progress. More than 150,000 data points are to be managed each semester to adequately assess students against course SLOs. A presentation was made to faculty at convocation and discussions have taken place at the SLO steering committee meetings.

3. Discussions have taken place that would facilitate an organized mechanism to assess and assign research requests.

4. TIR has made presentations to the Academic Senate, EMPC, the vice presidents and the president on the development of a Balanced Scorecard for Institutional Effectiveness. The metrics were developed in conjunction with the assistance of the research analyst.

5. The high cost of an appropriate data warehouse infrastructure has hampered significant progress. EMPC has established a subcommittee to review alternatives.

6. The SLO steering committee concurs with the need to establish a system for tracking student progress against established SLOs.

Planning Agenda

B.2.b. cont.

The Planning Handbook should be updated in conjunction with EMPC and the other master planning committees and under the supervision of the President and Board of Trustees.

Response to Planning Agenda

The Planning Handbook was updated and sent to the Board for approval in December 2009. The resource allocation process now includes specific information on how funds are allocated with respect to each instructional Program Review request. Posting of program review data has enabled faculty to access data without having to query the database. Evaluation of data for instructional programs is conducted by faculty involved with program review. Instructional program review data analysis is progressing. The Master Planning Handbook is available on the intranet. The review of the planning process will continue.

Planning Agenda

B.2.b. cont.

Evaluation of student learning outcomes and institutional and shared governance planning should be parallel and possibly convergent activities. A methodology for evaluating planning effectiveness should be developed.

Response to Planning Agenda

The program review coordinator is appointed by the Academic Senate with full release time to organize data and train faculty on SLO assessment and program review. The SLO planning committee met with representatives from Student Services, EMPC, IMPC, program review, the SLO coordinator, and TIR. As part of the spring 2007 review process, SLO and program review implementation were integrated. The Office of Institutional Research has posted SLO research data on courses and programs for Program Review. The resource allocation process now includes specific information on how funds are allocated with respect to each area's program review. Posting of program review data has enabled faculty to access data without having to query the database. Evaluation of data for instructional programs is conducted by faculty involved with program review, as well as other areas on campus. The Planning Handbook for allocation of resources includes a nexus between program review, institutional SLOs and SLOs. Master planning committees made priorities for funding one-time dollars based on whether or not a program review was completed and whether or not the item was requested in the program review. At this time there is no methodology for evaluating planning effectiveness, but the new model does have an annual cyclical response of expenditures as related to planning.

D. LONGITUDINAL STUDENT DATA/STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

By several measures and reports, overall success and achievement rates for Merced College students are comparable to or exceed that of other similarly situated community college students.

Merced College continues to focus on improving student outcomes and our 2008-2009 performance was within our peer group range on all key indicators of student success, and we exceeded our peer average on four indicators: Persistence, Vocational Course Completions, Improve-

ment Rate for Basic Skills Courses, and Improvement Rate for English as a Second Language Courses.

Merced College - College Peer Grouping 2003-2004 to 2008-2009

Time Frame	Merced College - College Peer Grouping	College's Rate	Peer Group Average	Peer Group Low	Peer Group High
2003-04 to 2008-09	Student Progress and Achievement Rate	41.0	42.5	26.0	54.1
2003-04 to 2008-09	Percent of Students Who Earned at Least 30 Units	69.1	72.1	63.0	81.7
Fall 2007 to Fall 2008	Persistence Rate	66.5	59.9	39.8	74.9
2008-2009	Annual Successful Course Completion Rate for Credit Vocational Courses	78.6	75.1	63.6	87.3
2008-2009	Annual Successful Course Completion Rate for Credit Basic Skills Courses	51.2	60.0	49.5	75.5
2006-07 to 2008-09	Improvement Rate for Credit Basic Skills Courses	54.8	51.5	40.6	62.8
2006-07 to 2008-09	Improvement Rate for Credit ESL Courses	78.4	54.8	8.6	78.4

Source: 2010 Accountability Report of Community Colleges, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, Merced College student outcomes ranked favorably when compared to a national peer grouping consisting of 31 public community colleges located in the Western United States that had similar enrollment.

Degrees and Certificates Awarded

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES AWARDED						Overall Variance 2004/05 –2009/10	
Academic Year	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	%	#
Associate of Arts	407	385	477	569	506	24.32%	99
Associate of Science	66	54	79	106	76	15.15%	10
Certificate	73	118	144	110	132	80.82%	59
TOTAL	546	557	700	785	714	30.77%	168

Source: DataMart, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

During 2008-2009, Merced College students earned 785 awards (675 associate degrees and 110 certificates) in 53 disciplines, representing a 43.77 percent increase from 2005-2006. Although 2009-2010 saw a slight decrease of 9.04 percent from the peak in the 2008-2009 academic year and a departure from the upward trend in degrees and certificates earned, it is still a 30.77 percent increase from 2005-2006. This decrease could be attributed to the discontinuation of the University

Studies associate of arts program, which may have resulted in more students transferring without obtaining a degree. It also led to awards earned being spread across several disciplines.

Student Completion and Transfer Rates

In compliance with the Student-Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-542), it is District policy to make available its completion and transfer rates to all current and prospective students. Beginning in fall 2002, and consistent with statewide methodology, a cohort of all certificate, degree, and transfer-seeking first-time, full-time students were tracked over a three-year period. Their completion and transfer rates are listed below.

Fall 2002 Cohort	Merced College Rates
Completion Rate	31.1%
Transfer Rate	22.0%

Note: These rates do not represent the success rates of the entire student population at Merced College. Also, the rates do not account for student outcomes occurring after this three-year tracking period.

Student Financial Aid
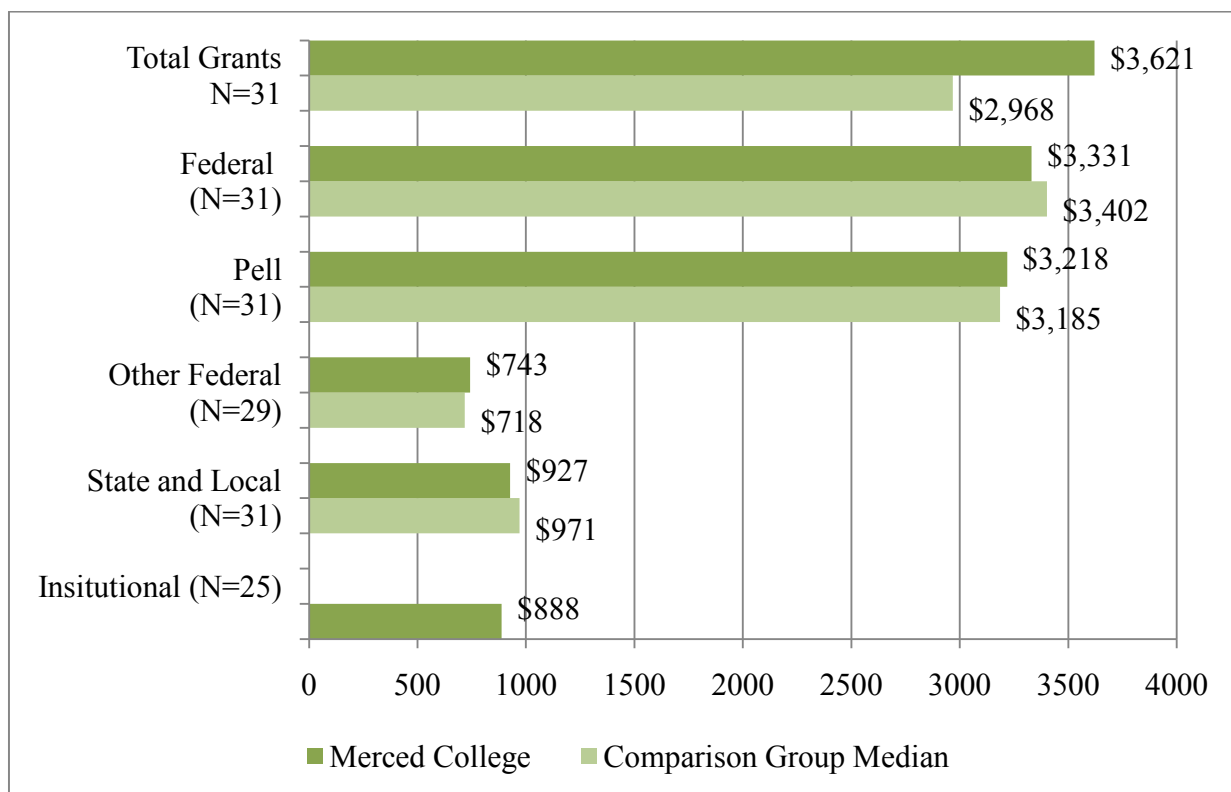
Source: DataMart, California Community Colleges

The Financial Aid office provides significant information and assistance to students and their families to demystify financial aid options and application procedures. As a result, an estimated 69.89 percent of students received some form of financial aid during the 2008-2009 academic

year. Of those, 34.16 percent received federal grants averaging $2,576 per student, and 65.84 percent received any state and/or local grants averaging $454 per student. (California Community Colleges, DataMart) Many students are low income and rely more heavily on Pell Financial Aid grants than their peers: 28.41 percent of Merced College students were awarded Pell Financial Aid grants, compared to 14.4 percent of community college students statewide.

According to a 2009 National Center for Education Statistics comparison study, Merced College students qualify for and receive financial aid in greater amounts than students within its peer group of 31 similarly situated institutions of higher education. On average, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking Merced College students enrolled during 2007-2008 received $3,621 in total financial aid vs. $2,968 in total financial aid for students within the peer group. Reflecting the overall low incomes of the Merced County region, Merced College students received more ($3,218) in income-eligible Pell grant aid than their peers ($3,185). (NCES statistics; data apply to full-time, first-time degree- or certificate-seeking students).

Systemwide indicators

Getting an education at a California community college is a great investment. An analysis of income trends of a 2003-2004 cohort of community college graduates revealed a significant and rapid increase in earnings. The median income at graduation for this cohort was $28,828 during 2003. Within one year of degree or certificate attainment, this cohort's median income increased to $43,760 and continued to increase each year thereafter. By 2007, this cohort's median income increased 100 percent over 2003 levels, to $57,594.

Compared to all Californians and California households, 2003 median income levels of the 2003-2004 cohort was $8,150 less than other Californians ($28,828 vs. $34,922, respectively), and $20,492 less than California median household income ($28,828 vs. $49,320, respectively). This earning gap closed upon degree or certificate attainment for California community college graduates. By 2004, the cohort's median income exceeded the California per capita median income. By 2007, the cohort's median income exceeded California household median income.

Student Progress and Achievement: Vocational / Occupational / Workforce Development Income Trend for Students Attaining Degree or certificate in 2003-2004 (N=4,933)
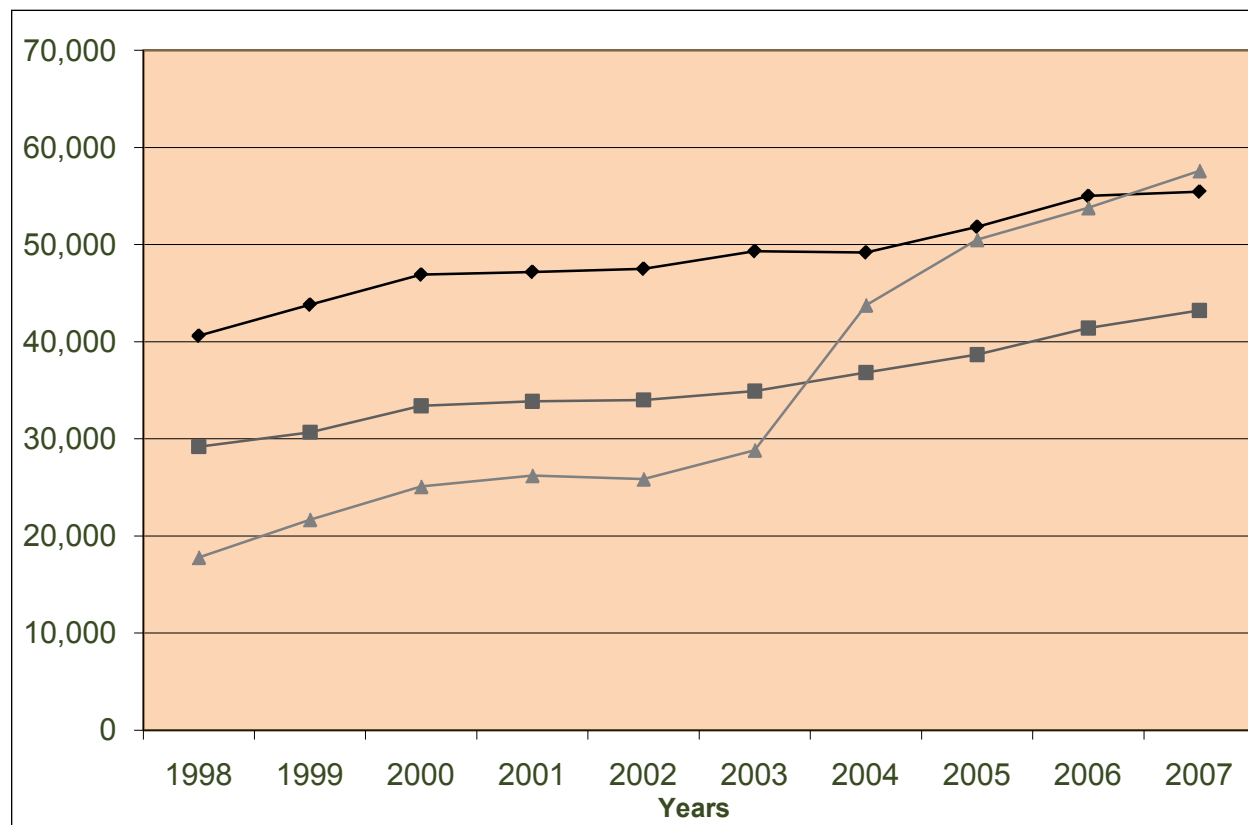
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
CA Median Household Income	40,600	43,800	46,900	47,177	47,500	49,320	49,185	51,831	55,000	55,450
CA Per Capita Income	29,195	30,679	33,394	33,869	34,006	34,922	36,830	38,670	41,404	43,221
CCC Median Income 2003-04 Cohort	17,788	21,685	25,082	26,212	25,856	28,828	43,760	50,502	53,784	57,594

Source: ARCC 2010 Report: System wide Indicators, pages 20-21

E. STATUS OF PROGRAM REVIEW AND PLANNING

"The Commission expects that institutions are at the Sustained Continuous Quality Improvement level for Program Review and Planning on the Commission's Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness. The college should describe how ongoing instructional and non-instructional program reviews are tied to the systematic institutional planning and resource allocation processes in support of institutional effectiveness."

Merced College meets the Commission's expectation that colleges are at the Sustained Continuous Quality Improvement level for Program Review and Planning on the Commission's Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness.

The College has developed a program review process that is timely, comprehensive, and meets the needs of all college programs and departments. All college departments are committed to the completion of program reviews on a regular, published schedule. Instructional and student services program reviews incorporate SLOs and achievement data as key components of these processes. Through carefully developed master planning processes, the program review process is fully integrated into college planning and resource allocation.

F. STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

"The Commission recognizes institutions are in varying stages and developing and assessing student learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level. The college should describe evidence gathered to date, how it is being used, and what plans exist for continued expansion of this effort."

Merced College has made significant progress in the development of SLOs over the past several years. Currently, all college classes and student services programs have defined SLOs. All Student Services programs, 95 percent of all college programs, and approximately 35 percent of individual courses have ongoing assessment of learning outcomes. The College has defined institutional SLOs, all of which are assessment on an ongoing basis.

The fall 2009 Accreditation Self Study Opinion Survey indicates that more than two-thirds of faculty agree that the "college community engages in dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning." All courses list their SLOs on the class syllabi and students are increasingly aware of their importance.

SLOs are the primary method used to evaluate student success, as well as the integrity of curricula and programs. The equivalent of a full-time faculty coordinator has been assigned to expand and improve the collegewide development and assessment of SLOs. The coordinator maintains records of assessment results. In addition to the collegewide coordinator, a student services manager works with all student services programs to assist with the development and analysis for SLOs for those programs.

At least two means of direct or indirect assessment are used, and the specific types of assessment are determined by faculty. In the case of Student Services, the type of assessment is determined by individual departments. SLO course assessment takes place twice during a five-year period.

Data analysis may be completed through a variety of means, including working with the SLO coordinator, Office of Institutional Research, program review, advisory committee meetings, and staff development. With the addition of such resources such as Curricunet, and the additional of more research staff, the pace of assessment of SLO's has increased.

G. DISTANCE LEARNING AND OFF-CAMPUS SITES

Merced College strives to improve educational access and success for all students regardless of their particular circumstances. Classes are offered in a variety of locations, times and delivery methods that meet the needs and preferences of our students **(INTRO17)**.

In addition to day and evening programs at the Merced and Los Banos campuses, Merced

College also provides classes to off-campus locations. In April 2008, the off-campus sites of Mariposa, Dos Palos, and Delhi were visited and approved by ACCJC as educational sites. Other courses are held off-campus in surrounding cities such as Chowchilla and Livingston. Merced College also makes an active effort to reach out to meet community needs by providing contract education courses to local government agencies, chambers of commerce, business and industry.

Merced College's educational center in Los Banos, first established in 1971, serves the residents of the westside of Merced County. Students from Los Banos, Dos Palos, Santa Nella, Gustine, and other local communities have utilized the Los Banos Campus for their higher education needs when travel to Merced proved prohibitive due to distance and travel costs. Historically, the Los Banos Campus has had inadequate facilities and has lacked important science labs. The result was that many students had to travel to the main campus in Merced for advanced classes and labs. With the completion of the new Los Banos Campus in 2007, this need has all but disappeared. Los Banos Campus enrollment, in terms of full-time equivalent students (FTE), was 390.2 in spring 2010, an increase of 104.5 percent over the 190.8 FTE recorded in spring 2007, the last semester in which classes were held at the old campus.

Merced College, along with many other institutions of higher education, began offering distance education classes to meet the needs of students who are increasingly experiencing competing priorities of work, family and college. Distance education students tend to be older, more likely to be employed full-time and attend school part-time. Despite increased demands on their time, today's students benefit due to the proliferation of computer and internet-based technologies that make the asynchronous nature of distance education a viable option for completing their educational goals. In addition to the competing demands that students experience, many Merced students live in rural areas where travel to the main campus is prohibitive. In fact, Merced College serves a largely rural area with District boundaries that include all of Merced County and parts of Madera County. Students also attend Merced College from nearby mountain communities, including Mariposa County, which is not part of the District. A majority of course offerings are held at the main campus in Merced; however, the College has been offering distance education and hybrid classes in order to serve a population that is deterred from taking classes at the main campus or off-site centers due to distance.

In keeping with the nationwide trend, Merced College began offering classes at a distance during 2002. As of 2008, Merced College offered 71 distance education and hybrid courses. Because of the growth in distance education and hybrid offerings, Merced College undertook an analysis of its courses that are offered via this modality in fall 2008. This analysis revealed that students may complete 50 percent or more of the Merced College Associate Degree Breadth Requirement (2008-2009) as well as the California State University (CSU) Breadth Requirements (effective 2007) through distance education. Additionally, students majoring in history may complete 50 percent or more of the major requirements for an associate of arts degree through distance education. Both General Business and Management Information Systems offer a significant number of units for the degree requirement though not yet 50 percent. The College's leadership recently determined that these classes have increased to the point where the Accrediting Commission would consider this change to be substantive in nature and submitted its 2008 Distance Education Substantive Change Proposal.

The courses offered at a distance are under the jurisdiction of Merced College and part of the District's Educational Master Plan to distribute educational opportunities in areas where students have the ability to benefit. Consequently, these classes preclude the need to travel to the main campus or off-campus centers and are offered in an asynchronous mode providing anytime, anyplace access to higher education.

The District serves students with complex and demanding lives, and who reside in a large geographic region which is primarily rural and agricultural in nature. The asynchronous nature of distance education classes provides these students with educational opportunities despite their work and family obligations and busy schedules. Because the District's service area is so widespread, students experience transportation challenges that are overcome by taking distance education courses. College administration has thus recognized that the region would be best served by distributing educational opportunities in an economically feasible manner by offering courses via a distance. This approach supports the District's commitments as stated in the Vision 2020 statement which is contained in the Educational/Facilities Master Plan In Cadence With The Future: 2001-2020.

H. EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT AUDITS AND FEDERAL GRANT INTEGRITY

Information regarding external independent audits as well as information demonstrating integrity in the use of federal grant monies is provided below.

Merced College's audit is performed annually in accordance with U.S. Office of Management and Budget consistent with the Federal OMB Circular A-133 Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations **(INTRO18)**. Merced College, as a recipient of federally funded grants either directly or indirectly (pass through funding), is required to provide financial and compliance information for all federally funded grants. This information is examined by external auditors Matson and Isom to determine if the federally sponsored programs were administered in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. To ensure program integrity, the federal government relies upon audits performed by external, independent auditors. Auditors have a legal and ethical responsibility to perform audits that follow all applicable auditing standards and federal requirements.

OMB Circular A-133 establishes audit requirements and defines federal responsibilities for implementing and monitoring requirements for institutions of higher education and other nonprofit organizations receiving federal awards. The Compliance Supplement is the auditor's handbook in setting forth the compliance provisions of federal assistance programs relevant to the A-133 audit process **(INTRO19)**. Recent audit reports are listed below. *Please direct any questions to the Merced College Office of Grants and Institutional Research or to Merced College Fiscal Services.*

Merced College enjoys a long and stable history of fiscal competence and financial strength. Merced College typically receives unqualified audit opinion in each of the three major areas of scrutiny: financial statements, federal awards, and state awards. The table below summarizes the College's audit opinions from 2004 through 2009 fiscal years. Consistent with its continuous quality improvement practices, Merced College addresses and remediates any weaknesses identified in a timely and effective manner.

Merced College Financial Statements Audit Compliance per U. S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133					
Audit Type	Fiscal Year 2004-2005	Fiscal Year 2005-2006	Fiscal Year 2006-2007	Fiscal Year 2007-2008	Fiscal Year 2008-2009
Financial Statements	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unqualified
Federal Compliance	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unqualified
State Compliance	Unqualified	Qualified	Qualified	Unqualified	Qualified

I. EPILOGUE

As Merced College looks toward its 50th anniversary in 2012, the solid foundation laid down by the College and community over the past four decades will continue to provide structure and support in a rapidly changing educational environment. With student success as its overarching focus, Merced College will no doubt carry on its legacy of providing innovative instructional programs, community-based partnerships and planning, and excellence in all areas of education.

This Accreditation Self-Study provides an abundance of useful statistical information about Merced College and its students. But behind every statistic is a student—many students. And each and every student has a story. While students are the authors of their own lives, Merced College provides the skills and training, support services, and the intellectual challenges and academic rigor that enable them to construct a life story that is profoundly meaningful and immeasurably valuable.

INTRODUCTION LIST OF CITED SOURCES

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

INTRO1   per CCC, 2,184, see: www.cccgis.org; http://gis.deltacollege.edu/DID_County_Overlap/default.aspx

INTRO2   http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06047.html US Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts. Data derived from Population Estimates, Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits, Consolidated Federal Funds Report (Totals 100.4 percent)

INTRO3   2005 Congressional Research Report

INTRO4   http://www.newsweek.com/feature/2010/san-joaquin-valley.html

INTRO5   *The Economist*

INTRO6   U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Area 5-03100 (PUMA5)

INTRO7   U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis

INTRO8   Merced Sun-Star, "Grim Real Estate Statistics: Merced County Leads State in Foreclosures, #6 in Nation" January 14, 2010.

INTRO9   California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

INTRO10   California Employment Development Department/Department of Finance

INTRO11   2008 California Statistical Abstract

INTRO12   American Farmland Trust

INTRO13   Per verbal communication with Keith Griffiths, Stan Alliance, October 2008

INTRO14   San Joaquin Valley Pollution Control District

INTRO15   Central Valley Higher Education Consortium--College Next

INTRO16   Institute for Higher Education, Leadership and Policy

INTRO17   Substantive Change Proposal

INTRO18   http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a133

INTRO19   http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a133_compliance_07_07toc

Abstract of
the Self Study

Abstract of the Self-Study

Since the publication of Merced College's last accreditation self-study in 2004, many changes have occurred at the organizational, physical, instructional, and student support levels. These changes, both necessary and obligatory, have further refined and defined the College's core values and beliefs. They have revitalized the institution's student-centered mission, resulting in innovative ideas and energies. Coupled with a new generation of instructors in the classroom and a new administrative structure in the Office of Instruction, Merced College is prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

With its commitment to physical planning, program development, and a heightened focus on student learning outcomes, program review, and their link to resource allocation, Merced College has prepared this self-study after many months of collaborative dialogue and group and individual investigative analysis. The results of these efforts are explored in this self-study in each of the standards.

STANDARD I: INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

IA—Mission

Merced College's mission and vision statements, as well as the written expression of its core values and beliefs, provide a clear and definite direction toward which the institution pursues its broad educational goals. These guiding principles are defined through a process of collective dialogue and collaborative efforts and reflect the institution's strong commitment to student learning, educational quality, and community-based cultural activities. The College's mission and vision statements and its core values and beliefs recognize the importance of student diversity as an institutional strength. The College respects and values all members of its community by responding to cultural, educational, economic development, and technological needs. This process fosters the institution's commitment to student learning in an ongoing and systematic educational master planning process that is central to the planning decision-making process. This process uses both quantitative and qualitative data for decision-making and links program review, assessment, and academic planning with strategic planning.

IB—Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Since the College's last self-study, the central focus of improving institutional effectiveness has been the development and establishment of student learning outcomes and program review. The achievement of specific learning outcomes, both programmatically and institutionally, drives the master planning processes and forms the basis of all measurable objectives. Student learning outcomes, as well as program review, proceed from a strategic, systematic, data-driven, and evidence-based planning process. The College is committed to a completely transparent and inclusive institutional dialogue that integrates educational master planning with resource allocation. The College's resource allocation model includes an annual program review process that leads to validated program improvements based on qualitative research. Goals are set to improve its effectiveness at many levels, and the College articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms as

evidenced in program review and the achievement of student learning outcomes.

STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

IIA—Instructional Programs

With an overarching focus on student success, Merced College maintains high quality instructional programs across a variety of disciplines. Instruction, however, is not limited to the credit transfer curricula. Numerous opportunities exist for students in the areas of basic skills, career and technical education, business and workforce development, non-credit lifelong learning, and many programs and courses offered through Community Services. The College serves a diverse student population in terms of age and ethnicity. Community Services' annual College for Kids program brings children ages 2-17 to the campus for enrichment and learning activities in the humanities, natural and social sciences, agriculture, health sciences, computer studies, and many other areas. Older adult learners have taken advantage of non-credit classes offered through the Continuing Education office. These include leisure activities such as painting, ceramics, quilting, and many vocational education courses such as computer applications, and medical assisting. Continuing Education also offers English as a Second Language classes to non-English speaking students. These classes and others are held at the main campus in Merced and off-campus at various sites through the District's service region. All course and program development follows a rigorous approval process through the Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Senate.

The College assures the quality and currency of its program offerings through the faculty-led curriculum development and program review process. Faculty members have a continuous dialogue regarding the development, assessment, and implementation of student learning outcomes (SLOs). Instructional program improvement and innovative pedagogic practices result from the College's philosophical and practical application of program review and SLO initiatives.

IIB—Student Support Services

A diverse student population demands a wide spectrum of student support services. Ensuring access to these services, regardless of location or means of instructional delivery, is critical to the College's efforts to create a student-friendly educational experience that is positive, progressive, and marked by success. As part of the institutional evaluation of the quality of student support services, the College has a comprehensive program review process through which the institution systematically assesses student support services using SLOs, faculty and staff input, a variety of student surveys, and other appropriate measures. Further, the College researches and identifies the learning support needs of its students by using a variety of tools, including direct student contact, recommendations by students, and systematic research mechanisms using data collection. All Student Services departments have incorporated program review and SLOs into their assessment cycle. Continuous program improvement is based on increased use of technology, data-driven research, best practices, and ongoing evaluative processes.

Counseling and other academic advising programs are offered in several areas of the College, including the Counseling Cohort, Disabled Students Program Services (DSPS), personal counseling, Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS), CalWORKs, International Student

Services, Veterans, eCounseling (online) and the Puente Program. One-stop student services are provided in the Lesher Student Services Center on the Merced campus, and in Building A at the Los Banos Campus, for all prospective, returning and continuing students.

IIC—Library and Learning Support Services

Merced College's library and learning support services address both the learning needs of students and the instructional needs of faculty through a variety of online and onsite resources. The Learning Resources Center (LRC), which includes the library and the Audio Visual Department, routinely assesses its programs and services using SLOs, faculty input, faculty and student surveys, and comprehensive program review. The library actively seeks out student and faculty opinion about library services as part of the program review process. In addition to open study areas and tables, individual carrels, and comfortable easy chairs, the library has 12 student study rooms for individual or small group use. Two meeting rooms that seat 25, as well as a media viewing room, can be reserved in advance for groups larger than eight. Over 70 computer stations are available for student use and have access through the MC Portal to the Internet, Britannica OnLine, SIRS, Lexis Nexis Academic Universe, Ethnic Newswatch, and an e-book collection of over 15,000 titles. These computer stations also provide access to Microsoft Office applications, including Word and PowerPoint. Technology for use in the Library includes microfilm reader-printers, VHS / DVD viewers, and CD players. Interlibrary loan is available to students and staff. Personal assistance is provided to students at any skill level and for any educational goals. The new Los Banos Campus library, while much smaller than the Merced facility, offers most of the same services for students in a pleasant and inviting environment.

Learning support services are available to students at the Merced and Los Banos campuses. Through the Student Success Committee, the College plans and evaluates its learning support services. The committee has submitted five-year plans as part of the College's planning process, and the College has received two major grants in support of these plans to offer services sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings.

STANDARD III: RESOURCES

IIIA—Human Resources

The district's hiring policies form the basis of a careful recruitment and selection process to employee well-qualified personnel interested in student success. The Office of Human Resources (HR) is responsible for the process by which qualified personnel are hired according to their appropriate education, training and experience. The District adheres to selection processes based on good personnel practices and those that support the institution's mission and goals. The District's turnover rate is low and there are very few terminations, indicating a good match between employees' qualifications and their job responsibilities. Professional development for all staff is supported by the District with many opportunities for continuing growth.

All District employees are evaluated through a formal written process. This process is explicit in its expression of institutional standards and expectations of employee performance. The process further evaluates the extent to which employees meet those standards and conforms to the expectations. Faculty member evaluations take into account each instructor's development and assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Procedures for evaluating the majority

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of employees are mandated by and outlined in contractual agreements between the District and the Merced College Faculty Association (MCFA) and California Schools Employees Association (CSEA). Confidential, management and supervisory employees are unrepresented but are evaluated regularly by their appropriate administrator.

Program reviews define and focus the institution's commitment to using an improved methodology whereby the hiring of staff is linked to budgeting and planning. This ensures that the District maintains an appropriate staffing level required for the continued quality of all programs and services.

IIIB—Physical Resources

The Merced Community College District (District) encompasses approximately 2,184 square miles of land. A single-college district, the main campus is located in the City of Merced on 271 acres with approximately 390,793 square feet of assignable space. The new Los Banos Campus educational center, completed in 2007, is located on 120 acres immediately adjacent to the City of Los Banos. An additional District facility, located in downtown Merced, is the 21,360 square foot two-story Business Resources Center (BRC) which opened in January 2008. The facility focuses on the needs of area businesses and employers seeking job training opportunities. Classes are also held at several community locations, including high schools, nursing homes, and other public facilities. Each of these locations provides a safe environment and is accessible to persons with disabilities. The District also offers a growing inventory of online courses to meet the changing needs of students.

The Merced College Planning Model was established in 1990 as a collaborative, integrated process that utilizes effective communication and significant input and planning guidance from all levels of the campus community. The Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) serves as the oversight committee for all five master planning committees (Administrative Services, Facilities, Instructional, Student Services and Technology and Research).

The District continues to enjoy the support of local communities and has a history of successful campaigns to secure local financing for various projects. In November 2002, area voters approved two bond measures under Proposition 39, totaling more than $53 million for the Merced campus and almost $12 million for the construction of the Los Banos Campus.

The District is committed to an ongoing, collaborative process of planning that will meet the future needs of the community.

IIIC—Technology Resources

Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The effectiveness of technology is a result of systematic assessment using a number of quantitative and qualitative research methods. These methods are integrated into the program review process of each technology support services area.

A major reconstruction effort in 2008 resulted in the improvement of network access to all District facilities. This was followed by the installation of new Ethernet switches. Network improvements now provide wireless network technology access. Through the college's Portal, students can access many important resources, including email, grades, enrollment information,

financial aid advice, and library resources. These systems are secure and protect sensitive data in compliance with all state/federal regulations. Professional support is provided to students through the Student Help Desk, through technicians providing instructional support in labs, and through the AV technicians who support library related activities at the student information stations in the library.

All new classrooms are equipped with technology that meets the District's current multimedia standards for instruction. Instructional equipment in each of these facilities is configured to support a variety of pedagogical styles. The College supports technology by providing training to faculty and other personnel in the effective application of information.

Campus security has been enhanced with the installation of 40 digital and analog security cameras on parking lots and buildings on the Merced and Los Banos campuses and at the Business Resource Center. Code Blue Emergency devices have been installed at strategic points on both campuses. A new mass announcement system has also been installed.

Standard IIID—Financial Resources

The District's fiscal policies are guided by sound principles of simplicity, neutrality, transparency and stability. Since 2003-2004, the District has maintained an average fund balance of 11.9 percent, well above the institutional policy of requiring a six percent reserve. This balance has afforded the District with the fiscal stability needed to set institutional priorities and support educational improvements for students. The state's current fiscal crisis requires extensive planning and meaningful strategies to address current and future shortfalls while maintaining the District's core mission; however, the District has sufficient reserves to ensure support of its educational programs and services in the short-term.

The budget planning process promotes participation by the entire college community. Decisions affecting financial resource distribution are derived from the collaborative efforts of all constituents. This process integrates institutional planning with fiscal planning to support the institution's mission and goals. The College takes into account long-range financial priorities when making short-term financial plans, identifying and planning for payment of liabilities and future obligations. To this end, District remains committed to maintaining significant reserves to meet long-range financial priorities.

STANDARD IV: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Standard IVA—Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The District encourages campus wide participation in the decision-making process. A vigorous and strongly supported shared governance structure has been in place since 1991. The effect of having collegial consultations on important and often difficult issues has produced a congenial campus atmosphere where each constituent group has a voice in planning and evaluation of institutional practices. Shared governance also includes student representation on planning committees. The president routinely communicates to the entire campus on matters of concern, especially as they relate to the budget. The District recognizes the importance of each individual in the process of governance and strives to create a working environment that is harmonious and yet is respectful of differences.

Standard IVB—Board and Administrative Organization

The District is governed by a seven-member elected Board of Trustees. A student trustee participates and votes in an advisory capacity. The District's policies reflect appropriate representation of the public interest and are lacking conflict of interest. The president is empowered to interpret Board policy and is expected to perform the job duties as defined, making sure that laws and regulations are followed, required reports are completed, policy and procedures are developed. Delegation of authority and responsibility by the Board to the president has been clear and effective. The Board and the president are committed to maintaining open communication with the community and dialogue is encouraged among staff.

Organization of the Self Study

Merced Community College District
Organization of the Self Study

ORGANIZATION

Merced College's Accreditation Self Study report represents the collaborative efforts of more than 70 administrators, managers, faculty, classified staff, and students who engaged in a 15-month comprehensive dialogue and investigative analysis of the College's adherence to institutional standards identified by the accrediting commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The process of collective deliberation, data collection and synthesis of information has resulted in a self study that best represents Merced College's global commitment to its mission of ensuring student success. Every Merced College employee and hundreds of students had an opportunity to participate by responding to opinion surveys, attendance at numerous meetings, posting of two drafts of the study, as well as a regular newsletter that reflected the progress being made by each of the standard teams.

The Accreditation Steering Committee was chaired by Dr. Anne Newins, Accreditation Liaison Officer and vice president of Student Personnel, and Communications professor Lee Anne Hobbs, chair of the Academic Senate. Substantial technical support was provided by an administrative assistant, Toni McCall. The Steering Committee enjoyed the support of staff from the Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) who provided much of the necessary data and evidence. The director of Institutional Advancement joined the committee as the editor of the Self Study. The Steering Committee also included team leaders who were assigned to the various accreditation standards. They were responsible for selecting their own team members from across the campus to engage in the necessary institutional dialogue required of the accreditation process.

Members of the Steering Committee joined colleagues from the region in a training session conducted by accrediting commission staff members at West Hills College-Lemoore in March 2009. The full Steering Committee was first convened shortly thereafter and bi-weekly meetings were held throughout the fall and spring semesters of 2009-2010. Additional steering committee meetings were held as needed. Editing, design, and printing of the Self Study were conducted during the summer and fall months of 2010. Final approval of the Self Study was completed during the fall semester of 2010 The Self Study was designed in-house and printed by an outside company.

The steering committee was constituted as follows:

Dr. Anne Newins (administrator)	Co-chair of the Steering Committee
Lee Anne Hobbs (faculty)	Co-chair of the Steering Committee
Toni McCall (classified)	Administrative assistant to the Steering Committee
Robin Shepard (management)	Editor of the Self Study
Cherie Davis (management)	Institutional researcher for the Steering Committee
Karyn Dower (administration)	Team Leader—Standard I

Tracey Jensen (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard I

> Team Members: Luis Flores (classified), Yeng Her (Classified)

Myshel Pimentel (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard IIA

Dr. Marianne Tortorici (administration)   Team Leader—Standard IIA

> Team Members: Steve Bell (faculty), Mike McCandless (faculty), Jacob Montejano (student), Vince Piro (faculty), Jeanne Temple (faculty)

Betsy Donovan (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard IIB

Richard Marashlian (management)   Team Leader—Standard IIB

> Team Members: Donya Avila (classified), Jean Barry (faculty), Isabel Cambridge (faculty), Steve Clark (faculty), Regina Coletto-Leap (management), Sherry Elms (management), Imelda Ferguson (faculty), Anne Francisco (classified), Michelle Gilardi (faculty), Jill Henningsgaard (faculty), Everett Lovelace (administration), Veronica Oforlea (management), Enriqué Renteria (faculty), Dennell Smith (faculty), Diane Spork (classified)

Ed Brush (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard IIC

Dee Near (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard IIC

Dr. Susan Walsh (management)   Team Leader—Standard IIC

> Team Members: Kaila Adams (student), Omar Amavizca (management), Spencer Bowen (student), Mario Cordova (management), Manuel Costa (classified), Cheryl Eno (classified), Susan Flatt (faculty), Paula Freston (faculty), Barbara Guth (classified), Cindy Hubbard (classified), Susan Kline (faculty), Richard Lozano (classified), Michelle Pecchenino (faculty), Toni Reintke (faculty), Steve Welch (classified)

Mazie Brewington (administration)   Team Leader—Standard III

Marie Bruley (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard III

Mike Cuchna (administration)   Team Leader—Standard III

> Team Members: Joe Allison (management), Omar Amavizca (management), Joe Bisinger (management), Arlis Bortner (management), Manuel Costa (classified), Delia Esquivel (classified), Sheila Flores (classified), Brian Forest (classified), Keith Howes (management), Kito Moua (classified), Melody Ortega (classified), Don Peterson (management), Marvin Smith (management), Rich Souhrada (management), Susan Walsh (management), Steve Welch (classified), Jim Wilde (management)

Sue Chappell (faculty)   Team Leader—Standard IV

Dr. Benjamin T. Duran (president)   Team Leader—Standard IV

> Team Members: Stacey Kellner (management), Robin Shepard (management)

The team leaders and team members were responsible for collecting information, documenting evidence, and writing the initial drafts of the standards assigned to them. The team leaders were tasked with editing their first drafts and submitting them to the Steering Committee for review.

Communications Timeline

The campus community was kept informed of the Steering Committee's progress through a series of formal and informal presentations and through several "Focus on Accreditation" newsletters. Information was also provided periodically during regular meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Following is a list of some of the many Accreditation presentations and updates:

Board of Trustees Meeting	May 5, 2009
Management Team	May 7, 2009
Instructional Master Planning Committee	May 19, 2009
Guidance Division	May 20, 2009
Student Services Classified Staff	June 25, 2009
Administrator's Retreat	July 1, 2009
Adjunct Faculty Presentation	August 13, 2009
Flex Day Program	August 13, 2009
Convocation	August 14, 2009
Student Services Master Planning Committee	September 4, 2009
Academic Senate	Regular ongoing updates
Management Team	September 19, 2009
Board of Trustees Presentation	February 2, 2010
Management Team	February 4, 2010
Accreditation Newsletters	Regular ongoing updates
Student Success Committee Meetings	Regular ongoing updates
Board of Trustees Meeting	August 3, 2010
Convocation	August 17, 2010
Academic Senate Update	September 9, 2010
Board of Trustees Meeting	October 5, 2010
Educational Master Planning Committee	October 14, 2010

Announcements were made to all college constituencies via email, hard mail, committee reports, etc. A request for employee review of a rough draft of the Self Study was delivered throughout the District in May 2010 and again in September 2010.

Self Study Timeline

Spring/Summer 2009

- Development of Self Study committee structure

- Development of initial timeline

- Appointment of Steering Committee members

- Steering Committee training held at West Hills College, Lemoore, California

- Development of 2009-2010 Accreditation Self Study Budget

- Distribution of Accreditation Reference Handbook, Self-Study Manual, and other reference materials to committee members

- Identification of Steering Committee team members

- Began initial planning and set up of self-study website

Fall 2009

- Beginning of biweekly Steering Committee meetings

- Definition of roles of committee members established

- Steering Committee determined methods for collecting and compiling evidence

- Steering committee determined system for the citation of evidence

- Steering committee members received SharePoint training

- Teams began research and collection of evidence

- Teams began writing first drafts

- Opinion survey distributed campus wide

- Presentations to campus constituencies began

- *Focus on Accreditation* Newsletters began distribution

Spring 2010

- Continuing presentation of Accreditation information to campus constituencies

- Continuing publication of *Focus on Accreditation* Newsletters

- Continuation of evidence collection

- Continuation of biweekly Steering Committee meetings

- Review of Self Study first drafts by Steering Committee

- Beginning of first drafts of introduction, general information, and appendices

- Posting for campus input of first draft of Standards I, II, III, and IV

- Establishment of 2010-2011 budget to cover costs of publication and team visit

Summer 2010

- Continuation of editing of first draft

- Evidence posted to SharePoint, hyperlinks created, and hard copies of evidence collected

- Designed layout of self study

Fall 2010

- Second draft posted to the Campus Community for review and input
- Second draft submitted to the Associated Students of Merced College for review and input
- Final accreditation newsletter posted
- Final draft submitted to Academic Senate for approval (October 10, 2010)
- Final draft submitted to Board of Trustees for approval (November 2, 2010)
- Final layout and editing completed
- Self Study sent for printing
- Final copies of Self Study sent to ACCJC
- Planning for March 2011 Team Visit begins
- Completion of SharePoint website

Endnotes

The process for completing an accreditation self study, as well as ensuring that accreditation standards are continually met, has become more complex in a number of ways. In response, the Steering Committee has agreed that an ongoing accreditation committee should be created.

It should be noted that this document represents work in progress. By the time the team visit occurs, many of the planning agendas should be accomplished, such as the development of a new strategic plan and incorporation of new online features.

Finally, in regards to the collection and citation of evidence, this Self Study primarily uses one hyperlink to take the reader to files located within an evidence folder placed in the College's SharePoint environment. This hyperlink is located at the top of all evidence lists, which follow each Standard section. Most evidence is located in SharePoint's Evidence Library. However, each Standard section may contain several independent hyperlinks to evidence found on external websites. Each citation within the text of this document is highlighted in bold for easy reference. Each evidence within the evidence libraries includes the citation number as part of the file name. This will facilitate easy cross-referencing. In addition, an "evidence room" is provided to the members of the accreditation visiting team. The evidence room contains boxes with physical copies of the majority of evidence found in the Self Study.

Organization of the Institution
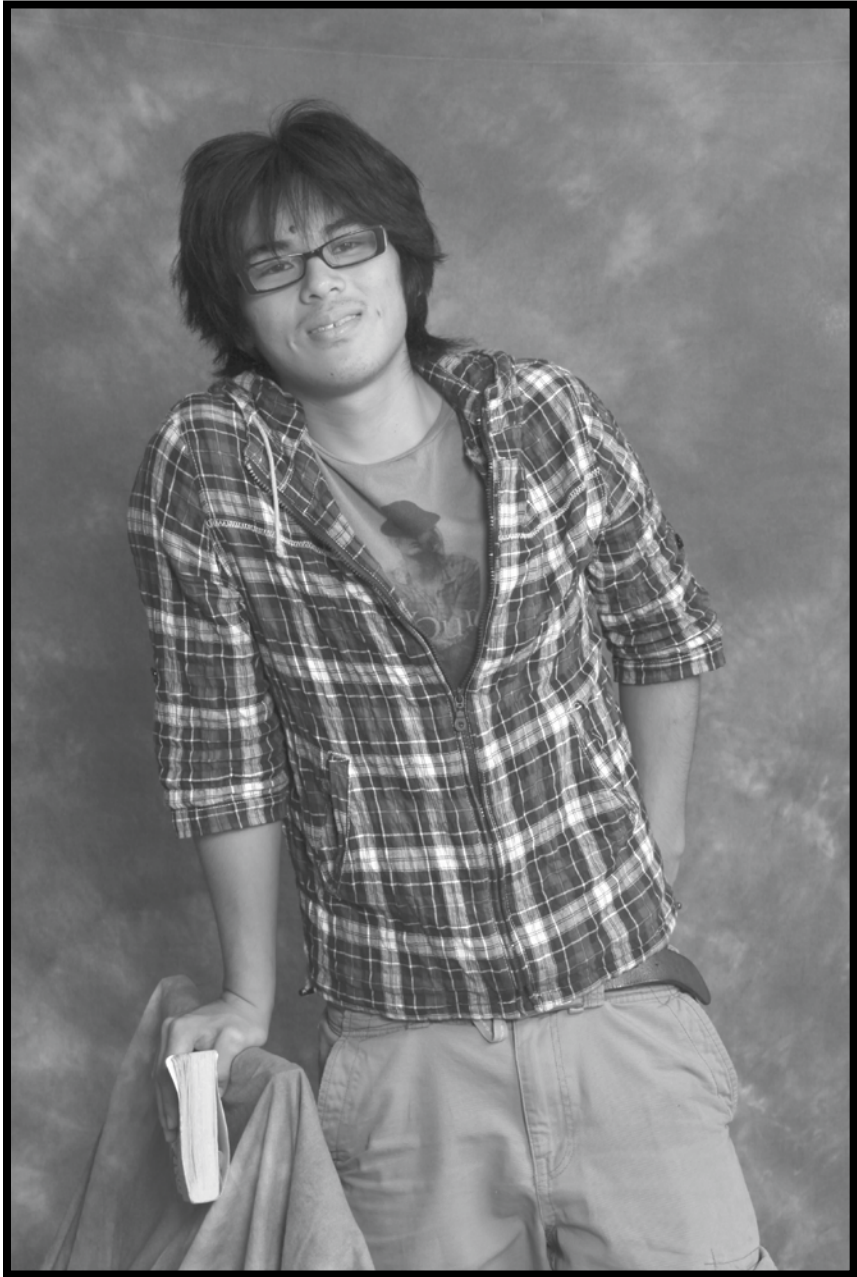
MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Organization of the Institution

The subsequent pages contain the organizational charts for the five major functions at Merced College: President, Administrative Services, Instruction, Student Services, and Technology and Institutional Research.

Merced College Office of the President
Organizational Chart

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                      ┌─────────────────┐
                      │ Board of Trustees│
                      └─────────────────┘
                               │
                      ┌─────────────────┐
                      │  Superintendent/ │
                      │    President     │
                      │ Benjamin T. Duran│
                      └─────────────────┘
                               │
        ┌────────────────┐  ┌─────────────────┐
        │ Director,      │  │ Executive Assistant│
        │ Institutional  │──│ to the President │
        │ Advancement    │  │  Stacey Kellner  │
        │ Robin Shepard  │  └─────────────────┘
        └────────────────┘
```

| Vice President, Instruction *Marianne Tortorici* | Vice President, Administrative Services *Mazie L. Brewington* | Vice President, Student Personnel *Anne Newins* | Vice President, Technology & Institutional Research *Mike Cuchna* |

**Merced College District Administrative Services
Organizational Chart**

Vice President,
District Administrative
Service
Mazie L. Brewington

Administrative Assistant
Confidential Secretary
Denise Butler

Facilities Planning &
Development Specialist
Sheila Flores

Business Services
Vacant

Maintenance/Transportation
Facilities Haz Mat
Rick Souhrada

Fiscal Services
Joe Allison

Buildings/Operations
Grounds
Vacant

Student Fees
Marianne Levey

Campus Security &
Safety
Jim Wilde

Payroll
Christine Stappenbeck

Human Resources
Supervisor
Keith Howes

Bookstore
Robyn Piro

Purchasing
Vacant

Print Services
Richard Manifest

Cafeteria
Contract Manager
Gabe Martinez

Merced College Office of Instruction
Organizational Chart

Vice President,
Instruction
Dr. Marianne Tortorici

Administrative Secretary II
Kathy Grossi

Dean
Dr. Doug Kain

Dean
Tom Ray

Dean
Jim Andersen

Dean
Dr. Bobby Anderson

Dean
Dr. John Graulty

Dean
Karyn Dower

Dean
Dr. Brenda Latham

Angelica
Campos

Robbie Dean
Donna Torrez

Nancy Bates
Karen Wallace

Norma DeLa Torre-Davis
Corina Jimenez
Maria Soto

Stephanie Flowers
Kristi Wolf

Charlene
Reed

Vikki Grijalva
Rita Kindle

**Science, Math
& Engineering**

**Lead:
John Montoya**
•Engineering
•Math

**Lead:
Carl Estrella**
•Biology
•Chemistry
•Environmental Tech.
•Geology
•Physical Science
•Physics
•Wastewater Tech.

**English, Basic Skills
& Child Development**

Lead: Sue Chappell
•Child Development
•Education
•Guidance Classes
•Liberal Studies
•LRNR Classes

**Leads: Dallas Dillon &
Vince Piro**
•English
•English as a Second
Language
•Journalism

Duties:
•Co-Op Education
•Merced College
English Language
Institute
•Job Opportunities
Service
•Learning Communities
•Student Success
•Study Central
•Supplemental
Instruction
•Tutorial

**Career Technical
Education**

Lead: Steve Boyle
•Ag Business
•Agriculture
•Animal Science
•Auto Tech.
•Crop Science
•Drafting
•Electronics (and
CISCO)
•Industrial Tech. (and
HVAC)
•Landscape
Horticulture
•Mechanized Ag
•Plant Science
•Soil Science
•Welding

Lead: Jessica Casey
•Athletics
•Health
•Physical Education
•Recreation

Duties:
•Perkins (VTEA)
•Tech Prep

**Allied Health,
Business & Public
Safety**

**Lead: Caren
Col-Hamm**
•Allied Health
•Rad. Tech.
•Registered Nursing
•Sonography
•Vocational Nursing

Lead Cary Yanagi
•Accounting
•AOM
•Business
•Computer Studies
•Management (CSA)
•Marketing
•Merchandising
•Nutrition
•Paralegal
•Real Estate

Lead: Bob Gregory
•Addiction Studies
•Corrections
•Criminal Justice
•Fire Technology

**Social Sciences,
Humanities &
Fine Arts**

Lead: Rich Randall
•Anthropology
•Archeology
•Economics
•Geography
•History
•Human Services
•Political Science
•Psychology
•Sociology

**Leads: John Albano &
Cheryl Barnett**
•Art
•Drama
•Music
•Photography

**Leads: Jim Bonstein,
Max Hallman & Natalie
Sobalvarro-Butler**
•American Sign
Language
•Comm. Studies
•French
•German
•Hmong
•Humanities
•Japanese
•Philosophy
•Spanish

Duties:
•Honors

**Economic &
Workforce
Development,
Community Services
& Noncredit**

Duties:
•Noncredit
•Community Services
•Business Resource
Center
•Workplace Learning
Resource Center
•Center for
International Trade and
Development
•Off Campus Centers
•Theater
•Child Development
Center

Los Banos Campus
Full Service Ed Center

**Coordinator:
Mike McCandless**

Duties:
•Dos Palos Site

**Office of Instruction
Staff***

•Catalog & Class
Schedule
    Teresa Gudgel
•Contracts
    Judie Engel
•Facilities Scheduling
    Raul Alvarez
•Flex/Load Banking
    Marilyn White

*Report to VPI &
Dean, Economic & Workforce
Development

Revised 11-06-09

Merced College Office of Student Personnel Service
Organizational Chart

Vice President, Student Personnel Services *Anne Newins*	Administrative Secretary *Toni McCall*

Dean of Student Services Special Programs *Mario Cordova*

Dean of Student Services *Everett Lovelace*

Student Success Programs

CALWORKS *Veronica Oforlea*

EOPS & CARE

Public Information Officer *Robin Shepard*

Admissions & Records *Sharon Reinhardt (Registrar) Sherry Elms (Assoc. Registrar)*

Financial Aid *Sharon Reinhardt*

Disabled Student Services *Richard Marashlian*

Student Health Services

Counseling Cohort *Lead: Imelda Ferguson Lead: Anthony Lewis*

Associated Students Advisor *Steve Clark*

Associated Students/ Student Government

Student Activities

Office of Relations with Schools & CalSOAP *Regina Coletto*

Career Center

Transfer Center

Outreach (Matriculation)

Assessment Center

11/15/2010

Merced College Technology and Institutional Research Organizational Chart

VP Technology & Institutional Research (Mike Cuchna)

Administrative Secretary II (Jeanne Bernardi)

Director ITS (Don Peterson)

Datatel Team
- Database Analyst (Dwight Nadeau)
- Senior Analyst (Bonnie Muscutt)
- Programmer Analyst (Bill Dunham)

HelpDesk and Services Team
- HelpDesk Lead (Jeanette Martin)
- HelpDesk Assistant (Stacey Jorgenson)
- User Analyst (Sylvia Giordano)
- Internet Services Specialist (Mike Smith)

Network Administrator (Arlis Bortner)

Telecommunications Team
- Network Technician (Walter Sherman)
- Network Technician (Denise Rossi)
- PC Technician (Todd Blake)
- PC Technician (Will Resendes)
- Inst. Support Tech III LB (Pam Gomes)
- Instructional Lab Technician (Kathy Kekahuna)

Online Education Systems Manager (Steve Alexander)

Online Team
- Student HelpDesk Tech (Eduardo Alvear)
- Education Tech Specialist (Guy Near)

Director, Grants & Inst. Research (Cherie Davis)

Grants & Research Team
- Research Analyst (Yeng Her)
- Senior Research Analyst (Luis Flores)

Director Learning Resources Center (Susan Walsh)

Learning Resources Team
- Reference Librarian (Dee Near)
- Library /Media Tech I (Donna Bland)
- Library/Media Clerk (Michelle Costa)
- Library/Media Tech II (Barbara Guth)
- Library/Media Tech II (Richard Lozano)
- Associate Librarian (Ed Brush)
- Library/Media Clerk (Melinda Cornwell)
- Library/Media Tech I (Cheryl Eno)
- Library/Media Tech II (Cindy Hubbard)
- Elec. Resources Librarian (Nancy Golz)

LRC Technology Manager (Omar Amavizca)

AV Team
- Education Tech Specialist (Manuel Costa)
- Library/Media Tech I (Melody Ortega)
- Library/Media Tech I (Nathaniel Garcia)
- Education Tech Specialist (Kito Moua)
- Sr. Audio Visual Tech (Brian Forest)
- Library/Media Tech I (Steve Welch)
- Library/Media Tech I (Denise Runner)

Certification of the Continued Compliance with Eligibility Requirements

Merced Community College District

Certification of Continued Compliance with Eligibility Requirements

The Accreditation Self Study team reviewed and has verified that Merced College meets each of the eligibility requirements established by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Certification of the Self Study Report may be found in Appendix A. Appendix C contains verification of each of the 21 areas that delineate the eligibility requirements.

Responses to Recommendations from the Most Recent Comprehensive Evaluation

MERCED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Responses to Recommendations from the Most Recent Comprehensive Evaluation

1. *". . . the college should implement a new program review process in a focused and expeditious manner, including a published schedule as to when all college programs and services are committed to undergo the full process. Integration of program review with the institutional planning and budgeting processes, the development of student learning outcomes, and student achievement data is also recommended."*

Over the past several years, much effort has lead to the development and implementation of a program review process that is timely, comprehensive, incorporates user friendly software, while meeting the needs of all area constituencies. All college departments are committed to completing program reviews on a regular, published schedule. Instructional and student services program reviews incorporate SLOs and achievement data as key components of these processes. The program review process is integrated into the college planning and re-source allocations process and SLOs. Student achievement data plays a part in the comple-tion of program reviews and creation of SLOs.

2. *". . . the college needs to develop student learning outcomes for all courses and programs. Additionally, institutional student learning outcomes need to be integrated with General Edu-cation and Competency Requirements. Assessment of student learning outcomes needs to show how course credit and the awarding of degrees and certificates are based on student achieve-ment of stated learning outcomes and how outcome assessments are used to improve courses and programs, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success."*

The College has developed, implemented, and is in the process of assessing SLOs for 100 percent of its programs, courses, and all student services programs. Institutional SLOs also have been created and are assessed as part of course and program assessments. Ongoing assessment occurs for all programs and student services, with approximately 35 percent of college courses being assessed regularly. Improvements are implemented into programs, classes, and services based on SLO assessment. The results of these assessments have translated into better instruction and services, and assisted in the development of program reviews. The results also assist in the determination of additional resources that may be needed for programs or services. The Self Study addresses in detail how the SLO process has been developed and incorporated at Merced College.

3. *". . . the team recommends that the college fully embrace its stated commitment to a student-centered environment by structuring a leadership development program for student involvement in the college shared governance process."*

Since the last team visit, student government leadership has been stabilized. A new counselor was hired to dedicate a portion of his load to student leadership. Due in part to his efforts, student government now is much more cohesive and participatory. Under the leadership of

the student government faculty advisor, the Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC) is provided a list of all shared governance committees at the beginning of each fall semester. Committees, depending on their overall size, request one or two student members. Since these are open meetings, all students are welcome to attend. ASMC is responsible for the assignment of student participants based on a student's individual interest in a particular committee. For example, a student interested in architecture or landscaping may wish to serve on the Facilities Master Planning Committee. The students are responsible for providing both the student perspective as well reporting the committee's actions to the ASMC.

Students also participate in other campus committees that may not have a shared governance structure. Examples include the Bookstore Committee and the Food Services Committee. Students also have participated in task forces such as the Electronic Waitlist Committee and a group dedicated to the improvement of the college catalogue. There also are students members assigned to the Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee.

4*. "... the team recommends that the college develop an assessment plan to provide ongoing and systematic evaluation and integration of all institution-wide planning processes. The assessment should include the current planning processes, program reviews, data-driven decision-making and resource allocation processes, and their interrelationships."*

The College has developed a planning model that addresses the evaluation and integration of planning processes for all college functions. The Master Planning Handbook delineates how faculty, staff, and managers participate in planning and decision-making. For all master planning committees, representation is determined by the groups or committees identified in the handbook. There are many other groups that provide information and data to planning committees. The information may be readily accessed from websites dedicated to institutional research, program review, and master planning committees. Regular, systematic and detailed program reviews assist with collegewide planning and resource allocation. A master planning calendar illustrating the relationship between planning, program review, decision making and resource allocation has been developed through the shared governance process.

Standard I
Institutional Mission & Effectiveness

STANDARD I TEAM LEADERS

Karyn Dower
ADMINISTRATION

Tracey Jenson
FACULTY

STANDARD I

Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

IA. MISSION

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

Originally approved on December 15, 1998, Merced College's mission and vision statements and its core values and beliefs are reviewed periodically, with the most recent update approved by the Merced Community College District's Board of Trustees (Board) on May 7, 2002 **(IA.01) (IA.02, items 11b-c) (IA.03, items 9c, 8f) (IA.04)**. These statements, along with the institutional values and beliefs, clearly define the College's broad educational goals. These guiding principles result from collective dialogue and collaborative efforts, reflecting the institution's strong commitment to student learning, educational quality, and community-based cultural activities. Merced College's educational purposes are clearly articulated in the following statements of its mission, vision statement and core values and beliefs.

Mission—*Students are our focus and we are known by their success.*

Vision Statement—*Students are our focus at Merced College. We set high standards to encourage students to reach their highest potential in a supportive environment. Diversity is a strength of our institution. Merced College is a leader in instruction and cultural activities. We value and respect all members of our community. We are known by the success of our students.*

Core Values and Beliefs

- *Students – past, present, and future – are the focus of Merced College.*

- *Fostering diversity is a strength of the institution.*

- *Merced College establishes high standards and provides a challenging education to encourage students to reach their highest potential.*

- *Merced College respects and values all members of its community.*

- *Merced College serves the community by responding to cultural, educational, economic development, and technological needs.*

- *Merced College provides a supportive and fulfilling environment.*

As an institution of higher learning in the California Community College system, Merced College maintains open access and serves anyone who can benefit from instruction. The mission and vision statements, and core values and beliefs recognize student diversity as a strength. The College respects and values all members of the community by responding to cultural, educational, economic development, and technological needs. Serving a diverse student population, the College maintained its bi-ethnic majority of Hispanic (38 percent) and White Non-Hispanic (34.6 percent) students during 2008-2009. Other ethnicities included Asian (8.6 percent), African American (4.7 percent), American Indian/Alaskan Native (1.1 percent), Filipino (1.1 percent), Pacific Islander (0.6 percent), with Unknown/Non-respondents (11.4 percent). Despite

being more than one-third of the student population, Hispanics are not reflective of Merced County's overall Hispanic population of 52.9 percent **(IA.05).** A federally recognized Hispanic Serving Institution, Merced College seeks opportunities to increase student access and success based on the needs and rich diversity of the region.

The process used to foster a college wide commitment to student learning is an ongoing and systematic educational master planning process in which the mission, vision and core values and beliefs are central to planning and decision-making. This process uses both quantitative and qualitative data for decision-making and links program review, assessment, and academic planning with strategic planning **(IA.06, p. 3, Figure B).**

Ongoing evaluation is assured through the comprehensive program review process. As instructional and student services programs, technology and institutional research units, and administrative units prepare their program reviews, they review relevant demographic, labor market, advisory committee minutes, and institutional data in order to determine the suitability of programs for the learner populations, addressing their needs and aligning them with the College's mission **(IA.06, p. 9) (IA.07) (IA.08) (IA.09) (IA.10).**

The College's commitment to student success is evident throughout the mission, vision statement and core values and beliefs and is demonstrated by a wide range of programs designed to support student learning such as counseling, online resources, tutorial programs, Study Central, International Student Services Program, Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS), Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), and Institutional Research as detailed in Standards II and III.

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

Descriptive Summary

Discussions have been held among key campus constituents regarding the relevance of the mission statement to student learning. The Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC), composed of representatives from the campus's various master planning committees in a shared governance format, is the vehicle used to drive these conversations. For example, in 2007 EMPC met for discussions on connecting the mission statement to student learning. Moreover, institutional student learning outcomes were developed to coincide with the mission, vision and core values and beliefs in 2004. These were refined in 2006 and matched to general education requirements in 2007. Beginning in the 2003-2004 academic year, Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) became the main topic in convocation and continued as the focal point of collegial conversations throughout 2005 and 2006. For example, the College brought in Dr. Norena Badway, a principal with the Higher Education Evaluation and Research Group, as the keynote speaker during the 2005 convocation. Convocation is attended by all members of the college community including classified, certificated, management, and the Board of Trustees **(IA.06) (IA.11) (IA.12) (IA.13) (IA.14) (IA.15) (IA.16) (IA.17) (IA.18) (IA.19).**

The College's mission, vision and core values and beliefs include the following explicit state-

ments supporting student learning: Merced College sets high standards to encourage students to reach their highest potential in a supportive environment. Merced College is a leader in instruction and cultural activities. We value and respect all members of our community. These statements explicitly express the purpose of the institution because "we are known by the success of our students."

Merced College serves local communities through credit, non-credit, not for credit (contract education), community service courses, and cultural events. Merced College strives to meet the diverse needs of this varied and dynamic student body by offering students an expansive and comprehensive range of learning opportunities. These include, but are not limited to:

- AA/AS degree programs
- Afternoon, evening, and short-term (Fast Track) courses
- Basic skills courses
- Certificate programs
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Face-to-face, online, and hybrid learning opportunities
- Puente program
- Instructional support programs (learning communities, supplemental instruction, technology-enhanced instruction, Fast-Track English, summer math intervention)
- Transfer opportunities

Merced College offers a variety of student support services including, but not limited to

- Supplemental student instruction (SSI)
- Student Health Services
- Student web portal

Veterans Resource Center

- Web Advisor
- Writing and Reading Center

A full description of these services, found in Standard II, demonstrates a commitment to achieving student learning and links services to the mission of the institution. Assessment of institutional effectiveness occurs through the program review and SLO assessment processes.

Self Evaluation

Merced College provides a full range of programs and services to meet the needs of a diverse community of student learners. These programs and services are aligned with the College's mission, vision and core values and beliefs statements, with institutional student learning outcomes, and with the purpose and character of the institution.

The College assesses and documents progress in meeting the needs of its student population by providing institutional research studies, student surveys, academic program reviews, student

services program reviews, and non-instructional program reviews **(IA.08) (IA.10).** Expanding on previous methods of success such as degree completion rates and transfer rates, SLO assessment provides multiple measures of student success **(IA.20) (IA.21) (IA.22).**

To achieve the purposes of the mission, vision and core values and beliefs statements, the college community works in unity to help students master Institutional SLOs. The Institutional SLOs represent major skills sets all students need for success. The College is committed to incorporating its Institutional SLOs into students' educational pursuit so that when students complete their education they will be competent in the following areas:

- **Communication:** Use language and non-verbal modes of expression appropriate to the audience and purpose. (GE Breadth Areas A and C)

- **Computation:** Use mathematical skills and various aspects of technology appropriate to the task (GE Breadth Areas A and B)

- **Cognition:** Use critical thinking skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and information (GE Breadth Areas A, B and C)

- **Global and Community Consciousness and Responsibility:** Demonstrate understanding of different cultures and knowledge of historical eras and importance of community involvement (GE Breadth Areas D)

- **Personal Development and Life-Long Learning:** Demonstrate self-management, maturity, and growth through practices that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being (GE Breadth Area E) **(IA.17) (IA.18) (IA.21) (IA.22).**

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

The mission statement was originally approved by the Board of Trustees on December 15, 1998 and most recently reviewed on November 3, 2009. The approved mission statement, vision statement, and core values and beliefs statement are published in the college catalog, marketing materials, faculty handbook, and website. **(IA.23, p. 8) (IA.24) (IA.25) (IA.26)**

Self Evaluation

The college has a mission statement that is current, approved and published.

Planning Agenda

- None

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.

Descriptive Summary

The District's Board of Trustees regularly reviews the institutional mission statement. As stated previously, the initial mission statement was approved in 1998. A minor revision occurred in 2002 and the Trustees voted in May 2002 to adopt the District's Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Core Values and Beliefs as it reads today. They were reviewed again in November 2009 **(IA.01) (IA.02) (IA.03) (IA.04).** In addition to periodic Board review, the mission, vision, core values and beliefs remain central to the program review process that feeds into the six master planning committees. Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and administrators have an opportunity to serve on master planning committees. Each planning committee may draft policy and make recommendations that are forwarded to the president and Board for final approval. The process allows for incorporating the interests of the institution's stakeholders. Student participation in planning was a missing element identified in previous self studies; however, students currently serve on master planning committees and are represented on the Board of Trustees **(IA.06) (IA.27).** The college catalog informs students of their opportunity to participate in shared governance **(IA.23, p. 28).** There have been no changes to the mission and vision statements, and the core values and beliefs since 2002.

Self Evaluation

There is no formal board policy for changing the mission statement. However, one measure of the effectiveness of the process of developing, communicating, and approving the College's mission and goal statements is the level of participation by all constituencies. An area of significant improvement is the development of student participation on master planning committees. The Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC) takes an active role in encouraging students to add their voice to the decision-making process, facilitated by a counselor hired in August 2006 to serve as liaison/mentor to ASMC.

Planning Agenda

- The District hired a consultant to develop a strategic plan which will include the development of institutional goals. Working groups began in August 2010 with a goal to complete the process by February 2011.

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

Descriptive Summary

The institutional planning and decision-making process begins with comprehensive program reviews tied directly to SLOs and Institutional SILOs. Comprehensive program review currently occurs on a six-year cycle. Master planning committees recommend actions based in part on information received from program review. The College undertook a redesign of the master planning process beginning in spring 2008 concluding with Board approval in December 2009 **(IA.06) (IA.11) (IA.12) (IA.13) (IA.14) (IA.15) (IA.16) (IA.28) (IA.29) (IA.30) (IA.31) (IA.32)**

(IA.33) (IA.34) (IA.35). Each of the master planning committees operates with awareness of the mission, vision statement and core values and beliefs which drive planning and decision-making. The College's vision and mission are central to the planning process as illustrated in *Figure B. Educational Master Planning Committee Budgeting/Evaluation Process* of the Master Planning Handbook **(IA.06, p. 3)**. All department plans and institutional plans are expected to reflect the College's mission, vision statement and core values and beliefs **(IA.06).** Critical decisions regarding budget changes (augmentations and reductions), program development and service development result from these planning processes **(IA.03, 8f) (IA.35, 16a, 17c) (IA.36, p. 42) (IA.37).**

Self Evaluation

To improve how effectively the mission statement prompts planning and decision-making, beginning in the 2010/2011 academic year, the program review process includes annual updates. In the master planning process developed and approved in December 2009, planning guidelines direct EMPC and each master planning committee to develop their plans and recommendations in the context of the college mission, vision statement and core values and beliefs. College faculty, staff, students, and administrators are committed to providing quality programs to a diverse and growing student population in cadence with the mission statement. Through program review and educational master planning, a process is in place to ensure that the institution's mission, vision statement and core values and beliefs will be central to planning and decision-making.

Planning Agenda

- The District hired a consultant to develop a strategic plan which will include the development of institutional goals. Working groups began in August 2010 with a goal to complete the process by February 2011.

STANDARD IA EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IA.20c   SLO Assessments Chemistry 04A, Fall 2008

IA.20d   SLO Assessments Chemistry 04B, Fall 2008

IA.20e   SLO Assessments Chemistry 12A, Fall 2008

IA.20f   SLO Assessments Chemistry 35A, Fall 2008

IA.21   SLO Website

IA.22   EMPC Minutes 4/22/2010

IA.23, pp.8, 28   Merced College Catalog 2009-2010, Mission Statement

IA.24, p.4   Merced College Faculty Handbook 2010-11, Mission Statement

IA.25   Merced College Website, Mission Statement

IA.26   Merced College Marketing Materials

IA.27   EMPC Website, Membership Page

IA.28   EMPC Planning Retreat 3/4/09

IA.29   EMPC Minutes 3/19/09

IA.30   EMPC Minutes 4/23/09

IA.31   EMPC Minutes 5/21/09

IA.32   EMPC Minutes 10/1/09

IA.33   EMPC Minutes 10/29/09

IA.34   EMPC Minutes 11/12/09

IA.35   Board of Trustees Minutes 12/1/09 (items 16a, 17c)

IA.36, p.42   Board of Trustees Packet 12/1/09

IA.37   Board of Trustees One-time Funding Handout 11/3/09

IB. 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.

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

Descriptive Summary

The College engages in dialogue using the master planning process based on the institution's vision, mission and core values and beliefs, which are strategic, systematic, data-driven, evidence-based and focused on student learning. The College has implemented the planning activities started in 2003-2004 to identify, assess, and evaluate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) on institutional, program, and course levels and uses the results of this process to better determine how well it is meeting its goals and objectives **(IB.01) (IB.02) (IB.03) (IB.04) (IB.05) (IB.06).** To facilitate this process, a faculty SLO Coordinator for instruction and a faculty coordinator for Student Services program review were provided release time.

In addition to master planning committees, the College provides a wide array of opportunities for faculty, staff and administrators to embrace and understand the purpose of dialogue regarding continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. The College's committee structure creates a forum for this dialogue and ensures that planning aligns with the institution's purposes, character, and student population. The following are a few examples of this structure:

- The Academic Senate meets at least once a month and serves as a medium for the exchange of information and ideas. Academic Senate representatives from each area cohort or instructional area take a proactive approach to planning for academic and professional matters, helping to ensure faculty and student success. Additionally, the Academic Senate provides members for all master planning committees **(IB.07).**

- The Curriculum Committee, which reports to the Academic Senate, meets monthly and consists of representatives from each area cohort or instructional area. The Curriculum Committee deals with curricular issues, including establishing, modifying or discontinuing programs and courses. SLOs are central to the development of course outlines. Student matriculation is viewed critically as each course is designed, structured, and then reevaluated on a six-year cycle by faculty representing all disciplines. The Program and Curriculum Development policy is the foundation to ensure District programs and curricula shall be of high quality and relevant to community and student needs (IB.08). The college president relies primarily on faculty for advice on establishing procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings.

- Instructional Council is composed of area cohort leads, area directors, and instructional deans and meets monthly with the vice president of Instruction. This group considers instructional issues affecting students and staff, and focuses on serving students to ensure that their educational barriers are anticipated, minimized, and prevented. Instructional Council strives to build and support a sound instructional program, with the assistance of Administrative Services and Student Services.

- To support students in vocational programs, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) group meets biannually. Composed of representatives from all areas conducting career technical education, this cohort of administrators and faculty seeks to ensure that students receive an education that meets current industry standards. Ongoing dialogue ensures instructional programs are crafted to meet federal and state regulations impacting student employment goals. In addition, CTE makes an assertive effort to support underrepresented groups in all employment fields **(IB.10)**.

- The Student Services committee structure that facilitates this dialogue is discussed in Standard II. For example, the Student Personnel Executive Committee (SPEC) meets twice a month to facilitate student pathways through the College. Representatives from Instruction and all areas of Student Services discuss current issues affecting the quality of student support services and their effect on student learning.

In addition to its committee structure, the College provides a wide array of high-quality opportunities for all members of the College community, both full- and part-time, to understand institutional procedures and to promote student success. Through staff development opportunities, experts share their knowledge and skills in areas such as improving teaching and technology in the classroom, enhancing online instruction, meeting students' special needs, utilizing college resources, understanding college policies and procedures, developing teamwork, and strengthening computer skills **(IB.11)**.

Through their continuing dialogue, members of the College community recognize the significance of research used in the evaluation of student learning. Individuals have access to all data relevant to their areas. Research reports, all academic and student services program reviews, master plans, and strategic plans are accessible on the college website. Data driven evidence is used in the master planning model by the master planning committees and in the program review process **(IB.12)**. The College is completing its first program review cycle that started in fall 2005 **(IB.01)**. The next phase of program review, beginning in fall 2010, is to adopt an annual program review model linked to the annual budgeting cycle. This process is designed for continual improvement measures that will occur more frequently than on a six-year cycle **(IB.01).** The six-year cycle will become streamlined as a result of annual updates. In doing so, program review will more accurately reflect the needs of programs in a more timely manner.

Self Evaluation

The College is successful in promoting dialogue in and between groups noted in the previous section. Communication and collegial consultation is an ongoing process across all groups. The College is committed to transparency in all communications to help groups work together toward a larger goal and to eliminate redundancy. The College has an excellent planning model

that allows for a regular and ongoing dialogue on the topic of SLOs. To facilitate dialogue about student learning, the District provided a full-release faculty position as the SLO coordinator in fall 2008. Evidence of the achievement of SLOs and institution and program performance is widely distributed and regularly updated through program review and SLO assessments **(IB.01) (IB.06).**

In 2008-2009, the College embarked on integrating its educational master planning model with the resource allocation model completed in fall 2009 and adopted by the Board on December 1, 2009 **(IB.13) (IB.14, p. 42) (IB.15) (IB.16).** The College has developed a resource allocation model that includes an annual program review process leading to validated changes in programs and resource allocation **(IB.17) (IB.18) (IB.19).**

Planning Agenda

- None

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.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College sets goals and objectives consistent with its stated purposes at many levels of the campus and throughout the District. Institutional Learning Outcomes, derived from the mission, vision, and core values and beliefs, provide the criteria for the establishment of area goals and objectives **(IB.02).** An understanding of the goals and a commitment to achieving these goals occurs through the master planning process where goals are set through program review to improve the effectiveness of the institution **(IB.19).** The master planning process reflects the goals and objectives of the master planning committees **(IB.20) (IB.21).** Periodic updates on each of the goals and objectives enumerated in the Master Planning Handbook are provided at educational master planning retreats and/or meetings.

For instructional areas and programs, student services, technology and research and administrative units, program review exists to ensure that SLOs and/or area objectives are being implemented and met. Additionally, program review exists to ensure that a plan is in place for improving the learning experiences of students. Discipline faculty participate in program review and identify a common vision and goals for their instructional disciplines, as well as goals shared in common with student support services **(IB.01).**

As mentioned in Standard IB.1, the college integrated its educational master planning model with the resource allocation model. The College developed a resource allocation model that includes an annual program review process leading to validated changes in programs and resource allocation.

Self Evaluation

The College sets goals to improve its effectiveness at many levels. The College articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms as evidenced in program review. The College understands the goals and works collaboratively toward their achievement as evidenced through the committee structures and minutes of the Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, Instructional Council, CTE Committee, master planning committees, and Board of Trustees meetings.

Moreover, the College has articulated nine strategic goals adopted by the Board of Trustees to improve its effectiveness **(IB.22).** They include the following goals:

- **Long-term Planning:** Develop a long-term planning process that is inclusive, cohesive, and incorporates the mission of the District. The process will have an emphasis on measurable and specific goals that ensure the fiscal integrity of the District.

- **Institutional Advancement:** Strengthen and expand the efforts of the Merced College Foundation to maximize scholarship opportunities and gifts from benefactors. Enhance and expand the community's knowledge of the full spectrum of opportunities offered by the College.

- **Fiscal Stability:** Develop a planning process that ensures the long-term fiscal integrity of the District while incorporating the principles of shared governance.

- **Student Access/Success:** Be accessible to all who desire to avail themselves of the college's programs and services.

- **Diversity:** Reflect the diversity of the population the College serves.

- **Outreach & Collaboration:** Collaborate with all segments of the general population.

- **Physical Resources/Facilities:** Build and maintain facilities that meet the needs of students.

- **Technology:** Provide appropriate, current technology in all areas and ensure efficient use.

- **Teaching & Learning:** Strengthen teaching and learning within an environment that encourages and enables students to achieve their goals.

In the absence of a current formal strategic planning document, Merced College implements its goals informally through the program review process, Board actions, and the master planning committee structure. Examples of how the goals are met include:

- In 2002, local voters passed two bond measures for Merced College that reflect facility master planning and Board goals of long-term planning, student access/success, physical resources/facilities, technology, and teaching and learning **(IB.23).**

- The resource allocation model reflects the Trustees' goals of long-term planning and fiscal stability as well as the structure of master planning committees and program review

(IB.17) (IB.18).

- The Dr. Lakireddy School of Allied Health opened in fall 2009 and it reflects Board goals of institutional advancement, student access/success, diversity, outreach and collaboration, physical resources and facilities **(IB.23) (IB.24).**

- Merced College posts the results of program review on its intranet site. Results are disseminated through master planning committees. While the informal process works relatively well, the College recognizes the need to tie the many diverse methods into a formal strategic plan.

Planning Agenda

- The District hired a consultant to develop a strategic plan which will include the development of institutional goals. Working groups began in August 2010 with a goal to complete the process by February 2011.

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 analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Descriptive Summary

Across the District, College personnel understand and embrace the idea of ongoing assessment and planning for the achievement of institutional goals. A cyclical planning model is utilized in the program review process to assess progress towards meeting institutional goals, including SLOs and resource requests. Previously, the budget-to-program-review process was not explicitly linked to coordinate with the state budget cycle. In December 2009, the Board adopted an updated model explicitly linking planning to budgeting and calendaring the process to coordinate with the state budget cycle. This will ensure that the District makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation **(IB.13) (IB.14).**

Ongoing evaluation is assured through the comprehensive program review process. As instructional and student services programs, technology, institutional research, and administrative units complete their program reviews, they systematically evaluate them for improvement using feedback from their respective areas. Data specific to SLOs at the course, program, and service/department levels have been used at the College since 2004 **(IB.1).** Over this time period, definitions and measurements of SLOs have evolved to ensure that they are useful in program development **(IB.06).** In this way, the measurements inform the planning process.

Since the College's last accreditation self study in 2004, the amount of data generated has increased and many reports have been written for planning purposes that are both qualitative and quantitative. The Technology and Institutional Research (TIR) website provides a complete list of research reports, briefs and program reviews, each of which provide data with which to inform planning **(IB.12).**

Self Evaluation

The College utilizes extensive planning processes across the institution that ensures data are used to affect change and link budget augmentation requests to institutional plans. The current resource allocation process is new therefore, a lengthy history is not available. However, evidence for the past two years suggests a strong link and improvement in connecting the program review cycle and evaluation to budget planning and allocations. To improve institutional effectiveness using an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation, the College is in the process of using program review software implemented in spring 2010 for instructional areas and will move to an annual program review cycle in fall 2010 **(IB.01).**

Planning Agenda

- The College will monitor the use of the new program review software to validate its effectiveness in the assessment, evaluation, and linkage to the budgetary process.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College's Master Planning Handbook is a planning tool that details how students, faculty, staff and managers participate in planning and decision-making. For all master planning committees, representation is determined by the participating committees or groups identified in the Master Planning Handbook. For instance, the Academic Senate and Faculty Association select faculty representatives to serve on the committees. Classified staff members are nominated by the California School Employees Association (CSEA) and the Classified Senate. Students are appointed by the Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC). The management team council or college president appoints managers. All meetings are open to any member of the campus community interested in attending **(IB.16).**

In addition to the master planning committees, the College has many work groups and ad hoc committees that offer opportunities for input into the planning process such as the Instructional Program Review Committee, Veterans Task Force, Research Assistance Team (RAT), Class Schedule and Catalog Committee, Datatel Users Group (MCDUG), Compressed Calendar Investigation Committee, and Health and Safety Committee. Additionally, each department and/or division conducts regular meetings across the campus **(IB.25) (IB.26) (IB.27).**

Involvement in college planning is guaranteed through shared governance and referenced in policies such as Merced College Board Policy 2750, California AB1725, and California Education Code Section 70901 **(IB.28) (IB.29) (IB.30).** First, certain groups are required to be involved in shared governance committees through AB 1725. Moreover, it is expected both during and after the tenure process that members of the faculty will join committees **(IB.31).**

In the resource allocation model, the College allocates resources to fulfill its plans for improvement of institutional effectiveness by soliciting requests from staff in all departments and

disciplines. Requests are ranked by area leads/managers/deans and linked to program review, institutional outcomes, and by accreditation standards. From here, master planning committees combine area requests into a common list and submit them to EMPC **(IB.15) (IB.16) (IB.17).**

Newer educational facilities provide access to more advanced equipment and expand program capacity. When the new Los Banos Campus opened its doors in 2007, enrollment increased by 40 percent during the first semester. Normally, increases in student enrollment provide a significant positive impact on the College's ability to fund projects. When resources to fulfill plans for institutional effectiveness are not available, as is currently being experienced with the state's budget crisis, the College augments resources with external sources of revenue. For example, in 2002 local voters approved two college bond measures, Measure J and Measure M **(IB.23)**, which funded construction of several new educational facilities, including the Allied Health Center, Business Resource Center, Learning Resources Center, and the Los Banos Campus. Bond funds also allowed for the remodeling of the Science, Administration, and Student Union buildings. All of these projects were planned through the Facilities Master Planning Committee (FMPC) and published in the District's educational facilities strategic plan, In Cadence with the Future **(IB.33).**

Also, the College has an active non-profit Foundation with a governing board of directors composed of both community and College members. In fall 2009, Merced College opened the doors to its new Allied Health Center. A major gift of $1 million from a local cardiologist provided additional funds to open the facility **(IB.34).** In addition, recognizing the need to augment District revenue, the Economic and Workforce Development division provides customized training for businesses through employee training contracts. This division works closely with the Merced County Department of Workforce Investment **(IB.35).**

The Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) addresses the needs of students across the campus and community as it actively seeks additional grants to supplement instruction and equipment. For example, in 2009 the College partnered with the county's Department of Workforce Investment in a Respondent Training Fund Grant where local businesses are served with programmable logic controller training. Merced College benefitted by purchasing high-tech equipment through the grant that would otherwise not have been available through regular funding sources. Another example involves the Basic Skills Initiative and Study Central. The Basic Skills Initiative provided funding for Study Central, an innovative instructional support program which has become institutionalized.

Self Evaluation

Evidence of the commitment to shared governance can be found in minutes of Board meetings. A review of the minutes reveals student, faculty, and administrative comments on the importance of shared governance **(IB.02) (IB.36) (IB.37) (IB.38) (IB.39) (IB.40) (IB.41).** In addition, Board Policy 2750 speaks directly to consulting collegially on academic and professional matters **(IB.28).** The College's resource allocation model provides a comprehensive and broad-based approach to planning and decision-making. The Foundation, Economic and Workforce Development division, and OGIR generate additional resources that provide the College with extra funding to improve institutional effectiveness.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

The College collects a variety of assessment data at all levels of planning. Data include placement test results and other student information that measures retention, success and persistence. Data are disaggregated to ensure that groups of students are equitably served. The data are also augmented with SLO measures from the broadest measures of the degree to which students are attaining their educational goals to department and course levels. For example, the registered nursing program has SLOs for specific competencies. The pass rate for the licensure exam, the NCLEX, is measured and reported to the Allied Health Advisory Committee **(IB.42 a-c).** Other departments use capstone projects (child development and computer science, for example) typically performed at the end of the program/course to measure the degree to which SLOs have been realized. Still other departments, such as science and mathematics, have developed common department exams to measure the degree to which students have attained course-specific SLOs **(IB.06).**

The Office of Instruction uses data from an Enrollment Management Report to determine student status in section offerings and for strategic enrollment management. Categories include day lecture/lab, evening lecture/lab and short-term lecture/lab sections offered by divisions and departments for numbers of section offerings, students enrolled, fill rates, weekly student contact hours (WSCH), full-time equivalent students (FTES), and full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF) load for full- and part-time WSCH/FTEF **(IB.09)**. In fall 2005, the first level of SLO information was generated in a report of SLO Grades (grade distribution). This data provides summary information relating to student retention and success. Persistence information was added to that report in fall 2006 and student demographic information was added in spring 2006 **(IB.26).**

OGIR provides institutional data and analysis for program review and other purposes. To make data accessible to faculty as well as provide easier access to college-specific data, the District has developed an Institutional Data and Research website that is regularly updated and made available to its constituents **(IB.26).** All research projects are posted to the site. The College supports the use of data in all of its major decision-making processes. District reports are located on the TIR website. All planning documents including assessment data, the Master Planning Handbook, the Fact Book, the Fact Sheet, the Student Equity Plan, and program/unit reviews are available on the College's website **(IB.1) (IB.16) (IB.26).** All institutional research reports, research briefs and evaluation briefs also are available on the website.

The College participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), which assesses student satisfaction with programs, services and facilities. A core set of satisfaction questions are administered year-to-year. Additional questions are included to identify specific needs related to programs and services. These assessment data are readily available. CCSSE is given on a periodic basis. The American College Testing (ACT)

Student Opinion Survey is given biennially **(IB.12).**

Merced College communicates matters of quality assurance to the state and federal agencies through OGIR, which is responsible for state and federal data reporting and enrollment management analysis. OGIR provides IPEDS data as well as other mandated assessment reports (e.g., CTE administration and FERPA compliance) to the federal government on a systematic basis to ensure quality.

Self Evaluation

Merced College has active master planning committees devoted to program review and outcomes assessment that direct instructional disciplines and programs, student support services, and other administrative units in their efforts to generate assessment data to improve teaching and learning. Since the last accreditation visit, OGIR staff has grown and has produced significantly more qualitative and quantitative data for planning activities as found on the website **(IB.26).** Currently access to data is available on the College's intranet. Data will migrate to a SharePoint environment and will be accessible to the public.

Information is shared externally through OGIR, CTE, advisory committees, etc. **(IB.26) (IB.42 a-c) (IB.43) (IB.44 a-b) (IB.45a-b) (IB.46)**; however, opportunities to communicate broadly with the College's external stakeholders regarding institutional quality are hampered by limited local media outlets. Current news items are posted on the College's website, which is accessible by the public. The Public Affairs office is managing several social networking sites to facilitate broader dissemination of college information.

Planning Agenda

- The College will move data to SharePoint and increase accessibility to the public.

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.

Descriptive Summary

In the past, the College informally evaluated the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes. Review and modification occurred through discussions in master planning committee meetings and feedback from departments and disciplines. In 2009, the College created a formal process to ensure the effectiveness of ongoing planning and resource allocation. The first cycle of the process occurred in 2009-2010 through the master planning committees. The process involves reviewing and updating as needed the Educational Master Planning Handbook by providing feedback to EMPC from the other master planning committees about the allocation model's effectiveness **(IB.16, Fig. B)**.

In this new process, committee members, disciplines and departments review and modify 1) the Master Planning Handbook, 2) the resource allocation needs of individual disciplines, departments and programs through program review, 3) facilities and other ongoing projects under the purview of campus strategic planning, and 4) processes by which plans are developed and

revised and resources are allocated. These regular activities operate in a cyclical fashion relative to each other **(IB.16).**

Changes to program review also demonstrate the College's commitment to review the department-level evaluation process. Each year since 2005, the review process and manual has undergone continual quality improvement based on feedback. For the first three years, the changes focused on integrating SLOs into the program review process. Initially, departments were asked to develop SLO definitions. Later, the focus was on developing SLO measurements. Most recently, discussions have focused on implementing an online system that fully integrates program planning with budget requests, builds in a system of peer review, allows for an efficient process of re-evaluating requests from one year to the next, and integrates information on what worked well and what did not **(IB.01).**

Self Evaluation

The college planning process is reviewed regularly. Planning starts at the area and department level. Plans reflect the College's vision and mission. The most recent evaluation took place in spring and fall 2009. One of the most important changes involved district budget planning . In December 2009, the Board adopted an updated model explicitly linking planning to budgeting and calendaring the process to coordinate with the state's budget cycle **(IB.13) (IB.14) (IB.47) (IB.48).** The Educational Facilities Master Plan, In Cadence with the Future, guided the District through the facilities resource allocation process. A committee began meeting in spring 2010 to recommend a consultant for the development of a District wide strategic plan.

Data and analysis have significantly improved and are widely distributed for use throughout the College. There is a continuous commitment to improve student learning as evidenced by the continual improvement of the SLO and assessment processes. Model examples of SLO assessment can be found in chemistry, Spanish, and computer science department reviews **(IB.06).**

In the past, the informal process was not evaluated for effectiveness in fostering improvement. As a result, the new process includes a systematic review for this purpose. At this writing, this process is in its infancy and is undergoing its first evaluation to determine its effectiveness in fostering improvement. For example, in Instructional (IMPC), Administrative Services (ASMPC), Student Services (SSMPC), and Technology and Research (TRMPC) master planning committee meetings, discussion of the current effectiveness of the processes have taken place and a "lessons learned" approach to redesigning the planning is occurring **(IB.49).**

Planning Agenda
- The District hired a consultant to develop a strategic plan which will include the development of institutional goals. Working groups began in August 2010 with a goal to complete the process by February 2011.

- The College will develop a template for annually reviewing the college's planning process including a set schedule for all committees to perform and document the review.

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.

Descriptive Summary

Program review is the mechanism whereby systematic reviews and assessment of the effectiveness of the evaluation processes for instructional programs, non-instructional programs (library and other instructional support services follow this model), technology units, student support services programs, and administrative units are conducted. This occurs through the last step of the program review cycle which includes an evaluation of the effectiveness of the process. Participants in program review provide feedback on how well they were able to use the tools, handbooks, data, software, etc. The College is nearing the end of its first full cycle of program review and will begin annual cycles in 2010 using a computerized program review module. The computerized program is in response to feedback by constituents and designed to make the process more user-friendly **(IB.01) (IB.50, pp.86-87) (IB.51, pp. 98-99) (IB.52, pp. 63-64) (IB.53, pp. 107-108).**

Self Evaluation

Program reviews have proven to be an effective tool in providing evaluation. The results of program review have contributed to improvement in instructional programs, student support services, library, administrative units and technology and research through resource allocations **(IB.15).** Department/discipline, staff and student needs are identified in program reviews and prioritized by the departments/disciplines and advanced to respective master planning committees for merging into a combined system of requests for consideration by EMPC and submission to the president and the Board.

Similarly, program review and assessment processes have been modified and revised over the past five years in an attempt to make them more responsive to the institution's mission, vision and core values and beliefs and to promote student learning and increase institutional effectiveness. Evaluations of program review and assessment procedures have resulted in changes to these processes as well as changes to instructional and non-instructional unit program reviews. **(IB.01) (IB.50, pp. 86-87) (IB.51, pp. 98-99) (IB.52, pp. 63-64) (IB.53, pp. 107-108)**

Planning Agenda

- None

STANDARD IB EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IB.01	Program Review Website
IB.02a	Board of Trustees Minutes December 7, 2004, Adoption of ISLOs (item 15a), Adoption of Principles of Assessment (item 15a), Board Goals (item 18a), Shared Governance (item 17a)
IB.02b	Board of Trustees - Adoption of ISLOs December 7, 2004
IB.02c	Board of Trustees - Adoption of Principles of Assessment December 7, 2004
IB.02d	Board of Trustees - Adoption of Board Goals December 7, 2004
IB.03	Board of Trustees Minutes 4/3/2007 (item 8)
IB.04a	Convocation Notes for SLO Education, 2005
IB.04b	Convocation Notes for SLO Education, 2005
IB.04c	Convocation Notes for SLO Education, 2005
IB.05a	SLO Assessment, Chemistry 02A, Fall 2008
IB.05b	SLO Assessment, Chemistry 02B, Fall 2008
IB.05c	SLO Assessment, Chemistry 04A, Fall 2008
IB.05d	SLO Assessment, Chemistry 04B, Fall 2008
IB.05e	SLO Assessment, Chemistry 12A, Fall 2008
IB.05f	SLO Assessment, Chemistry 35A, Fall 2008
IB.06	SLO Website
IB.07	Academic Senate Website
IB.08	Board Policy 4020 - Program & Curriculum Development
IB.09	Instructional Council Website
IB.10	Career, Technical Education Act - Website
IB.11	Staff Development Website
IB.12	Institutional Research Website
IB.13	Board of Trustees Minutes 12/1/09 (items 16a, 17c)
IB.14, p. 42	Board of Trustees Packet 12/1/09
IB.15	Board of Trustees One-time Funding Handout 11/3/09

IB.42c   Allied Health Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, 05/18/2009

IB.43   Merced College CTE Core Indicators 2009-2010

IB.44a   Radiology Program Advisory Meeting Minutes 11/25/2008

IB.44b   Radiology Program Advisory Meeting Minutes 11/18/2009

IB.45a   Child Development Advisory Board Minutes 4/15/10

IB.45b   Child Development Advisory Board Minutes 10/22/09

IB.46   Workplace Advisory Board Minutes 04/13/2010

IB.47   Budget Committee Minutes 01/25/10 (item IV)

IB.48   Budget Committee Minutes 02/22/10 (item IV)

IB.49   EMPC Minutes 04/22/10

IB.50, pp. 86-87   English-Reading, IPR

IB.51, pp. 98-99   Agriculture-General, IPR

IB.52, pp. 63-64   Life Sciences, IPR

IB.53, pp. 107-108 Fire Technology, IPR

Standard II
Student Learning Programs & Services

STANDARD IIA TEAM LEADERS

Myshel Pimentel
FACULTY

Marianne Tortorici
ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD IIB TEAM LEADERS

Betsy Donovan
FACULTY

Richard Marashlian
MANAGEMENT

STANDARD IIC TEAM LEADERS

Ed Brush
FACULTY

Dee Near
FACULTY

Susan Walsh
MANAGEMENT

STANDARD II

Student Learning Programs and Services

IIA. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

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

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

The mission of Merced College is "Students are our focus and we are known by their success." Based on our mission statement, program development, curriculum design, and allocation of resources are centered on the needs of the student. To determine the needs of our students, the District reviews state and national economic development data **(IIA.01a-b**), as well as various institutionally derived student, transfer, retention, persistence, success, etc. statistical information **(IIA.02).** The College uses this information to create educational opportunities to meet the needs of the students and community. Because the statistical information reveals a wide range of needs, Merced College strives to meet those needs by offering different types of classes, including those in general education, transfer, vocational education, basic skills, non-credit, contract education, and community services.

Merced College uses a variety of means to determine if our programs are high quality and meet student and community needs. These include

- Approval of programs by the State Chancellor's Office

- Articulation with four-year universities and colleges

- Status of the vocational programs with their respective state regulatory agency or independent accrediting body

- Assessment of students taking state and/or national certification and licensure examinations

- Evaluation by faculty of non-credit courses for quality and currency **(IIA.03)** Faculty review the results to determine if the courses are meeting the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and needs of the student

- Evaluation by students and employers to determine the quality of community services and contract education

Faculty are responsible for the development and assessment of courses and programs. Development and approval of courses and programs includes input from the following entities:

- Discipline faculty who complete instructional program reviews for each program on a regular basis

- The Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC), which provides direction and oversight for instructional planning and program review and resource allocation

- The Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC), which oversees planning for all areas of the campus: instruction, technology, facilities, student services, and administration

- The Curriculum Committee, which approves individual courses for each program on a six-year cycle and approves any changes or creation of new programs prior to Board of Trustees approval

- The Board of Trustees, which approves of all courses and programs

- The Chancellor's Office, which approves all new programs

- Outside agencies that approve vocational programs.

All course and program development follows a rigorous approval process through the Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Senate. Transfer courses are submitted through the articulation process for approval for IGETC (Intersegmental General Education Transfer Credit), CSU Breadth (California State University), and UC-TCA (University of California Transfer Credit Approval.) If a course is not approved for articulation, faculty are notified and offered the option to redesign the course. Courses designed for transfer are offered only if they have prior approval for transfer credit from the four-year institutions of higher education.

In the past three academic years, Merced College awards, on average 557 degrees and 124 certificates (**IIA.04**). According to the California Postsecondary Commission data for University of California and California State University transfer students from Merced College, two of the last three academic years have seen an increase in transfer (see table 2.1) to public institutions (**IIA.05**).

Merced College student transfers to California public universities over the past four years have increased from 386 students in 2004-05 to 515 students in 2007-08 or 33.42 percent increase (see TABLE 2.2). In this table, "Total Public" refers to the combined totals of California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) academic institutions. Transfers to CSUs during this period increased from 370 students in 2004-05 to 448 students in 2007-08, a 21.08 percent increase. Transfers to UCs during this period increased as well, from 16 students in 2004-05 to 67 students in 2007-08, a 318.75 percent increase. The opening of UC Merced proper in 2005 may be one factor contributing to this increase in transfers. In-State Private (ISP) transfers from Merced College had an increase from 105 students in 2004-2005 to 160 students in 2007-2008, representing an increase in transfers of 52.38 percent. Lastly, the total Out-of-State (OOS) transfers from Merced College over the last four years increased from 90 students in 2004-2005 to 103
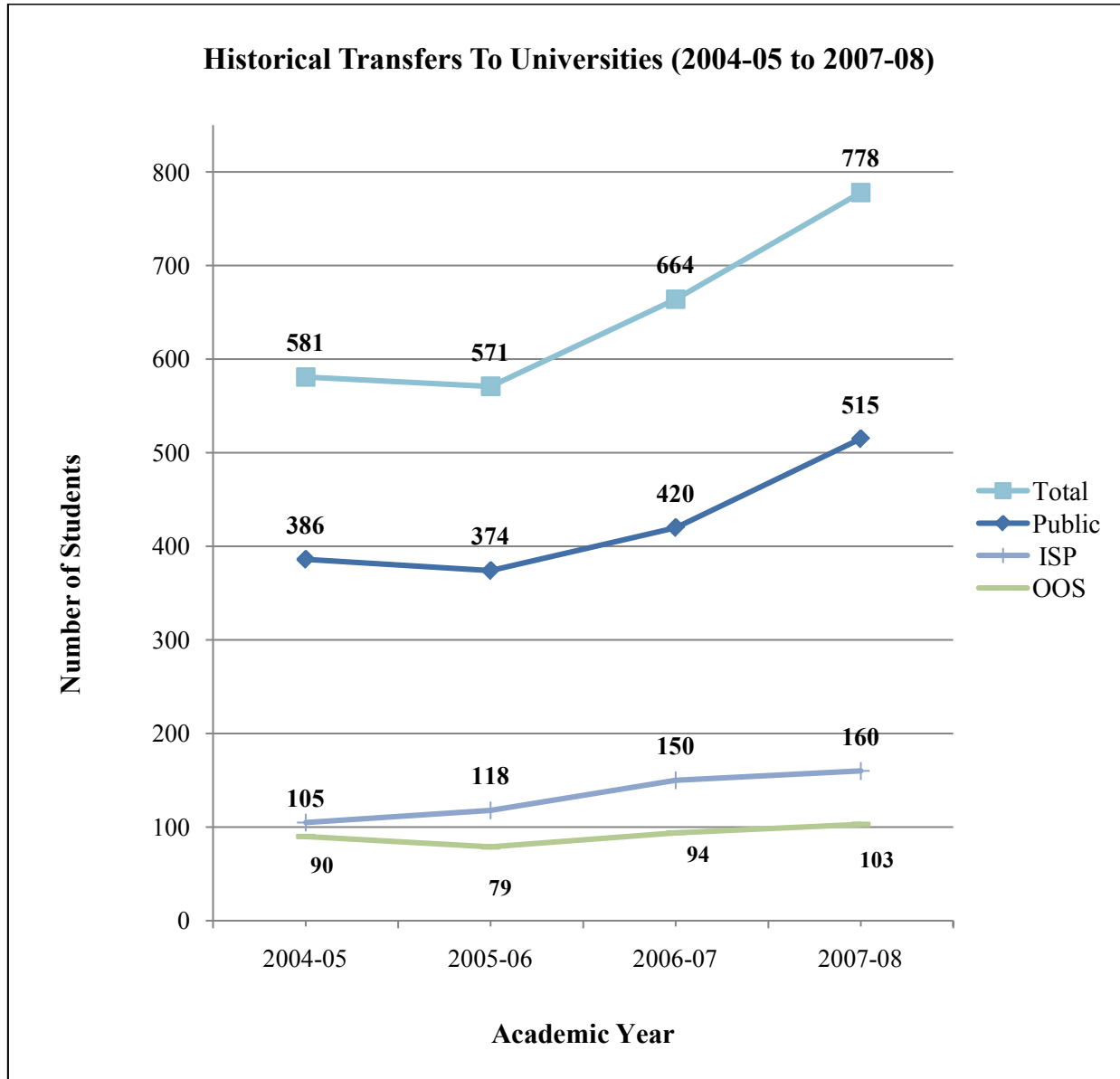
students in 2007-2008, a 14.44 percent increase. On average, Merced College student transfers to public institutions comprise approximately 65.35 percent of total transfers from 2004-2005 through 2007-2008, compared to 20.48 percent of transfers to in-state private institutions and 14.18 percent to out-of-state institutions over the same four-year period.
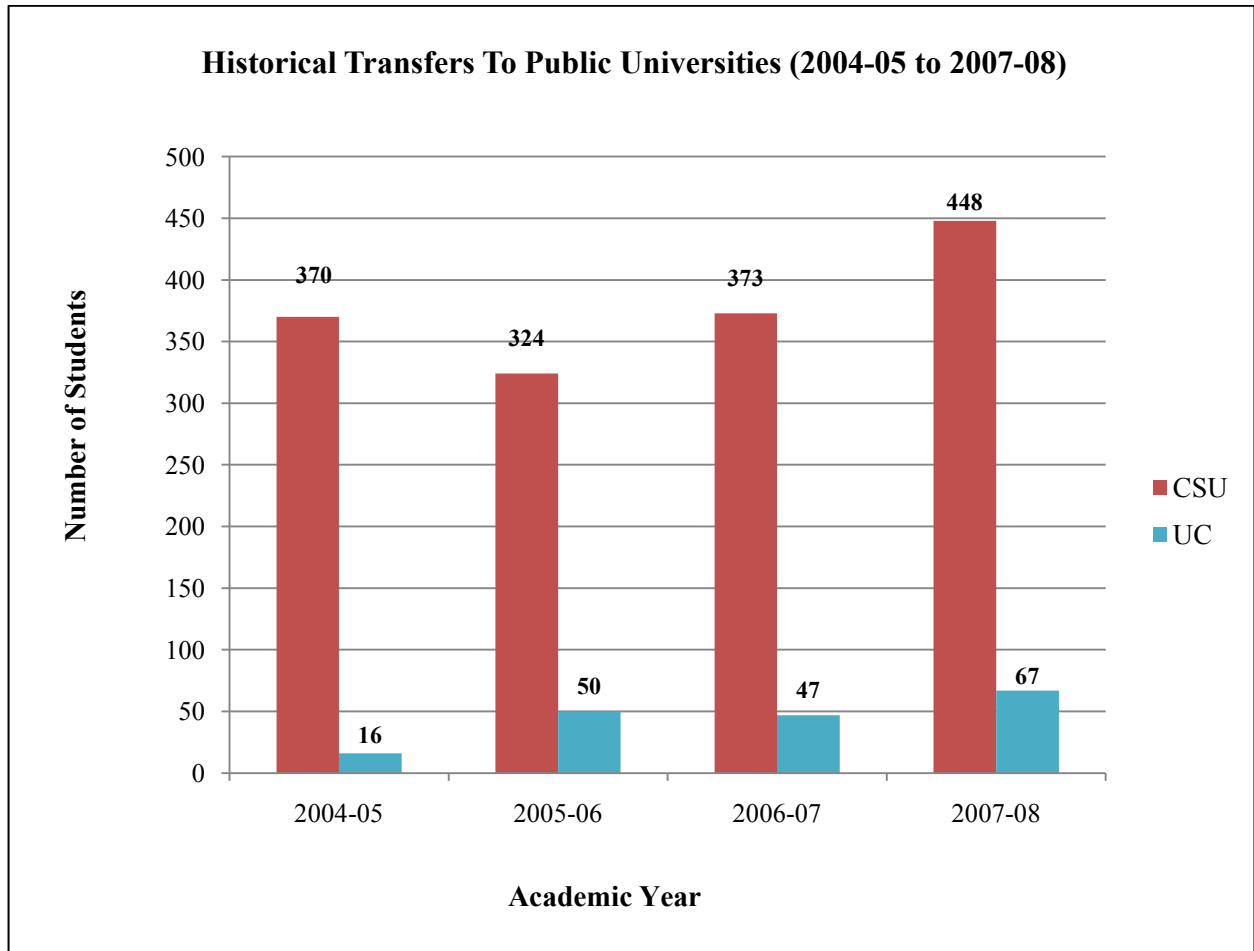
TABLE 2.1 TRANSFER TO PUBLIC, IN-STATE PRIVATE AND OUT-OF-STATE INSTITUTIONS							
Institution Type	Academic Year	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Total	Institution-al Average
Total Public*	N	386	374	420	515	1,695	424
	%	66.44%	65.50%	63.25%	66.20%	65.34%	65.35%
California State University (CSU)*	N	370	324	373	448	1,515	379
	%	63.68%	56.74%	56.17%	57.58%	58.40%	58.54%
University of California (UC)*	N	16	50	47	67	180	45
	%	2.75%	8.76%	7.08%	8.61%	6.94%	6.80%
Total In-State Private Colleges (ISP)	N	105	118	150	160	533	133
	%	18.07%	20.67%	22.59%	20.57%	20.55%	20.48%
Total Out-of-State Colleges (OOS)	N	90	79	94	103	366	92
	%	15.49%	13.84%	14.16%	13.24%	14.11%	14.18%
Total		581	571	664	778	2,594	649
Annual Average as a Percent of Total	%	22.40%	22.01%	25.60%	29.99%	100.00%	

*CSU and UC data were combined to create the "Total Public" count.
Note: Percentages may not total 100.00% due to rounding.
Data: CPEC, CCCCO

Historical Transfers To Universities (2004-05 to 2007-08)

Historical Transfers To Public Universities (2004-05 to 2007-08)

Number of Students (y-axis)

Academic Year (x-axis)

Legend: CSU (red), UC (blue)

Academic Year	CSU	UC
2004-05	370	16
2005-06	324	50
2006-07	373	47
2007-08	448	67

Data on employment is more difficult to obtain. Vocational programs, especially those in Allied Health, are able to track the employment rate of their students in the community. Vocational advisory boards provide anecdotal information regarding graduates and their success. No formal method of tracking student employment outside of the vocational areas exists at this time.

The currency of programs is monitored through a regular cycle of planning and review (IIA.06). All courses with prerequisites and/or advisories must be reviewed under Title 5 guidelines on a six-year basis.

Merced College participates in many intersegmental cooperatives, including the Higher Education Consortium of Central California (HECCC), the San Joaquin Valley Learning Communities Consortium, and the Project Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum (IMPAC). Participation in these cooperatives includes discussions of currency and needs of students. This information is then used to assure academic integrity of programs.

Self Evaluation

A continual review and assessment of data ensures that the College is meeting the needs of students based upon learning outcomes.

College programs reflect the needs of Merced County as indicated by data from the State Employment Development Department (EDD), which has projected that health care will be the fastest growing industry in the county. Merced College offers programs in diagnostic radiologic technology, certified nursing assistant, emergency medical technician, licensed vocational nursing, and registered nursing. To meet the demand for these occupations, the College has increased the number of students it accepts for the programs and has begun to accept students every semester as opposed to once a year. The county's largest employers are from the agricultural industry.

At the writing of this self study report, the most recent data for retention and success rates was collected from the 2008-2009 academic year. Review of the last two years of retention rates reveals that in 2007-2008 Merced College had an average 81.37 percent retention rate compared to the statewide average of 82.57 percent. In 2008-2009, Merced College's average retention rate was 80.37 percent compared to the statewide average of 83.58 percent. The average success rate for Merced College students in 2007-2008 was 63.25 percent while the statewide average was 66.02 percent. The average success rate for Merced College students in 2008-2009 was 62.46 percent while the state average was 66.73 percent. The pattern of retention and success rates indicates that Merced College is slightly below the state average. Through the Student Success Committee, which is responsible for implementing the Student Success Initiative, the College is addressing these challenges in retention and success rates. Changes have been made to curriculum and student services in recent years (English curriculum, Math curriculum, development of Study Central, SI, Learning Communities).

Assessment of the various College programs reveals that they are of high quality and have integrity. For example, all programs are approved by the California Community College Chancellor's Office **(IIA.07).** Merced College reviews the reports from external agencies to ensure that vocational programs meet the needs of students and are of high quality. All programs reporting to an agency are in compliance with the regulations and are fully accredited or approved **(IIA.08).** Review of the passing rates on licensure and certification examinations indicates that Merced College students are at or above the state or national averages, respectively **(IIA.09a-e).**

Review of the number of courses that articulate with four-year institutions indicate that about 60 percent are transferrable. The majority of College courses articulate with the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems. Although the state keeps statistics on our transfer rates to UC and CSU systems, our courses also articulate with private and other, non-California state institutions of higher learning. The variety of students transferring to four-year institutions (see transfer assessment above) indicates that our courses are of high quality and meet the needs of a wide variety of state and private institutions. Beginning in 2008, the research department began including success rates for all courses sent to the Curriculum Committee. This information has contributed to the dialog that is occurring on campus concerning ways to improve student success.

Planning Agenda

- Extend the analysis of retention and success rates at Merced College beyond basic skills and develop a plan to improve the success of all students to meet the state average.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College is a state community college regulated by the Education Code of California. According to California Education Code, Section 7600 **(IIA.10)**, the College must admit any California resident, and may admit any nonresident, who possess a high school diploma or the equivalent. This means courses receiving money from the state are opened to any person who has been admitted to the College and meets the prerequisites. The College accepts any student over the age of 18 who has a high school diploma or equivalent.

Merced College assesses the learning needs of entering students through a variety of methods. One primary tool used to assess students is the Accuplacer placement test, which includes general assessments in sentence skills, reading comprehension, arithmetic, algebra, and college-level mathematics. Approximately 56.5 percent of entering students test below college level English and 83.01 percent score below college math **(IIA.11).** Students must also meet with a counselor to discuss Accuplacer results. Counselors advise students regarding courses to take to achieve their goals. As English is the second language for many Merced College students, another assessment tool the College employs is the Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) for non-credit. Another assessment tool the college employs is the LOEPS, which measures students' grammatical ability and understanding of meaning in context of English. The instructional program review process and student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment allow programs to evaluate courses, programs and student progress while they are in the program. The results provide a means for instructors to change the curriculum or instructional methods to improve student success. Review of student progression and persistence within a sequence of courses, such as those in the developmental area, is useful to assess the success of students and need for program change. Students on academic probation or who have been dismissed for academic reasons are required to enroll in a Guidance 54 course. Data from a 2010 study by the research department on GUID 54 indicated that students who take GUID 54 benefit from taking the course as seen by the persistence rate and increased GPA rates **(IIA.12).**

The Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC) report is used to determine how well Merced College is performing compared to other colleges with similar characteristics throughout the state. The most recent report presented to the Board of Trustees in spring 2010, revealed that Merced College is at or above the peer group for the following areas **(IIA.13):**

- Persistence
- Annual successful course completion rate for credit vocational courses
- Improved rate for credit basic skills
- Improved rate for credit ESL

The college is below the peer group for the following areas:

- Student progress and achievement rate

- Annual successful course completion for credit basic skills

- Percentage of students who earn at least 30 units

A small percentage of Merced College students are international students. Aside from the routine assessments noted above, international students must earn 450 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) examination to be placed in regular classes. Those not earning a high enough TOEFL score enroll in the College's English Language Institute. This program is an intensive 20 hours per week of classroom instruction designed to improve student's TOEFL proficiency. Coursework topics include Oral Communication, Pronunciation, Comprehension, Reading, Writing and Language Structure. Additionally, students are provided home stay, allowing them to live with local families where they can practice the English language and learn about American culture.

As of fall 2009, data indicates that Merced College has a diverse ethnic and cultural student population **(IIA.14)**. Over half of the students are female (58.6 percent). The largest ethnic population groups are Hispanics at 41.2 percent and White non-Hispanics at 33.0 percent. The remaining student population is African American students at 4.6 percent, American Indian/ Alaskan Native students at 0.9 percent, Asian students 9.2 percent, Filipino students at 0.9 percent, Pacific Islander students at 0.6 percent, students with two or more races at 0.4 percent, and unknown students at 9.1 percent. The median age is 22 years and the mean age is 25 years. Approximately 17 percent of students are part-time taking six units or less. About 47 percent enroll in 12 units or more. Compared to the 2005 Fact Book **(IIA.15)**, student ethnicity has increased by over 9 percent among Hispanics and 5 percent in unknown. It has declined by 1.6 percent for African American students and 6.4 percent for White, non-Hispanics students.

National and state economies have been in recession for the last several years. California has experienced a significant loss of jobs and income. According to the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and Merced Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) labor force data, over the last four years the average annual unemployment rate for Merced County has steadily increased from a low in 2006 of 9.4 percent to an unemployment rate of 10.1 percent in 2007 **(IIA.01a-b)**. In 2008 the rate increased to 12.7 percent, and in 2009 the rate was 17.8 percent. These rates are far above national and state averages. The exceedingly high unemployment rate has resulted in an enormous enrollment surge as people return to education for new career opportunities. While the largest employers in Merced County are farming, government, and trade, according to the EDD and MSA, December 2009 labor force, the only businesses anticipated to hire in the near future are education, health care, and government **(IIA.01a-b)**.

Prior to establishing new degrees or certificates in the career technical field, instructors must perform a job analysis to validate need for the program. Additionally, proposed programs must be approved by the regional Career Technical Committee. Merced College has partnered with the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) on many projects and programs. Most recently, with the advent of the availability of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the College has worked to either establish new programs in demand or increase the enrollment of professions such as Allied Health. Merced College is actively involved in assisting local businesses with successful Center for International Trade Development (CITD) and Workplace

Learning Resource Center (WpLRC) grants. These programs are located in the Business Resource Center (BRC), a facility in downtown Merced dedicated to meeting business and community needs. The purpose of the CITD, an initiative through the California Community College Economic Development Network, is to advance California's economic growth and global competitiveness through quality education and services focusing on continuous workforce improvement, technological deployment and business development. The CITD offers import/export workshops and seminars, assessment of export potential, free one-on-one technical assistance, in-house training programs, agribusiness technical assistance, an international trade resource center, and international service provider referrals. The WpLRC, part of a statewide network that provides employee assessment and customized training to all types of business and companies, is grant-funded through the Economic and Workforce Development. Its mission is to upgrade Central Valley workforce skills through quality education and services focusing on continuous workforce improvement, technology and business development.

Self Evaluation

Merced College employs a variety of means to assess student learning and community needs, using the results of student learning as a means of curriculum and program development, as well as ways to implement appropriate services to improve student success. The research study on GUID 54 focused only on the fall 2008 cohort and only analyzed two semesters. The College utilizes external data such as the ARCC report and internal research data to assess student success and learning. The data is useful in determining changes necessary for student success and what new curriculum might be added to meet the needs of the community and students.

Merced College has a broad array of educational programs that include basic skills, ESL, transfer, career-technical options, credit courses, non-credit courses, and fee-based programs. Additionally, the College offers a variety of instructional formats which include, but are not limited to credit courses, non-credit courses, on-campus and off-campus courses, short- and long-term classes, and distance education.

A review of the state and local economy, along with the needs of Merced County, resulted in a partnership with the local Workforce Investment Board to increase the enrollments of nursing and Allied Health students. Additionally, the CITD and WpLRC have been working to help support Merced County businesses.

With its open enrollment policy, Merced College sees a wide range of student abilities. A large percentage of students enter the college with skills well below college-level classes. Through the California Basic Skills initiative, the College has been able to create programs and services to improve student skills, including adding faculty in the basic skills area, increasing tutorial support, adding a new supplemental instruction program, establishing learning communities, and creating Study Central, a program specializing in student tutoring, seminars, and assistance.

The College also created a single-semester Teaching and Learning Academy that educates new faculty on pedagogy, information competency, syllabus preparation, grading, and other topics pertinent to the classroom instructor and student services.

Planning Agenda

- Use data to improve support services such as supplemental instruction and curriculum development, leading to an increase in the annual success rate of basic skills students in order to meet the rate of the peer institutions in the ARCC report.

- Perform a more intensive study on the effectiveness of GUID 54.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College's credit and non-credit curriculum, as well as program development and review, are directed by the Curriculum Committee, composed primarily of faculty. Committee members elect a chair to lead the group. The committee determines which delivery systems and modes of instruction best facilitate student learning. Recently, the committee has expanded its membership to include an articulation officer, library representative, and a separate guidance representative **(IIA.16)**. The vice president and deans of Instruction, along with a research analyst, contribute to the curriculum dialogue. Committee discussions focus on quality, rigor, currency, and relevance for the student population. Courses are scrutinized for compliance with California's Title 5 regulations, the Education Code, matriculation regulations, and articulation needs. The chair of the Curriculum Committee engages in larger, more dynamic discussions within the Academic Senate.

To maintain curriculum integrity while meeting the needs of Merced College students, the course outline approval process identifies effective and successful delivery systems, assessment, and instructional modalities **(IIA.17)**. The College offers a variety of delivery systems including, but is not limited to, face-to-face, short-term, online, hybrid, supplemental instruction, and learning communities. Instruction in a learning community depends on collaboration between and among instructors, which leads to community building and improved student success. Additionally, the College offers a variety of instructional modalities that includes, but is not limited to, lecture, laboratory, and distance education.

Because technology increases the range of instructional delivery and addresses varied learning styles, Merced College has vastly improved all educational facilities with effective, current technology. Currently, 119 classrooms are equipped with ceiling-mounted multimedia equipment. All classrooms have network wiring. Students have network access in the reading, writing, and tutorial labs as well as in the Learning Resources Center (LRC). There are 52 wireless access points and four fixed video conferencing units at all four locations – Merced, Los Banos, Delhi, and Business Resource Center. The Audio Visual Department at the Merced campus has two additional portable conferencing units **(IIA.18)**. Regardless of the delivery mode or assessment method, all courses must conform to the same curriculum standard and rigor.

Technology has improved support for students and faculty. For example, Student Services now offers a long list of online services including registration, wait-listing, orientation, and eCoun-

seling **(IIA.19).** A full-time technician is available at the Student Help Desk to answer questions and visit classrooms as needed. Additionally, a fully staffed Help Desk answers questions and assists all campus personnel.

Direct and indirect methods are used to assess the integrity of programs and curricula. SLOs are the primary method to assess student success and the integrity of curricula and programs. The College's full-time SLO coordinator trains and assists faculty in the development and assessment of SLOs for Instruction and Student Services. Additionally, the College has an SLO website containing information about SLOs, including their assessment and progress **(IIA.20).** The coordinator keeps records to review the results of assessment with respective faculty. Other means of assessment include external surveys and reports. These include, but are not limited to

- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) **(IIA.21).**

- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) **(IIA.22).**

- Cal-Pass **(IIA.23).**

- Local career technical advisory committees.

- Information on the State Chancellor's website, including Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC) **(IIA.13)** and Data Mart **(IIA.24)**

Data analysis is performed by faculty through a variety of means, including SLO assessment with the coordinator, program review, department meetings, advisory committee meetings, and staff development. SLO course assessment occurs twice every five years. At least two means of direct or indirect assessment are used and the forms of assessment are varied and chosen by faculty. Faculty perform in-depth program reviews in their discipline every five years. Annual updates began in fall 2010. The program review process requires that faculty assess the needs of their respective disciplines and determine the success of their current curricula and programs. Department and career technical advisory committees meet on a regular basis and often review and assess student success. Faculty involved with courses delivered online have the support and guidance of the Online Instruction Committee and Technology and Institutional Research (TIR) Online Manager. As a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee, the Online Instruction Committee assists the Curriculum Committee "with decisions about online instruction curriculum" and serves "as a resource for faculty who want to explore ideas for online instruction" **(IIA.25).**

The College, individual departments and specific programs, provide many staff development opportunities to ensure campus communication is ongoing and inclusive in regards to delivery systems, modes of instruction, and student success. Recent and current offerings include

- **Flex Days**—These are offered at least twice a year to faculty and are designed to address, among other things, modes of instruction, delivery systems, SLOs, and student learning in general

- **Speed Dating**—This is a relatively new and very successful format to introduce faculty to new approaches, strategies, programs, etc. Topics include Learning Communities and

counselors' duties

- **Dr. Vincent Tinto**— With Basic Skills Initiative funding, Dr. Tinto was a guest speaker in spring 2009

- **Teaching and Learning Academy**—This is required for all new hires and gives them an opportunity to explore all aspects of the campus, including research-based modes of instruction

- **On-Demand Training for Distance Learning Faculty**

- **Audio Visual (AV)** provides faculty training on an ongoing basis

- **Janine Graziano-King**—As a part of MDRC, Ms. King spent a staff development day with current and potential Learning Community instructors.

Through these and other opportunities, Merced College personnel maintain an open dialogue on student success.

Self Evaluation

Merced College utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and which are appropriate to current and future needs of its students. This is accomplished with an established process of curriculum design and assessment directed by the Curriculum Committee and initiated by faculty, by ongoing department and campus professional dialogue, and through improved and expanded technology and staff development using current and confirmed research on instruction and student learning.

Appropriately, the Curriculum Committee is the primary source for curriculum and program development. Additionally, the committee ensures that all courses and programs, regardless of method of instruction, length of course, or instructional modality, are of equal integrity.

Staff development helps faculty determine which delivery systems and modes of instruction are compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.

Ongoing professional dialogue is represented in the Fall 2009 Accreditation Self Study Opinion Survey **(IIA.26)**, as indicated below:

- 69 percent strongly agree or agree that "The College identifies the learning needs of diverse students."

- 68 percent strongly agree or agree that "The college community engages in dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning."

- 52 percent strongly agree or agree that "Institutional leaders encourage taking initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services."

Outfitting classrooms with technology has produced a positive response from students and instructors. With these additions, instructors have been able to augment their delivery systems and address a wider range of learning styles. According to the LRC Program Review completed

in fall 2009, the Student Survey of spring 2009 shows that 71 percent strongly agree or agree that "technology is important in the presentation of class material" **(IIA.27)**. In the Fall 2009 Accreditation Self Study Opinion Survey, 64 percent of faculty strongly agree or agree that "instructional equipment meets student needs" and 54 percent strongly agree or agree that the "student computer labs meet student learning needs" **(IIA.26).**

The Online Instruction Committee, a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee, has suggested appropriate activities and functions for evaluation, review, planning for online courses **(IIA.25).** The Staff Development Committee, along with various departments and programs, continues to offer a wide range of staff development opportunities including Flex Days and the Teaching and Learning Academy. The Accreditation Self Study Opinion Survey shows that

- 42 percent strongly agree or agree that "The College provides appropriate professional development opportunities for faculty."

- 68 percent strongly agree or agree that "Input from faculty and staff is used to determine faculty and staff development activities."

Planning Agenda

- Investigate ways and means to increase opportunities and participation in staff development to ensure institutional improvement of delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College began the process of developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) in 2003-2004. During that year, faculty was educated on the definition of SLOs, how to develop SLOs, and how to assess them. SLOs were originally called Expected Learning Outcomes (ESO). The ESO name remained for several years before the faculty elected to return to the more commonly accepted name of student learning outcomes. (It should be noted when reading through the documentation that ESO and SLO are interchangeable.) For purposes of consistency, the term SLO will be used in this report.

The Faculty Senate established a Student Learning Outcomes Task Force in spring 2003 and found that the faculty had a varied level of expertise in this area. The expertise ranged from the very skilled faculty in Allied Health programs who had been using learning outcomes as part of their accreditation process for years, to faculty having no experience or knowledge about SLOs.

The campus began a systematic dialogue on outcomes with the attendance of 15 faculty and administrators at the March 2003 Research and Planning Group of California (RP Group) Student Learning Outcomes workshop **(IIA.28).** The fall 2003 Convocation included a presentation by Dr. Bill Scroggins to the entire faculty on student learning outcomes **(IIA.29).** Flex Days for

January 2004 included a workshop on course-level outcomes and break-out sessions for each discipline **(IIA.30).** The March 19, 2004 Flex Day offered a workshop on institutional-level outcomes facilitated by Dr. Bill Scroggins **(IIA.31).** Members of the Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC) attended the workshop, as well as other interested faculty, staff and administrators.

In 2004-2005, the College provided six units of reassigned time to a faculty member to serve as the SLO coordinator, who then worked with the faculty to develop instructional SLOs. A SLO Advisory Committee, chaired by the SLO coordinator, was created to develop the institutional SLOs **(IIA.32).** The committee was composed of faculty and administrators. The committee submitted the instructional institutional SLOs draft, to the Instructional Master Planning Committee, Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Educational Master Planning Committee, and college community in general for dialog and input. During this time, the Academic Senate passed resolution 6-04 on SLO assessment principles **(IIA.33).** In December 2004, the Board of Trustees approved both the instructional institutional SLOs and the assessment principles. Simultaneously, faculty generated a list of programs in their respective area. By spring 2005, all credit programs had developed program SLOs and correlated them with the new instructional institutional SLOs **(IIA.34)**.

In 2005-2006, SLOs had been integrated into the curriculum process and a website had been created for faculty to use as a resource **(IIA.20).** Additionally, the noncredit program developed SLOs. The primary achievement in 2005-2006 was the assessment of 60 high-impact courses identified as having a great impact on students because of high enrollments or because of high stakes within the program. During spring 2004, faculty, in consultation with the Office of Instruction, selected high impact courses within their respective areas to perform a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle (SLOAC), which selected an SLO to assess, decided on an assessment, completed an assessment, analyzed the feedback of that assessment, and, finally, made decisions about future pedagogy, curriculum, or planning based on that analysis. This process introduced faculty to the SLOAC, allowing them to discover the strengths and challenges of such assessment.

During spring 2005, Student Services began an intensive learning process regarding how to apply the concept of SLOs to areas not ordinarily thought of as "learning environments," such as Financial Aid. In fall 2005, a Student Services SLO coordinator was identified and the Student Services SLO Consultation Group was formed. Also at this time, a Student Services Program Review coordinator was identified. There was, and continues to be, extensive collaboration between the student services coordinators.

In spring 2006, Student Services had a plan to develop and assess SLOs **(IIA.35).** By the end of 2007, Student Services SLOs were developed, adopted, and evaluated under the direction of the Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) and Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, college president, and the Board of Trustees.

By 2006-2007 the College had two years of experience in SLO development and began a process to integrate SLOs into the program review and master planning process **(IIA.36).** Additionally, in October 2006, institutional SLOs were revised to broaden their scope to include general

education and student services **(IIA.37)**. Other activities that year included the establishment of guidelines for approval of program SLOs at the curriculum committee, addition of SLOs to course syllabi, and assessment of noncredit course SLOs.

 In 2007-2008, the Academic Senate passed resolution 8-07 adopting an SLO assessment model **(IIA.38)**. This included the incorporation of SLO assessment in the course outline and program review process. Additionally, the instructional program review handbook was revised and updated **(IIA.39)**.

By 2008-2009, the College had four years experience working with SLOs and program review. During that time, faculty learned about SLOs and how to develop procedures for the integration of the SLOs in curriculum, program review, and master planning. However, the process of assessment had yet to become a routine procedure. To assist the faculty in refining the SLO, program review, master planning, and assessment process, Administration made a commitment to provide a faculty member 100 percent reassigned time as the SLO coordinator for a minimum of two years. The coordinator provides technical assistance for student services SLOs, and a more in-depth assistance for instructional SLOs and program review. The Academic Senate passed several resolutions relating to SLOs and program review. Following is a list of these resolutions:

- 5-08, updated the SLO assessment model **(IIA.40)**.

- 6-08, changed the term expected learning outcomes (ESOs) to student learning outcomes (SLOs) **(IIA.41)**.

- 1-09, added the SLO coordinator to the curriculum committee **(IIA.16)**.

- 3-09, added the SLO coordinator to the Academic Senate and Academic Senate Executive Committee **(IIA.42)**.

- 4-09, established the instructional program review committee chaired by the SLO coordinator **(IIA.43)**.

At the writing of this report, the SLO coordinator has been successful in getting 264 courses assessed, representing 16 percent of instructional courses taught during the time frame of fall 2008 through fall 2009 semesters and all of the student services SLOs assessed **(IIA.44)**. The College purchased the electronic program application CurricUNET to facilitate curriculum development with the SLO coordinator as the program administrator. Additionally, the SLO coordinator works with Governet, a computer programming company, to develop a program review computer applications as well as a customized report module for CurricUNET.

EMPC spent 2008-2009 creating a document integrating program review, SLOs, planning and resource allocation. The result was the December 2009 Merced College Planning document **(IIA.45)**. During 2009-2010, time was spent on developing a calendar and implementing a process that integrates SLOs and planning with resources **(IIA.46)**. The new process began in spring 2010 and is currently being implemented with plans to assess its success in 2010-2011.

Self Evaluation

Merced College has a long history regarding the development and implementation of SLOs and

program review. After several years of faculty training through workshops, conferences, and staff development, the vast majority of contract and adjunct faculty are now competent in the development and implementation of SLOs and program review.

There has been a great deal of dialogue and input from the college community regarding SLO development and implementation, as well as program review, in both instruction and student services. The recent past has been dedicated to using the shared governance process to develop and implement the assessment of SLOs for program improvement. Additionally, the college community is dedicated to ensuring that the improvements identified by SLO assessment occurs and is implementing a process to integrate SLOs, program review, planning with resource allocation.

Administration recognizes the importance of having SLOs, program review, and planning as the core of student learning. This commitment is illustrated by the hiring of a full-time SLO coordinator, the purchase of several computer applications to assist in the curriculum and program review process, and the Board of Trustees' approval of many academic senate resolutions on these topics.

Planning Agenda

- Collect and review data of the change(s) implemented at the course level from the results of SLO assessments to determine the success of the change(s) on student learning.

- Review and evaluate the methods used to assess SLOs to determine if they are the best tools to measure the SLO success.

- Assess the procedure and success for integrating SLOs, program review, and master planning with resource allocation to determine what improvements are needed.

IIA.2.
The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College offers a variety of courses at different levels. These include collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs. In addition, the College has a large program offering credit, non-credit, and not for credit courses to the business community. Credit and noncredit courses are also offered through Community Services and Contract Education. The courses offered through Community Services and Contract Education are usually directed to a unique population in business or the community to meet a specific need rather than the student seeking to transfer or receive a degree. International Students are enrolled in courses as regular students. Merced College does not offer a study abroad program.

All courses and programs are developed by discipline faculty based on recommendations and

feedback from sources such as the Administration, the public, businesses, economic development data, staff, instructors and students. The appropriateness of each course is determined by content experts through the program review process and through the Curriculum Committee.

The Curriculum Committee is responsible for evaluating every course and program developed by faculty, based upon the guidelines established by the Chancellor's Office, Title 5 regulations, the California Education Code, and transfer institutions. All courses and programs, whether credit or noncredit, on-campus or off-campus, or distance education are carefully examined, evaluated and approved by the Curriculum Committee. The course outline has a section dedicated to distance education. Information to assist faculty in the development of their courses can be found on the college curriculum website **(IIA.47).** The site contains information on SLOs, definition of activity courses, course numbering system, sample course outline, etc. The Board of Trustees approves the addition, deletion or modification of any credit or noncredit course, as well as degree and certificate programs prior to submission for state approval.

To assist in ensuring the quality of the curriculum and student learning, all faculty members meet the state minimum qualifications. Faculty without the appropriate degree to meet minimum qualifications must be approved by the Equivalency Committee, composed of faculty, a dean and the vice president of Instruction. The Equivalency Committee reviews transcripts, course descriptions, work experience, and letters from discipline faculty to determine if the applicant should be awarded equivalent status.

Self Evaluation

Courses are scheduled for review every six years or sooner if faculty wish to update or modify a course. Because of rapid changes in technology, career technical courses are often reviewed sooner than six years. New Career Technical programs are reviewed by the regional career technical deans committee in addition to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee is composed of faculty from a variety of disciplines and areas, an articulation officer, transfer technician, deans, vice president of Instruction, researcher, librarian, SLO coordinator, and a counselor. The variety of people with different expertise is critical for the committee to ensure courses meet the state standards and are of high quality **(IIA.48).**

Non-credit courses are reviewed by the non-credit director and dean annually for quality and student success. A report is sent to the state Chancellor's office.

The Student Success Committee reviews curriculum, resources, and data for all basic skills courses **(IIA.49).** The committee makes recommendations to Administration and faculty and updates a plan for the basic skills courses annually.

Program review is another means used to ensure the quality of the curriculum. As part of the program review process, faculty analyze data such as enrollment trends, success and retention rates, and others to answer the program review questions and formulate the program's priorities and recommendations **(IIA.50).** When the program review report is complete, it is reviewed and approved by the instructional program review committee and college curriculum committee **(IIA.43).**

Human resources, administrators, and discipline faculty review faculty credentials to ensure all

faculty members meet minimum qualifications or have been approved for equivalency status. Faculty are evaluated on a regular basis and recommendations for improvement are provided, if needed. Staff development activities are offered by the college to maintain the skills of the faculty **(IIA.28) (IIA.29) (IIA.30) (IIA.31).**

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Curriculum development is a faculty-driven process that begins with discussion within the disciplines or within various advisory committees. Once a decision is made to create or edit a course or program, the information is entered into CurricUNET, initiating the curriculum review process **(IIA.17).** Included in the process is review by the following: the SLO coordinator, articulation officer, librarian, researcher, discipline curriculum lead(s), the respective dean, and individual curriculum committee member(s). After review, the proposal is submitted to the Curriculum Committee, which reviews the content to ensure that it meets Title 5 standards. Upon approval of the course or program, it is forwarded to the Office of Instruction for signature, to the appropriate dean for coding to adhere to the Chancellor's office record keeping, and is placed on the Board agenda for approval. All programs that lead to a degree or certificate are forwarded by the vice president of Instruction to the Chancellor's Office for approval. In the case of stand-alone credit courses (courses that are not associated with a degree or certificate), the flow of course approval stops at the Board level. The College is required to have Curriculum Committee members complete training and become certified annually for the stand-alone process to occur.

Besides approving courses that are new or revised, the Curriculum Committee follows Title 5 guidelines for review of courses in a six-year cycle. In addition, the College has implemented an Instructional Program Review Committee (IPRC). Previously, the vice president of Instruction took responsibility for facilitating the improvement of programs and services at the College. This responsibility was transferred to the faculty in 2009, thus the formation of the IPRC. The IPRC is a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee and as such, a part of the Academic Senate. It reports to the Curriculum Committee first and ultimately to IMPC **(IIA.43).** This faculty-driven committee "solicits and provides support for evidence-based documentation from instructional programs and services to assess effectiveness and identify areas for instructional improvement with an emphasis on student learning outcomes and which may lead to requests for financial resources" **(IIA.43).** Under the direction of the IPRC, faculty must review their programs annually and complete a program review self study every five years. The committee reviews and updates its process, offers instructional program review training events, evaluates training effectiveness, provides support for instructional program review completion,

and evaluates the number of completed instructional program reviews **(IIA.43).**

Merced College faculty are responsible for establishing SLOs. In fall 2008, a full-time faculty member was granted full release to become the SLO Coordinator. This appointment represented progress made from 2003 when the College began planning the implementation of SLOs and appointed a part-time SLO coordinator. Since the full-time SLO coordinator has been in place, all credit and non credit courses have SLOs, and the process for review has been ongoing.

Some of the College's instructional programs fall outside the purview of the Curriculum Committee. Two grant-funded programs, the Center for International Trade Development (CITD) and the Workplace Learning Resource Center, are governed by the Chancellor's Office. Since all these programs are grant funded, the coordinators submit reports to the grantors to validate the goals and objectives of the grant. The programs are housed at Merced College's new downtown site, the Business Resource Center (BRC). Also housed at the BRC is the Community Services Program which is self-sustaining and responds to the needs of the community. The curriculum for these programs is established by the faculty or experts within the field.

Self Evaluation

Merced College has a solid, identifiable structure in place to design, approve, administer, deliver and evaluate courses and programs. Fundamental to that structure are continuing conversations and discussions in discipline, area, and cohort meetings. In addition to creating new, more effective classes, faculty evaluate existing courses, seeking ways to better meet student needs. For example, faculty became concerned that the Math 80 prerequisite did not lead to student success in VOCN 46A and concluded that MATH A needed to be the prerequisite. Faculty asked an institutional researcher to review data to determine if their hypothesis was correct. The results substantiated the hypothesis that "MATH A be made a prerequisite for VOCN 46A, as this course is seen to be a better indicator of course success" **(IIA.51).**

With the IPRC, faculty have the primary responsibility for course evaluation with an emphasis on SLOs. The SLO coordinator and faculty leads continue to discuss what makes an exemplary SLO and how it might improve student learning. Faculty have taken responsibility for course SLOs and program SLOs, moving toward a comprehensive evaluation system.

Planning Agenda
- Review the IPRC process following the first complete cycle of annual and comprehensive reviews with attention to overall design, validity and sustainability.

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

Descriptive Summary

Faculty are responsible for developing and assessing SLOs for all college courses and programs.

These outcomes are determined as part of the course proposal and course revision curriculum process. Faculty consult with professionals in their fields of expertise to determine competencies necessary for that discipline.

All career technical programs rely on their respective advisory committees for advice and review of competencies required for students in those programs. Many career technical programs also have state-level boards and other outside accrediting bodies that help define and review SLOs.

Once the SLOs have been developed, their assessment determines if changes are needed to improve student learning. In 2004, faculty worked together to develop principles of assessment **(IIA.33).** These principles define what to assess, why to assess, who will do the assessment, and how to use the results. Academic Senate resolution 5-08 created a SLO assessment model that includes an assessment form **(IIA.40).** The SLO coordinator developed a SLO assessment webpage which explains assessment, the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of assessment, and sample SLO assessments **(IIA.20).** The program review process includes a section that assesses the effectiveness of program and course SLOs **(IIA.39).**

Self Evaluation

Faculty are responsible for the development, implementation, and assessment of SLOs. They rely on a variety of internal and external resources for the development, implementation, and assessment of SLOs. These include, but are not limited to, advisory committees, students, economic data, program review, and transfer requirements.

The Academic Senate is active in creating resolutions to assist faculty in the development and assessment of SLOs. The SLO coordinator has proven to be the key in the coordination, education, and facilitation of the development and assessment of SLOs. The SLO coordinator has created a well-developed SLO website that contains information, assessment forms, and resources for faculty **(IIA.20).**

The program review process has dedicated a section titled "Program SLO Assessment and Program SLO Grid" to the assessment of course and program SLOs. Program faculty are asked during program review to evaluate the appropriateness of course SLOs in relationship to program-level and institutional SLOs. Any desired changes are taken to the Curriculum Committee for implementation. Career technical programs also use external data from certification and board examinations as a means to determine the success of program SLOs. The research department also provides data to faculty for them to use when evaluating course and program SLOs.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

All courses and programs are approved through the college curriculum review process. Certificates between 18-60 units and all associate degrees must also be approved by the Chancellor's Office. A current, approved program inventory list for Merced College can be found at the Chancellor's Office website **(IIA.07).**

The Curriculum Committee oversees all curriculum issues for the college, including all proposals, modifications, and reviews. The committee ensures breath, depth, rigor, and sequencing of all courses and programs. All proposals are required to include course outlines with SLOs. The entire process is faculty-driven, reflecting ongoing conversations in department meetings. The curriculum approval process is rigorous and requires review and/or approval from the following: the SLO Coordinator, articulation officer, a researcher, librarian, dean, curriculum committee members, and the vice president of Instruction. All of these reviewers assess new and revised curriculum changes for general college and system compliance issues as well as issues specific to their respective area. For example, the articulation officer reviews for transfer. When determining if a course is basic skills or a degree applicable credit course, or requires prerequisites, etc., the Curriculum Committee adheres to California's Title 5, section 55002, Program, Course and Class Classification Standards **(IIA.52).**

The Curriculum Committee has developed a numbering system to indicate course status. For example, courses numbered 1-49 are transferable. Those numbered 50-79 and/or with letters are applicable to a degree or certificate. Numbers 80-89 are intermediate non-degree applicable basic skills or occupational and activity courses. Courses with numbers of 90-99 are non-degree applicable basic skills, and three digit numbers are reserved for noncredit classes **(IIA.53, p. 18).**

Faculty have developed a system that allows for continuous monitoring, updating, and reviewing all types of courses, including transfer, basic skills, online, and noncredit. The result is a dynamic process that allows for questioning, review, and improvement. The Curriculum Committee requires that all courses be reviewed at least every six years with career technical courses being reviewed every two years. A list of the courses scheduled for review is available from the Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) **(IIA.54).**

Career and Technical Education (Vocational Education) courses are also approved by the Curriculum Committee. Many of the College's vocational programs have been funded by the Vocational Technical Educational Act (Perkins Act Title I C). The act directs the development, initiation, and improvement of vocational courses. To receive funding from Perkins, the College verifies the high quality and appropriateness of its courses. In addition, each vocational program has a faculty advisory committee which monitors the programs and offers direction, if needed, for improved rigor and student success **(IIA.55).** Besides the college curriculum committee, all new career technical programs must be approved by the Regional Career Technical Committee.

Although the College has always performed program reviews, there was no formal instructional program review committee. However, in April 2009, the Academic Senate passed Resolution 4-09 to establish a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee, the Instructional Program Review Committee (IPRC) **(IIA.43).** This committee of faculty members—three facilitators plus

one representative from the five instructional areas and one from non-credit—is responsible for overseeing the annual instructional program review process. The SLO coordinator chairs the committee. IPRC affirms the faculty's role in monitoring and conducting program reviews.

Merced College was awarded a Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) grant in 2007. The Basic Skills Initiative is a grant-funded initiative from the Chancellor's Office to address student success. With the grant, the College has, among other things, reorganized basic skills sequencing in English, math, and English as a Second Language (ESL). By supporting validated prerequisites and offering students the appropriate resources for support, these sequences lead towards a transfer agenda which significantly adds to the depth and rigor of programs (**IIA.56, p. 11).**

Fundamental to high-quality instruction is a well-chosen faculty, characterized by a high degree of expertise within disciplines. Prior to hiring a faculty member, the College must have documentation that the applicant has the appropriate degree or the equivalency to satisfy the minimum requirements as defined by the state. Applicants without the appropriate degree must apply for equivalency and provide the appropriate documentation to the Equivalency Committee, which is composed of three faculty members, a dean, and the vice president of Instruction. Faculty members must have the appropriate credentials, must be fingerprinted, and have a satisfactory background report prior to hire. Once hired, both full-time and adjunct faculty are evaluated by a peer and appropriate manager per established process **(IIA.57).**

To maintain instructor quality, the College provides a comprehensive staff development schedule that includes professional development (FLEX) Days, Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA), and Microsoft Information Technology Academy. FLEX schedules include a variety of presentations **(IIA.30) (IIA.31).** Faculty receive current information on teaching techniques, how to handle students, curriculum design, etc. New faculty hires must attend a semester-long Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA) designed to educate them about the College's programs, support services. The TLA also provides faculty with advice on good instructional techniques and mentoring **(IIA.58a-c).** Faculty members lead these programs, which are designed to address current and confirmed research along with best practices. The College offers all employees an opportunity to participate in the Microsoft Information Technology Academy. Those who elect to participate receive comprehensive information technology training, resources, and Microsoft certification eligibility. Faculty are able to improve their skills which, in turn, improves student support and instruction. Maintaining high quality instruction is ongoing and complex, involving a highly qualified faculty who constantly measure the appropriateness of courses and programs for academic success.

Self Evaluation

To streamline the course/program proposal process, the College has implemented CurricUNET, a system that "automates the entire process of submitting course and program proposals via a Web browser" **(IIA.59).** A faculty task force worked with the application experts to customize the content in CurricUNET to ensure breadth, depth, rigor, and sequencing from the time the course is created. As stated above, faculty are responsible for establishing and maintaining high-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. An ongoing conversation among instructors, faculty leads, and the Curriculum Committee has lead to many improvements to the courses and programs offered at the College.

BSI grant funds have greatly improved the sequencing and continuity of all courses, including basic skills in English, math, and ESL. The current sequencing of courses is designed to improve how basic skills students are viewed and how they view themselves. They are no longer viewed as a separate entity known as developmental students, but are placed in a sequence of courses that begin as basic skills and then which merge into the transfer agenda. With the implementation of BSI, instructors are gathering data from the reading skills lab that will be used to monitor and improve the quality of the basic skills courses **(IIA.60).**

The IPRC began meeting in April 2009. While program review has always been in the hands of faculty, the decision to form this committee was made to ensure that faculty have the necessary support and direction to successfully perform annual program reviews. Human Resources ensures that all faculty hired meet the minimum qualifications as defined by the state. FLEX activities, the TLA, and the Microsoft Information Technology Academy are tools used to assist faculty in maintaining currency in their discipline and instructional techniques.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College faculty and staff use delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of their students.

The Curriculum Committee reviews course outline proposals to assure that there are diverse methods of instruction. A review of course outlines shows a variety of delivery modes as well as teaching methodologies from lecture to group research, from demonstrations to multimedia presentations, and from field trips to laboratory assignments, among many others. Additionally, a review of course outlines illustrates the variety of instructional methods and instructional methodologies used by faculty. For example, the following methodologies appear in a wide variety of courses, including transfer level courses, basic skills courses, and vocational courses:

- Lecture (ACTG 04A) **(IIA.61)**
- Laboratory Instruction and Exercises (BIOL 01) **(IIA.62)**
- Direct Observation (CLDV 35) **(IIA.63)**
- Presentations followed by oral critiques (DRAM 04) **(IIA.64)**
- Computerized Instruction (ESL 85) **(IIA.65)**
- Clinical Practice (ALLH 60) **(IIA.66)**
- Hands-on Activities (AUTO 40) **(IIA.67)**
- Online Instruction (ENGL 1A) **(IIA.68)**
- Individual Conferences (ENGL 84) **(IIA.69)**

- Group Research Project (BUS 10) **(IIA.70)**
- Collaborative Group Activities (COMM 01) **(IIA.71)**
- Individual and Group Tutoring (MATH 49ABCD) **(IIA.72)**
- Class Discussion (JPNS 01A) **(IIA.73)**
- Demonstrations in shop (MECH 07/WELD 07) **(IIA.74)**
- Multimedia Presentations (WELD 40B/MECH 19B) **(IIA.75)**

Merced College has also engaged in a series of instructional methodologies and support services to meet the diverse needs and learning styles of its students. First, the College has created Learning Communities so that students can benefit from learning in cohorts and from courses that have mutually complementary student learning outcomes. The College also instituted Supplemental Instruction in courses with historically high drop-out rates and low success rates. Initial grants from Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in Community Colleges (SPECC) and MDRC funded many of these programs. The research completed by SPECC showed such programs to be successful in the retention and persistence of a diverse body of students **(IIA.76)**. The College also instituted Study Central, a place where students can study and receive assistance from instructors in various fields. Instructors specialize in a variety of fields, from English to Math to Accounting to Computer Applications to Foreign Languages **(IIA.77)**.

Each academic year, the Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA), open to all faculty members, and attended by all first year, tenure-track faculty, holds a series of workshops devoted to the diverse needs and learning styles of students. Faculty participate in workshops with titles such as Interactive Classrooms, Teaching English Language Learners, Multiple Intelligence and Learning Styles, Distance Education, and Reading Apprenticeship **(IIA.58a-c)**. The Staff Development Committee also provides Flex Day workshops and activities that meet the diverse needs and learning styles of students, from ESL students to online students. Topics include ESL for Non-English Teachers, Online Instruction: Improving Course Quality, Clickers in the Classroom, Make a Movie Seminar and Closed Captions, Reading and Writing Assignments for non-English Courses **(IIA.78)** Aside from on-campus workshops, the College sponsors trips for faculty to attend workshops about new instructional methods, assessment, and technology **(IIA.79)**.

Merced College also provides students with a variety of laboratories and tutorial services to assist students with diverse learning styles. The Tutorial Center, in particular, trains its tutors through both course work (TUTR 35) and workshops on topics such as Study Skills, Learning Styles, Learning Disabilities and Cultural Differences **(IIA.80) (IIA.81)**. Disabled Student Services also offers a variety of services for students with diverse needs. Disabled Student Services also educates the faculty on learning styles, assistive technology, and needs of students with alternative learning styles. Course materials are available in alternative formats to accommodate these students and the College has a means to caption videos for the deaf or hard of hearing **(IIA.82)**.

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle (SLOAC) also asks instructors to access the effectiveness of delivery modes and to investigate the relationship between teaching methodologies and student performance. As instructors complete their SLO assessments, they consider what changes need to be made to curriculum and teaching methods to improve course effectiveness **(IIA.40)**.

While the reading laboratory has had an assessment of learning styles for its students, it currently does not have such an assessment. Lab coordinators determined that as there was no follow-up between the learning styles assessment done in the lab and reading classes, that any assessment would be dropped until further discussion could occur on ways to coordinate the assessment with classroom follow-up on learning styles. In the past, after students assessed their learning styles, they were instructed on how to incorporate this knowledge into their course work and study habits **(IIA.83).** Select guidance instructors often helped students assess their various learning styles. Guidance 54 Foundation and Strategies for Academic Recovery and Guidance 48 Life and Career Planning classes utilize the Learning and Study Strategies Inventor (LASSI) and the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) instruments, both having learning styles assessment **(IIA.84) (IIA.85).**

The College has also expanded its online offerings, hoping to meet the needs of students who need flexibility in scheduling and who live in or work in remote locations. Students have responded favorably to online courses **(IIA.86).**

Self Evaluation

Faculty provide delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect students' diverse needs and learning styles. The Staff Development Committee effectively offers workshops and trainings to both new and experienced teachers that help instructors meet these diverse needs and learning styles. Faculty have begun to use SLO assessment to determine the effectiveness of various delivery modes and teaching methodologies.

The College offers several services to meet student instructional needs, offering tutorial services, Study Central, Supplemental Instruction, and Learning Communities. However, many of these services were reduced due to state budget cutbacks. The College is currently investigating a means to institutionalize these successful programs.

The College does not currently have a method of assessing the learning styles of all of its students. An assessment of learning styles takes place in various Guidance courses; however, not all students are required to take such courses.

Planning Agenda

- Investigate methods that would allow for the assessment of student learning styles for students either through coursework or through a campus wide assessment, and a means to make the results of such assessment available to both students and instructors.

- Investigate means to ensure adequate funding for the institutionalization and stabilization of Learning Communities, Study Central, Supplemental Instruction, and Tutorial.

IIA.2.e.
The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an ongoing systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College evaluates all courses and programs through an ongoing systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, currency, achievement of SLOs, and future needs and plans.

The Curriculum Committee evaluates course outlines on a regular basis through the review process established by the committee and approved by the Academic Senate. Courses are due for revision every six years or when faculty has made a substantial change to a program. The Curriculum Committee reviews course outlines for relevance to student and community needs, appropriateness of SLOs and assessments, thoroughness of content and its match to outcomes, and the future needs of students and the community.

In recent years, the College has begun incorporating the latest technology into its review process for curriculum and programs. For example, the Curriculum Committee began to use CurricU-NET in order to review both course outlines and programs.

All programs undergo regular and systematic review through the established program review process. Program review coordinators have developed a schedule requiring the regular program evaluation. In analyzing data and relevant material, discipline faculty consider demographic data, faculty data, facility and equipment needs, course offerings, SLOs, and indirect outcomes (such as persistence and retention). Vocational programs also include input from advisory committees and industry partners for evaluation and planning **(IIA.39).**

As the College institutes new master planning strategies, it is committed to using program review data in decision-making with regard to curricular changes, program changes, budgeting and resource allocation, and the hiring of faculty and staff **(IIA.45).**

To assure consistency in data gathering and review, the Academic Senate has written resolutions establishing the program review process. The latest resolution, adopted in 2009, determined that "the Academic Senate establishes an Instructional Program Review Committee (IPRC) as a standing subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee with responsibilities as outlined in the . . . Instructional Program Review Committee document." The resolution further states that "the Academic Senate supports modification of the Merced College Academic Senate Constitution and By-Laws as necessary to reflect the establishment of the Instructional Program Review Committee" **(IIA.43).** Furthermore, a computer application for program review will be implemented in fall 2010. This customized program is designed to standardize the program review process using IPRC guidelines.

All courses undergo a systematic review of learning outcomes. The SLO coordinator has set up a schedule requiring faculty to analyze the achievement of SLOs in all college courses. (SLO assessment is tied to review of courses by the Curriculum Committee.) Faculty assess whether students are able to perform the outcomes of each course, determine appropriate changes that need to be made to instruction or curriculum, and decide which resources are necessary to help students reach the course SLOs. Vocational programs must often meet the benchmarks required by outside agencies such as the federal government, and these benchmarks are integrated into course and program SLOs **(IIA.20).**

The College has adopted Institutional SLOs and discipline faculty have analyzed and matched

course and program SLOs with these institutional SLOs. Review of these Institutional SLOs will take place in 2009-2010 academic year **(IIA.20).**

After a series of part-time SLO coordinators, the College has committed to a full-time SLO coordinator position in which a faculty member is given full release time to coordinate the SLO program, update the website, and work with the program review facilitator team to integrate SLO assessment with program review.

From the beginning of its SLO assessment, the SLO and program review coordinators, in conjunction with the administration, have integrated SLO assessments and program reviews.

Self-Evaluation

The use of CurricUNET has improved the efficiency with which courses and programs are reviewed. First, the review-approval process has fewer delays, and reviewers, such as the vice president of Instruction and Curriculum chair among many others, are better able to submit comments and corrections in an orderly and systematic process. Second, there is more potential for in-depth dialogue regarding courses and programs since members of the committee can review course outlines in progress rather than wait for a Curriculum Committee packet.

The program review process has stabilized after a few years of change and revision to the process. The College currently has an established review schedule so that it is clear when programs must be reviewed. The establishment of a Program Review Handbook has helped faculty in their review and analysis of programs.

The SLO assessment process has also stabilized after a couple of years of training and revision to the process. The College has an established SLO assessment schedule and forms which assist faculty in the assessment of SLO achievement.

The learning curve in the beginning of the SLO process was very steep, resulting in few SLOs being developed in the first three years. In fall 2008 under the direction of a full-time SLO coordinator, a systematic and determined effort to assess each and every course on a regular schedule was established.

Planning Agenda
- None

IIA.2.f.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College engages in a systemic review of the master planning process beginning at the division level. All areas – Instruction, Student Services, Administrative Services, and Technology and Institutional Research – have a master planning committee that makes recommenda-

tions regarding their area to the district wide Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC). EMPC ensures a student-centered focus in the District and recommends resource allocations to the president, evaluates institutional resource requests forwarded by other master planning committees, fosters communication among master planning committees, and ensures that institutional outcomes are evaluated and implemented. EMPC's accountability for outcomes is designed to be an integrated and circular process consisting of a thorough evaluation of institutional learning outcomes, resource allocations and coordination of resource requests among master planning committees.

In spring 2009, EMPC worked with the division master planning committees to create the *Merced College Planning Handbook* **(IIA.45).** During fall 2009, the handbook was distributed to the master planning committees, the Academic Senate, and the campus community as a means to encourage dialogue and edit the document. The Board of Trustees adopted the handbook in December 2009, **(IIA.87).**

As part of the instructional program review process, each program engages in an ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure the currency and to measure the achievement of its stated SLOs for courses, certificates, and programs, including general vocational education, and degrees. The Instructional Program Review Team is establishing a formal process to integrate the SLO data and feedback into the program review process **(IIA.39) (IIA.20).**

The instructional program review process uses both qualitative and quantitative information. Institutional researchers provide quantitative data which includes, but is not limited to, retention, success, persistence, grades, transfer, number of degrees awarded **(IIA.88a-b).** As the SLO process has evolved, so has inclusion of this data in the program review process. Faculty members use this feedback and data to assure the currency and achievement of course SLOs. Each program uses program review to plan for both short- and long-term objectives and to improve SLOs for courses, certificates, and programs. Currently, programs are reviewed every five years, but annual updates for each program will be implemented in the near future.

In addition to program review, Career Technical Education (CTE) programs that receive funding from the Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) undergo an additional layer of review. To obtain VTEA funding, CTE must submit a proposal to the college's VTEA Advisory Committee, composed of community and college members. The VTEA Advisory Committee reviews reports and approves or denies funding requests based on an established rubric. A program that receives funding from the Advisory Committee must submit a report to the Committee on regarding its success in achieving program improvement goals **(IIA.89).**

Using a variety of program reviews and data provided by the Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR), master planning committees determine short- and long term objectives for the College, including the hiring of new faculty and classified staff, requests for equipment, facilities, budget, and the allocation of resources.

Self Evaluation

The College engages in systematic, ongoing program evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and to measure achievement of SLOs for courses, certificates, programs, including general vocational education, and degrees. This is accomplished through EMPC, instructional

program review, and the VTEA Advisory Committee.

The College is in the process of updating and revising the SLO assessment and program re-view process so that they better integrate into the planning process to assure the currency and achievement of institutional, program, and course SLOs.

While progress has been made in recent years, Administration and faculty have struggled to create ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning. However, under new adminis-trative and faculty leadership, the planning process is quickly being revised to assure the cur-rency and achievement of SLOs for courses, certificates, and programs, including general and vocational education, and degrees. As part of revising its planning process, the college has com-mitted a faculty member to coordinate SLO assessment full-time. The coordinator also chairs the Instructional Program Review Committee to assure the integration of SLO assessment, program review, and planning.

Planning Agenda

- Evaluate the planning processes identified in the December 2009 *Merced College Planning Handbook* and revise as needed.

IIA.2.g.
If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it vali-dates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test bi-ases.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College uses very few departmental course examinations and no institutional

program level examinations; however, departmental course examinations are conducted during final exams in Math A—*Beginning Algebra*, Math C—*College Algebra*, Biology 1—*General Biology for Non Majors,* and Chemistry 2A—*Introductory Chemistry.* The Science, Math & Engineering Division is considering another departmental final exam for *Math 80*—Pre-Algebra. The exams are written specifically to test for the course content. If a student were to fail a final exam, he/she could still move on to the next course if the course grade was still reflected as passing.

Self Evaluation

Merced College utilizes very little departmental testing. The need for departmental testing is determined by the discipline faculty and, at times, by outside regulating agencies. Currently, math, science, and computer science have department-level tests. However, these disciplines have not worked with the Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) to address reliabil-ity and validity for their tests.

Planning Agenda

- Disciplines utilizing departmental examinations will consult with institutional research to ensure validity and reliability of test instruments.

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

Descriptive Summary

Credit is awarded to students when they successfully complete the class activities and attain the SLOs. Course outlines contain the guidelines, assessment, SLOs, and grading methods for awarding credit in any given class. For each class, students receive a published syllabus with this information. The 2009-2010 Merced College Catalog provides a complete guide to Attendance and Grading **(IIA.53, p.24)**.

According to Board Policy 4230, the Academic Senate is responsible for all matters of grading **(IIA.90)**. Using guidelines approved by the Chancellor's Office and published in California Community College, Title 5 Regulations, the Academic Senate has established a successful and clear process for continuity, uniformity, and compliance in matters of assessment, grading, and awarding credits **(IIA.52)**. As noted in standards IIA.2a-2c, the process for awarding credit begins with faculty and is carried through the Curriculum Committee via CurricUNET. Steps required during this process ensure that courses meet specific norms. For example, once a transferable course is accepted by the Academic Senate, the articulation officer consults websites (OSCAR and ASSIST) for further verification, and then submits the course to the University of California and California State University System for transfer status. Once the universities verify the legitimacy of a course, it becomes part of the offerings in the College's catalog.

Self Evaluation

All courses at Merced College undergo a rigorous process to ensure they meet the standards and guidelines stated by the Academic Senate and Title 5. Faculty adhere to the course outline when creating syllabi and teaching courses. Additionally, transfer courses are submitted to individual colleges within the University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) systems to determine if they qualify for transfer to their institution.

Students who successfully complete SLOs are awarded a passing grade and receive credit for the class. Thus, credits awarded at Merced College are consistent with accepted norms and guidelines established by the Academic Senate, State Chancellor's Office, and Title 5, section 55002. Transfer courses must also meet the UC or CSU standards.

Planning Agenda
- None

II.A.2.i.
The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.

Descriptive Summary

Credit and noncredit program degrees and certificates are awarded to students who successfully complete required courses. Courses needed to complete a degree or certificate are located in

the *2009-2010 Merced College Catalog* **(IIA.53).** All degrees and certificates are certified by Admissions and Records office.

Faculty members are responsible for determining which courses are needed for degrees or certificates. The Curriculum Committee approves all courses, programs, degrees and certificates. Guidelines for application and approval are located on the Curriculum Committee's website **(IIA.47).** Guidelines include the need to develop course and program student learning outcomes. Through SLO review and assessment, as well as program review, the College is continually improving and modifying its courses and programs.

For example, the English cohort met to discuss program SLOs for the English associate of arts degree. Faculty discussed the skills expected of a graduate from the program, the courses necessary to achieve those skills, and the evaluation process for assessing SLOs **(IIA.91).**

When institutional SLOs were established, dialogue occurred among the SLO Advisory Committee, the Faculty Senate, and Board of Trustees **(IIA.32).**

Self Evaluation

Degrees and certificates are awarded on the basis of successful completion of required courses. To successfully complete a course, students must successfully achieve the course SLOs, and faculty members determine whether students have successfully achieved them. Admissions and Records is responsible for validating whether students have successfully completed the appropriate courses associated with the degree or certificate for which they are applying.

Dialogue regarding SLOs, course content, and specific courses needed for degrees or certificates occurs as a part of program review, with comment from advisory committees and review of the economic development data on workforce and industry/business needs. A broader dialogue regarding programs or courses to offer occurs at the Instructional Master Planning Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Academic Senate.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIA.3.
The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College clearly states its general education philosophy regarding academic and vocational programs **(IIA.53, pp. 8 & 38).** Criteria for an associate of arts or associate of science degree include completion of between 23 and 27 units from five areas of study: Language and Rationality, Natural Sciences, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development. These breadth areas were proposed by the Curriculum Committee after development from a subcommittee of faculty. The Curriculum Committee formally ad-

opted them in October 2005.

The Curriculum Committee, a sub-committee of the Academic Senate, guarantees a broad per-spective on curricular matters. Curriculum Committee voting members include: one or more full-time, tenure track faculty from each instructional area, a member from the Counseling Co-hort, a librarian, the Academic Senate president, SLO coordinator, vice president of Instruction, two area deans, the articulation coordinator, matriculation coordinator, noncredit coordinator, and an student government representative. In addition, a full-time tenure track faculty member from an off-campus center, an institutional researcher, an instructional services technician, an Admissions and Records representative, and a secretary are designated as non-voting Curricu-lum Committee members **(IIA.48).**

In addition to completing breadth area coursework, students must also demonstrate reading, writing, and mathematics competency by completing English 1A and Math C, Math D, Math E, or a higher level math, with a C or better grade **(IIA.53, p. 33).** Merced College also requires students to establish Computer and Information Literacy proficiency by satisfactorily ("C" or better) completing courses that meet competency requirements A through G **(IIA.53, p. 33).**

Students intending to transfer are encouraged to develop an educational course of study under the guidance of a counselor. The associate degree breadth requirements closely approximate the required areas of study for the California State University transfer breadth requirements and the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).

Academic Senate Resolution 8-07, which was passed in January 2008, established the current process for SLO assessment. After discipline faculty have completed course level assessment of a particular SLO during a fall semester, that assessment is used to recommend changes to the course for evaluation in the spring semester **(IIA.38).** The Curriculum Committee reviews any proposed changes based on the SLO assessments. The Curriculum Committee requires two readings of the course in order to add it to the general education curriculum. This process pro-vides for a full exploration of the proposal as well as ample dialogue prior to any action being taken. The College's institutional SLOs serve as the educational objective satisfied by the associ-ate degree breadth requirements. The relationship between institutional SLOs and the breadth requirements is illustrated in the following chart.

Associate Degree Breadth Requirements	Institutional Student Learning Outcomes
Area A—Language and Rationality	Communication: Use language and non-verbal modes of expression appropriate to the audience and purpose. Computation: Use mathematical skills and various aspects of technology appropriate to the task. Cognition: Use critical thinking skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and information
Area B—Natural Sciences	Computation: Use mathematical skills and various aspects of technology appropriate to the task. Cognition: Use critical thinking skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and information
Area C—Humanities	Communication: Use language and non-verbal modes of expression appropriate to the audience and purpose. Cognition: Use critical thinking skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and information
Area D—Social and Behavioral Sciences	Global and Community Consciousness and Responsibility: Demonstrate understanding of different cultures and knowledge of historical eras and importance of community involvement
Area E—Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development	Personal Development and Life-Long Learning: Demonstrate self-management, maturity, and growth through practices that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Self Evaluation

The SLO coordinator educates discipline faculty on SLO assessments. The Faculty Senate has adopted an SLO assessment process which has been instituted at the course level. All credit courses are required to undergo assessment at least twice within a five-year period. Discipline faculty use assessment results to develop curriculum changes, which are then forwarded to the Curriculum Committee for review and approval. Faculty involvement and collaboration is integral in the SLO assessment cycle. Collaboration and discussion of SLO assessments result in changes that benefit student learning and effect course level, program, and institutional SLOs.

The philosophy and vision of Merced College are outlined in the catalog and serve as the rationale for associate degree graduation requirements. Furthermore, the SLO process and curriculum review are faculty driven and reflect appropriate academic standards.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIA.3.a.
General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following: An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and

fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College students completing their general education requirements develop the means by which they can comprehend the world in the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. Requirements from the five identified associate degree breadth areas serve to provide students with broad educational understanding **(IIA.53, p. 38).** Students can also continue to explore areas of interest through further study. Moreover, students are required to meet competency requirements for reading, writing, math, and computer and information literacy. In the 2010-2011 academic year, a Curriculum Committee task force will begin meeting to review the computer and information literacy. Currently, to achieve computer and information literacy competency, students must receive a C grade or better in courses that satisfy seven competency requirements **(IIA.53, p. 33).** These competency requirements are satisfied by designated classes which are illustrated in a grid **(IIA.53, p. 34).**

Competency requirements ensure that students acquire college-level skills in reading, writing, and mathematics **(IIA.53, p. 33).** Reading and Writing Competencies are satisfied based on successful completion (C grade or better) of a college-level reading and composition course (English 1A or the equivalent). The Math Competency is satisfied based on successful completion (C grade or better) of Math C, Math D, MATH E or the equivalent.

SLOs are included in course outlines and professors are required to reproduce SLOs on their course syllabi. SLOs are assessed at least twice within a five-year period for all credit courses. Discipline faculty members evaluate and propose changes based on SLO assessment. Suggested curriculum modification is sent to the Curriculum Committee for review. The Curriculum Committee evaluates any changes to existing course and new course proposals to ensure adherence to course SLOs, institutional SLOs, the College's vision and mission statements, as well as breadth and transfer articulation agreements. In fall 2009, the College instituted the use of CurricUNET to facilitate and help standardize curriculum procedures at the course level.

The rigor employed in curriculum development and assessment provides students with a variety of course choices and the opportunity to be exposed to a wide variety of subjects and breadth of knowledge. This philosophy is clearly stated in the *2009-10 Merced College Catalog:*

> *Those who receive associate degrees must possess in common certain basic principles, concepts and methodologies unique to and shared by the various fields of study. College-educated persons must be able to use this knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. Most importantly, this education should lead to a better self understanding.* **(IIA.53, p. 38).**

Graduation requirements for an associate degree require competencies in reading, writing, mathematics, and computer and information literacy **(IIA.53, p. 38).** Furthermore, the Associate Degree Breadth Requirements obligate students to successfully complete courses in five diverse areas of study and maintain a minimum academic standard of success (2.0 grade point average) to graduate and/or continue their education in good academic standing **(IIA.92a-b).**

Self Evaluation

The College's general education curriculum enables students to successfully apply their knowledge in various endeavors. Students earning associate degrees have completed a rigorous academic program designed to enhance their understanding in the major areas of knowledge. In 2008-2009, 386 Merced College students earned their associate degrees **(IIA.24).** The fall 2009 semester provides further evidence of student success with a 83.01 percent retention rate and 64.77 percent success rate. While these numbers are slightly below the state average, they indicate significant improvement for Merced College students. Since fall 2005, the College has improved both the retention and success rates of its students each year. In fall 2005, the College enjoyed a 76.85 percent retention rate and a 59.38 percent success rate. Over the last five years, these numbers have improved by 6.16 percent and 5.39 percent respectively **(IIA.24).** Merced College students are prepared to be successful in the classroom and in the work force. The broad curriculum addresses student learning in traditional areas of knowledge and student understanding is assessed through SLOs.

The Curriculum Committee maintains primary responsibility for the evaluation, selection, and review of breadth requirement courses, adhering to the procedures outlined in Academic Senate bylaws. Faculty discussions and assessment of SLOs are used to standardize delivery of course content and ensure student success.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIA.3.b.
A capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

Descriptive Summary

A general education at Merced College requires that students earning associate degrees or preparing to transfer to four-year institutions must meet specific criteria including reading, writing, computer and information literacy competencies, and successful completion of breadth requirements. The five areas which comprise the breadth requirements correlate with institutional IS-LOs *(see grid II.A.3 above).* The general education curriculum prepares students to comprehend the world and become lifelong learners. The intent of the breadth requirements and Institutional SLOs is to nurture a student's skills from various fields of study necessary for academic and personal success. These skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through various means. The Standard II.A.3 chart illustrates the correlation between Institutional SLOs and associate degree breadth requirements, while also establishing the fields of study and areas of knowledge necessary to achieve an associate degree and/or meet transfer requirements.

The requirements necessary to attain an associate degree consist of between 23 and 27 units of

study with courses satisfying the reading, writing, math, and computer and information literacy competencies. Furthermore, students who earn an associate degree or who are prepared to transfer must also successfully complete courses from five identified major fields of study: Language and Rationality, Natural Sciences, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development. Successful completion of courses is defined as a grade of C or better in the *2009-2010 Merced College Catalog* **(IIA.53, p. 32).**

Merced College uses a vigorous SLO assessment cycle **(IIA.93).** During the fall semesters, courses are assessed according to the established SLO course level assessment cycle using at least two methods of assessment. In the beginning of spring semesters, faculty analyze and discuss the results of the assessments. Divisions are asked to submit course level assessment plans whereby each course is assessed at least twice in a five-year cycle. Moreover, SLO assessment forms for fall are also completed during the spring semester. Pedagogical discussions regarding assessments are ongoing. These discussions may result in curricular course modifications as necessary.

Merced College provides full-release for an SLO coordinator who is responsible for SLOs throughout the campus and whose duties include the education of faculty in regard to SLOs and faculty responsibility and assessment of SLOs. Moreover, the coordinator establishes pertinent timelines for course-level SLOs, collects data, and disseminates the information to discipline faculty.

Self Evaluation

The institution's knowledgeable and capable faculty value student success and academic standards. Therefore, instructor assessment remains a reliable measurement of a student's skills. Moreover, faculty members collaborate and engage in discussions regarding teaching methodology based on SLO assessment. The SLO process helps to standardize the level of academic rigor across the curriculum and to promote student success.

Merced College realizes the importance of creating lifelong learners capable of success after their college experience. The Curriculum Committee and the SLO coordinator disseminate information to faculty regarding SLOs and the importance of SLOs to student learning. Keeping discipline faculty informed regarding their roles in the assessment process is fundamentally important in the educational process. Faculty members consistently evaluate pedagogy to enhance student success.

Student success is readily apparent through their accomplishments. Merced College awarded 386 Associate of Art Degrees and 109 Certificates in spring 2009. The student success rate is defined as the percentage of students receiving an A, B, C, or P, while the student retention rate is the percentage of students receiving any grade except any kind of withdrawal (W-Withdrawal, FW-Forced to Withdrawal, or MW-Military Withdrawal) or RD (Report delayed) in their coursework. The College's student success rates are 62.10 percent, while retention rates are 79.83 percent **(IIA.24).** Merced College is acutely aware that the retention and success rates of Merced College students are roughly 4 percent below the state average. Merced College employs a variety of means to combat this problem. Shared governance committees such as the Student Success Committee, various basic skills innovations, and the pedagogical changes and improve-

ments resulting from SLOs and the dialogue accompanying such assessments are being used to improve student success and retention.

Although Merced College falls below the state average in retention and success rates, there is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that students are acquiring the skills necessary to be productive life-long learners. For example, in the Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, disciplines represented in each of the five general education categories, students have gone on to attend some of the nation's top four-year institutions and have become critically-acclaimed artists, scholars, and professionals. In the visual arts, Merced College graduates have pursued advanced degrees from such prestigious institutions as Yale, have earned critical acclaim in major arts centers across the country, and have served the local community as K-12 arts educators. Similar anecdotal and quantitative evidence of student success may be cited in all disciplines and programs across campus, proving that Merced College is achieving its mission of producing capable lifelong learners **(IIA.94).**

Planning Agenda

- None

IIA.3.c.
A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.

Descriptive Summary

The Merced College mission and vision statements, as well as the institution's philosophy, and core values and beliefs reflect a commitment to the development of each student as both an ethical human being and an effective citizen. These directives are an educational guide. The institution's philosophy acknowledges the changing nature of the world and the necessity of providing an education preparing students to be life-long learners capable of being educated and active participants in the community. The mission statement, *Students are our focus and we are known by their success,* is a reminder that student success remains the College's primary responsibility. The vision statement recognizes the value of diversity and stresses the necessity of cultivating student potential. The core values and beliefs illustrate the College's task of fostering an accepting academic environment that nurtures academic, personal, and community success.

Institutional SLOs reflect the College's understanding of the need to develop students as life-long learners and effective citizens. The Global and Community Consciousness and Responsibility and the Personal Development and Life-Long Learning institutional SLOs are at the heart of the associate degree breadth requirements description:

> *Breadth requirements are designed to introduce students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world. Those who receive associate degrees must possess in common certain basic principles, concepts and methodologies unique to and shared by the various fields of study. College-educated persons must be able to use this*

knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. Most importantly, this education should lead to a better self understanding (**IIA.53, p. 38**).

Breadth requirements expose students to a broad education in various fields of study. Moreover, they emphasize providing students with a liberal education that will allow them to effectively participate in their communities as ethical human beings and effective citizens.

College policies ensure an appropriate academic environment for students. The Board of Trustees adopted an academic honesty policy that is included in the *2009-10 Merced College Catalog* and which addresses ethics in the classroom **(IIA.95).** Merced College also rigorously maintains policies protecting academic freedom, standards of conduct, and free speech **(IIA.96) (IIA. 97) (IIA.98).** These policies serve to create an academic atmosphere that upholds ethical principles and diversity.

At the course level, faculty members determine where to include the topics of ethics. In November 2005, the Curriculum Committee adopted a proposal providing an Ethnic Studies course definition for A.A. breadth requirements **(IIA.92b).** Specific courses in the breadth requirements are designated as ethnic studies courses. These courses must "expose students to, develop an understanding of, and examine cultures that are different from the dominant culture of the United States. In addition, these courses teach an appreciation for and a knowledge of ethnic contributions to the society of the United States" **(IIA.53, p. 38).** These courses allow students to foster an appreciation for cultural diversity while also developing a broad social perspective.

Self Evaluation

The College's general education program promotes a liberal education that encourages students to grow personally and academically. During their academic experiences, Merced College students are exposed to broad subject matter that increases their understanding of both their community and the world-at-large. Classes designed to raise a student's awareness of global and community consciousness, personal responsibility and development, and life-long learning help students appreciate diversity and become ethical human beings and effective citizens. Moreover, a sound general education provides students with the foundation to successfully assume civic, political, and social responsibilities.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIA.4.
All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

Descriptive Summary

The *2009-10 Merced College Catalog* lists all courses required for associate of arts or science degrees by program. Following California's Title 5, Section 55063 guidelines, all college programs require a focus of study in order to obtain a specific degree. Additionally, at least 18 units must

be completed in the discipline or related disciplines. The College complies with Title mandates that associate degrees must have at least 60 semester units of which at least 18 must be in general education, and at least 12 units must be completed at Merced College **(IIA.99).** Merced College's programs emphasize lower division courses that prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions or for work in the vocational areas. Additions to programs or the creation of new programs are submitted to the Curriculum Committee, Board of Trustees, and the Chancellor's Office for approval.

Self Evaluation

Currently, all Merced College programs include study in at least one area of inquiry or established interdisciplinary core. California Title 5 updates in late 2007 stated that all A.A. degrees must have a discipline focus. This update required that Merced College evaluate three of its degrees: University Studies, Transfer Studies, and General Studies. The time frame required the College to act quickly in order to ensure any degree changes would be effective for the 2008-2009 catalog year. After evaluation of these degrees by a task force of faculty and administrators, the Academic Senate passed Resolution 2-08 outlining six new area of emphasis degrees to replace University Studies, Transfer Studies, and General Studies. Six area of emphasis degrees were approved by the Board and sent to the Chancellor's Office **(IIA.100).** However, the Chancellor's Office only approved Social and Behavioral Science, Arts and Humanities, Natural Sciences, and International Studies (formerly Cultural and Global Diversity) **(IIA.101).** These four degrees were first included in the *2008-2009 Merced College Catalog* **(IIA.53, p. 40-42).** According to Stephanie Low, an Academic Affairs specialist in the Chancellor's Office, two of the degrees not approved, Critical Thinking and Research and Health and Wellness, did not have clearly defined areas of study **(IIA.101).** As these degrees were not approved, they were not offered.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College offers Career Technical Education (CTE) programs requiring external licensure, as well as certificate programs that provide students an opportunity to test for national examinations in the field of study. These areas include certified nursing assistant, registered nursing, radiologic technology, CISCO networking, Toyota T-10 Program certification, and the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) exam for automotive technology.

Contract Education classes offer occupational certification that meet employment

competencies. Contract Education, in the not-for-credit mode, offers industry certification in subjects such as the ServSafe Essentials Program. This program is administered by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation and meets the requirements for the California

Retail Food Facilities Law Section 113716.

In addition, Contract Education offers Hazardous Materials training in the not-for-credit mode. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 8-hour Hazardous Material (HazMat) Refresher Training and the OSHA 40-hour Hazardous Materials Training Course are offered to local businesses. The course meets requirement in the OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standards.

In the Career Technical Education (CTE) courses, an industry-based advisory committee reviews all curricula to ensure it is current and meets the competencies of the respective industry sector. This process also provides guidance on any licensing and certifications needed to ensure the certificate and degree completers are provided with the tools they need to be employable upon program completion. In addition, the automotive program has completed a National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation certification process to ensure curriculum, instructional equipment, and faculty meet the recommended industry standard to support employer needs.

In many cases, CTE programs use industry provided testing tools that provide feedback from sources other than in class evaluations to evaluate the success of meeting course SLOs, as well as program and institutional SLOs. In addition, CTE industry partners are asked to provide feedback on the readiness of alumni they hire so that the instructional process can be evaluated and modified to better meet industry needs.

Vocational advisory committees play a pivotal role in determining and evaluating employment requirements and the success of the College's vocational students. Community experts within the appropriate areas review the core competencies of the vocational programs in conjunction with faculty and provide feedback regarding the alumni they have employed locally. In addition to the above, many courses are articulated with the University of California and the California State Universities, as well as several private colleges and universities.

Self Evaluation

Merced College has obtained success in student pass rates within its CTE programs. Students pass the national and state licensing exams at a very high rate, including a 100 percent passing rate in 2006, 85 percent in 2007, and 84 percent in 2008. Merced College Need more information here about passing rates of . . . Add details and pass rates of programs mentioned above that have external certification agencies **(IIA.09a-e).**

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Primarily, Merced College disseminates information to students and the public through *the Merced College Catalog* **(IIA.53),** and through the District website **(IIA.102).** Currently, the catalog is published in print, on the college website, and on an electronic disk. Hard copies are distributed to counselors and staff and sold to students through the campus bookstores. The electronic disk is mailed to colleges and requesting individuals. The format of the catalog, which lists information about educational courses and programs, support services, financial aid, and transfer policies, changed in 2009-2010 from listing programs and courses in separate alphabetized sections to a listing in one alphabetized section. The new catalog also added information about the office location of instructional and Student Services deans, a phone number to call for additional information about a discipline, and information on how to contact a counselor. The catalog also expanded information on disciplines and added program SLOS. Course outlines and syllabi have contained SLOs for several years.

The catalog is a dynamic source of information, and is revised annually with current information on degrees and certificates, as well as descriptions of courses and programs, all in a very clear and concise manner. The Schedule and Catalog Committee meets regularly to not only assess the design of the catalog and class schedule, but to ensure the accuracy of information. The committee includes Admissions and Records and Student Services staff, a curriculum technician, instructional and Student Services deans, counselors; the vice presidents of Student Services and Instruction, the articulation officer, an academic senate faculty representative, and a student. Using the Schedule and Catalog Committee's suggestions and recommendations, discipline faculty, in collaboration with area deans, also work on annual revisions of the catalog.

The College's web site provides links to the Transfer and Career centers, the schedule of courses, and other pertinent data. Because the website contains thousands of pages, numerous site managers are responsible for updating specific sections of the website. For example, the secretary for the vice president of Instruction is responsible for the Office of Instruction pages. Respective home pages identify persons responsible for management of website information. Users can use an email link to send a message to the website manager regarding questions, updates, or errors.

Other means of advertising programs and courses include individual brochures for Career Technical Programs and the class schedule **(IIA.103a-p) (IIA.104).** Individual program brochures are also available. Postcards are mailed to all continuing students about pending registration and stress that that class schedules may be found online or obtained at the College. Though there is increasing dependence on online resources, schedules also are provided to area educational institutions upon request.

All instructors are required to provide their dean with current syllabi each semester. Among the information provided in the syllabus, descriptions of courses and SLOs are included. The opportunity to review the syllabus is also provided during faculty evaluations. The curriculum approval process for new courses and for the six-year update of curriculum includes the catalog description for the courses as well.

Faculty determine if course SLOs were met and to what degree and the information is used

so that changes at the course and program level can be implemented to better meet the course SLOs or to determine if the SLOs are in need of revisions.

Self Evaluation

The College has a variety of publications and means for advertising its degrees, certificates and programs. These programs are advertised in print and electronically. Additionally, the College's Public Information Office contracts with an external marketing company to advertise college programs in newspapers, television, radio, billboards, and other media.

Degree and certificate programs are monitored through the Curriculum Committee. The programs undergo reassessment every five years, including a description of the program with SLOs. These descriptions are available in the catalog (in print & on the internet) and through CurricUNET, the electronic program application used to develop, approve, and maintain records for curriculum. During faculty orientation (both adjunct & full-time) the syllabus is discussed and an example of a course syllabus is included in the faculty handbook **(IIA.105, pp. 42-43) (IIA.105, pp. 44-49)**.

Merced College provides faculty training and information on SLOs, developing course outlines, and creating course syllabi. Training includes a mandatory orientation, a teaching and learning academy for new faculty, and staff development FLEX activities. Faculty in-service training opportunities have provided instruction in SLOs and in syllabus creation, but these are optional for faculty. *The Faculty Handbook* directs faculty to provide a thorough syllabus to every student that includes clearly stated, measurable course objectives that are directly related to learning activities **(IIA.105, pp. 42-49)**.

Learning objectives for the degree and certificate level are presently determined by individual course objectives that comprise the program or certificate for most offerings.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College accepts transfer of credit for any course equivalent to a Merced College course that has been successfully completed by a student at an accredited institution. A transcript evaluation officer reviews transcripts to determine course equivalence. The evaluator uses CollegeSource.org as the primary resource to determine course equivalency. Another source is the degree audit program of Datatel. If any question arises regarding such credit, discipline faculty assist the evaluation officer to assure that expected learning outcomes for transferred courses

are comparable to the learning outcomes of the College's courses. This is done by comparing course descriptions, syllabi, and course work as necessary **(IIA.53).** If there is no articulated equivalency, several options exist for students wishing transfer credit from another institution, such as the petition process for non-course equivalencies, acceptance of upper-division courses to meet lower division credit, and the course substitution process to substitute courses for the major core **(IIA.106)**. A brief paragraph for transferring students is located in the college catalog **(IIA.53, p. 19).**

Additional mobility is provided by acceptance of credits through use of advanced placement (AP) tests, College Level Examination Program (CLEP), credit by examination, and military service credit **(IIA.53, pp. 25-26).**

Students with credit from colleges and universities outside the United States may satisfy degree requirements with equivalent courses if their transcripts have been evaluated through a District-approved foreign credentials evaluation service.

The college catalog provides students with transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate student mobility without penalty. Several pages in the catalog list the transfer policies, procedures, and requirements for transfer to the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems. CSU Transfer Breadth Requirements, Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) requirements, and a University of California Transfer Course Agreement are easy to access for students **(IIA.53, pp.41-44).**

The articulation officer has developed articulation agreements with various California State University, University of California, and private colleges. The College also participates in the Articulation System Stimulating Inter-institutional Student Transfer (ASSIST) program. Several times a year, the College's Articulation Office submits information to OSCAR (part of ASSIST) in order to update courses for University of California Transfer Course Agreement (UC TCA.) Those updates contain new courses, deactivated courses, and changes to existing courses. Information is then disseminated by the Articulation Office to the discipline faculty and transfer counselors **(IIA.107) (IIA.53, p. 44).** Students work with counselors and faculty to obtain such information.

The College is also a member of The Higher Education Consortium of Central California (HECCC), which is a regional collaborative effort between various institutions of higher education. HECCC works to assure continuity in curriculum and articulation among member colleges. Participating colleges are Merced College, CSU Stanislaus, UC Merced, San Joaquin Delta College, and the Yosemite Community College District. As noted on the HECC website, "The articulation officers annually update and electronically maintain the following official HECCC articulation equivalency matrixes: Associate in Arts/Science Degrees, California State University General Education (CSU GE), Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), California Articulation Number System Course List (CAN), and prerequisite courses for Associate in Science degree nursing programs."

Self Evaluation

The College makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies to facilitate student mobility between itself and four-year colleges and universities. In accepting transfer

credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. However, printed information or directions for the student regarding evaluating transfer for credit from other colleges is limited.

The procedure for the course substitution option is not detailed in the catalog nor is the process by which a student can file a general petition for other school courses to fulfill the associate degree breadth requirements if they are not equivalent to a Merced College course.

Planning Agenda

- Include the directions for transferring credit from another institution into Merced College to "Other Means of Obtaining College Credit" into the Merced College Catalog.

- Review the course substitution policies and procedures to determine if they should be detailed for transition to Merced College and printed in the college catalog.

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

Descriptive Summary

The Academic Senate approved a program discontinuance plan in October 2007 **(IIA.108).** The plan was sent to the Curriculum Committee for review before being forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval **(IIA.108).** The College established Administrative Procedure 4021 Program Discontinuance on February 29, 2008 **(IIA.109).** This procedure, also adopted by the Board, clearly outlines how the College will address significant changes to program requirements. As stated on page one of the procedure, decisions concerning the sustainability of programs are a "joint venture" between faculty and administration **(IIA.109).** Additionally, all parties affected by the change, including students, must be allowed to participate in the discussion.

The procedure outlines the process to follow should a program be discontinued, but it does not constitute a valid reason to search for programs to discontinue, or to bypass participation in other academic processes such as instructional program review. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence must be included in the discussion to discontinue a program. The policy outlines three possible outcomes of the program discontinuance process. A program may simply be discontinued, continued, or it may be continued with qualification.

Merced College's first responsibility is to its students, and when programs are changed, including being eliminated, a plan to minimize disadvantages to students is established. Students already enrolled in the program in question must be allowed time to complete the program or be offered assistance in locating and transferring to a college offering a similar program **(IIA.109).** According to the Catalog Rights Statement included in the *2009-2010 Merced College Catalog*, a student with catalog rights may choose to "meet the requirements in effect at the campus from

which the student will graduate either at the time the student began such attendance, or at the time of entrance to the campus, or at the time of graduation" **(IIA.53, p. 32)**. However, also included in the Catalog Rights Statement is a statement allowing campus authorities the right to "authorize or require substitutions for discontinued courses" **(IIA.53, p. 32)**.

Merced College also encourages students to make use of its counseling services, both transfer and/or academic. Counselors, in collaboration with faculty, designate substitution courses when necessary. Course substitutions are recorded on a "Request for Substitution" form which is filed in the Admissions and Records office **(IIA.106)**. When a program has been discontinued, even though courses may still be offered during the phase-out, students are strongly advised not to enter the program **(IIA.110)**.

Self-Evaluation

Merced College has a process for program discontinuance and has followed the procedure in the rare instance a program needed to be discontinued.

The only program discontinued at Merced College in the last 10 years has been Paralegal Studies. This program was discontinued after thoughtful consideration – a primary reason for discontinuance was the downturn in the economy. What had always been a small program became even smaller. There were not enough jobs in the local economy to support continuation of the program, or those jobs were already filled and graduates were not willing to relocate for employment. Additionally, the College had not invested in the American Bar Association (ABA) Certification, primarily because the size of the investment was not proportional to the size of the program, and, without the certification, the program was not viable given there were certificated schools as near as Fresno **(IIA.111)**.

The Curriculum Committee voted to discontinue the Paralegal Studies program in December 2008 after it had been brought forward by the program representative. Following the Paralegal Studies recommended course sequence, Merced College announced it would no longer offer the program as of summer 2010. Students in the program were made aware of the program phase-out, and each core or elective course was offered one last time between spring 2009 and spring 2010 in an effort to accommodate students already in the program. After each core or elective course had been offered for the last time, a corresponding course deactivation was sent through the Curriculum Committee **(IIA.111)**. Additionally, an announcement was printed bold-faced in the *2009-10 Merced College Catalog* stating that the paralegal program would no longer be offered effective summer 2010 **(IIA.53, p. 223)**.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College provides several electronic and print publications to the public and students, including primary information such as the schedule of classes, catalog, student handbook, Career Technical Education pamphlets, and the College website, which contains substantial information on both policies and practices. The schedule of classes is a biannual publication (fall, spring/summer) appearing in print and on the website **(IIA.104) (IIA.102).** Prior to publication, information in the schedule of classes is reviewed by the Schedule and Catalog Committee, a shared governance committee. The Scheduling and Catalog Committee, formed by the vice president of Instruction, includes administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The committee updates information and ensures the integrity of the schedule and catalog in both their printed and electronic forms.

The annually printed catalog appears in print, CD Rom and on the website **(IIA.53) (IIA.112) (IIA.102).** During the development of the catalog, discipline faculty, instructional deans, and appropriate Student Services and Administrative Services personnel review their respective sections for accuracy and updates. Additionally, the Schedule and Catalog Committee reviews information and assists with the design and distribution method(s).

Student Services gathers information through various mediums depending on the type of information. After the information has been gathered, it is reviewed by those groups most affected by the decisions. The information is reviewed based upon the effects to students and the college community, with the material formatted to meet the needs of the audience. Once the information has been constructed in a manner suited to student needs, Student Services begins to disseminate information through various methods. In order to reach a wide audience, the College notifies students through various print and electronic mediums, including the catalogue, student handbook, schedule of classes, traditional mail, the College's intranet site, student electronic mail, information TV monitors, press releases to news outlets, and various pamphlets. Furthermore, through District electronic mail, information is also provided to faculty and staff to share with students during class and in person at the Student Help Desk. Updates and reviews occur as needed.

Career and technical training programs publish brochures on a regular basis **(IIA.103a-p).** Based on guidance from various program directors, brochures are updated to contain current information about courses needed for degree and certificate programs, contact numbers to obtain more information on specific programs, and a brief description about the discipline.

The college website is currently undergoing a major revision in both content and design with SharePoint becoming the technological environment of the Merced College website. This change will expand the College's technological capabilities, helping both students and employees.

The college website provides an "About Us" section easily accessible to the community that lists various policies, regulations, procedures, District information, and demographics. The information is clearly communicated as Merced College consistently strives to provide the most current information on the website and in its printed publications.

Self Evaluation

Merced College employs many avenues of communication to ensure appropriate and accurate distribution of information. Published information is regularly reviewed for quality, accuracy, and currency. Numerous individuals and committees are involved in the design and update of various publications. These include a graphic designer, a public information officer, an instructional and student services administrator, discipline faculty, Admissions and Records personnel, and curriculum technicians. Furthermore, the college website provides statistical information regarding student achievement and matriculation, while information regarding policies and practices is located in the schedule of classes, the catalog, as well as website. The documents are clear, understandable, and accessible to the college community.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College Board Policy BP 4030—*Academic Freedom* addresses academic freedom and responsibility (**IIA.96**). As stated in the policy, the "Merced Community College District is committed to free discussion and open inquiry." This freedom is extended to students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Merced College understands that an environment that supports the open exchange of ideas is necessary for learning (**IIA.113) (IIA.114**).

Merced College Administrative Procedure AP 5540 clearly outlines the institution's Academic Honesty Procedure (**IIA.95**). The procedure, adopted in 1997 and updated in 2002, identifies the responsibilities of administrators, faculty, staff, and students in protecting and upholding the College's standards concerning academic honesty. The procedure also delineates different forms of academic dishonesty, as well as the responsibilities of instructors and administrators should academic dishonesty be discovered.

Both the board policies and administrative procedures are made available to faculty and the public via the College's website (**IIA.102**). Faculty can also access them in the *Merced College 2009-10 Faculty Handbook (***IIA.105, pp. 5 & 55**). Additionally, these policies and procedures are discussed during orientations for all new part- and full-time faculty members. The *Merced College 2009-2010 Catalog* provides a statement on academic dishonesty and states that copies of the procedure can be obtained in the Office of Student Personnel (**IIA.53, p. 13**). Hardcopies of the policies are available in the Office of the President. The Academic Honesty procedure is also referenced in the *Schedule of Classes* (**IIA.104, p. 99**) published each semester, and the Administrative Procedure can be found on the College's website under "Policies, Regulations, and Procedures".

Self-Evaluation

Administrative Procedure AP 5540 and BP 4030 clearly address the institution's beliefs concerning its commitment to the "examination and discussion" of ideas as being integral to the vigor of a society **(IIA.96, para. 1).** Both AP 5540 and BP 4030 are readily available to the public through the channels discussed above.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy BP 4030 outlines the College's beliefs concerning academic freedom **(IIA.96).** The policy, adopted in 2002, is circulated amongst faculty and is included in the Faculty Handbook **(IIA.105).** The handbook is also available on the College's intranet, MCNet **(IIA.115).** Specifically, the policy states:

> *As a responsibility, it obligates members of the college community to present, discuss, and interpret ideas, knowledgeably, fairly and objectively, with openness to the ideas of others, with the intention to stimulate independent thinking, and with a sensitivity to the special situations of students* **(IIA.96**).

Furthermore, the Academic Senate adopted an ethics statement in 2009. The resolution, drafted after much discussion by an Academic Senate task force, identifies standards that are "intended as an ethical guide for instructors" **(IIA.116).** It is made clear that these standards do not counter any laws or contractual obligations; instead, the statement provides "general standards that serve as a reminder of the variety of responsibilities assumed by all members of the academic profession" **(IIA.116).**

Additionally, students are asked to anonymously participate in faculty evaluations as a way to guard against faculty using the classroom for their personal agendas.

Self Evaluation

Merced College faculty members are allowed the right to determine the appropriateness of material to be presented in the classroom. Academic freedom is integral to the teaching and learning process; however, the faculty is sensitive to separating personal convictions and professionally accepted views.

The faculty strives to maintain an environment for open to exploring different viewpoints. Where faculty may present controversial information, students always have the option of disagreeing. Because it is difficult to identify what happens within the confines of a classroom, one mechanism the College utilizes to determine how effectively faculty make this distinction is to ask students to anonymously evaluate instructors. The evaluation asks students to rate the "instructor's willingness to consider differences of opinion" **(IIA.117)**. Furthermore, AP

5530—*Student Rights and Grievances* outlines students' rights to file a grievance for unfair treatment (**IIA.118**). Students are advised to contact the College's Equal Employment Officer if they decide to exercise their grievance rights (**IIA.53, p. 26**).

A fall 2009 survey of faculty, staff, and administration reported that approximately 70 percent of full-time faculty and 80 percent of adjunct faculty believe that the college "supports academic freedom and responsibility" (**IIA.25**).

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

The *Merced College 2009-2010 Catalog* outlines the College's academic honesty administrative procedure in a section titled *Academic Honesty* under *College Policies, Regulations, and Procedures* (**IIA.53, p. 13**). Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 5500—*Standards of Conduct*, specifically addresses cheating, plagiarism, dishonesty, forgery, and other forms of academic dishonesty (**IIA.97**). Faculty, student, administrative, and classified staff responsibilities are delineated within the policy.

The Faculty Senate passed the *Academic Honesty Procedure* in support of BP/AP 5500 (**IIA.119**) in May 2002. This procedure details faculty responsibilities for encouraging academic honesty in their classrooms. The procedure also explains student and administrative responsibilities.

Self Evaluation

Merced College has established clear expectations concerning academic honesty and openly communicates these expectations and consequences for dishonesty to students. The Faculty Senate's *Academic Honesty Procedure* has been in its current form since 2002. All faculty members, adjunct and full-time, have access to the procedure in the *Merced College 2009-2010 Faculty Handbook* (**IIA.105**). All new part- and full-time faculty members attend an orientation where the handbook policies and procedures are discussed.

Individual faculty members expose students to this policy through course syllabi, program handbooks, i.e. Radiology (**IIA.120**), and through specific topical assignments found in some courses. For example, English AL, the pre-collegiate writing lab, requires students to read the College's academic honesty procedures and write a response summarizing their thoughts as one of 15 journal assignments throughout the semester (**IIA.121**). The college catalog includes a statement explaining the meaning of academic dishonesty and directs students who would like to receive a copy of the administrative procedure to the Office of Student Personnel (**IIA.53, p. 13**).

Several faculty members also use online programs such as Turnitin.com to discourage plagiarism. A sample statement from a faculty syllabus is as follows:

> *The intentional or unintentional presentation of information from another source as if it were*

*your own is plagiarism. In this class you must incorporate and document information correctly in order to avoid plagiarism. We will also utilize the website turnitin.com. All other forms of sloppy citation, cheating, copying, or academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Do not attempt to write an assignment **for** another student or submit as your own an assignment written **by** another student. A failing grade on a plagiarized assignment and a formal complaint to the Vice President of Student Services are the typical consequences. Depending on the severity and frequency of the incident, further consequences can include suspension from the course or academic probation* (**IIA.122**).

Most commonly, incidents of academic dishonesty are handled by individual faculty members on a case-by-case basis. Deans are occasionally involved and when student discipline is required, ranging from a letter of warning to a suspension, the vice president of Student Services becomes involved (**IIA.123**).

Additionally, a Flex Day workshop on academic honesty, specifically plagiarism, was held for faculty and staff in August 2009. The workshop discussed different forms of cheating, the college's policies regarding plagiarism, how to inform and direct students, working with them to avoid the problem, and instructor responsibilities (**IIA.124**). Attendees responded favorably to the workshop (**IIA.125**)

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College is a public institution and does not attempt to instill certain viewpoints or beliefs in its students, nor does the College require a certain mindset of its faculty and staff. Merced College promotes an atmosphere of respect, learning, and diversity. The College's Philosophy states, ". . . Merced College provides educational opportunity for all who qualify and benefit. This education involves having a respect for, and awareness of, all cultures, as well as the dignity and worth of all individuals" (**IIA.53, p. 8**). Merced College's philosophy, mission, vision, and core values and belief statement are reflected in the College's policies and procedures.

Board policies, including policies on student conduct, non-discrimination, and sexual harassment, are currently available on the College's website. These policies are additionally communicated to students through publication in the *2009-2010 Merced College Catalog* available in print and electronic formats and the schedule of courses published each semester (**IIA.53, pp. 13-15**) (**IIA.104**).

The faculty is made aware of the College's policies and procedures through the aforementioned formats. In addition, policies and procedures are communicated to faculty through the *Faculty*

Handbook, Academic Senate meetings, and through the Merced College Faculty Association (MCFA) collective bargaining agreement with the District.

Self Evaluation

Merced College's policies and procedures concerning the conduct of faculty, staff, and students are published in several publications. Merced College successfully communicates the standards of conduct expected of its faculty, staff, and students.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

This is non-applicable to Merced College.

Self Evaluation

Non-applicable.

Planning Agenda

- Non-applicable.

STANDARD IIA EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIA.01a   Merced County, Labor Force Data, California Employment Development Department

IIA.01b   Merced County, Unemployment Data, California Employment Development Department

IIA.02   Merced College, Office of Research and Development Webpage

IIA.03   Noncredit Letter and Assessment Form 04/04/2005

IIA.04   Merced College Fact Sheet, Fall 2008

IIA.05   Merced College Transfer Rates (CSUs and UCs), California Postsecondary Commission Website

IIA.06   Instructional Program Review Cycle

IIA.07   CCCCO Program Inventory 11/03/2010

IIA.08   Merced College Status Vocational Programs External Agencies

IIA.09a   Global Exam Performance Summary Report, 2005

IIA.09b   Global Exam Performance Summary Report, 2006

IIA.09c   Global Exam Performance Summary Report, 2008

IIA.09d   Global Exam Performance Summary Report, 2009

IIA.09e   Global Exam Performance Summary Report, 2007

IIA.10   California Ed Code, Section 76000-76002

IIA.11   Flores, Luis, Institutional Researcher, email, Student Placements English and Math, 10/06/2010

IIA.12   Merced College, Guidance 54 Report, 2010

IIA.13   Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges, 03/2010 (ARCC)

IIA.14   Institutional Research, Census demographic data, Spring 2009

IIA.15, pp. 5-8 Merced College, Fact Book, 2005

IIA.16   Academic Senate, Resolution 1-09, 02/26/2009

IIA.17   Merced College, CurricUNET Webpage

IIA.18   Bortner, Arlis, Phone Conversation, 02/04/2010

IIA.19   Anne Newins, VP Student Services, email, 02/04/2010

IIA.20	Merced College SLO Webpage
IIA.21	CCSSE , 2009
IIA.22	IPEDS, 2009
IIA.23	Cal-PASS Website
IIA.24	CCCCO, Data Mart Webpage
IIA.25	The Charge of the Online Instruction Committee, Webpage
IIA.26	Merced College, Accreditation Self Study Opinion Survey, Fall 2009
IIA.27	Learning Resource Center Student Survey, Spring 2009
IIA.28	Student Learning Outcomes Workshop Document (Need documentation)
IIA.29	Merced College Convocation Agenda, 2003
IIA.30	Flex Day Flyer, 01/2004
IIA.31	Flex Day Flyer, 03/19/2004
IIA.32	Board of Trustees Approval, Institutional SLOs, 2004
IIA.33	Academic Senate, Resolution 6-04, 11/04/2004
IIA.34	Curriculum Audit Grid, Crop Science
IIA.35	Student Services, SLO Assessment Plan, Spring 2006
IIA.36	Merced College, Planning Cycle Recommendation, 12/2006
IIA.37	Merced College, Revised Institutional Student Learning Outcomes, 10/2006
IIA.38	Academic Senate, Resolution 8-07, 01/31/2008
IIA.39	Instructional Program Review Handbook, 2008
IIA.40	Academic Senate, Resolution 5-08, 10/09/2008
IIA.41	Academic Senate, Resolution 6-08, 10/30/2008
IIA.42	Academic Senate, Resolution 3-09, 04/09/2009
IIA.43	Academic Senate, Resolution 4-09, 04/30/2009
IIA.44	Jensen, Tracey, email, 08/18/2010
IIA.45	EMPC Planning Handbook, 12/2009
IIA.46	EMPC Planning Calendar, 2010

IIA.47   Curriculum Committee Webpage

IIA.48   Academic Senate By-laws, 2008

IIA.49   Student Success Initiative (SSI) Plan, 10/06/2009

IIA.50   Life Sciences IPR, Spring 2008

IIA.51   Institutional Research, Pre-requisite Validity, VOCN 46A

IIA.52   California Title 5, Section 55002, Program, Course and Class Classification
                    Standards

IIA.53   *Merced College Catalog, 2009-10*

IIA.54   Curriculum Committee Title 5 Reports

IIA.55   Andersen, Jim, Dean, phone conversation, 12/11/2009

IIA.56, p. 11   The Center for Student Success, *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Suc-
                    cess in California Community Colleges*

IIA.57   Merced College Faculty Association (MCFA) Agreement, Article IX,
                    Evaluation and Tenure

IIA.58a   Teaching and Learning Academy Schedule Fall 2007

IIA.58b   Teaching and Learning Academy Schedule Fall 2008

IIA.58c   Teaching and Learning Academy Schedule Fall 2009

IIA.59   CurricUNET Website

IIA.60   Huntington, Pam, Reading Lab Assessment Plan

IIA.61   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, ACTG 04A

IIA.62   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, BIOL 01

IIA.63   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, CLDV 35

IIA.64   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, DRAM 04

IIA.65   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, ESL 85

IIA.66   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, ALLH 60

IIA.67   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, AUTO 40

IIA.68   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, ENGL 1A

IIA.69   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, ENGL 84

IIA.70   Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, BUS 10

IIA.71	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, COMM 01
IIA.72	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, MATH 49ABCD
IIA.73	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, JPNS 01A
IIA.74	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, MECH 07/WELD 07
IIA.75	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, WELD 40B/MECH 19B
IIA. 76	Bond, Lloyd. *Toward Informative Assessment and a Culture of Evidence*, Stanford: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2009
IIA.77	Study Central Flyer, Spring 2010
IIA.78	Merced College Flex Flyer, Spring 2010
IIA.79	Mattoon, Stan, email, 01/27/2010
IIA.80	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, TUTR 35
IIA.81	Flatt, Susan Flatt, email, 11/05/2009
IIA.82	Merced College, Disabled Student Services (DSS) Webpage
IIA.83	Wilson, Lenice, email, Learning Style Assessment, 03/05/2010
IIA.84	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, GUID 54
IIA.85	Merced College, CurricUNET, Course Outline, GUID 48
IIA.86	Distance Education Committee, Agenda and Notes, 2009-2010
IIA.87	Board of Trustees, Minutes, Approval *Merced College Planning Handbook 2009,* 12/01/2009
IIA.88a	IPR Dataset, IGETC
IIA.88b	IPR Dataset, Transfers by Discipline
IIA.89	CTE Advisory Committee Minutes, 05/27/2010
IIA.90	Merced College, Board of Trustees, Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 4230
IIA.91	Piro, Vince, English Faculty Lead, Personal Communication, 03/02/2010
IIA.92a	Curriculum, Minutes, 10/06/2005
IIA.92b	Curriculum, Minutes, 11/03/2005
IIA.93	Merced College, SLO Assessment Cycle Timeline
IIA.94	Graulty, John, Dean, email, 12/09/2009

IIA.95	Merced College, Board of Trustees, Administrative Procedure 5540
IIA.96	Merced College, Board of Trustees, Board Policy 4030
IIA.97	Merced College, Board of Trustees, Board Policy 5500
IIA.98	Merced College, Board of Trustees, Board Policy 5550
IIA.99	California Title 5, Section 55063
IIA.100	Academic Senate, Resolution 2-08, 02/28/2008
IIA.101	Spevak, John, Retired Vice President of Instruction, email, 04/01/2008
IIA.102	Merced College Website
IIA.103a	Program Brochure, Accounting
IIA.103b	Program Brochure, Addiction Studies
IIA.103c	Program Brochure, Administrative Office Assistant
IIA.103d	Program Brochure, Computer Studies
IIA.103e	Program Brochure, Corrections
IIA.103f	Program Brochure, Criminal Justice
IIA.103g	Program Brochure, Diagnostic Sonography
IIA.103h	Program Brochure, Diagnostic Sonography Cardiac
IIA.103i	Program Brochure, Diagnostic Radiologic
IIA.103j	Program Brochure, Fire Technology
IIA.103k	Program Brochure, Foods and Nutrition
IIA.103l	Program Brochure, Management
IIA.103m	Program Brochure, Nurse Assistant
IIA.103n	Program Brochure, Real Estate
IIA.103o	Program Brochure, Registered Nursing
IIA.103p	Program Brochure, Vocational Nursing
IIA.104	Merced College Schedule of Classes, Spring 2010
IIA.105	*Merced College Faculty Handbook,* 2009-2010
IIA.106	Merced College, Student Services, Course Substitution Form
IIA.107	Hundley, Amy, Articulation Officer, email, 11/03/2009

IIA.108	Academic Senate, Resolution 5-07, 10/11/2007
IIA.109	Merced College, Board of Trustees, Administrative Procedure 4021
IIA.110	Renteria, Enrique, Counseling Lead, personal communication, 11/10/2009
IIA.111	Freston, Paula, Business Professor, email, 10/06/2009
IIA.112	Merced College Catalog 2009-2010 CD rom
IIA.113	Academic Senate, Resolution 6-01, 12/06/2001
IIA.114	Academic Senate, Resolution 3-05, 05/19/2005
IIA.115	Merced College Intranet, MC-Net
IIA.116	Academic Senate, Resolution 2-09, 03/26/2009
IIA.117	Merced College, Student Evaluation of Teaching Form
IIA.118	Merced College, Board of Trustees, AP 5530
IIA.119	Academic Senate, Resolution 3-02, 05/16/2002
IIA.120	Merced College, Diagnostic Radiology Program, Student Handbook
IIA.121	Cabezut-Ortiz, Delores, Writing Lab Co-coordinator, personal communication, 03/03/2010
IIA.122	Hundley, Amy, English Faculty, email, 11/07/2009
IIA.123	Newins, Anne, VP Student Services, email, 09/30/2009
IIA.124	Merced College, Staff Development, Flex Flyer, 08/2009
IIA.125	Merced College, Staff Development, Flex Workshop Evaluations, 08/2009

IIB. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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

Both the Merced and Los Banos campuses of the Merced Community College District (District) enjoy the advantages of sharing a well-developed system of student support services. The purpose of this network of services is to augment the academic needs of a diverse student body and to support the mission of the institution which is "Students are our focus and we are known by their success." Numerous offices and venues on both campuses work collaboratively to provide accessible and comprehensive student support services for students enrolled or anticipating enrollment at these campuses.

As part of the institutional evaluation of the quality of student support services, the College's program review process systematically assesses student support services using Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), faculty and staff input, a variety of student surveys and other appropriate measures to improve the effectiveness of these services. In 2005, the College identified both an SLO coordinator and program review coordinator for Student Services. All Student Services programs have participated in the development and evaluation of SLOs and have completed the program review process by as of the spring 2010 semester. During the fall 2010 semester the cycle will begin again.

The Merced College Planning Handbook describes the role of program reviews and SLOs in the evaluation of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), resource allocations, and the coordination of resource requests among the six Merced College master planning committees (**IIB.01**). Within this structure, Student Services programs make resource requests to the Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) which validates that requests are based on the data evaluation provided through the SLO and program review process. SSMPC then forwards the requests to the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC). EMPC functions in an oversight capacity and evaluates the resource requests from all five master planning committees, prioritizing them according to their alignment with the ILOs (**IIB.02**).

To enhance their own planning model, Student Services programs developed a three-year planning document that reports each program's evaluation of a current SLO and changes made based on a previous SLO(s). Needed resources are stated on this document as well. Unfortunately, due to major budget reductions, this process has become an "emergency plan for the next 18 months" in place of the three-year concept (**IIB.03a-i**).

Merced College has felt the effects of the national and state economic downturn of the last few years. During these difficult fiscal times, Student Services programs have had to face the additional challenge of serving an increasing student population with fewer resources. During the 2009-2010 academic year, allocation reductions of up to 45 percent in categorical programs resulted in the loss of approximately one dozen student services classified employee positions. In

addition, 1.2 full-time equivalent Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) counselors were transferred to general counseling. Intensive collaborative planning and coordination among student services programs during this period has helped to mitigate the effects of such massive cuts. In spite of district wide budget cuts, Student Services continues to work toward meeting the mission of the institution.

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

Descriptive Summary

Student support services are delivered under the administrative leadership of the vice president of Student Services. Operating under the vice president are the dean of Student Services/Special Programs, dean of Student Services, Office of Institutional Advancement, Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS), International Students, and Student Health Services. The dean of Student Services/Special Programs oversees First Year Experience, CalWORKs, EOPS & CARE, Student Equity, and the Basic Skills Plan. The dean of Student Services is responsible for the Counseling Cohort, Associated Students of Merced College, Office of Relations with Schools, Matriculation (outreach, orientation, and assessment credit and non-credit), CalSOAP, and the Career/Transfer (**IIB.04**).

During the 2008-2009 academic year, EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs, and Matriculation underwent a Chancellor's Office categorical program site visit (**IIB.05**). During this process, categorical programs provided an evaluative self-study addressing management, access, progress, and success. While the College has received a draft of the summary report, the Chancellor's Office has not released its official findings due to limited staffing caused by 2009-2010 budget cuts.

A number of college committees address student success issues, including the Student Success Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, which is composed of faculty from a number of disciplines as well as an instructional dean and a student services dean. Their discussions focus on instructional support services available to students such as tutorial services, supplemental instruction, computer labs, first-year experience, and learning centers (**IIB.21**).

Some committees are unique to Student Services and all have agendas concerning student success issues. Program coordination and problem-solving are accomplished through regularly scheduled Student Personnel Executive Committee (SPEC) and Student Services Administrative Managers (SPAM) meetings (**IIB.66b**) (**IIB.67**). SPEC and SPAM are both operational rather than shared governance committees. SPEC involves student services program leaders and includes faculty, management, and classified staff. The committee meets every two weeks to focus on problem-solving and operational planning. The minutes are distributed to all of the members and are archived.

SPAM is a smaller group comparable to the Vice Presidents' Cabinet and includes the deans, the Financial Aid director, and the DSPS director. SPAM meets every other week to troubleshoot and problem-solve. Minutes are not taken. The director of the Office of Relations with Schools

and the associate register attend by request. SPAM has the largest programs, most complex regulations, and the largest budgets to manage, all while overseeing subsidiary programs. For example, the dean of Student Services/Special Programs oversees CalWORKs.

SSMPC, a shared-governance committee represented by classified, faculty, management groups, as well as students, provides broad oversight, advocacy, and direction for all student services programs (**IIB.06**). SSMPC regularly reviews information related to student access, progress, learning, and success. The Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) supports institutional planning and evaluation through data collection that assesses the quality of student support services. The ACT Student Opinion Survey, one of the College's critical research tools, helps identify satisfaction levels among the student population in regards to services, educational offerings, and facilities. Survey information provides useful information for evaluating the impact of programs and services designed to support student learning. It also allows for a comparative study with results from multiple years. For example, comparison data is available from the fall 1998, 2002, and 2006 semesters (**IIB.65**).

Merced College was one of nine California Community Colleges to receive up to $250,000 in Student Support Partnership Integrating Resources and Education (SSPIRE) grants over three years for a range of programs integrating instruction and student services (**IIB.08a**). The goal of the SSPIRE grant is to improve academic achievement and graduation rates among low-income and underprepared students. As a SSPIRE grant recipient, the College created Study Central, a dedicated space on campus where students study, work in small groups, and receive guidance and/or tutoring from faculty and student peer mentors (**IIB.08b**). Study Central also sponsors special workshops for students and faculty. About 100 students visit Study Central per week, and about 400 visited at least once each semester with many returning regularly throughout the term. An evaluation conducted in 2007 concluded that most students heard about Study Central from their instructors, and most attended to receive help in their homework. The subject that received the most attention was math. Writing assistance was not sought as readily because this help was available for students at the Reading and Writing Center (**IIB.09**).

With SSPIRE funding, the College administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in 2007 and 2009 and received valuable data regarding student opinion of the College's programs and services **(IIB.10a-b).**

OUTREACH AND ENROLLMENT SERVICES
Admissions & Records (A & R)—The mission of Admissions & Records is to collaboratively educate students in the timely use of processes related to admissions, registration, program completion, and access to academic records. Admissions & Records also provides assistance to students registering for classes by determining residency, veteran certification, transcript evaluation, IGETC and/or CSU-GE breadth certification, transcript requests, enrollment verifications, GPA verification reports for state grants, graduation evaluations, coordination of the graduation ceremony, collection and processing of census and grade reporting rosters. Admissions & Records maintains and stores all student records. The Merced campus has one full-time and one 19- hour student services (registration) clerk to serve over 9,000 students. Other A&R staff is called upon to assist with registration during peak registration periods. A&R moved into the Merced campus's Lesher Student Services Center (LSSC) in 2008 along with other student

services programs to create a one-stop services experience for students.

A new, full-time permanent student services clerk at the Los Banos Campus assists with admissions and registration, providing consistent information to potential and current students. The campus's Student Services functions as a one-stop center where nearly all supportive services are centrally located, allowing the staff to be familiar with various services to which they are not assigned. In 2009-2010, the Los Banos campus served approximately 1,200 students.

Assessment—Completion of assessment is a very important step in the matriculation process, one that facilitates student success and ensures that students begin their educational experience at the appropriate level. A complete assessment includes placement tests and other multiple measures such as study skills, goals, educational history, career aspirations, and prior academic performance. The Assessment Center administers the following tests:

- Accuplacer, a computerized assessment of English and math skills.

- LOEP (Level of English Proficiency), a test used for placement of non-native speakers of English for English and/or ESL courses. (LOEP is part of the Accuplacer package, and students can be "branched" into the LOEP test depending on their responses to background questions and test item responses).

- ATB (Ability to Benefit) is for students who do not have a high school diploma or GED and who wish to qualify for federal financial aid.

- CELSA (Combined English Language Skills Assessment*)* is for English as a Second Language testing.

The assessment component is crucial to the accurate placement of students into college curricula. Pre-test orientations have been updated to more accurately inform students about each test. A diagnostic manual has been created to assist students preparing for the math portion of the test (**IIB.11**). Off-site testing in the high schools, offering more convenient locations, has been provided to graduating seniors. All assessment testing for the District is entered and tracked in SARS (**IIB.12**).

Cal-SOAP—The California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) is a statewide program designed to increase the number of students attending college (**IIB.13**). The program serves elementary, middle, high school, and community college students from limited income families, or first-generation college students (first in family to attend college), or from areas or schools with low eligibility or college participation rates.

Merced County Cal-SOAP has been in existence since 1999. Cal-SOAP staff annually serves students who attend nine local area high schools, one elementary school, and Merced College students. Merced County Cal-SOAP focuses on students and their parents, and is committed to providing both financial and academic information for parents to ensure the success of their students. Merced College's Cal-SOAP offers the following programs:

The Collegiate Academy—A collaborative effort between Merced College, UC Merced, CSU Stanislaus, Fresno Pacific University, and local high schools, the Collegiate Academy creates a greater awareness of educational opportunities for students and parents seeks to increase college and university eligibility and matriculation rates of historically disadvantaged students in the Merced County area. The Collegiate Academy offers a wide range of services to identified high school students enrolled in a college preparatory academic program. These services include college workshops, monthly meetings with program representatives, summer enrichment programs, trips to college campuses and tutoring.

I'm Going To College—The I'm Going to College (IGTC) program is designed to create an awareness of higher education opportunities among fourth-grade students. IGTC helps students recognize at a young age that college is important and possible. The project provides classroom instruction in different types of colleges, understanding key terms such as "degree" and "major," and practicing the process of applying for admission and financial aid. The program culminates with a "College Day" at CSU Stanislaus where the 4th-graders are welcomed as honorary college students. They take specialized classes, have lunch, receive a tour led by Stanislaus Student Ambassadors, and utilize the bookstore to receive their "I'm Going to College" backpacks full of supplies obtained simply by cashing in their financial aid checks. Currently, Merced County Cal-SOAP sponsors an IGTC program in the three elementary schools in the Delhi Unified School District.

Tutorial—Tutorial services are offered at many local high schools to assist students enrolled in AVID classes or during after-school hours.

Continuing Education—For more than 30 years, Continuing Education, formerly the Noncredit Program, has offered free, noncredit education to adults ages 18 and older. Continuing Education classes must be approved both by the District and the state and fall within one of the following areas: basic skills (elementary and secondary), civics, English as a Second Language (ESL), health and safety, home economics, parenting, short-term vocational, and courses for older or disabled adults. The program is designed to provide free, open-access education to community members who may not wish to, or may not be prepared to, enroll in for-credit courses.

Continuing Education currently offers more than 100 course sections at 47 locations throughout the Merced County area. Eight to 10 percent of Merced College students are enrolled in noncredit classes each semester. Certificates of completion are awarded to students as they complete each level of English as a Second Language (ESL). Certificates of Competency are awarded for Medical Assistant and Technical Office Occupations. Moreover, Continuing Education also serves as a gateway to credit courses for many students. As part of the matriculation process, orientation, counseling, and career educational planning support services are available to noncredit students (**IIB.14**) (**IIB.15**).

International Students Services—More than 150 international students enroll annually at Merced College. The International Student Services program (ISS) encourages them to interact with the community through student clubs and special events. ISS offers orientation sessions and special workshops to introduce international, non-immigrant, refugee and permanent resident students to college life and aspects of American culture. The following services are offered to all international students:

- Group and individual orientations before registration each term;

- Assistance in selecting suitable courses for each major and in meeting the degree requirements and/or transferring to four-year schools;

- Adjusting to academic life in the United States and in meeting the many challenges that are part of being a young adult living a long way from home.

ISS provides information on important topics such as health care and health insurance, and the Immigration & Naturalization Service (I-120) enrollment requirements. The I-120 form is issued by any university or college and declares a student's official admission to the campus. Apartment and host family arrangements, safety tips, cultural and social activities, and events for international students are also provided. International students meet with an international student counselor at least once a term to help them understand the collegiate system and make progress toward completing an educational degree (**IIB.16**) (**IIB.112**).

Public Affairs—Public Affairs is one of three activities under the Office of Institutional Advancement. The director of Institutional Advancement is the District's public information officer, reporting to the vice president of Student Personnel. Public Affairs uses the traditional media tools of press releases, editorials and opinion columns, advertising, and publications to communicate to the public the benefits of using the educational programs and services offered by Merced College. These activities have been focused primarily on campaigns to drive student recruitment. The director of Institutional Advancement was an original member of the now-defunct Management and Planning for Long-term Enrollment Committee (MAPLE). MAPLE was the College's primary committee responsible for enrollment management until 2009 (**IIB.17**).

Public Affairs staff (the director and a part-time public information assistant) designs and manages comprehensive communications and marketing campaigns to assist in student recruitment and produce growth in enrollment. Public Affair's annual advertising budget was increased to accomplish these goals; however, funding was reduced by 94 percent in 2009-2010 as a response to budget cuts. With its limited marketing budget, Public Affairs has begun using low-cost information and marketing opportunities provided by various Internet-based social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Public Affairs supports the mission of Merced College by marketing and promoting College programs and services to local communities and constituent groups, and by managing ongoing public information campaigns through area media. These efforts support student success by informing the community of the availability of educational opportunities and workforce development programs. Public Affairs has guided or assisted with numerous publications, including an International Student information folder, Financial Aid information folder, student recruitment videos, and web-based marketing and information, as well as traditional advertising. Public Affairs has also produced a bilingual student recruitment 'fotonovela,' numerous marketing banners, and other promotional materials. Data (from the MAPLE Committee meeting minutes) suggest that public information efforts, including marketing and advertising, have resulted in increased student enrollment (**IIB.17**).

Orientation—Orientation sessions are provided throughout the year to students (**IIB.72**). Orientation provides students with information regarding student services, a campus tour, locations of their classrooms, and a chance to meet other new students to help establish a support network. Orientation topics cover areas as registration, degrees and certificates, transfer information, career and major selection, and student support services. Student rights and responsibilities are outlined, including the right to appeal prerequisites and other matriculation components. Students also receive relevant handouts and directions for their use (**IIB.73**). Orientations were previously provided to area high school seniors during spring visits to their respective campuses. Currently, due to budget reductions, orientations at the high schools have been suspended.

Between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009, 3,120 students were oriented (2,351 at Merced College and 769 at the Los Banos Campus). Beginning in July 2009, orientation sessions have been provided to 644 students (538 in Merced and 106 in Los Banos). One of the most important accomplishments that the student orientation program has provided this year is the transition of all orientation services to an online format, which has allowed students to learn at their own pace, receive guidance when needed, and speed up the orientation process. The new system is also an effort to further enhance and strengthen the overall educational experience of students and their families. In a recent evaluation of the online orientation it was found that the orientation and tour are favorably received by students. Overall comments were very positive (**IIB.18**).

There are several extended orientation classes such as "Foundations and Strategies for College Success" (GUID 30—3 units), "Foundations and Strategies for Academic Recovery" (GUID 54—3 units), an intervention course for 2nd level probation students, "EOPS Strategies for Success" (GUID 70B—.5 units), and "College Survival" (GUID 80—1 unit) designed primarily for new and high-risk students, especially basic skills students, and "College Success Strategies for Student Athletes" (GUID 52—3 units) (**IIB.19**).

Puente—The mission of the Puente Project is to increase the number of educationally underserved students who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn degrees, and return to the community as leaders and mentors to future generations (**IIB.20**). Puente provides three major areas of service to students to help prepare them for transfer to four-year colleges and universities.

English Instruction for Puente Students—Puente students take two consecutive writing classes, English A and English 1A. These classes provide a supportive and stimulating environment for Puente students with an emphasis on developing writing skills through an exploration of the Mexican American/ Latino experience.

Counseling—Puente students work closely with their Puente counselor to develop an academic educational plan, explore career options, and identify their goals. Students visit University of California campuses and other four-year colleges and attend an annual Puente student transfer conference. Puente students also take guidance courses in preparation for academic and career success.

Mentors—Puente students are matched with an academically and professionally successful mentor from the community. The network of trained Puente mentors provides many resources

for the Puente students, their families, their colleges, and the community. Puente team members match the Puente students with mentors from the local professional communities. Mentors are trained volunteers who serve as role models of academic and professional success to these students, offering them ongoing encouragement and guidance, and providing a vital link between the local community and the college campus.

Veterans—Merced College is approved to train veterans and eligible persons under Title 38 U.S. Code. Veterans Services provides enrollment assistance for new and continuing receiving educational benefits under various qualifying chapters of the GI Bill. Many veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan need additional support, and the College is evaluating ways this special population can be better served (**IIB.80**) (**IIB.10f, pp. 69-71, 111, 133**) (**IIB.136**). A new Veteran's Resource Center will be opened in the fall of 2010.

SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES
CalWORKs—The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility Kids Act (CalWORKs) replaced AFDC/GAIN in the provision of cash aid and welfare-to-work programs for welfare recipients. The CalWORKs program receives funding to provide training and support services to students who are currently welfare recipients or who are in transition off of welfare to achieve long-term self-sufficiency. Students receive the following array of high-quality direct support services (State Budget Act 2004-05, 6870-101-0001, 14): Coordination with county welfare offices to determine eligibility and availability of services, paid child care for instruction and employment hours, academic, vocational, and personal counseling, advocacy on welfare to work related issues, specialized workshops, peer (mentor) support groups, referrals to on and off campus resources, Work Study (paid part-time employment), and job placement and workforce preparation assistance to find meaningful employment, and successfully transition into the workforce. In 2008-2009 CalWORKs served 558 students. The Los Banos Campus currently serves 60 CalWORKs students (**IIB.22**) (**IIB.23**).

Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) operates under the philosophy that all individuals have unexplored potential and that education provides the individual with the opportunity to investigate that unexplored potential (**IIB.24**).

While the DSPS staff provides a supportive and individualized approach to the provision of services, students are encouraged to be independent and expected to be responsible. Factors that contribute to success for DSPS students include disability-related academic accommodations for students, which include but are not limited to the following: 1) test accommodations, note-taking assistance, alternate media services for students with vision impairments or with learning disabilities, and interpreters for hearing impaired students, and 2) case-managed counseling services for disabled students with oversight for students regarding early intervention strategies and motivational support. In 2008-2009 the College served 1,010 disabled students (**IIB.22**). During 2009-10 DSPS is projected to serve over 1,000 students, including students at the Los Banos Campus. Los Banos currently serves 131 DSPS students.

The following services are available to all DSPS students both in Merced and Los Banos: counseling, registration assistance, priority registration, monitoring/follow-up, accommodation letters to professors, campus orientations, liaison with professors, liaison with community agencies, and liaison with on-campus offices and programs. Services which are disability specific are

provided through note taking, interpreters for the deaf, closed caption videos, test accommodations, reader services, Braille books and books on audio format, enlarged print and MP3 files on disk, adaptive PE, assistive computer technologies access and training, specialized equipment loan, temporary handicapped parking permits, and diagnostic assessment for learning disabilities (**IIB.25a-b)** (**IIB.26**).

Extended Opportunities & Program Services (EOPS) and CARE Programs—EOPS provides grants, UC and CSU application fee waivers, and priority registration for eligible students. Students also receive academic, career, and personal counseling through the provision of an education plan, book service, and book and emergency loans. EOPS student academic progress is checked mid-semester and needed interventions, such as tutoring, are provided. Students may request letters of recommendation for jobs or transfer to colleges and universities (**IIB.27, pp. 3-4**). The Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) program is an additional service provided through EOPS to assist the single parent in completing his/her college education. CARE also provides childcare funds, book service, meal and gas cards, and transportation. In 2008-2009, EOPS served 1,501 students, of which 139 were EOPS/CARE participants (**IIB.22)** (**IIB.28**).

Currently, EOPS serves 1,000 students in Merced and 117 students in Los Banos. Although EOPS was supervised by several different directors over the last three years, the program has continued providing students with quality-based services. For example, EOPS implemented two new activities in addition to its "over and above" services: *The 2009-2010 EOPS Student Handbook for Learning & Success,* created in spring 2009, and the Guidance 70B Course. These serve as tools for students who are new or fairly new to College, both providing information and guidance to assist students through what may be their first most troublesome semesters.

The 2009-2010 EOPS Student Handbook for Learning & Success was not only designed to equip EOPS students with vital information, but it is also used for the Guidance 70B course, which was offered in the fall 2009 semester. Eight sections were offered, seven at the Merced campus and one at the Los Banos Campus. A total of 177 students were enrolled in these sections, of which 155 were EOPS students. Ten sections are projected for the spring 2010 semester. The course has received approval by the Curriculum Committee to be offered as GUID 85 starting in summer and fall 2010 (**IIB.29**).

Student Health Services—The mission of Student Health Services (SHS) is "to provide students with services and resources necessary to make responsible, informed choices regarding their health." SHS goals are to provide students with emergency and basic health care services, help students develop a responsibility for their own health, increase student awareness of community health care providers, and offer resource information regarding health interests and concerns.

SHS has established working relationships with all departments and programs on- and off-campus, providing first aid kits and TB testing, as well as emergency medical and psychological intervention as needed. SHS staff members frequently serve as a resource in the form of consultations, written materials, and presentations regarding the health and wellness needs of the campus.

In 2008-2009, SHS provided relationship workshops for both international students and the

general student body. Anxiety workshops were presented at the Los Banos Campus. College employees received training in how to handle students in distress. *Assisting Students in Distress* manuals are also available for all staff. In 2007-2008, SHS provided a variety of services to 3,397 students. During 2008-2009, 317 students received personal counseling. Health contacts totaled 2,844 (1,891 at the Merced campus and 953 in Los Banos). The following chart illustrates the number of students seen at both the Merced and Los Banos campuses. Data demonstrate that since 2004 the number of students seen and the services provided has increased.

YEAR	SERVICES PROVIDED	STUDENTS SEEN
MERCED CAMPUS		
2004-2005	1793	1793
2005-2006	1791	1791
2006-2007	2518	2317
2007-2008	2888	2860
LOS BANOS CAMPUS		
2004-2005	335	335
2005-2006	359	359
2006-2007	503	503
2007-2008	537	537

For the Merced campus, statistics are maintained regarding the demographics of the population served. It is interesting to note that in the chart below females outnumber males almost 2 to1. The largest age group seeking services are under the age of 25.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES - YEARLY STATISTICS, 2008-2009

MONTH	MALE	FEMALE	0-25 YRS.	26-45 YRS.	46+ YRS	STUDENT	STAFF	SERVICES PROVIDED	TOTAL NUMBER SEEN
JUNE	25	39	31	20	13	54	10	66	64
JULY	12	28	21	23	16	38	22	63	60
AUG.	46	110	85	43	28	134	22	165	156
SEPT.	86	191	142	90	45	217	56	306	277
OCT.	85	146	112	62	57	173	58	287	231
NOV.	62	105	107	46	14	143	24	191	167
DEC.	37	74	72	22	17	104	7	114	111
JAN.	41	93	75	44	15	126	8	143	134
FEB.	58	110	102	49	17	158	10	178	168
MAR.	68	119	111	58	18	176	11	263	187
APR.	59	105	96	54	14	146	18	220	164
MAY	94	165	165	67	27	241	18	292	259
YEAR TOTAL	673	1285	1119	578	281	1710	264	2288	1978

In spring 2009, SHS at the Los Banos Campus served 466 students. The number of students seen each semester has steadily increased as enrollment increases. All SHS services play a role in a student's success by contributing to the overall health of a student, often providing temporary relief of symptoms from illness and treat minor injuries. Below is a breakdown of services provided and number served by category **(IIB.30).**

	Description of Service	count	Male	Female	Age			Student	Staff
					0-25	26-45	46+		
101	Health Counseling and Education	4	2	2	3	1	0	4	0
102	Class or Group Presentation	38	12	26	32	5	1	38	0
103	First Aid & Emergency Care	27	12	15	23	4	0	26	1
104	Use of Rest Area	3	0	3	2	1	0	3	0
105	On Campus Referral	2	1	1	2	0	0	2	0
106	Off Campus Referral	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
107	OTC Items / First Aid Items	379	123	256	194	167	18	340	39
108	Blood Pressure Check	16	2	14	2	12	2	15	1
109	TB Test Given	14	2	12	3	10	1	12	2
110	TB Result Given	12	1	11	3	8	1	10	2
111	HIV Testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
112	Pregnancy Testing	16	0	16	9	7	0	16	0
113	Other testing & Screening	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Served	511	155	356	273	215	23	466	45

COUNSELING SERVICES

General Counseling—The Counseling Cohort provides a comprehensive program of support services including academic, personal, and career counseling. The focus is on student access and success through the following key central functions:

- **Assessment Interpretation.** Discuss English and math assessment scores with students. Make appropriate course recommendations based on scores and other multiple measures.

- **Course Scheduling.** Assist students in creating course schedules each semester.

- **Probation Counseling.** Advise students regarding a variety of interventions that are dependent on whether the student is on first level, second level, or dismissal status, academic and/or progress probation. The interventions consist of probation workshops, Guidance 54 (a course designed to teach success strategies), and retention contracts.

- **Education Planning.** Create a semester-by-semester plan for a specific program certificate, AA/AS degree and/or transfer preparation.

- **Personal Counseling.** Provide short-term personal counseling services and community referrals to students who are experiencing problems creating barriers to success.

- **Non-Credit Counseling.** Create a plan for students to transition from non-credit courses to credit courses.

- **Policy & Procedure.** Inform students about the petition process, credit by examination, academic renewal, pass/no pass (formerly credit/no credit) grading option, withdrawal, grievance procedure and role of mediation, certificate and graduation applications.

RETENTION SERVICES—Student retention has been a major concern for community college faculty and administrators for a number of years, resulting in communication with students to determine their reasons for dropping-out and to develop activities to improve student retention. At Merced College, the student follow-up component of matriculation ensures that students who are experiencing academic difficulties are identified early enough during the term for appropriate and effective intervention to occur. Each semester students on probation status are sent a hard copy letter (**IIB.33a-c)** from the dean of Student Services notifying them of their probation status and what the students must do in order to enroll for the next term or semester (**IIB.31**) (**IIB.32**). All probation students are prevented from registering without a counselor's signature. In addition, there are three different interventions which take place based on the level of probation:

- **Level One Academic and/or Progress Probation.** Students must attend a workshop and successfully complete an exit test to verify their mastery of the information. The workshops help the students understand why they are on probation and make them more aware of the college policies and learning strategies that affect their academic standing. If they succeed in passing the quiz, their registration hold is lifted. If they are not successful, they must repeat the workshop. In fall 2009, 15 probation workshops for students were provided (**IIB.34**) (**IIB.35a-b**).

- **Level Two Academic and/or Progress Probation.** Students must enroll in *Foundation and Strategies for Academic Recovery* (Guidance 54) (**IIB.36**), a course that emphasizes study skills, time management, calculating GPA, and college procedures, including academic renewal, course repetition, etc. The Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) recently conducted a Persistence and GPA study of the course for the Fall 2008 semester (**IIB.37**) and found that in spring 2009, the cohort's persistence rate was below the District's by 5.59 percent, but in fall 2009 it was above the District's by 4.17 percent. Students who completed GUID 54 in fall 2008 increased their GPAs by an average of 20 percent from fall 2008 to fall 2009. While GUID 54 students may not persist to the same degree as students district wide, their GPA did improve by 46.08 percent from the previous semester. The biggest improvement in GPA occurred in the semester in which students were enrolled in GUID 54.

- **Dismissal Academic and/or Progress Probation.** Students must complete a retention agreement with a counselor (**IIB.38**). The contract outlines a recovery plan that the students agree to complete. Counselors review the retention contracts at the end of fall

and spring semesters to determine if the students met the contract requirements. Those who didn't are advised through the mail that they will be dismissed for one semester. They must petition and meet with the dean in order to enroll after the one semester of dismissal.

Career/Transfer Services—The Career/Transfer Center assists individuals who are making occupational and educational decisions (**IIB.39**). These services include: EUREKA, a career-search software program with information on hundreds of occupations and training programs, career information materials, career interest testing to help students determine occupational and educational goals, counseling services and current information on transfer programs which include Transfer Admission Agreements (TAGs) and articulation agreements for various majors. The center provides information on general education requirements and facilitates contact with four-year colleges and universities including scheduled on-campus visits by representatives. The center conducts college fairs, and transfer workshops, Transfer Day/College Night, maintains a library of college catalogs including the UC and CSU systems, California community colleges, and many independent institutions, and provides assistance in completing UC and CSU applications, and also provides test booklets, bulletins, scholarship information, and applications (e.g., CBEST, CSET, SAT, TOEFL).

The Career Center's goal to update the Career/Transfer website has been accomplished. The Career Center served 431 students in 2008. Eighty-three presentations to classes were made, reaching 1,664 students. The Career/Transfer Center served 448 students during the 2006-2007 academic year and an additional 622 students during the fall 2007 semester with additional class presentations.

The chart below shows the number of Merced College students who transferred to the University of California and/or California State University during the last three years, according to the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) Transfer Pathway Report for Merced College (**IIB.40**). Transfer rates to both school systems have increased.

Four-Year Public Institution	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
California State University	370	324	373	448
University of California	16	50	47	67
TOTAL	386	374	420	515

Career Counseling is available with counselors who guide students using tools and resources to assist them in finding suitable career paths. Counseling sessions may involve interpretation of career assessments and discussions of appropriate career-related activities that help students establish their career goals. The *Life and Career Planning* course (GUID 48 or GUID 48ABC) also provides the most in-depth exploration of the career development process. Students are guided through the identification of their career interests, abilities, values, and skills. A career profile is provided for students through career assessment instruments such as the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), Self-Directed Search, and Strong Interest Inventory. Students also research occupations that fit their career profile and learn job search strategies, résumé writing and interviewing. They are also exposed to resources found on the Internet and are informed of the important role the computer plays in their search.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial Aid Assistance—The mission of the Merced College Financial Aid Office is to assist in the recruitment and retention of students by providing financial resource information and access to funding. Financial Aid's goals are to provide quality customer service from a knowledgeable and professional staff, to work collaboratively with the campus community to better serve its diverse student population, to award financial aid in an equitable, consistent and timely manner adhering to federal, state and college regulations, and to empower students to reach their potential in a supportive and positive environment (**IIB.41**).

The most significant change in the Financial Aid office that has contributed to the success of Merced College students has been a complete overhaul of the financial aid intake and processing procedures. As the student population increased, it became evident that the Financial Aid office was unable to process the number of applications it received in a timely manner. With much discussion and planning, Financial Aid devised a system that allows for the completion of each student's package while being served at the counter. This provides for immediate feedback to students regarding missing documents, for example. A two-part form was developed with a checklist that could be marked and personalized for a student's specific situation. A copy is provided to the student, greatly improving the return of requested documents. The second copy is retained in the student's file so advisers can easily determine what is still missing. Financial Aid began this process mid-March 2009 and the positive results have been significant.

From January 2008 to June 2009, Financial Aid received 8,188 unduplicated ISIRs (Financial Aid Application Data). Financial Aid paid $12,033,822.30 in Pell Grants to 4,279 recipients. For the fall 2009 semester (2009-2010 data), with the change in procedures and the increase in applications, Financial Aid received 9,421 unduplicated ISIRs. A total of 4,327 Pell grant recipients were provided $8,688,255.05 (**IIB.42**).

The chart below shows the amount and type of financial aid disbursed in 2008-2009 and the number of recipients.

Financial Aid Type	Headcount	Total Amount
Federal Work Study (FWS) (federal share)	283	577,930
BOGW – Part A basis unreported	299	66,545
BOGW – Part B based on income standards	4,916	1,622,085
BOGW – Part C based on financial need	2,743	906,345
Academic Competitiveness Grant	139	96,925
Cal Grant B	1,218	1,501,992
Cal Grant C	76	30,330
EOPS Grant	336	129,685
CARE Grant	102	73,876
Chafee Grant	17	77,421
Pell Grant	4,186	12,033,853
SEOG (supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant	426	262,900
TOTAL AMOUNT DISBURSED TO STUDENTS		$17,379,887

Source: CCCCO as of 11/03/10

Scholarships—The Scholarship Office is located within the Financial Aid department. The scholarship coordinator administers the Merced College Foundation scholarship program and other non-Foundation scholarships, or "outside scholarships." The scholarship coordinator works with the Foundation's scholarship committee and individual donors to provide annual awards. Awards are announced during a ceremony held annually in May. For each of the past several years, the Foundation scholarship committee has awarded more than $100,000 from over 200 individual or group donors to students. These awards are provided from endowment earnings and from annual gifts. Additionally, many outside scholarships are also offered to students. In 2008-2009, 458 students received both Foundation and outside scholarship awards totaling $279,959 (**IIB.43**). For the 2009-2010 academic year, 254 Foundation scholarships were awarded to 175 recipients, 11 of those scholarships were designated for the Los Banos Campus, providing 14 students with awards. Not all students who receive scholarships are eligible for financial aid or other grant services, so these scholarships are valuable resources for the purchase of books and for meeting other expenses.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Student Activities/ASMC—Opportunities are provided for students to pursue their personal, professional and academic goals in student-led organizations. To enhance their educational experience, students are encouraged to participate in clubs and student government where they can learn leadership and organizational skills and serve the community. Through campus involvement, students have access to a diverse group of student organizations.

The Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC) sponsors the following annual activities: Blue Devil Days, Club Rush Week, Spring Carnival, and Project Christmas. At the beginning of each term, ASMC also sponsors student-to-student book exchanges/sales. This is a significant way to help students who struggle with the cost of textbooks.

Merced College's student club program is designed to increase opportunities for students to engage in activities that contribute to educational and/or social growth outside the classroom. Some of the active student organizations on campus are: Alpha Gamma Sigma, Anthropology Club, Associated Students, Blue Devil Aggies, Campus Crusade for Christ, International Club, Native American Student Alliance (NASA), Students for Social Justice, Phi Theta Kappa, Pre-Medical Club, Science & Engineering Club, Student of the Month, and Volleyball Club (**IIB.44**).

Most community colleges do not have on-campus dormitories, so community college students are primarily commuters and not inclined to participate in on-campus activities. Their jobs and family responsibilities draw them away from campus when their classes are not in session. As the number of students who participate is not large, it's not possible to say whether or not the activities that are offered meet student needs until further research is conducted.

Job Opportunity Services—this program provides employment referral assistance for students seeking part-time, temporary, and full-time jobs. This service continues for up to two years after graduation. Job Opportunity Services seeks to teach students the skills necessary for a successful job search, match career goals to employment openings, successfully place students into cooperative education and internship experiences related to their major, and provide employers with a valuable resource to post jobs & find quality prospects. In conjunction with the Career Center, students can find employment opportunities, career library, career assessments, job

search information including help with resume writing and interviewing, career fair, transfer resources, internship and Cooperative Education information (**IIB.45**).

Self Evaluation

In today's economic climate, this has become an even greater challenge to meet student needs as Student Services programs are asked to do more with less. In spite of district wide budget cuts, Student Services has worked toward meeting the mission of the institution. While staff layoffs could jeopardize the delivery of services to students, collaborative efforts among programs have worked to mitigate the effects of budget cuts. For example, an "August Rush" committee was formed in summer 2009 to create a plan that would address student frustration with attempting to register into fewer available classes with a reduced level of staffing to assist them (**IIB.46**). The meetings produced many positive outcomes. All student service programs were represented and each participated in the problem-solving sessions. A wide-range of issues that affect students was covered, such as the need for improved signage, emergency book loans, and recruitment of instructional deans to assist students in the registration process.

In the opinion of the Los Banos Campus staff, the relationship between student support staff, counselors, professors and administrators, and the campus's small town feel or "family type" atmosphere have contributed most to the success of its students, although there hasn't been official research conducted to substantiate this. Professors communicate on a regular basis with the counseling office to express concerns about students. The Los Banos Campus dean and program directors are available when challenges arise while working with the staff to meet the various needs of the student population. These relationships create and enhance a supportive learning environment, enabling counselors to serve a greater number of students walking through the doors more effectively.

Student Services is committed to improving student learning. Upon review of *The Student Services Program Review Handbook* and the requirements of the SLO process it's evident that Student Services has rigorous standards for the evaluation of its programs and their relationship to student success (**IIB.48**) (**IIB.49**). Data was collected and analyzed, and each program developed SLOs and subsequent planning agendas. These were further refined in a three-year plan format, combining elements of program review, SLOs, and resource requests in one document, which also serves as an annual program evaluation.

For a number of years, the College has been consistent in its approach to the assessment of student satisfaction and the role of Student Services. The American College Testing Student Opinion Survey (ACT) has been administered every four years and was administered in 1998, 2002, 2006, and again in spring 2010 (**IIB.07**). The purpose of the study is to determine student opinion of the college environment and student related services and programs. Previous surveys continue to serve as a foundation of baseline data by which the institution recognizes trends.

The 2006 ACT Student Opinion Survey (pages 13 and 14) gathered a total of 396 responses to questions about student satisfaction with student services. Out of the 396 respondents, between 33 to 205 students answered the survey questions as indicated below. Based on the results of this survey, most responses show that students are either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the student support services provided across the district.

Student Services		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dis-Satisfied	Very Dis-Satisfied	Blank	"USED" Total Who
Academic Advising/ Course Planning Services	N	54	86	20	6	2	4	172
	%	31.4	50.0	11.6	3.5	1.2	2.3	100.0
Personal Counseling Services	N	25	33	7	1	0	5	71
	%	35.2	46.5	9.9	1.4	0.0	7.0	100.0
Vocational Guidance/ Career Planning Service	N	37	56	14	2	0	7	116
	%	31.9	48.3	12.1	1.7	0.0	6.0	100.0
Job Placement Services	N	9	8	11	0	0	5	33
	%	27.3	24.2	33.3	0.0	0.0	15.2	100.0
Financial Aid Services	N	88	65	25	7	5	15	205
	%	42.9	31.7	12.2	3.4	2.4	7.3	100.0
Student Health Services	N	14	14	11	0	0	7	46
	%	30.4	30.4	23.9	0.0	0.0	15.2	100.0
College-sponsored Social activities	N	4	8	2	0	1	6	21
	%	19.0	38.1	9.5	0.0	4.8	28.6	100.0
College Orientation Program	N	38	76	42	2	1	11	171
	%	22.8	44.4	24.6	1.2	0.6	6.4	100.0
Veterans Services	N	3	1	0	0	0	12	16
	%	18.8	6.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.0	100.0

Based upon the Merced College 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey, which is a compilation of the ACT comparison data from fall 1998, 2002, 2006 (**IIB.65, pp. 14-15**), a selection of student data and survey responses is given in chart form. Students surveyed ranged in age from 19 and younger to over 50. The grid below reflects student perceptions on the quality of support services. The data show most students are very satisfied/satisfied with the services provided. The score indicates the satisfaction level with Student Services based upon the given satisfaction scale: 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied.

Student Services	Very Satisfied/ satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied	Score
EOPS	77.2%	15.5%	7.8%	4.14
DSPS	66.6%	27.1%	6.3%	3.57
International Students	53.4%	43.7%	2.9%	3.66
Transfer Center	55.7%	37.8%	6.5%	3.63
Career Center	59.8%	34.9	5.3%	3.74
Counseling Office	69.8%	23.7%	6.5%	3.86
ASMC/Student Activities	43.7%	46.9%	9.4%	3.42
Reception staff's responsiveness to students' questions and concerns at Admissions and Records	65.2%	27.8%	7.0%	3.78
Reception staff's responsiveness to students' questions and concerns at Financial Aid	63.3%	24.6%	12.1%	3.72
Reception staff's responsiveness to students' questions and concerns in the Counseling Office	68.6%	25.2%	6.2%	3.84
Reception staff's responsiveness to students' questions and concerns at EOPS	65.8%	28.1%	6.1%	3.87
Reception staff's responsiveness to students' questions and concerns in the Student Activities/ASMC area	47.7%	44.0%	8.3%	3.54
Information regarding health issues such as smoking, sexually transmitted diseases, stress management, etc.	44.4%	39.1%	16.5%	3.37
Access to academic records	65.7%	29.4%	4.9%	3.87
Information regarding transfer options	57.3%	33.7%	9.0%	3.67
Days and times that student service offices are open for transactions	59.6%	31.3%	9.1%	3.72
Resources and facilities of the Career/ Transfer Center	59.1%	35.1%	5.8%	3.75
Accommodations provided for people with disabilities	64.0%	30.0%	6.0%	3.83
Information regarding career options	59.7%	33.5%	6.8%	3.71
Information regarding college policies and procedures	56.3%	39.4%	4.3%	3.69
Information regarding assistance for students with disabilities	57.6%	37.3%	5.1%	3.77
Information regarding substance abuse and available treatment programs on campus or in the community	45.5%	43.1%	11.4%	3.41
Registration through WebAdvisor	62.6%	28.2%	9.2%	3.85
Merced College Portal	69.8%	23/9%	6.3%	3.94
Merced College Website	74.6%	19.7%	5.7%	4.00

Some community colleges use the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to measure student engagement based on a variety of responses to course scheduling, teaching strategies and student services (**IIB.10c, pp. M6-M8**). The level of engagement is considered to be a good predictor of success. In 2008, the College administered CCSSE and students were asked the following questions. For purposes of this report, questions that impact only Student Support Services were utilized. A "mean" is the mathematical average of all responses for a particular survey item.

Indicate how satisfied you are with the services at this college. N=Number of respondents	Means	Key for Means
Academic advising/planning [N=696]	2.23	0=N.A.
Career Counseling [N=601]	2.18	1=Not at all
Job placement assistance [N=363]	1.71	
Peer or other tutoring [N=444]	2.05	2=Somewhat
Financial aid advising [N=558]	2.18	3=Very
Student organizations [N=359]	2.02	
Transfer credit assistance [464]	2.12	
Services to students with disabilities [N=222]	2.12	
Concluding Statement: The survey shows that the students indicate only a "somewhat" satisfactory level for the student support services as indicated above		
Indicate how important the services are to you. N=Number of respondents	Means	Key for Means
Academic advising/planning [N=774]	2.62	1=Not at all
Career Counseling [N=766]	2.50	2=Somewhat
Job placement assistance [N=760]	2.11	
Peer or other tutoring [N=757]	2.20	3=Very
Financial aid advising [N=759]	2.50	
Student organizations [N=751]	1.92	
Transfer credit assistance [763]	2.38	
Services to students with disabilities [N=757]	2.10	
Concluding Statement: The survey shows that the student support services as indicated above are only "somewhat" important to the respondents.		

These survey items indicate the extent to which students use key academic and student support services, as well as how important they consider these services to be. Students also indicated their satisfaction with the services. The survey items address advising, academic and career planning, financial aid, and other services that can affect learning and retention. These responses should be discussed to determine if the services are truly not important to students or whether they unaware of them. In some cases their satisfaction is less favorable than what appeared in the ACT Student Opinion Survey. Without further analysis, appropriate changes can't be made. For example, if students are unaware of these services, the College must focus on having better communications with students. This may involve utlizing Facebook or other so-

cial networks which appeal to our current population. However, meaningful solutions can't be developed if the Student Services programs don't use research to accurately identify the problems. To be most effective, all Student Services components need to store and analyze three to five years of comparative data. Then a discussion should take place regarding the findings and what follow-up is needed. The use of the above data in program planning or decision-making among Student Services is a relatively new process. The expectation of making future decisions based on data is accepted by all student service programs.

Planning Agenda

- Expand analysis of student surveys so that meaningful connections can be made to planning and resource allocation.

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

a. **General Information**

- **Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Web Site Address of the Institution**
- **Educational Mission**
- **Course, Program, and Degree Offerings**
- **Academic Calendar and Program Length**
- **Academic Freedom Statement**
- **Available Student Financial Aid**
- **Available Learning Resources**
- **Names and Degrees of Administrators and Faculty**

b. **Requirements**

- **Admissions**
- **Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations**
- **Degree, Certificates, Graduation and Transfer**

c. **Major Policies Affecting Students**

- **Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty**
- **Nondiscrimination**
- **Acceptance of Transfer Credits**
- **Grievance and Complaint Procedures**
- **Sexual Harassment**
- **Refund of Fees**

d. **Locations or publications where other policies may be found**

Descriptive Summary

Merced College provides for its constituents an annually published catalog that is precise, accurate, and current at the date of publication. After publication, the catalog is maintained in an online version accessible on at the College's website (**IIB.50**). Addendums are posted online as needed. If an error is found before the catalogs are distributed, addendums are inserted in the printed books (**IIB.51**). The online catalog is Section 508 compliant for the visually impaired as an accessible PDF file (**IIB.53**). The catalog is easy to read and clearly organized. The catalog may be purchased in hard copy at the Merced College Bookstore on both campuses. It can also be ordered through the Merced College Bookstore by mail or online (**IIB.52**). The catalog is also available in the Library (**IIB.54**). The catalog is distributed to more than 500 state and local organizations in the form of a CD-Rom after each annual publication by placing a request with our college Career/Transfer Center (**IIB.55a-b**). The organizational format and visual appearance of the catalog was redesigned in 2009-2010 to make it is easier for users to find necessary information.

a. **General Information**

The catalog contains the College's official name (first page), maps of both the Los Banos and Merced campuses, and physical addresses of campus locations, current contact telephone numbers, and the institutional website address. It also includes the names of the current governing Board of Trustees and administrative officers. The names and degrees of administrators and faculty are published in the catalog along with the District's mission statement, vision statement, philosophy of the institution, and the Academic Freedom Statement. The 2009-2010 academic calendar identifies holidays and specific campus dates of importance and is located in the catalog, online at the Merced College home page and in the course schedule. The catalog contains academic program information, course offerings by discipline, degree and certificate offerings, as well as specific academic requirements for successfully completing these programs. The College's institutional standards for academic progress are detailed and understandable in a readable format. The Merced and Los Banos campuses' student learning resources are described in the catalog and in the course schedule. The catalog lists financial aid funding available from state and federal governments and the area on each campus where additional information may be located.

b. **Requirements**

Up-to-date information is provided in the catalog on admissions, residency requirements, matriculation processes, counseling, enrollment, student fees, refund procedures, and financial obligation information. Admissions policies are stated in the catalog, Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, and are published in a variety of sources including the bi-annual course schedule and online (**IIB.56a-c**) (**IIB.57a-d**) (**IIB.58, pp. 18-26**). Class schedules containing the admissions policies and procedures were mailed to continuing students in the District's service area, but the practice has been discontinued due to the cost. Everyone is encouraged to access the schedule online. The fall 2009 course schedules also contain relevant information for matriculation, graduation, registration, student fees and costs associated with college attendance and payment options. Applications for admission are available in the Admissions and Records office, online at the Help Desk, online at CCCApply.org and by mail or fax (**IIB.59**).

Information on degree, certificate, and graduation requirements is listed in the 2009-2010 catalog section under "Preparing for Graduation." Associate degree breadth and competency requirements are also posted in the course schedule. Transfer requirements are listed in the catalog, the course schedule, and online (**IIB.60, pp. 41-46**). This includes transfer to the California State University and the University of California system as well as a listing of the breadth requirements and transfer course agreement listings and information.

c. **Major Policies Affecting Students**

Academic Honesty, Nondiscrimination, and Sexual Harassment policies are located in the catalog's general information section published online in the Board Policies and Administrative Procedures and can also be located on the college home website (**IIB.61a, pp. 13-16**) (**IIB.61b-c**) (**IIB.62**). The College's major policies are outlined in the catalog with information regarding student rights, policies, and procedures. Grievance and Complaint Procedures are located in the 2008-2009 catalog. Information on Financial Aid grievances is provided and the process is documented. Complete information regarding grievance and/or complaint procedures is available on the College intranet within the Board Policies and Administrative Procedures pages. Other College policies, regulations and procedures included are student rights, conduct expectations, and probation standards. All of these policies are stated in English, Spanish and Hmong. A packet for grievances based on discrimination, such as age, sexual orientation, sex, gender, ethnic group, religion and disability can be obtained by contacting the Office of Administrative Services **(IIB.63) (IIB.64**).

Acceptance of transfer credits from other institutions is detailed in the 2008-2009 catalog and online at the college website. Transfer credits are reviewed with the student's submission of an official transcript from the former institution. Merced College utilizes the ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulating Inter-institutional Student Transfer) and CAN (California Articulation Number—discontinued in 2008) systems along with a variety of other online and printed sources to validate the transferability of courses from other colleges and to award credit. The petition process for acceptance of upper division credits is detailed in this section of the catalog as well.

d. **Location or publications where other policies may be found**

Hard copies of all College policies may be found in the Office of the President. The District's mission statement, vision statement, philosophy of the institution, and the Academic Freedom Statement can be found in the catalog and online at the College's website. Admissions policies are stated in the catalog, Board Policies and Administrative Policies, and are published in a variety of sources online at (**IIB.61a, pp.13-16**) (**IIB.61b-c**). Grievance and Complaint Procedures are located in the 2009-2010 catalog, the course schedule, the Administrative Board Policy Manual and include the Sexual Harassment policy, contact person, and the complaint procedure. Records of student complaint and grievance information of a confidential nature are maintained in the Office of the Vice President of Student Personnel. Records of sexual harassment or discrimination are maintained in the Office of the Vice President of Administrative Services.

Self Evaluation

The College reviews and publishes required information in the catalog and in other publications on an annual basis. However, there is a need to create an awareness of the significance of the catalog so that students understand policies such as catalog rights and other processes affecting their ability to reach their academic goals. Many students choose not to purchase a $3 catalog in the College bookstore and do not access it online. They rely on a counselor to provide necessary information or use the course schedule for basic information. Students can't distinguish the differences between the two publications, most referring to the course schedule as the catalog. The catalog is produced on CD-ROM for use in outreach and distribution to other colleges and high schools.

Students responded favorably to the college catalog and admissions publications in the 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey on page 7 (**IIB.65**). In a ranking of student satisfaction, the following items received scores based on this scale: 5=very satisfied, 4=satisfied, 3=neutral, 2=dissatisfied, 1=very dissatisfied

Item	1998	2002	2006
1. College/admissions publications	3.97	3.90	3.95
2. Availability of financial aid information prior to enrolling	3.70	3.72	3.81
3. Accuracy of college information you received before enrolling	3.65	3.71	3.76

In 2006, 56.3 percent of students were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with information regarding college policies and procedures, but 39.4 percent indicated they were neutral. More than likely, those who were neutral were unaware of the location of this information.

During 2008-2009, the vice president of Instruction created the Schedule and Catalog Committee to review issues related to the accuracy of information and the design of these publications. The committee, which meets on a regular basis, consists of members from admissions and records, student services, curriculum technician, instructional deans, student services deans, counselors, vice president of Student Personnel, vice president of instruction, articulation officer, academic senate faculty representative, and a student. The committee updates and ensures the integrity of the schedule and catalog in both its printed and electronic forms (**IIB.132**).

It would be helpful to have more comprehensive information in the catalog regarding petition procedures (Course Repeat, Academic Renewal, and Late Term Withdrawal). The dean of Student Services (who chairs the Academic Exceptions Committee), is responsible for reviewing these sections for clarity and accuracy on an annual basis. The procedure for the "course substitution" option is not explained in the catalog. Neither is the process by which a student can file a general petition to request that a non-articulated course from another institution be used to meet a graduation requirement, or the process to request other academic exceptions.

Planning Agenda
- None

IIB.3.

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

Merced College researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population using a variety of tools, including direct student contact, recommendations by students, and systematic research mechanisms using data collection. Methods consist of departmental program reviews (**IIB.48**) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) (**IIB.02**), the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) (**IIB.10a-b**), the ACT Student Opinion Survey (**IIB.07**), Student Satisfaction Survey (**IIB.65**), Student Personnel Executive Committee (SPEC) (**IIB.66b**), Student Personnel Administrative Managers (SPAM) (**IIB.67**), and Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) meetings (**IIB.06**). Individual department meetings are additional forums for open dialogue between and within the various Student Service areas. Student Services staff work closely with students to identify their needs, and request feedback to modify and improve services.

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

Descriptive Summary

Student Services strives to provide equitable access to all enrolled and potential students. Each Student Services department has a mission statement reflecting the institutional mission statement: "Students are our focus and we are known by their success" (**IIB.68**). Student Services departments develop and review programs and services on an ongoing basis through SLOs and Program Review. Student Services are available to all eligible, currently enrolled students, regardless of service location. Off-campus sites such as Delhi, Livingston, Chowchilla, Mariposa, and Dos Palos are primarily instructional sites; however, students may access all available services on the Merced or Los Banos campus, either in person, by phone, or on-line as appropriate. This applies to online students as well. Student Services information for the Merced and Los Banos campuses is available on the college website (**IIB.69a**) (**IIB.69b**). Posted Information includes days and hours of operation, contact names and numbers, services available, and program requirements.

The switchboard operator is a frequently utilized source of information, assisting students and potential students in navigating the college directory and campus layout, as well as providing general information about classes, programs, and services. Students may access the operator via telephone or in person. The operator is available to the public Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Title IX, 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act information are printed in English, Spanish, and Hmong in the college catalog (**IIB.133, pp.16-17**). Many Student Services staff members are bilingual and can provide services and deliver information in English, Spanish, or Hmong. Written materials are available in alternate formats upon request.

The former Lesher Library building on the Merced campus was remodeled in 2007 so that the

majority of Student Services departments could move into one building to better accommodate students and to provide services in a central location. The new Lesher Student Services Center (LSSC) includes the following departments: Assessment, Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSS), Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS) , CalWORKs, Counseling Cohort, Office of Relations with Schools, Career Transfer Center, Admissions and Records, Veterans Services, dean of Student Services, dean of EOPS and Special Projects, Job Placement, CalSOAP, Financial Aid, Student Fees, and the Learning Communities kiosk and Information Desk. At the Los Banos campus, Student Services are all located within Building A, which allows for one-stop access to services.

In an effort to maximize the "one-stop" concept, it was decided that various Student Services departments would maintain common hours. Departments involved in the registration process have extended hours during periods of peak registration to accommodate student needs. Extended hours include day, evening, weekend schedules. During non-peak registration periods, Student Services departments are open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, closing with extended hours on Wednesday at 7 p.m. (**IIB.70**) (**IIB.71**).

Matriculation Services

Orientation is available online and in person at both campuses. Campus tours, high school and community outreach, and the Student Ambassador program were also provided until 2009 when budget cuts forced an end to these services. Assessment tests conducted on the main campus and at the Los Banos campus, as well as local high schools are completed using Accuplacer, a computerized instrument. Assessment testing is available on a walk-in basis during scheduled hours. Day, evening, and some Saturday testing sessions are available. The Accuplacer schedule is posted on the web and a written schedule is posted outside of the Assessment Lab door. Hardcopy schedules are available to students inside the Assessment Lab, at the Office of Relations with Schools, the Counseling Cohort, and Admissions and Records. Students receive a printed calendar including test times and dates during orientation. The calendar reflects the schedules for Assessment, Orientation, ATB orientation and testing, and FAFSA workshops (**IIB.72**) (**IIB.73**) (**IIB.74**). Students can receive their Accuplacer scores and course recommendations and ATB results immediately after testing. These assessment results are utilized during academic counseling sessions to assist with course planning. Multiple measures (transcripts, AP scores, self-report, etc.) may be utilized in addition to Accuplacer results to assist in the placement of the student. At this point, counselors may recognize the need for additional resources, resulting in direct referrals that can be pivotal to student success.

Technology is used when feasible to facilitate student access to Admission & Records services. Merced College has implemented an online admissions application process. Online class registration for continuing students is available through Web Advisor (**IIB.75**) by accessing the student portal (**IIB.76**) (**IIB.77**) (**IIB.78**). New students and those who have not maintained continuous enrollment at Merced College must register in person at this time. Current students can access their academic records and additional college information via the student portal. Efforts are underway to allow new students to be able to register online. This may be accomplished by 2010-2011. Counselors are learning how to use a Degree Audit, as well as eAdvising, system through Datatel. The expectation is that at some point in the future, students will access this

educational plan to review their progress. Students are given an e-mail account at the time of registration as a means to communicate and receive information. If a student has difficulty using online services or with Blackboard, the online course program, they can either call or e-mail the Student Help Desk. Assistance is provided Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. All students may now "waitlist" for classes and may check their enrollment status online. Computers are available in campus labs and at the library for those students who do not have access to a home computer. Traditional paper registration is available on the Merced and Los Banos campuses for students who prefer this method. Web Advisor was utilized by approximately 22 percent of students during the fall 2009 registration process and was up to 40 percent by the Fall of 2010. The number of applications submitted via CCCApply was 1,121 (**IIB.79**), and has been increasingly steadily. Most applications are now being submitted electronically.

Veteran's Services are available and accessible to all returning military personnel and their dependents (**IIB.80**). Merced College employs a Veteran's Services clerk as the certifying official, as well as designated counselors trained in assisting veterans with processing and educational planning. These services are currently available on the Merced campus. As the veteran population increases in Los Banos, there will be a greater need to serve them at the Los Banos Campus. Information for veterans can be found on CCCApply and the college website.

Academic counseling is available to all students by appointment or on a walk-in basis on both campuses. E-counseling is provided by one counselor on the Merced Campus **(IIB.81)**. Students are encouraged to meet with a counselor for an appointment to develop an educational plan, using various educational planning programs.

Three Guidance courses (GUID 48, GUID 30, and GUID 54) are offered online and the Counseling Cohort is currently considering offering online probation workshops.

Implementation of the Scheduling and Reporting System (SARS) Grid in 2007 has streamlined students' ability to obtain appointments with counselors. This system has facilitated appointment scheduling and reporting capabilities resulting in greater efficiency of counseling time and appointments. The College uses this information to identify peak periods in the Counseling Cohort and the needed staffing. Periodically an "express counselor" is stationed at the check-in desk during busy times to respond to students who can be helped in less than 15 minutes. Counselors are designated to certain specialty areas of study when feasible, and students are placed with the appropriate counselor to align with their educational goals.

Additionally, students receiving services through EOPS and/or DSS are assigned a program counselor who can develop a plan based upon individual needs and accommodations and services as indicated. Together with Admissions & Records, the Counseling Cohort has instituted probationary processes. Students on academic probation or in danger of academic dismissal from Merced College receive follow-up services in the Counseling Cohort, including early alert letters, follow-up counseling appointments, and probation workshops, classes, or contracts. These interventions are also in place at the Los Banos campus.

Career/Transfer

For students planning to continue their educational pathway at a four-year institution, the Transfer Center and the Puente program offer a variety of services and resources. Their goal is to help students prepare for and make a smooth transition from Merced College to a university system. The Transfer Center's mission is to meet the needs of students preparing to transfer to a bachelor's degree program by providing accurate, up-to-date information and a set of coordinated resources, activities, and services that support the transfer process. On the Merced campus, two counselors are assigned specifically to the Transfer Center and students are able to meet with the transfer counselor by appointment or on a walk-in basis. The Los Banos campus has a designated room for the Transfer and Career Center, which is staffed by the Transfer/Career Center assistant twice a month. All academic counselors provide transfer counseling on the Los Banos Campus. Four year college and university representatives regularly visit both campuses (**IIB.82**) (**IIB.83**).

The Puente Program provides three major areas of services to students to help prepare them for transfer to four-year colleges and universities: English instruction, counseling, and mentors. Puente students work closely with their Puente counselor to develop an academic educational plan, explore career options, and identify their goals. Puente is open to all interested students (**IIB.20**).

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid department supports students by ensuring that all current and potential students are aware of financial aid opportunities. Financial Aid conducts Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) workshops throughout the semester. Information tables are set up in the Merced campus quad at various times during the year and class presentations are available upon request. Outreach is conducted at area high schools and in the community. In 2008-2009, Financial Aid participated in 179 off-campus events, including scheduled times at WorkNet, the Merced Mall, and informational tables at area high schools during lunch. Staff also attended special events whenever possible, including the heavily attended Dia del Nino (**IIB.84**).

Informational materials are distributed via the Financial Aid website (**IIB.85**), the Financial Aid lobby area, and are circulated during events on- and off-campus (**IIB.86**) (**IIB.87**). Computers are available to students for applications and a Financial Aid representative is available at that time to assist as needed on both campuses. Workshops and individual appointments are available to students to assist with completing Financial Aid paperwork. The website www.icanaffordcollege.com lists Merced College Financial Aid events as well as the URL and e-mail contact information. Due to recent state budget cuts, the increase in student enrollment and subsequent increased need for staff processing, outreach has been reduced dramatically.

Disabled Student Programs and Services

The mission of Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) is to provide students with disabilities education-related support services and advocacy skills so they can compete academically on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers. Disability services are available at all sites to currently enrolled students with a medical verification of disability. Support services such as

test proctoring, alternate media, interpreters, note-taking services, assistive technology, adaptive PE, and other accommodations are provided to enhance student access to education and to promote success in all classes and activities offered at the College. Orientation provides students with information about DSPS services and the placement test helps identify the need for disability services, potentially resulting in an academic counselor's referral to DSPS. Brochures, class presentations, and faculty and staff in-services are additional means of disseminating information about disability services to the student population. Students qualified to receive DSPS services meet with a DSPS counselor to determine necessary accommodations. DSPS counselors are available at the Merced and Los Banos campuses. Learning disability testing is available to all students, and is currently provided on the Merced campus. This service was provided on the Los Banos campus prior to budget cuts in fall 2009. DSPS is currently exploring additional online services for its students (**IIB.24**) (**IIB.25a-b**).

Extended Opportunities Programs and Services/Cooperative Agencies Resource for Education

Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS) is an integral component in recruiting and successfully retaining students from educationally and socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Specific counselors are assigned to EOPS and students are required to meet with their EOPS counselor three times throughout the semester. Students are made aware of the programs via orientation, written and electronic materials, and referrals from others throughout campus (**IIB.27**). EOPS strives to alleviate educational barriers that preclude many low-income students from attending college. EOPS also provides book assistance, application assistance, counseling, tutorial, peer assistance, and grants for students who follow the terms of their mutual responsibility contract. Cooperative Agencies Resource for Education (CARE), a supplemental component of EOPS, is a unique educational program designed for welfare recipients who desire job relevant education. CARE's goal is to provide educational support services such as childcare assistance, special counseling and referral services that will increase the retention, persistence graduation and transfer rates of the welfare dependent student.

California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids

California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) is a state funded welfare-to-work program designed to help individuals on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). To be considered eligible for college services, students must be TANF recipients who have or who are developing a Welfare to Work plan. CalWORKs support services include advocacy, vocational counseling, academic counseling from a counselor specifically designated to CalWORKs students, paid work study, paid child care, resume assistance and job placement. CalWORKs services are provided on both campuses. Information regarding services is available on the college website (**IIB.88**) (**IIB.89**).

Student Health Services

The mission of Student Health Services (SHS) is to provide students with the services and resources necessary to make responsible, informed choices regarding their health. SHS and personal counseling are available to all currently enrolled students at both campuses. All services provided are included in the Health Fee, which is currently $17 for fall and spring semesters and $14 for the summer session. As community health resources have decreased, the College

has seen an increase in student mental health caseloads. Brief therapy is provided on both campuses by licensed marriage & family therapists. Substance abuse peer support groups have been offered on the Merced campus and are open to all students. Due to lack of student interest, these support groups are not being offered for the spring 2010 semester. Basic health and wellness information is provided through personal consultation, the Student Health website, workshops, class presentations, and written and electronic materials (**IIB.90**) (**IIB.91**) (**IIB.92**).

Self Evaluation

An ongoing process for defining and evaluating SLOs was developed and has been implemented since the previous accreditation team visit. Departmental program reviews aid in evaluation and have been completed by most Student Services departments. Both are tools to determine the needs of students and whether Student Services are effectively meeting them. A plan is in place to administer a locally developed needs assessment for fall 2010. This will provide a basis for future program planning.

The Student Equity Report (**IIB.93**), last required by the Chancellor's Office in 2004, is an important verification of equal access for students and proportionate success rates. Since 2004, student equity has been evaluated for specific concerns. For example, Allied Health programs have been examined for disproportionate impact. The College has looked at differences in enrollment for basic skills courses. When this report is requested by the Chancellor's Office, it will be representative of a more holistic approach.

Efforts are made within Student Services to accommodate day, evening and off-site students. Online services are becoming increasingly important and Merced College is in the process of developing more comprehensive online services.

According to the Merced College 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey (**IIB.65, p. 15**), students signify a very high satisfaction rate for registration through Web Advisor (62.6 percent), the student portal (69.8 percent), and the college website (74.6 percent). Students are evidently using these means for information and communication on an increasing basis.

As needs are identified, programs will respond with necessary changes and will evaluate the effectiveness of these changes. The assignment of resources will be based on identified program deficiencies. These deficiencies are validated through the SLO and program review processes. Student satisfaction is measured by the Merced College 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey (**IIB.65, p. 15**).

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College adopted its current Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) in October 2006

(**IIB.95**). Two of the ILOs address the College's commitment to providing an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all students.

One of the institutional SLO states*:" Global and Community Consciousness and Responsibility: Demonstrate understanding of different cultures and knowledge of historical eras and importance of community involvement."*

On-going dialogue throughout the institution and subsequent program development has created an environment of global and community consciousness at Merced College. This has, in turn, encouraged opportunities for personal and civic responsibility for all students. These opportunities have been provided through campus presentations, committees, and campus events (**IIB.96a-d**) (**IIB.97a-d**). By their very nature, many of these occasions enhance the growth of student intellectual and aesthetic aptitudes. Below are some examples.

Campus Presentations

- Gospel Jubilee/African-American Heritage Month Presentation (February 2006 to present)
- International Poet and Spoken Word Theater Artist (Shalja Patel) Presentation (October 2006)
- Student Panel Presentation addressing the learning needs of Students of Color during Flex Days for faculty
- Student Success (Vincent Tinto) lecture and faculty workshop (March 20 & 21, 2009)
- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society annual satellite series

Events

- World Cultures Music and Dance Festival (2006-present)
- World Cultures Soccer Tournament (April 2006)

Committees

- Campus Change Network (consisting of management, faculty and student representatives)
- Diversity Committee (consisting of management, faculty and student representatives

Merced College was one of 14 California community colleges invited to participate in California Tomorrow's Campus Change Network (**IIB.98**) (**IIB.99**). This community college initiative provided technical assistance to colleges interested in developing comprehensive reform strategies to improve academic success among its rapidly changing student bodies. The Campus Change Network provided work sessions during retreats where management, faculty and student leaders worked on developing reform approaches and strategies to use on their perspective campuses.

As a result of the Campus Change Network's efforts, the Diversity Committee was redesigned.

Two faculty members were assigned as co-chairs and given the charge to create more ongoing campus events that reflected the College's diverse campus community. Today the College maintains these efforts as it continues to host the Gospel Jubilee/African American heritage presentation and World Cultures Music and Dance Festival since its inception four years ago.

Student civic responsibility is developed by participation in student government and club activities. The Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC) student government council consists of elected student officers and a representative from each active club. Students have the option of membership in one or more of the many clubs active on campus. Active clubs include Anthropology, Campus Crusade for Christ, Chi Alpha, Black Student Union, Blue Devil Aggies, International Club, Mathletes, Muslim Student Association, Nichiren Buddhism, Pre-Med, Psychology, SAFE, Students for Social Justice, and Volleyball. Merced College also has two active honor societies, Alpha Gamma Sigma and Phi Theta Kappa. ASMC organizes several activities throughout the academic year to encourage personal and civic responsibility, including Blue Devil Days, Vote or Die, Club Rush, Elections, and Project Xmas.

Student clubs have extensive relationships with the greater Merced community. The Pre-Med Club offers services to the community by organizing a "Servant for a Day" activity to assist those in the community as well as raise money for scholarships. The Foot Club frequently gives "hacky sack" demonstrations to local elementary schools to encourage childhood exercise and outside activities. Campus Crusade for Christ and Chi Alpha Clubs have strong ties to local churches and frequently have functions on-and off-campus to raise awareness and promote their religion. The Nichiren Buddhism Club hosts an exhibit every semester to promote peace through a display of colorful and informative posters depicting recent steps forward in peaceful movements and advancements in human rights in different places around the world. The Alpha Gamma Sigma and Phi Theta Kappa honor societies also encourage personal and civic responsibility by organizing a Christmas toy drive and a canned food drive for less fortunate children and families in the community.

ASMC Executive Council students regularly attend an annual Leadership Conference hosted by the California Community College Student Affairs Association. Students learn from their peers and other experts on such topics as the Brown Act, parliamentary procedure, campus sustainability, and ways to improve student government. ASMC executive officers often participate in Region 5 teleconferences to discuss and vote on important issues facing the lower San Joaquin Valley community colleges. Students also represent Merced College at the state level by participating in the California Statewide Student Senate by serving as a senator and/or by attending the biannual General Assemblies.

Students participate in campus wide shared governance through membership on various campus committees (**IIB.100**) where their opinions are valued. Student perspective is also represented during Board of Trustees meetings with a student trustee who reports back to the entire ASMC body. Students are reminded of the significance of democratic principles through the recognition of Constitution Day. The College celebrates Constitution Day by holding a student essay contest.

The student-centered Student Ambassador and Agriculture Ambassador programs develop skills in public relations and communication. These ambassadors perform outreach activities

and conduct orientations and campus tours. The Agricultural Ambassador program (**IIB.101**) began in 1997. This program provides leadership training for students pursuing careers in the agricultural industry. Agriculture Ambassadors host leadership workshops for 4-H and FFA students, travel to local high schools to promote higher education, and serve as a voice for the agricultural industry. The Student Ambassador program was created 10 years ago by the Office of Relations with Schools. Despite its valuable contributions, this program was suspended due to budget reductions.

Merced College also has a Puente Program which exists specifically to assist Latino/Latina students with transferring to a university. The Puente Program takes students on field trips to local universities for tours to help motivate them to pursue transfer (**IIB.20**).

A second institutional SLO states: "*Personal Development and Life-Long Learning: Demonstrate self-management, maturity, and growth through practices that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being."*

The Counseling Cohort's guidance courses afford students the opportunity to explore individual needs and interests in relation to their academic success, creating an environment that promotes personal development. In Guidance 30*: Foundations and Strategies for College Success*, Guidance 48*: Life and Career Planning*, Guidance 54: *Foundations and Strategies for Academic Recovery*, and in Guidance 80: *College Survival*, students evaluate their personal development through values-directed exercises, career inventories, learning strategies, and personality assessments. These courses help students identify resources specific to their needs and interests in personal and career development.

Student Ambassador orientation sessions, and more focused orientations offered by EOPS, CARE, CalWORKs and DSPS, give students the opportunity to develop a community consciousness as they are introduced to student conduct codes and program specific student responsibilities. CARE and the Financial Aid Office workshops stress the importance of accepting personal accountability. Workshop topics have included: debt elimination, parenting skills, and the financial aid application process.

Learning Communities (**IIB.102**) courses encourage personal and civic responsibility among students through topics such as *Becoming an Active Participant in Democracy, Success Through Personal Exploration, The Great Debates: Philosophical Arguments in Early American History,* and *Bridges to Success by Breaking Barriers.* Study Central also hosts an ongoing series of workshops for students that address personal development needs.

Self Evaluation

As evidenced by the Merced College 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey (**IIB.65, pp. 10-13**), student life, student activities, and student government have, for the most part, improved in terms of student satisfaction. Based on the following scale: 5=very satisfied, 4=satisfied, 3=neutral, 2=dissatisfied, 1=very dissatisfied

Item	1998	2002	2006
1. Concern for you as an individual	3.53	3.56	3.63

2. Opportunities for personal involvement in college activities	3.54	3.58	3.64
3. Student Government	3.37	3.42	3.45
4. College media (student newspaper, campus radio, etc.)	3.28	3.42	3.40
5. Student voice in college policies	3.43	3.54	3.53
6. Purpose for which student activity fees are used	3.50	3.43	3.46
7. Rules governing student conduct	3.77	3.77	3.78
8. Recreational and intramural programs and services	4.02	3.77	4.05
9. Cultural Programs and Services	3.74	3.91	3.83
10. College-sponsored social activities	3.75	3.84	3.83

However, data provided by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement survey (CCSSE) (**IIB.10d, pp. 70-72**) point to a lack of involvement by most students on our campus. This "engagement" is measured in three different ways: frequency of use, satisfaction and importance.

Student Organizations

Frequency of use:	Often	5%
	Sometimes	13%
	Rarely/Never	45%
	Don't know/N.A.	37%
Satisfaction:	Very	11%
	Somewhat	21%
	Not at all	10%
	N.A.	57%
Importance:	Very	30%
	Somewhat	33%
	Not at all	37%

These responses indicate that not only do most students not participate, 57 percent state that ranking satisfaction is "not applicable" and 70 percent feel that student organizations are somewhat or not important at all. In support of these statistics is the following set of responses to the question: *About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week participating in college-sponsored activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.?*

None	1-5	5-10	11-20	21-30	More than 30
86%	9%	2%	2%	1%	0%

Investigating how students are spending their time, CCSSE produces interesting results:

- 76 percent spend one to10 hours per week studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to their program. Using the standard of two hours of study time for each hour in class, students are spending far less than the recommended amount of time studying.

- 53 percent of students are working a minimum of 11 hours to more than 30 hours per week.

- 59 percent provide some level of care for dependents living with them. This varies from one to more than 30 hours per week.

- 65 percent spend one to five hours per week commuting to and from classes.

- 78 percent never participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course.

- 71 percent never worked with instructors on activities other than coursework.

It would be valuable to use the Student Needs Assessment that is being developed for the fall 2010 semester to determine what students want in the way of activities on campus. While it is worthwhile to create new ways of communicating with students via websites, Facebook, Twitter, etc., to increase participation, determining a level of interest is fundamental. In evaluating whether the college environment produces the learning outcomes supportive of the institutional mission, CCSSE provides the following insight:

- 33 percent of students feel that the College emphasizes providing the support they need to thrive socially "Quite a bit" or "Very much" and 66 percent say "Some" or "Very little."

- 47 percent of students state that their experience at the College has contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in a personal code of values and ethics either "Quite a bit" or "Very much," while 52 percent say "Some" or "Very little."

- 29 percent of students respond that their experience at the College has contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in contributing to the welfare of their community either "Quite a bit" or "Very much," and 71 percent say "Some" or "Very little."

Further analysis and discussion needs to take place regarding the identification of who our students are, what they need to promote personal development, and what is the role of the Student Life area of our campus. Student government and campus club members express frustration at the lack of administrative and logistical support in the form of a full-time director of Student Life. Currently, one ASMC faculty advisor is responsible for teaching the student government class required for all officers and facilitating Student Council meetings. This faculty member has 50 percent of his load spent in this role. It is suggested that having a full-time director of Student Life would further ensure sustainable activities that encourage the development of student personal and civic responsibility.

Planning Agenda

Participate in the development and the analysis of the Student Needs Assessment to evaluate the role of student life activities on our campus.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College provides counseling services through several programs. Disabled Students Program and Services (DSPS), personal counseling, Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS), CalWORKs, International Student Services, Basic Skills, Veterans, eCounseling (online), and the Puente Program provide specialized counseling services for qualifying students. One-stop counseling services are provided in the Lesher Student Services Center on the Merced campus and in building A at the Los Banos Campus for all prospective, returning and continuing students.

All counselors meet at least minimum qualifications for counselors (**IIB.103**) and new hires are assigned a mentor. The counseling cohort is staffed by 21 full-time and four part-time counseling faculty members at the Merced campus and 1 FT EOPS/DSS counselor, 1.5 FTE general counselors, and two adjunct counselors at the Los Banos Campus. Counselors are committed to providing services that maximize learning opportunities and promote psychological wellness to help meet the personal, social, academic and career needs of all students. Additionally, counselors provide advisement concerning credit course placement and referral to noncredit ESL and other noncredit curriculum offerings as appropriate. ESL students are advised based on CELSA scores, or are referred based on scores from the credit course assessment instrument, Accuplacer, and multiple measures, such as academic history, career objectives, etc. Counselors update the Individual Career Educational Plan for students who continue enrollment in noncredit for a subsequent course and offer additional career counseling as appropriate (**IIB.104**).

The dean of Student Services works with the Counseling Cohort to employ data-driven decision-making. During non-peak time periods, students can make half-hour or hour appointments contingent on their needs. The Cohort operates on a walk-in basis only during peak registration periods to allow for the maximum number of students to be seen. After reviewing data from the Scheduling and Reporting System (SARS) on peak periods for counseling services, the Counseling Cohort implemented the new "Express Counseling" counseling service in spring 2008. This is located at the counseling reception counter and provides immediate service for students who have a quick question, need a signature, or need verification of prerequisites to enroll in classes. On average, this service allows a single counselor to meet with more than 19 students per hour, thus significantly reducing the wait time for students. For even more efficiency during peak periods, the Counseling Cohort utilizes schedulers to assist students with general questions and to help them find open classes and create their course schedule.

During the spring 2009 semester, the Counseling Cohort, along with the dean of Student Servic-

es, engaged in a 1½ day working retreat in a calm and uninterrupted venue to explore in-depth, critical issues that impact the department (**IIB.105**). Areas covered included transfer, IGETC updates, transcript evaluation, graduation, curricular changes, SARS reporting, the categorical site review team report and Learning Communities. Several new items were discussed, including the wait-list, Guidance 70 courses (1/2-unit orientation classes for new basic skills students), and the First Year Experience Program. A consultant provided "Hats Off to Merced College," a program that promoted team building, resiliency, and facilitated the staff in creating more balance in their lives.

Merced College utilizes a variety of ways to evaluate the efficacy of the Counseling Cohort. All full- and part-time counselors are evaluated according to the College's bargaining agreement. Other methods include the 2009 SLO survey which assessed student understanding of educational plans and the integral components of an associate degree (**IIB.106**). The survey results showed that 91 percent of students scored three out of five questions correctly. These findings were utilized as historical data for the current Counseling Cohort's program review. Counselors also assess the needs of students during high school outreach and one-on-one counseling sessions. In spring 2009, more than 500 high school seniors met with counselors to discuss their educational needs and goals (**IIB.107**). The ACT Student Opinion survey (**IIB.07**) is used to measure student satisfaction in the area of student services. While the survey was last administered in spring 2010, the results have not been evaluated at the time of this writing. The following chart from page 13 of the 2006 ACT Survey demonstrates a relatively high level of satisfaction within the area of counseling.

Student Services		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dis- Satisfied	Very Dis- Satisfied	Blank	"USED" Total Who
Academic Advising/ Course Planning Services	N	54	86	20	6	2	4	172
	%	31.4	50.0	11.6	3.5	1.2	2.3	100.0
Personal Counseling Services	N	25	33	7	1	0	5	71
	%	35.2	46.5	9.9	1.4	0.0	7.0	100.0
Vocational Guidance/ Career Planning Service	N	37	56	14	2	0	7	116
	%	31.9	48.3	12.1	1.7	0.0	6.0	100.0

Many student needs such as academic counseling, career counseling, personal counseling, transfer counseling, and the need for basic skills courses, are identified based on the College's mission statement, the Counseling Cohort mission statement, and data extrapolated from ACT and Accuplacer background questions. The application of this data allows for consistent information from counselors, course placement based on consistent utilization of multiple measures, adequate hours of operation in order to meet student demand for both day and evening students, establishment and maintenance of an early intervention system for at-risk students and establishment and maintenance of positive outreach programs.

In addition to those developed for the Counseling Cohort, SLOs are developed for each guid-ance course. The Guidance program review is done on a five-year cycle. The Counseling Cohort was also commended in the Categorical Student Services Program Summary Report for conducting weekly counseling cohort meetings which provide on-going training and updated information on Title 5, matriculation guidelines, transfer, curricular changes, major require-ments for A.A. and A.S. degrees, etc. (**IIB.108**). Counselors have consistently attended the CSU and UC state conferences as well as the Ensuring Transfer Success Conference. Addition-ally, the counseling cohort offers annual high school counselor training which provides updated information to our local high school counselors and administrators. One area that was listed as a need in the program review was the development of a counselor handbook to assist both veteran and newly hired counselors.

Self Evaluation

CCSSE reinforces students' positive responses regarding counseling services in the ACT Student Opinion Survey. In evaluating levels of student engagement through frequency of use, satisfac-tion, and importance the following measures were reported (**IIB.10e, pp. 116-118**).

Academic Advising/Planning

Frequency of use:	Often	17%
	Sometimes	45%
	Rarely/Never	29%
	Don't know/N.A.	9%
Satisfaction:	Very	30%
	Somewhat	47%
	Not at all	10%
	N.A.	13%
Importance	Very	69%
	Somewhat	24%
	Not at all	7%

Career Counseling

Frequency of use:	Often	13%
	Sometimes	33%
	Rarely/Never	40%
	Don't know/N.A.	14%
Satisfaction:	Very	25%
	Somewhat	37%
	Not at all	12%
	N.A.	25%

Importance	Very	65%
	Somewhat	20%
	Not at all	15%

There has been an increase in student satisfaction regarding all of the counseling services. In the College's 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey, using a scale of 5=very satisfied, 4=satisfied, 3=neutral, 2=dissatisfied, 1=very dissatisfied, the following results were reported (**IIB.65, p. 6, p. 13**).

	1998	2002	2006
Value of information provided by your advisor	3.82	3.65	3.84
Academic advising/course planning services	3.88	3.88	4.10
Personal Counseling Services	3.95	4.04	4.24
Vocational guidance/career planning services	4.03	4.03	4.17
Availability of your advisor	3.80	3.65	3.82

The ACT Student Opinion Survey was administered again during spring 2010. Once these results are available, they will be compared to the responses in the 2006 study. With the increasing student population and the reduction of counseling hours, it will be interesting to compare the satisfaction level regarding the above variables. The challenge is to provide the same quality of service when travel money for professional conferences is virtually non-existent and the need to see more students with fewer counselors is much greater.

With many of the budgets being significantly reduced, it is necessary to evaluate how to perform mission critical duties in the most cost effective manner while maintaining quality services to students. For example, the College matriculation budget, which funds numerous student services activities, was reduced 48.3 percent for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Concrete examples of how the Counseling Cohort continues to monitor and evaluate its services include:

- Conducting an 18-month rather than a three-year plan as previously decided. This allows the cohort to provide services consistent with the current budget.

- Given the significantly reduced hourly counseling budget ($110K in 2008-2009 & 47K in 2009-2010), the Counseling Cohort created a task force to examine and implement ways to meet the needs of students during peak registration periods. The task force examined data from peak registration and determined that allowing counselors to teach three units in load instead of six would increase the number of actual counseling hours available to students (a potential 42 hours of week of additional service to students).

- To ensure the quality of services the Cohort will develop such training tools as a counselor's handbook. It would also be valuable to review the State Academic Senate Standards of Practice for the Counseling Profession and discuss them in cohort meetings.

Planning Agenda

- Contingent on the budget, the Counseling Cohort will create a counseling handbook for new and experienced counselors for training purposes.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merced College's mission and value statements, along with its strategic goals, express its commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive learning environment. A wide range of courses, programs, activities and services raise awareness and appreciation of diversity including gender, race, age, ethnicity, disability, language, religion, and socio-economic status. Both the College's philosophy statement and vision statement reflect the college's commitment to diversity and multiculturalism, as indicated in the two paragraphs below.

Philosophy Statement

A democratic society functions best when its members are educated and active participants. To encourage this participation, Merced College provides educational opportunity for all who qualify and can benefit. This education involves having a respect for and awareness of all cultures, as well as the dignity and worth of all individuals.

Vision Statement

Students are our focus at Merced College. We set high standards to encourage students to reach their potential in a nurturing environment. Merced College is a leader in innovative instruction and cultural activities. We value and respect all members of our community and diversity is a strength of our institution. We are known by the success of our students (**IIB.109, p. 8**).

Academic Programs and Courses

Students can develop an appreciation for diversity by taking a course that has curriculum regarding ethnic and cultural studies. The College has expanded the number of courses that are approved to meet both the California State University breadth requirements and Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum in the Ethnic Studies Area. These courses are listed on the CSU Breadth Requirements and Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, and Associate Degree Breadth Requirements information sheets that counselors use when helping students plan their coursework. Such courses include: ANTH 02, *Cultural Anthropology*; ANTH 10, *South East Asian Culture*; HIST 8A, *History of the Americas Part I: Prehistory to Independence*; HIST 21, *The History of Minorities in America – Ethnic Groups*; HIST 22, *History of Minorities – Black Emphasis*; HIST 23, *The History of Hispanic-Americans in the Southwest*; HIST 24, *History of The Native Americans*; and HUM15, *Comparative Cultures.*

Additional courses that provide students with the opportunity to learn about different cultures and diversity related issues include CLDV 06, *Teaching in a Diverse Society*; COMM 30, *Introduction to Intercultural Communication*; (**IIB.110)**, ENGL 18/HUM 18, *African and African American*

Literature; GEOG 02 *World Geography;* MUS 12, *History and Appreciation of Jazz;* MUS14, *History of American Popular Music;* REGN 15 *Nursing in Health and Illness.*

Language courses at Merced College not only provide students with the opportunity to learn to read, write and speak a language other than English but also provide students with the opportunity to learn about the cultures that the languages represent. Currently, students have the opportunity to study Spanish (SPAN 01, 02, 03, 04, 10, 11), Japanese (JAPN 01A, 01b, 02), French (FREN 01, 02, 03, 04), German (GERM 01, 02, 03, 04), and Hmong (HMNG 01, 02). Although not considered a foreign language, American Sign Language is offered in a two-course sequence (ASLG 01 and ASLG 02).

The College also offers several degree and transfer programs with curriculum that provides students with the opportunity to learn about various aspects of human diversity. The programs and/or majors are: Arts and Humanities, Child Development, Foreign Languages (French, German, and Spanish), Humanities, International Studies, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

For more than 20 years, the College has supported an ESL course curriculum for students with limited English skills via the non-credit program, as well as four levels of ESL academic courses that focus on listening, speaking, grammar, writing, reading, and vocabulary for non-native English-speaking students. The two largest communities taking ESL courses at Merced College are people of Hmong and Hispanic heritage.

Students who use the Merced campus library benefit from the various displays of cultural and literary materials on both the main and top floor. Displays have included reflections on art around the world, celebrations of Hispanic Heritage Month, African American History Month, Japanese-American heritage, and the recognition of the services provided by veterans to our community. Poetry readings and musical programs are also presented throughout the year

Special Programs and Services
Puente Project

Merced College has continued to make significant efforts to serve students with learning differences and special needs. The Puente Project (**IIB.20**) assists students from diverse backgrounds with transferring to four-year colleges and universities and aims to ensure their success in college. Puente consist of three components: rigorous language arts utilizing the Mexican-American/Chicano experience, sustained academic counseling, and mentoring by members of the professional community. Research has demonstrated that students who complete the program not only have higher transfer rates than non-Puente students but higher retention rates as well.

EOPS/CARE

Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) (**IIB.28**) provides assistance to low income and educationally disadvantaged students so that they may achieve their educational goals. The program encourages the enrollment, retention, and transfer of students challenged by language, social, economic, and educational disadvantages. EOPS provides eligible students with support services in areas such as financial assistance, career and transfer counseling, and tutorial services. The Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) (**IIB.111**) program provides additional resources for EOPS students who are single parent welfare recipients with

children under the age of 14.

DSPS

The DSPS (**IIB.24**) philosophy is to empower students to be successful in obtaining their educational goals by providing the necessary support in their academic coursework and facilitating the effective use of strategies to manage their lives. Although disabled students' identities are protected through the privacy act, those with classroom accommodations are often identifiable to their classmates. It is an expectation that due to this exposure, these classmates will develop sensitivity to students with disabilities.

International Student Services Program

Indicative of the environment created at Merced College is a welcome letter (**IIB.16**) from the International Student Services Program (ISSP) (**IIB.112**) sent to prospective international Students:

> *"At Merced College, we value diversity and seek multiple perspectives to prepare our students for the global environment in which they will work and live. While striving to promote awareness, perspectives, and understanding of international cultures, we also recognize that our international students enrich the educational experience of our academic community, increase our global awareness, and provide cross-cultural interactions among us."*

ISSP has enrolled hundreds of students originating from more than 65 different countries, including those in Latin America, Europe, Africa, and the Pacific Rim. Many students will earn an associate degree while working toward transferring to a four-year college or university in the United States. ISSP offers a variety of services including assisting students in complying with F-1 visa regulations, and academic and personal counseling.

Fotonovelas

Merced College has created a unique approach to attract more Hispanic male students to college. Using the concept of the "fotonovela" (**IIB.113a-b**) or graphic novel as an outreach tool, the College designed an outreach instrument specifically targeting this underrepresented student population. Graphic novels have been very popular in Mexico during the middle half of the 20th Century, and this new version of the popular novela, available in English and Spanish, was designed to convey to potential students the value of a college education by showing characters in real life situations where they would benefit from having post secondary credentials.

Collaborations
Educational Excellence for Latinos

During fall 2009, Merced College, along with UC Merced and several public school districts, entered a partnership to host a forum on educational excellence for Latinos. The event was part of the nationwide White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. One of the main thrusts of this event was to stimulate community conversation about the future of Latino educational attainment in the United States and how both regional and national leaders can work together to achieve the objectives of the Initiative. Results from this forum and others will be used to inform a new presidential order for the implementation of the White House

Initiative in the near future (**IIB.114**) (**IIB.115**).

California Mini-Corps

The College coordinates a branch of the California Mini-Corps program (**IIB.116, p.76**) which operates statewide at 20 universities and colleges. California Mini-Corps provides direct, supplemental services to migrant children and their families. The program employs Merced College students as teaching assistants to provide a variety of academic services, while serving as mentors and raising the aspirations of migrant students. Services provided to migrant students occur both during the regular school year and in the summer, and include a puppetry program and an outdoor education program.

The objective of the school year program is to provide direct instructional services to migrant students as prescribed by the federal law "Improving America's Schools Act." The primary focus is on assisting migrant students in the core curriculum and promoting advocacy for high-risk migrant students in their school.

Student Organizations and Activities

Merced College promotes the enhancement of student understanding and appreciation of diversity by promoting a variety of student clubs. Merced College has more than 15 student clubs and organizations, several of which offer students the opportunity to learn about diversity and to experience other cultures. Students also have the opportunity to create their own club to meet their needs and to share their interest with others. Over the past five years the following ethnic or multicultural clubs have been active on campus:

- Black Student Union
- EOPS Club
- Hmong Club
- International Student Club
- Muslim Student Association
- Native American Student Alliance
- Puente
- Students for Social Justice

Several student clubs have sponsored very successful events over the years. The International Student Club offers programs several times a year for the campus community. These programs center on the different cuisines that are representative of the students' countries of origin. During 2008-2009 Students for Social Justice invited a poet from South America to share his insights about issues in that part of the world.

Appreciation of diversity can be seen in the wide variety of performances and activities presented on campus over the last five years. The college hosts a variety of lectures, films, and live concerts from all over the world. Following is a sample of multicultural activities hosted at Merced College during the last several years (**IIB.97a-d**):

- African American joint celebration with UC Merced-2003

- Black History Month annual celebration

- Hmong New Year

- Internationally Themed Soccer Tournament 2007(Faculty and Staff Diversity Committee)

- Latino Heritage Activities

- "Long Time Comin', It's A New Day" (Faculty and Staff Diversity Committee)

- Humanities Department Speakers Series

- Phi Theta Kappa honor society satellite series

Campus events with diversity as their theme have been sponsored by faculty, staff, student, and community members. These events have been well-received by the campus community and allow participants to expand their awareness of the rich cultural milieu that exist within the local community and within Merced County.

Staff Diversity

The District developed its first Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan in 1994, and the continuing focus on hiring a diverse staff ensures that the College will refine those practices and programs that enhance the understanding and appreciation of diversity. College faculty, staff and administrators from African American, Chicano/Latino, Asian, Native American, and Middle Eastern cultures contribute to campus diversity and appreciation. Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) faculty and staff provide services in Spanish, Farsi and Hmong languages. The college also continues to hire and train employees who are sensitive to the needs of students from diverse backgrounds. During the 2008 academic year, Merced College hired several full-time faculty and counselors to work with basic skills and other underprivileged student populations

Self Evaluation

Merced College offers a large selection of special programs and services that support the educational goals of a very diverse student population. These programs demonstrate high success and retention rates when compared with students who do not participate in these programs. The College is committed to enhancing student understanding and appreciation of diversity as evidenced by its many services, programs, clubs, and activities.

Members of the campus community are given the opportunity to provide input for the design of campus sponsored cultural programs through such committees as the Diversity Committee. Faculty members serve as advisors to student organizations, many of which sponsor events on campus that enrich the social and intellectual life of the campus and community. High levels of attendance at College-sponsored cultural events demonstrate campus interest and support for such activities. However, satisfaction as measured by the Merced College 2006 Student Opinion Survey (**II.B.65, p.10, 12**) has fluctuated over the years. When asked to state their level of satisfaction regarding cultural programs as well as racial harmony at this college, using a scale of 5=very satisfied, 4=satisfied, 3=neutral, 2=dissatisfied, 1=very dissatisfied, the responses were on average:

	1998	2002	2006
Cultural programs and services	3.74	3.91	3.83
Racial harmony at this college	3.81	3.74	3.75

The 2009 CCSSE (**IIB.10f, pp.69-71, 111, 113**) results were very helpful in creating a clear picture of the campus attitude toward diversity.

Students were asked about how often they had done each of the following:

	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Had a serious conversation with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own	24%	27%	31%	18%
Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	20%	27%	32%	21%

Students were asked:	Very Much	Quite a Bit	Some	Very Little
How much does Merced College encourage contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds?	19%	33%	30%	18%
How much has your experiences at Merced College contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in understanding people of other racial and ethnic groups?	22%	31%	28%	19%

The college clearly supports and promotes the understanding and appreciation of diversity. Just as society as a whole, the campus needs to maintain its efforts to create an environment of acceptance and equality. And it will be important to continue to measure the effectiveness of these efforts.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Admission to Merced College is open to California residents and nonresidents who possess a high school diploma (or equivalent), as well as persons over the age of 18 who are capable of

profiting from the instruction offered. The Office of Relations with Schools provides regularly scheduled orientations for new students facilitated by outreach staff and student ambassadors. Students can schedule an appointment for one of the New Student Orientation sessions, but may also attend on a walk-in basis as space becomes available. The two-hour orientation is held in the Assessment Lab, which has a capacity for 33 students to complete the orientation using computers. Students first complete a virtual tour of the campus, (**IIB.117**) and then participate in an online orientation (**IIB.118)** that ends with a 15-question test to determine if they fully understood the information presented. Students are provided with answers before exiting the orientation program. Students may also take virtual tours of the campus.

Students next complete the online application using CCCApply, developed by the CCCApply Users Group which updates the application annually. Students may also apply for admission to the College on a walk-in basis, using the paper application form available in Admissions and Records in the Lesher Student Services Center (LSSC). Students who apply through CCCApply receive an email with their college ID number within 24 hours; however, their student photo identification card must be obtained in person. Students who apply on a walk-in basis can immediately obtain their ID card. Non-English speakers are directed to the noncredit ESL program which is located at the downtown Business Resource Center.

Students with disabilities follow the same admissions process. Should a student need an accommodation for the New Student Orientation, a matriculation technician notifies Disabled Student Program and Services (DSPS) and arranges for assistance.

New students wishing to be admitted to the College are informed about the benefit of participating in matriculation services (orientation, assessment, and counseling/advisement). Non-exempt students who decline any or all of the services complete a Matriculation Services Refusal form available at Admissions and Records. These forms are submitted to the Office of Grants and Institutional Research (OGIR) which then enters and codes the information in a secured database. Data is used to chronicle and record trends that can assist the Matriculation Advisory Committee in its work of evaluating services provided students to increase their success and persistence.

Merced College uses Accuplacer, Accuplacer ESL Levels of English Proficiency (LOEPS) for placement into English and math courses. The Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) is used to place students into noncredit ESL classes. Per state matriculation guidelines, these assessment instruments are listed on the California Community College's Chancellor's Office list of approved assessment instruments (**IIB.119**).

All test publishers must provide evidence of a bias review to the Assessment Workgroup at the Chancellor's Office to receive approval for placement on the Chancellor's list of approved instruments. Accuplacer cut scores are locally validated for our student constituency, and are reviewed whenever a change in curriculum takes place.

A Sample Diagnostic Test for Mathematics which includes arithmetic, elementary algebra and college-level math, was developed by a team of Matriculation Advisory Committee members and faculty to prepare students for the math portion of Accuplacer (**IIB.11**). A copy is included in the packet of materials students receive at New Student Orientation. Counselors use Acc-

uplacer results as well as multiple measures (work experience, high school or other transcripts, family background, etc.) to assist new students in course selection. Completed multiple measures forms are sent to OGIR (**IIB.120**). Accuplacer is available in large print, Braille, and on audiotape for students with a verifiable disability. DSPS staff may administer the test or complete an authorization form that students take to the Assessment Lab at the time of testing.

Students wishing to challenge a class that has a prerequisite, co-requisite, or limitation on enrollment are provided with a document outlining the conditions for these challenges (**IIB.121**). If students wish to proceed with the challenge, they complete a Prerequisite, Co-requisite, Limitation on Enrollment Challenge Form and send it to the appropriate academic area along with supportive documentation (**IIB.122**). The challenge is reviewed by a committee or individual instructor in five business days and the student is notified of the decision.

OGIR has established a system of data collecting and coding and conducts Disproportionate Impact Studies every semester to see if the challenges are upheld or denied. Significant discrepancies are shared with the Matriculation Advisory Committee for action. This information is shared with the college community, especially the math and English academic areas, for evaluation and recommendations of appropriate actions. OGIR also conducts content validity studies that compare the assessment tool with the course curriculum in which the assessment indicates where a student should be placed. Faculty members continually assess and provide feedback on student placement.

Merced College uses a merit-based process for candidates applying to the Registered Nursing (RN) program (**IIB.123**). The cut score formula is based on overall GPA, successful completion of core science classes, number of times cores science classes have been repeated, and the successful completion of English 1A. The formula helps determine the probability of success in the RN program. Students who receive an 80 percent or higher probability number are placed into a lottery for random selection by OGIR. Students who are accepted must pass the standardized Test of Essential Academic Skills prior to beginning the RN program. A remediation class, ALLH-52, is available for students who do not meet the cut scores.

Self Evaluation

Admission, assessment, and placement of students are college wide processes involving integrated activities. These processes include evaluation and feedback from instructional faculty, counseling faculty, classified staff, and students. It entails curriculum analysis, supportive services, research, instructional evaluations, admissions procedures, and technical development. College admissions are an open process and assessment and placement is an all-inclusive approach that represents the student as a unique individual.

Merced College takes measures to ensure that the admissions and assessment practices and procedures are effective and free from bias. Accuplacer, LOEPS, and CELSA are regularly evaluated by the authors of the instrument and are nationally recommended. Appropriate instructional areas are advised of discrepancies and make recommendations for change.

Logistical changes were made in April 2008 to provide a one-stop approach for matriculation services and other student services. Student Services departments previously located in various areas of campus moved into the newly-renovated Lesher Student Services Center (LSSC). Lo-

cating Financial Aid, Work Study, Job Opportunity Services, Outreach and Assessment, Student Fees, Admissions and Records, Guidance, EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs, and Veterans Services in the same building has made possible more efficient delivery of services to students.

Additionally, OGIR research has indicated that Learning Communities (LC) and Supplemental Instruction (SI) are linked with student success. In 2006, SI students also in LCs were found to be 13 percent more successful than prior math students and 21percent more successful than prior English course students (**IIB.124**). Both proactive strategies are still in practice at the College.

However, when a student has a cumulative GPA under 2.0 or cumulative units that consist of 50 percent of withdrawals, incompletes, or non-credit units, he or she is placed on academic probation or progress probation. An academic probation and/or progress probation student has a hold on his or her records and is referred by Admissions & Records personnel to meet with a counselor to participate in an intervention program (probation workshops, Guidance 54, individualized contracts) before receiving approval for registration.

Noncredit and ESL programs were receiving a full complement of matriculation services before the present budget crisis (**IIB.125**). In fact, in 2008 the College encouraged student awareness by the development and distribution of an exceptional fotonovela in Spanish and English for ESL students, non-credit students, and others throughout the community (**IIB.113a-b**). Currently, off-campus noncredit programs utilize the Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) instrument for placement into ESL noncredit courses, but due to budget restraints and retirement of faculty, there is a need for an improved ESL assessment process on the main campus. Orientations and counseling historically have been offered in Spanish, Hmong, and English, and noncredit students were given the opportunity to develop an educational plan. Continuing these services may not be fiscally possible with the current budget challenges.

As per Title 5 requirements, in its *Matriculation Services Refusal Report of July 2007-June 2009* OGIR presented statistical data and information on 662 Matriculation Services Refusal forms from July 2007 to June 2009. Orientation was the most refused service (75.86 percent) (II.B.126). Also, the success/non success as well as the persisted/not persisted statistics per semester were evaluated with varying outcomes.

In Spring 2009, OGIR reviewed 205 Prerequisite/Co requisite challenges to determine the success rate in the student's target course during January 2008 to May 2009 (**IIB.127a-b**). The study indicated that the committee and instructors reviewing the challenges were correct in denying those challenges. Also, the disproportionate impact findings indicated that no disproportionate impact exists for age or gender, but that a disproportionate impact did exist for students who declined to state their race.

Other disproportionate impact studies have been carried out by OGIR on Limitations on Enrollment: The Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program-Abdominal and OB/GYN Track (for the period 2002 through 2006) (**IIB.128**), Music 44A (**IIB.129**) and Radiologic Technology Program (for Fall 2002 through Spring 2005) (**IIB.130**).

Recently the Chancellor's Office ruled that the number of resident credit units may not serve as

criteria for admittance to the RN program. Merced College has discontinued giving priority to nursing applicants who had completed 12 or more resident units. The requirement was discontinued immediately upon notice. The change will be reflected in the 2010-2011 catalog.

According to the Merced College 2006 Student Satisfaction Survey, the satisfaction level of Merced College students in regard to admissions has generally increased (**IIB.65, p. 7**). In the current fiscal environment, the College is faced with the challenge of determining how to effectively and efficiently provide the same level of admissions and assessment services to an increasing number of students with fewer faculty and staff members.

Planning agenda

- None

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

Descriptive summary

All student records are kept in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Students may request access to academic records which personally identify them and they may challenge the accuracy of the record or the appropriateness of its retention. Student consent is needed for the release of records covered by FERPA to outside parties (i.e., other schools, prospective employers) except for those agencies entitled to access under FERPA (i.e., campus officials, federal educational and auditing officers). These provisions apply to records received and used after November 19, 1974. The policy for release of student records information is published in the college catalog, schedule of classes and on the college website.

The District management information system, Datatel, limits access to information based on the requirements of the employee's position and is password-protected. Three Information Technology Services (ITS) staff members operate Datatel software, data and programming. Two ITS staff members keep the systems hardware running. ITS has implemented security measures and has provided for recovery of data in case of emergencies. Backups are completed daily and are kept both on- and off-site. Datatel keeps all district operational information, including all student records, human resources, and fiscal information.

Admissions & Records (A&R) responsibly maintains and protects all student records in a manner that ensures accuracy, security of information and compliance with accreditation standards. Nearly all forms produced by A&R are scanned and stored in Image Now and linked to student records. Every piece of information the College uses is based on the creation of a student admission record. Student records impact all other college departments. As stated by the vice president of Technology and Institutional Research, the culmination of the process is the student's permanent record which is used continuously for follow-up and research in order to strive for improvement in instructional and student services.

Self Evaluation

The College manages and maintains the security and confidentiality of student electronic and hard copy records. A&R and ITS staff ensure the storage, integrity, and access to electronic records maintained in the information systems. Other programs with student files comply with federal law and regulations (e.g. DSPS,Title 5, S56008). Grade screens are available to each professor on Web Advisor for their classes. This information is maintained in Datatel.

A&R continues to explore electronic communication with key areas of Student Services and Instruction. A&R staff communicates with deans, professors and instructional areas, and all Student Services departments on the accurate and timely exchange of information. The office is reinforcing its connection with technology staff members and promotes the development of new processes. A&R plans to implement the electronic transcript program CCCTran, as well as another e-transcript service, during 2011.

Security storage in A&R is being evaluated. The area previously had a fireproof vault which housed grade reports, transcripts and other pertinent information that required secure storage. A&R now has a small locked room which requires the purchase of fireproof cabinets and a fireproof safe to store documents and microfilm. Purchase of fireproof cabinets for all documents was deemed cost-prohibitive, leaving grades, evaluations, graduation requests, and related files vulnerable to damage. File security for the imaging system is based on every user having a login password. When not using the Image Now program, the user logs out. A limited number of users ensure that everyone does not have access to these files. When users are added, they are limited to information based on approval from an administrator and the ITS director. Based on the employee's job position, they are given access to only pertinent Datatel screens. Screen access is also determined by an administrator and the ITS Director.

Financial Aid keeps student files in hardcopy form for three years, after which the files can be destroyed. They are secured nightly in locked file cabinets, or maintained in other District storage locations. Files from the Los Banos Campus are sent to the Merced campus for processing. Student information is not released without a signed release from the student.

The EOP&S/CARE office assigns each student services assistant a student case load. The assistants are responsible for maintaining student files from their case load. All files are locked daily. Inactive files are removed from the office and filed in the warehouse. After four years, they are destroyed.

CalWORKs offices on both campuses maintain all student files in locked cabinets. All students in the program sign a Consent to Release Information Form. When a student exits the program, their file is placed in the office's exited file cabinet. When a student exits from the program and is consecutively inactive for more than a year, his file is archived in a locked cabinet in the store room and/or designated area in the warehouse per Chancellor's Office guidelines.

In spite of efforts by these programs to maintain student records, the interior design of the Lesher Student Services Center jeopardizes document safety. A&R, EOPS, Counseling, Financial Aid, Office of Relations with Schools, and CalWORKs have open office spaces. The half-counters facilitate daily operations but don't prevent access. Fortunately, Student Services staff members are very conscientious about shredding or storing sensitive material. The custodial

staff is responsible for securing the building and elevators at the end of each business day. A draft Disaster Recovery Plan for electronic storage of information is in progress. According to the ITS Director, there is currently enough storage for the next 10 years.

Planning Agenda

- The College will evaluate the extent to which security is compromised due to the open design of EOPS, Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Counseling, CalWORKs and Office of Relations with Schools in the Lesher Student Services Center.

II.B4.
The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College began implementing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in response to new guidelines established by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (AC-CJC) in 2002. At that time, the College's accreditation team decided instructional SLOs would be developed, adopted, and evaluated under the direction of the Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC) and the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) in cooperation with the president, Faculty Senate, and the Board of Trustees. After much discussion, the SLO Advisory Committee created institutional outcomes which were adopted by the Board in 2004. At this time the Trustees also adopted the SLO Advisory Committee's Principles of Assessment (**IIB.131a-b**).

Student Services struggled with the concept of SLOs in areas such as A&R and Financial Aid for several years. During spring 2005, Student Services began an intensive learning process regarding the implementation of this concept to areas not ordinarily thought of as "learning environments." In fall 2005 a Student Services SLO coordinator was identified and the SLO Consultation Group was formed. Also at this time, a Student Services Program Review coordinator was identified. There was and continues to be extensive collaboration between these two coordinators. Efforts have been made to make the end product of the SLO process flow directly into the program review process, thus reducing some of the work necessary for a program review.

Student Service programs to undergo program review were identified and scheduled during the fall 2005 Student Personnel Executive Committee (SPEC) retreat (**IIB.66a**). A Program Review Handbook and schedule was created, presented to SPEC, Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC), and EMPC for approval in spring 2006 (**IIB.48**) (**IIB.134**).

The College's student support services programs conduct comprehensive program reviews every six years with yearly updates to evaluate services and resources for adequacy in meeting identified student needs (**IIB.48**) (**IIB.94**). All Student Services programs have completed a program review cycle as of spring 2010. Once the program and the Student Services Program Review coordinator have approved the document, it is then reviewed by a Program Review

Oversight Committee, and approved by SSMPC and EMPC before being posted on the web.

In addition, each of the 13 student support services programs identify, assess, and report the results from student learning outcomes each year. The results are sent to the Student Services SLO coordinator for review and then to SPEC for final feedback before being published on the web.

Examples of how SLO results have been utilized are:

- **Career Center**—Creation of several documents including a Eureka handout, program brochure, and in class presentations

- **Admissions & Records**—Moving more services online through web advisor and CCCApply, to update signage, and provide students with important handouts

- **EOPS**—Creation of a student handbook and a new power point presentation for their new student orientation

- **Financial Aid**—Streamlining of how the office conducts business, changing the entire intake process, creating forms, and offering online workshops on campus

- **Counseling**—Developing a handout regarding educational plans

Student support services programs also rely on more global assessments/data such as the Student Equity Report, the ACT, and the CCSSE surveys (**IIB.93**) (**IIB.07**) (**IIB.10a-b**). Data and reports developed by OGIR influence the changes made in Student Services programs.

Through EMPC (**IIB.01**), the College has recently revised the planning process to make use of Program Review data to determine resource allocation (**IIB.47**). In addition, the Student Services Program Review and SLO coordinators have created a blended form to integrate Program Review, SLOs, and the planning process to assure equity and adequacy in Student Services. The key to its effectiveness is the emphasis on the evaluation of changes made to the programs. The new format is web based and will be implemented during the 2010-2011 academic year. The first year of the new review cycle will consist of a Program Review Annual Update (**IIB.94**), followed by a comprehensive program review document during year two of the cycle. The comprehensive document template will be finalized in during the 2010-2011 academic year, and will have a web presence via CurricUNET.

Self Evaluation

The College has made significant progress over the past few years in student support services Program Reviews and SLO identification, assessment, and reporting of results. Each year these processes have undergone revision and improvements have been made in the integration of Program Review, SLOs, and the three-year plan with input from the Student Services managers, deans, and the vice president. Student support services programs must now take the next step of fully integrating SLOs into their programs, make necessary changes, and reevaluate the effect of those changes. The College must take further steps to integrate the SLO and Program Review

processes and also finalize the creation of the resource allocation process utilizing Program Review data.

In addition, it is vital that the College conduct a student support services needs assessment to aid student support services programs in the development, change, and implementation of their programs, SLOs and Program Reviews. Currently, needs are assessed based solely on assumptions of programs from SLOs and satisfaction surveys.

Planning Agenda

- Create and conduct a student support services needs assessment.

STANDARD IIB EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIB.01   Merced College Planning Handbook

IIB.02   District Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

IIB.03a   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-Admissions and Records

IIB.03b   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-CalWORKs

IIB.03c   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-Counseling Cohort

IIB.03d   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-DSS

IIB.03e   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-EOPS

IIB.03f   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-Financial Aid

IIB.03g   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-Office Institutional of Advancement

IIB.03h   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-Office of Relations with Schools

IIB.03i   Student Services Fiscal Emergency Plan-Student Health Services

IIB.04   Office of Student Personnel Services Organization Chart

IIB.05   Categorical Program Site Review 2009

IIB.06   Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC)

IIB.07   ACT Student Opinion Survey

IIB.08a   Student Support Partnership Integrating Resources & Education (SSPIRE) Proposal, 2005-09-23

IIB.08b   Study Central Press Release, 2007-08-29

IIB.09   Study Central Post Evaluation, 2007-12-06

IIB.10a   Community College Student Survey of Engagement (CCSSE) 2007

IIB.10b   CCSSE 2009

IIB.10c, pp. M6-M8   CCSSE 2009

IIB.10d, pp. 70-72   CCSSE 2009

IIB.10e, pp. 116-118   CCSSE 2009

IIB.10f, pp. 69-71, 111,113 CCSSE 2009

IIB.11   Sample Diagnostic Test for Mathematics

IIB.36	Guidance 54 Course Outline
IIB.37	Guidance 54 Persistence Report
IIB.38	Retention Agreement
IIB.39	Merced College Transfer Center Website
IIB.40	California Post-Secondary Education Commission Transfer Pathway Report for Merced College
IIB.41	Financial Aid Program Review
IIB.42	Merced College Fact Sheet
IIB.43	Scholarship Awards Memo 2008-2009
IIB.44	Student Organizations
IIB.45	Cooperative Education Services Memo
IIB.46	August Rush Meeting Notes
IIB.47	Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) Resource Allocation Request
IIB.48	Student Services Program Review Handbook
IIB.49	Student Services Student Learning Outcomes Webpage
IIB.50	Merced College Catalog
IIB.51	Merced College Catalog Addendums E-mail 2009
IIB.52	Merced College Online Bookstore
IIB.53	Catalog Request
IIB.54	Merced College Catalog-Library Copy E-mail
IIB.55a	Merced College Catalog Master Mailing List E-mail
IIB.55b	Merced College Catalog Master Mailing List
IIB.56a	Admissions Policies: BP/AP 5010
IIB.56b	Admissions Policies: AP 5011
IIB.56c	Admissions Policies: AP 5012
IIB.57a, pp. 1-52	Merced College Schedule of Classes Fall/Summer 2009
IIB.57b, pp. 53-73	Merced College Schedule of Classes Fall/Summer 2009
IIB.57c, pp. 74-98	Merced College Schedule of Classes Fall/Summer 2009
IIB.57d	Merced College Schedule of Classes Spring 2010

IIB.82   Merced College Transfer Center Website

IIB.83   Career Transfer Brochure

IIB.84   Financial Aid Outreach E-mail

IIB.85   Merced College Financial Aid Website

IIB.86   Financial Aid Flier

IIB.87   Financial Aid Brochure

IIB.88   Merced College CalWORKs

IIB.89   CalWORKs Brochure

IIB.90   Merced College Student Health Services

IIB.91   Student Health Services Brochure

IIB.92   Personal Counseling Brochure

IIB.93   Student Equity Report

IIB.94   Student Services Program Review Annual Update

IIB.95   Institutional Student Learning Outcomes

IIB.96a   Diversity Committee Agenda and Notes 02-01-2006

IIB.96b   Diversity Committee Agenda and Notes 04-03-2006

IIB.96c   Diversity Committee Agenda and Notes 05-15-2006

IIB.96d   Diversity Committee Agenda and Notes 09-11-2006

IIB.97a   Multicultural Event Program Brochure 02-22-2009

IIB.97b   Multicultural Events Fliers

IIB.97c   Multicultural Events Press Releases

IIB.97d   Multicultural Events E-mails

IIB.98   Campus Change Network

IIB.99   Campus Change Network Committee

IIB.100   Shared Governance Committees Student representation

IIB.101   Agricultural Ambassadors

IIB.102   Learning Communities

IIB.103   Title 5 53410 Counselor Minimum Qualifications

IIC. LIBRARY AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

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

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

Descriptive Summary—Library

Library Mission Statement

The Merced College Library, part of the Learning Resources Center (LRC), serves a highly diverse student, faculty, and staff population. The LRC's mission was developed collaboratively by LRC staff in August 2006 and was reaffirmed in August 2009. The mission of the LRC is "to support the instructional processes and institutional student learning outcomes at Merced College by providing resources and services to the students, professors, and staff of the institution" (**IIC.01**).

Library Reporting Hierarchy

Several changes have occurred in the LRC since 2004. One of the most significant changes was an administrative restructuring that placed the LRC under the leadership of the vice president of Technology and Institutional Research beginning in fall 2007. Previously, the LRC operated under the direction of the vice president of Instruction. All Merced Campus Library activities and services remain under the direction of the LRC director (**IIC.02**).

Learning Resources Center Five Year Plan

In 1996-1997, a five year Learning Resources Center/Library Plan was developed by the Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC), supported by the Faculty Senate, and adopted by the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) (**IIC.61**). Fulfillment of the plan became one of the Board of Trustees' goals, one of the nine strategic goals to improve effectiveness which the Board first adopted in September 1999 (**IIC.62**) and reaffirmed in December 2004 (**IIC.63**). Major portions of the plan, at one time partially funded by categorical funding, have never been institutionalized and are no longer being funded. The specific parts of the plan that remain unfunded are: improving the currency and depth of the book collection, additional open hours at the Merced Campus Library; additional open hours at the Los Banos Campus Library; and additional availability of faculty reference librarians at the Los Banos Campus Library.

Library Services—Staffing

The LRC technical manager, classified staff, and faculty librarians report to the LRC director. LRC staff is composed of two managers (the LRC director and the LRC technical manager/AV supervisor), three full-time faculty librarians (the associate librarian, the reference librarian, and the electronic resources librarian), three adjunct faculty librarians, seven classified staff assigned to the library (four full-time 12-month library media technicians, one full-time 11-month library media technician, one full-time 12-month library media clerk, one part-time 10-month library clerk), seven classified staff assigned to the Audio Visual Department (one full-time 12-month library media technician, one full-time 11-month library media technician, two full-time 12-month educational media specialists, one full-time 12-month senior AV technician, two part-time 12-month library media technicians), and 21 student assistants (18 assigned to the library and three assigned to AV). While the two part-time library media technicians report to the Audio Visual Department, their primary responsibility is to work with students at the student computers in the library (**IIC.01**).

A second significant change was the addition of a full-time faculty librarian in 2009-2010 whose primary responsibility is to increase the accessibility and usability of electronic resources by students and faculty. The addition of this position has allowed for additional outreach to faculty and an increased library web presence using social networking applications such as Facebook, Flickr and Twitter. This librarian also spends one day per week at the Los Banos Campus Library and serves as a liaison to Los Banos Campus faculty.

Faculty reference librarians are available to assist students with information requests and to conduct orientations for classes during 53.5 out of the 56 open hours at the Merced campus library. Faculty librarians also serve as liaisons with all instructional areas to encourage use of library resources, improve delivery of information competency instruction, and to solicit input on library collection development and maintenance. Faculty reference librarians use the Library Instruction Room to conduct all orientations and library instruction on the Merced campus. Students sit at computer stations during library orientations so they can have hands-on experience using online library resources and databases. In 2008-2009, faculty librarians gave library instruction orientations to 164 classes, reaching 4,315 students at the Merced campus library (**IIC.03**).

Library media technicians and clerks, with the assistance of library student assistants, staff the two circulation desks (one on each floor), check out materials, technology, and rooms to students and staff, provide access to the instructor reserve collection, assist students with technology available in the library, and order, receive, and process materials. A comprehensive list of library services is provided later in this standard. The Merced campus library is open only on instructional days, 56 hours per week, Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to noon. These hours are based on availability of technical, clerical, student, and faculty staffing.

Los Banos Campus Library classified staff report to the dean of the Los Banos Campus (**IIC.04**). Library activities and services of the Los Banos Campus Library are under the direction of the dean of the Los Banos Campus. Faculty librarians report to the LRC director (**IIC.02**). The dean of the Los Banos Campus and LRC director collaborate on assignments for faculty librarians

who work at the Los Banos Campus Library. Faculty librarians are available 18 hours per week at the Los Banos Campus Library (six hours each Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday) and are available assist with students with information needs and to give library orientations and instruction.

Because of the small size of the Los Banos Campus Library, the library instruction portion of the orientations is given in the classrooms. This arrangement allows faculty librarians to demonstrate online resources and databases through the multimedia stations in the classrooms and prevents disruption to students using the library during times when library tours are scheduled. Following the library instruction portion of orientations, students tour the library facility. Los Banos Campus Library classified staff consists of one part-time library media technician, two part-time library media bookstore clerks and one student assistant.

Classified staff and the library student assistant check out materials to students and staff, provide access to the textbook reserve collection, assist students with technology available in the library, and receive materials that have been processed by staff at the Merced campus library. In addition, library classified staff operate the bookstore throughout the year, selling texts, materials, and supplies to students and supervising the bookstore student assistant. Extra bookstore personnel are hired for the two weeks before the start of each semester and for the two weeks following the start of each semester for 60 to 80 hours per week to assist with bookstore sales during this peak time (**IIC.05**). Library classified staff also provide reference assistance and give orientations during the times when the faculty reference librarians are not present.

Classified staff responsible for bookstore sales perform library duties concurrently during hours that both the library and bookstore are open, since both activities take place across an extended counter space in the library. Students are informed of this arrangement by a sign at the entrance of the Los Banos Campus Library which states the bookstore is located in the Library. Los Banos Campus classified library staff members also perform some audio-visual functions as no Audio-Visual Department exists on campus. The Los Banos Campus Library is open 50.25 hours per week, Monday through Thursday from 8:45 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., and Friday from 8:45 a.m. to noon. These hours are based on availability of technical and clerical staff as well as student assistants.

Library Services—Facilities

A third major change in the Merced campus library was the move of the LRC to a new and much larger facility in late 2006. The LRC opened in February 2007. This new library facility is twice the size of the former library (**IIC.06**) (**IIC.07**). The library provides several kinds of spaces for students, including 12 study rooms accommodating six students each; two meeting rooms accommodating 25 students each; and a media viewing room with VHS/DVD/cable television viewing capability that can accommodate 25 students. A variety of individual seating arrangements are available ranging from easy chairs at coffee tables (63) to wooden chairs at study carrels and tables (346). Sixty-eight computer stations are available for student use, 64 of which are linked to the college network and have access to the Internet. Computer stations are available on both floors and are linked to a networked printer where copies can be made. Students can perform research, use Microsoft Office suite to create materials, and use email at these stations. Merced College's wireless network extends to the Merced campus library and students can use

personal laptops to access resources available through the network as well as the Internet itself. The Merced campus library also has 12 individual media viewers with headphones that accommodate VHS and DVD formats for student use. Students can also check out CD players to listen to the library's extensive music collection.

The Los Banos Campus moved to its new site in 2007. The new Los Banos Campus library is 362 square feet larger than the library on the former campus (from 1,980 to 2,342 square feet). Part of its assignable square footage was designed for and is used as bookstore space (112 square feet) (**IIC.08**) (**IIC.09**). In addition to this square footage, space in the library behind the circulation counter and in front of the circulation counter is reserved for bookstore activities. The Los Banos Campus library has one meeting room that can accommodate eight persons, as well as a computer room with seven computers reserved for word processing. In the library main room six tables can seat 36 students and eight computer stations linked to the Internet are available for research only.

Library Services—Collections

The Merced campus library houses print collections of 51,124 book titles and 208 journal and magazine titles with back files of varying ages in both print and microfilm (**IIC.10**). The library also houses a large microfilm collection of the New York Times newspaper beginning in 1851 (ending in 2009 because of budget cuts). The Merced Sun Star is held on microfilm from 1975 to 2009 (also ended because of fiscal constraints). The library has enough shelving to continue to expand the print collections and to display titles in a variety of ways for decades to come. Because of budget constraints and because of the accessibility and usefulness of online periodicals, no additions have been made to the print periodicals collection in several years. The average age of books in the non-fiction collection is 21 years old and the average age of books in the fiction collection is 29 years old (**IIC.11**) (**IIC.12**). Current funding levels for the book collection allow for updating a small portion of the reference and circulating collections every year, but not for replacement of items that are checked out and not returned.

In 2008-2009, the library added 4,927 volumes and one database, Global Road Warrior (which is available to students through the Merced College Portal regardless of location) (**IIC.10**). Collection development followed the District Library Materials Selection Policy (**IIC.13**). The choice of selections to purchase was directed by reviews of materials from professional journals including *Booklist*, *Choice*, *Library Journal*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education,* usage statistics of segments of the collection, recommendations of discipline faculty made through their area leads, demand for materials in response to student assignments, requests by individual professors in consultation with the LRC director during Title V curriculum review discussions, and discussion with discipline faculty during the process of developing library orientations. The Merced campus library houses and circulates instructor reserve materials that include textbooks and class materials produced by professors. All instructor materials are provided by the professors themselves or donated by instructional areas. The library does not have a budget to purchase instructor reserve textbooks. All instructor reserve materials are given records in the automated library system so that students can determine if the library has a particular textbook or other instructor reserve material for their use before they make the trip to the library.

A recent large donation from the estate of Dr. Federico Rojas of music CDs from around the

world has greatly enhanced the audio music collection of the library. More than 1,300 music CDs are available to students to check out and another 6,000 CDs are in queue to be processed and catalogued (**IIC.10**).

The Los Banos Campus library houses print collections of 10,534 book titles and 23 magazine titles with small back files due to limited space (**IIC10**). The average age of books at the Los Banos Campus library is similar to the average age of books at the Merced campus. The Los Banos Campus has no separately identified book budget. In 2008-2009, the Los Banos Campus library added 746 volumes (**IIC.14**). The library shelving is full and titles have to be removed to shelve new additions to the collection. The library's current periodicals budget has less than half of the funding needed to support its current periodical subscriptions. The difference between the price of Los Banos Campus library subscriptions and the budget for them has been made up from state instructional equipment dollars, which have been eliminated from the 2009-2010 California state budget (**IIC.15**).

The Los Banos Campus library also houses and circulates a textbook reserve collection. The majority of the collection is provided with funds from a $100,000 gift from Mrs. Jan Falasco, allowing the library to purchase one copy of the most used textbooks at the campus as chosen by the library media technician. These reserve textbooks are entered into the automated library system by title. This provides students the ability to find out if the library owns a copy of a textbook by searching its title, but not by searching through course or instructor. Students must visit the library in person to see if a text is available. The books are checked out by hand by having the student write his name on the check out card in the book.

Merced College has purchased 23,191 electronic books as part of the Council of Chief Librarians/Community College League Consortium. These are available to students regardless of their location via the college Portal (**IIC.10**). Merced College subscribes to several online databases using Technology and Telecommunications Infrastructure Program (TTIP) funds and state instructional equipment dollars through 2009-2010, which again have been deleted from the state budget. The databases are available to students regardless of their location via the Portal. One-time funding for the current online databases and full text services has been provided in the 2009-2010 Merced College budget.

Library Services—Cultural Events and Displays

The Merced campus library has display spaces for cultural and literary materials on both the main and top floors. The displays are used to highlight college and community events. Displays have included reflections on art around the world and celebrations of Hispanic Heritage Month and African American History Month. In fall 2008, the display cases were used to highlight the service of veterans from the Merced community. In fall 2009, the cases were used to focus attention on Japanese American Heritage. In conjunction with that display, a panel discussion on the area's Japanese-Americans and their experience in World War II internment camps was led by a local scholar with community panel members. Other literary and cultural events have also been held in the library including a poetry reading with Central California poets, a panel discussion on Hmong culture, and a musical program by the Merced College Chorale (**IIC.16**).

Library Services—Automated Library System

A fourth change to the library was the move of the SIRSI Automated Library System into sole possession and responsibility of Merced College. In summer 2008, the College ended its Joint Automated Library System Agreement with Merced County. For the length of that agreement, the county's Information Technology Department provided technical support for the SIRSI Automated Library System (ALS) server and SIRSI library software. The agreement included year-round SIRSI software management support provided by the Merced County library and IT staff. This support was critical during times when the Merced College faculty librarian in charge of SIRSI system administration was off-contract, between semesters, or off work during summer break. Merced College now owns, operates and maintains the server and SIRSI software year round. The SIRSI Automated Library System serves both the Merced and Los Banos Campus libraries and provides information about library resources to students wherever they can access the Internet. The College did not add staff to support this effort or provide year-round system management. Current system administrative responsibility remains with a faculty librarian on a 175 day contract. A significant problem arose over summer 2009 when the entire system was updated to a new version and LRC staff needed training on the new software client version customized to local needs. Audio Visual staff, and in particular the LRC technical manager, had to spend numerous hours resolving technical issues that arose after the upgrade. Another critical incident occurred in October 2009 when the SIRSI server experienced critical drive failures and the entire automated library system, including the online catalog, was down for eight days. Lack of support for the ALS continues to create challenges in providing ongoing services to students and faculty (**IIC.01**).

Library Services—Summary

The LRC is committed to the program review process and conducts program review on a sustainable and continuous basis. The following is a comprehensive list of library services taken from the LRC's 2009 Program Review (**IIC.01**):

- Selecting, purchasing, cataloguing, processing, housing, and circulating instructionally related materials and media to support College curriculum while providing for the intellectual needs of the students

- Providing accurate and timely information on library and audio visual holdings through the SIRSI automated library system database and online public catalog

- Providing access to and instruction on a wide variety of print resources and online databases

- Preparing and providing library orientations specifically designed to meet the instructional needs of the professors and their students

- Providing discipline expertise and consultation on information literacy

- Providing reference assistance and services to students in support of their instructional assignments

- Providing reference and research support for professors

- Providing support to professors by placing and circulating their instructional materials on instructor reserve for student use

- Providing support to the District by maintaining a historical record of newspaper information on the College and by maintaining a small archive of college publications

- Providing students a place to study both individually and in groups

- Providing students with copying facilities for reserve and reference items

- Providing viewing and printing capability on historical issues of the Merced Sun Star, the New York Times, and several historical magazine titles stored on microfilm

- Providing orientations and staff development training on information literacy for professors

- Providing access to free and appropriate Internet search engines and websites that are relevant to college curriculum

- Creating handouts to promote and make Library services more widely known throughout the District

- Providing instructional videos for professor and student use on selected topics relevant to finding library and institutional resources. Examples include: "How to find a reserve book" and "How to access the Merced College portal."

Descriptive Summary—Learning Support Services

The College's *open computer lab* provides computer access for Microsoft Office programs, various specialty course-based software and access to Blackboard and Respondus software for students enrolled in distance education courses. The computer lab is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. (**IIC.17**). The Merced Campus lab has been reduced in size and hours for the 2009-2010 academic year compared with previous years (**IIC.18**). From 2004 to 2009, the computer lab was located in the Bizzini Interdisciplinary Academic Center, providing access to 160 computers. This lab space was required to house the revised English labs for the reading and writing classes for the 2009-10 school year so the computer lab was moved to a smaller facility, which is now located in the Communication Building, providing 60 computers for student use. Hours were reduced two hours a day, from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. to 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Los Banos Campus open computer lab provides computers for student use. It is open Monday through Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., one evening per week from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., and from noon to 3 p.m. on Friday.

In a recent survey of students, 34 percent did not have a computer at home while 45 percent did not have Internet access at home, with 93 percent needing a computer for coursework and 96 percent needing Internet access. Thus the computer lab plays a vital role in serving the educational needs of the students (**IIC.19**) (**IIC.20**).

The Tutorial Center provides tutoring services for students, addressing basic skills in reading, writing, mathematics and English as a Second Language, as well as learning skills and study skills which are necessary for students to succeed in college level work. Tutors are required to have an A or B for coursework they are tutoring, a letter of recommendation from a faculty member, as well as an interview with the dean of Basic Skills. Workshops are held regularly for the tutors on topics such a *How to Tutor, Tutoring Across Cultures*, and *Math and English Tutoring Tips*. Located in the Communication Building on the Merced campus, the Tutorial Center is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (**IIC.17**). All tutors participate in TUTR 35 class when first hired. Tutors are supervised by faculty on duty in the Tutorial Center and receive regular evaluations. Students using tutorial services are enrolled in TUT 106 (**IIC.21**).

The Los Banos Campus maintains a Tutorial Center under the direction of a 19-hour staff person. Hours are adjusted to meet the needs of students requiring tutoring. In addition, the Los Banos Campus maintains a limited math and English study hall using faculty office hours (**IIC.22**).

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) program began with a Title V Hispanic-Serving Institutions Cooperative Grant in 2004. The program was continued through the Carnegie/Hewlett Foundation Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education program (**IIC.23**). The SI program provides a peer who offers study sessions for target courses, teaches students how to read the text, how to study the subject, and generally assists the students in becoming stronger learners. Most SI sections have been in developmental English and math, with statistics, biology and critical thinking courses offered occasionally. Supplemental Instruction leaders also work several hours a week in the Tutorial Center (**IIC.24**) (**IIC.25**).

The Math Lab provides learning assistance in all levels of math. Faculty who staff the lab all meet the minimum discipline qualifications and can assist with any math course. A published faculty schedule is available to students who may use the lab to speak with their instructor or get a different instructor to explain the problems. The Math Lab has reduced hours for fall 2009 based on assessment of the use (**IIC.26**).

Hours of Operation (Fall 2009)	
Monday – Thursday	8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Friday	8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The EOPS tutorial program was available to EOPS students enrolled in developmental level courses. This program was closed and students will be served in the Tutorial Center beginning in the Spring 2010 semester (**IIC.27**). The severe budget cuts to EOPS in 2009-2010 required a reevaluation of the program's priorities and a reorganization of the tutoring program for EOPS students, which were supported by the Student Success Committee. This fit within the centralized service model the committee included in its 5 Year Plan (**IIC.28**) and resulted in EOPS joining the existing Tutorial Center. EOPS continues to monitor its student data.

Study Central offers faculty tutoring on multiple subjects in the Student Union Building and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Instructors offer specialized assistance depending upon their discipline and students can ask for assistance on any topic. Faculty

with expertise in foreign languages, communication, math, psychology, research, nutrition, agricultural science, among others disciplines are available. The Writing Center is no longer specifically identified within the Study Central and Tutorial Centers. Student tutors are trained on techniques in tutoring for writing. Study Central was closed for fall 2009 and reopened in spring 2010 using Student Success funding (**IIC.29**).

Self Evaluation—Library

The Merced College library routinely assesses its programs and services using SLOs, faculty input, faculty and student surveys, and comprehensive Program Review (**IIC.30**). The library actively seeks out student and faculty opinion about library services as part of the program review process.

Surveys were sent to the faculty via college email, as well as to adjunct faculty in printed forms placed in their mail boxes. Student surveys were distributed in the library, cafeteria, classrooms (vocational, transfer, and developmental courses), and to students in the quad. Comparing results from the 2009 Library Student Survey (Outside) with the same survey questions given in 2006 to students outside the library, a substantial increase occurred in the percentage of students indicating familiarity with library services—from 60 percent in 2006 to 85 percent in 2009. An even larger increase was seen in the number of students using library services—from 53 percent in 2006 to 85.8 percent in 2009 (**IIC.30**). Similar results were apparent when comparing students who took the survey outside the library with those who took the survey inside the library.

Merced College conducts regular ACT Student Evaluation Surveys. In surveys from 1998 (4.19 out of 5), 2002 (4.25 out of 5), and 2006 (4.35 out of 5), the library was ranked number one in student satisfaction among all college services. In the 2007 ACT survey, 84.8 percent of students responded that they were satisfied or very satisfied with library facilities and services. (**IIC.64**) This indicates that the library is successful in informing students about its services, offering students relevant services, and helping students achieve academic success.

Faculty members have also indicated that they are becoming increasingly familiar with library services. In the 2006 Library Faculty Survey, 71 percent of the faculty was familiar with the services compared with 90.9 percent in 2009. The percentage of faculty members who have referred students to the library has risen from 70 percent to 96 percent. The percentage of faculty who indicate that they believe the library facilitates student success has risen from an average rate 3.58 of to 4.36 out of a top ranking of 5 (**IIC.30**). The conclusions drawn from these results are that the library successfully informs professors about library services and materials that support their curriculum, and that as a result of student usage, professors perceive the library to be a factor in student success.

The new Merced campus library has proven to be a valuable student asset and has experienced a significant increase in visitors. As measured by the door counter, the number of users has increased 30 percent, from 215,204 in 2007-2008 to 280,774 in 2008-2009 (**IIC.30**). The additional computers in the library, made possible by funding for the new facility and additional space, continue to be used heavily. As a measure of student use, the computers had 19,356 logins in fall 2008 and 33,215 logins in spring 2009 (**IIC.31**) (**IIC.32**). In fall 2009, the system for checking out the computers changed. The measure for student use is accomplished now by com-

puter passes checked out at the circulation desks. In fall 2009, the number of computer passes checked out was 29,221 (**IIC.33**). Several library strengths were identified in the fall 2009 LRC Program Review and include

- Managerial and classified staff and faculty who have years of experience working in the library

- Managerial and classified staff and faculty with high work and ethical standards

- Classified staff trained and cross-trained to support all areas of the LRC

- Commitment to timely and efficient service to professors, students, and the campus community

- Collaborative efforts on the part of faculty librarians to work with other discipline faculty in meeting the needs of students

- Managerial and classified staff and faculty who participate in and support campus and community projects

- Accessible online databases (through 2009-2010), an e-library of over 21,000 e-books, and instructionally appropriate web resources

- A well-organized and accessible collection of materials

- Library spaces that accommodate the needs of students for individual and collaborative study spaces

- A plan of service based on measurable SLOs that supports the institution's instructional processes and institutional SLOs

- A functioning program review cycle that includes substantive dialogue, assessment, and willingness to change.

The LRC 2009 Program Review identified several library areas in need of improvement, including

- **Support for Online Instruction**—Support for online instruction and remote students including students at off-campus centers without access to an academic library. This concern was listed in the 2004 Accreditation Response. The library does not have ongoing funding for online resources for the distance education curriculum currently being offered by the college or for curriculum offered at off-campus centers that are not near an academic library. In addition, more academic and career-technical databases should be added to support the changing and growing curriculum needs.

- **The Book Collection**—The 2004 Accreditation Response indicated that the College's book collection was lacking in content, depth, and diversity to meet the needs of the institution's curriculum and SLOs. The book budget has not been sufficient to make the changes suggested by this response.

- **Systems Management**—The SIRSI automated library system is now housed on campus

and is the sole responsibility of Merced College, yet no additional systems management staff have been funded to provide year-round support of the functions of the complex software.

- **Staffing**—As witnessed in the past five semesters, there is not sufficient staff to meet the circulation and reserve text book needs of the students at the circulation desk on the first floor of the library. Also, additional library media technician staffing is needed to assist disabled students with special adaptive technology (to replace the unfunded DSS accessibility technician position).

- **Hours of operation**—Hours of operation are considered insufficient by numerous constituent groups. At a minimum, the library needs to have sufficient funding for faculty and staff to be open Friday afternoons and Saturdays, and throughout the summer session.

- **Communication with Faculty and Students**—Constituent groups mentioned that there was a need for the library to provide more information on its services and collections.

- **Faculty librarian for Los Banos Campus**—A faculty librarian is needed to support students and professors as well as the information literacy curriculum components for the Los Banos Campus. Availability of faculty librarians at the campus has been made possible by cobbling together funds from the main campus and from the Los Banos adjunct library faculty account. It is difficult to find qualified faculty who are willing to travel to Los Banos at adjunct wages and it is expensive to provide transportation for full-time faculty to go on a daily basis. Given the requirement of the English curriculum for information literacy and library literacy and of the Accreditation Standard for providing information literacy to students, a full-time faculty librarian is needed in Los Banos.

Because of the differences in student population and facilities, library services at the Los Banos Campus and at off-campus centers are fewer than the library services made available to students and faculty at the Merced campus. The Los Banos Campus library itself is too small to accommodate a class of students in addition to students using the library to study. The shelving is inadequate to support additions to update or enhance the collection. There is no ongoing separately identified budget for purchase of books or media for the library and its ongoing periodical budget represents less than half of what the current print periodicals collection costs (**IIC.15**). Classified library staff job descriptions (positions which do not require college degrees) include giving orientation lectures and informing students of resources which are faculty librarian responsibilities at the Merced campus (**IIC.04**). The library is open more than 50 hours per week, yet has only 18 hours of faculty librarian time (36 percent of the hours open) to assist the more than 1,000 students, 15 full-time faculty, and more than 40 adjunct faculty needing reference service, library instruction, and research to meet the needs of recently revised English course outlines and other course outlines.

Ongoing funding to support online databases critical to the curriculum, as well as for students at off-campus centers and remote locations, was added to the Merced College general fund budget through the program review/master planning process in fall 2009 to become effective in the 2010-2011 budget. The Academic Senate passed a resolution calling for one-time dollars to fund

these crucial sources for the 2009-2010 year (**IIC.34**). One-time funding was provided in 2009-2010 to fill in the gap left by state elimination of TTIP and SIE funding.

The Merced campus library's open hours are not sufficient to meet the needs of students as identified in student and faculty surveys (**IIC.35**) (**IIC.36**) (**IIC.37**). Academic Senate Resolution 11-08 called for more hours during the fall and spring semester as well as the summer session (**IIC.34**).

Self Evaluation—Learning Support Services

Learning support services are available to students at the Merced and Los Banos campuses. Students working online or at off-campus centers must travel to avail themselves of these services. There is no online tutorial support or online math assistance.

The College has extensively planned for learning support services beginning with the LINC Committee, now known as the Student Success Committee. The committee has submitted five-year plans as part of the College's planning process (**IIC.28**). The College has received two major grants in support of these plans to offer services sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings (**IIC.38**). The dilemma is the reduction of funding for Student Success efforts, which were to directly fund these programs.

CCESSE survey results found that students who used the computer lab were mainly satisfied, with 68 percent returning "very" or "somewhat" scores. Fifty-eight percent of students also ranked the computer labs as being very important and 27 percent indicated that the labs were "somewhat important." The skills labs were also "very important" (49 percent) or "somewhat" important (31 percent) to students with 60 percent of those using the service being "satisfied." A recent survey of students found that 75.7 percent of students either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement "The student computer labs meet student learning needs" on the Merced College campus.

Tutoring services were not ranked high in satisfaction (15 percent "very" and 26 percent "somewhat"), but the importance to students using the service was 44 percent "very" and 32 percent "somewhat" (CCSEE Survey). Faculty members working in the Tutorial Center are currently developing a new model of tutorial services to incorporate the research findings of grant programs such as the SSPIRE Study Central and the Writing Center and Carnegie Supplemental Instruction program (**IIC.39**) (**IIC.40**).

Planning Agenda

- Advocate for additional staff, services, and materials through the master planning process using program review and assessment of student learning outcomes.

- Increase faculty librarian availability in order to provide similar services to off-campus students and faculty.

- Complete the program review process for learning support services.

IIC.1.A.

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

Descriptive Summary—Library

Selection of materials and collection development follows the District Library Materials Selection Policy and the choices of which materials to purchase are informed by the following: recommendations of discipline faculty made through their area leads, requests by individual professors in consultation with the LRC director during Title V curriculum review, discussion with discipline faculty during the process of developing library orientations, use of segments of the collection, demand for materials in response to student assignments, and reviews from professional journals including Booklist, Library Journal, and the Chronicle of Higher Education (**IIC.13**). As a part of the Title V Curriculum Review Process between 2005 and 2009, the LRC director discussed requirements for library materials and services for each course outline of record with discipline faculty to ensure appropriate resources were available (97 courses were reviewed in this way in 2008-2009 alone) (**IIC.41**). With the adoption of Curricunet, this step is no longer required by the Curriculum Committee.

Requests from professors through their area leads (formerly division chairs) have always been part of the process of collection development and selection of materials in every year that state instructional equipment and materials money has been available. In addition, faculty librarians have worked with discipline professors, most notably Allied Health professors, to ensure the materials used by their students represent current information.

Library staff completed an inventory of the holdings at both the Merced and Los Banos campus libraries in 2009. Through this inventory, staff members were able to identify areas where materials had been stolen or lost. Because the Los Banos Campus library has very limited space available for books, materials are checked against the automated library system records to identify which items have not been used for extensive periods of time. An effort is underway to make the small collection at the Los Banos Campus more responsive to the needs of professors and students campus by making space available for new titles that match the curriculum currently being taught.

Merced College students and professors who have access to the Internet, regardless of location, can use 23,191full-text e-books, and multiple journal, newspaper, encyclopedia and magazine databases including: EbscoHOST, SIRS, LexisNexis, Ethnic Newswatch, Newsbank, Issues and Controversies on File, CountryWatch, Encyclopedia Britannica, and Netlibrary through the Merced College Portal. All of the online databases and subscription resources were funded with state funds (TTIP and State Instructional Equipment) that have been cut from the state budget. Ongoing funding to support online databases critical to the curriculum was added to the College's general fund budget through the program review/master planning process in fall 2009 to be included in the 2010-2011 budget. One time funding was provided in 2009-2010 to fill the gap left by state elimination of TTIP and SIE funding.

Self Evaluation

Library

Faculty librarians and the LRC director take affirmative steps to evaluate and assess library collections; evaluating data on use of segments of the collection available through the SIRSI automated Library and information. They also review information on age and size of segments of the collection provided through OCLC WorldCat collection development analysis. After identifying and evaluating practices to improve collection development, successful efforts continue to be made to evaluate the quality, quantity, usefulness, and currency of the library collection in addition to seeking out the opinions and curriculum needs of the discipline faculty.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Library

In fall 2000, the District adopted, as found in the 2009-2010 Merced College Catalog, (**IIC.65, p. 33**) the following information competencies as part of a Computer and Information Literacy requirement for graduation. Students must:

- Understand the difference between information and knowledge.

- Understand the links among information centers and the access points available through technology and reference sources.

- Understand the basic structure of electronic databases and the strategies used to access them.

- Recognize the different levels, types, and formats of information including but not limited to primary vs. secondary, and popular vs. scholarly.

These information competencies were based on Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) draft guidelines and recommendations at the time of adoption. These competencies are published in every issue of the college catalog and class schedule. The catalog includes a chart delineating which approved courses or combination of courses enable the student to meet the requirement. Courses meeting one or more of the required competencies must have those competencies included in the SLOs or objectives of the course outline of record that is approved by the Curriculum Committee.

The institution currently provides instruction for users of library services in four basic ways. First, it is provided at the course level. For example, two sections of LRNR 30—*Information Competency in the Electronic Age* were offered at the Merced campus during the fall 2009 semester

and two sections are in the class schedule for the spring 2010 semester (**IIC.66a-d**). This is the typical pattern of classes for the Merced campus. A single LRNR 30 section was taught once in spring 2009 at the Los Banos Campus, but the section was not continued due to state budget cuts. All of the institutionally adopted information competencies are embedded in the current LRNR 30 course outline of record. Successful completion of the course certifies adequate student knowledge of the competencies. In addition, the information competencies are embedded in the course SLO. This assures measurement and ongoing evaluation of the teaching of information competency skills (**IIC.42**). SLO assessment reports are completed at least once a year for the course.

The second method of providing ongoing instruction is via library orientations taught by faculty librarians. While these orientations are often customized to meet the curricular needs of specific courses, information competency skills have become an integral component of every session (**IIC.43**). In 2007-2008, 3,696 students representing 140 class sections attended a library orientation session. In 2008-2009, those numbers increased to 4,315 students representing 164 class sections (**IIC.3**). The College's orientation sessions are subjected to the same SLO assessment process as the individual course offerings. Currently, all English classes are evaluated by cognitively tiered pre- and post- tests to more accurately determine knowledge gains regarding information competencies unbiased by variances in achievement levels. Separate tests are used for English 84, English A, and English 1A students. Library reference assistance by faculty librarians is a third conduit for imparting information competency skills. Substantive individual student research inquiries are used as "teaching moments" to enhance student comprehension of the competencies. This interactive process is also subject to the aforementioned SLO assessment reports and evaluated at least annually using point of service surveys (**IIC.44**).

Lastly, the library offers periodic orientation workshops for faculty involving information competency principles which in theory will be transferred to students. These workshops have been held once a year since 2000 either as part of the regularly scheduled flex activities on campus or through library-sponsored events. The most recent workshop was held August 13, 2009 and covered the use of online databases, accessing library and AV support services, and use of Web 2.0 applications (**IIC.45**).

Learning Support Services

The competencies for the learning support services do not include information competency directly. EDU 112A "Skills Acquisition for Student Success – General" is the noncredit course supported by the computer lab. SLOs for that course are directed at study skills and direct use of a computer, rather than information competency higher level cognitive skills. The Tutorial program supports the information competency outcomes only as they directly pertain to the course being supported. For example, a student seeking assistance in AGBS 18 would receive assistance in those outcomes.

Self Evaluation

Library

Evaluation of information competency skills developed through instruction provided to library users is conducted on an ongoing basis. Currently, the three-unit course LRNR 30—*Information*

Competency in the Electronic Age, the library orientations, and the individual instruction provided by faculty librarians at the reference desk are all evaluated each semester. Workshops are evaluated at the time of presentation.

LRNR 30 is one of the few courses that meet all the information competency requirements for graduation. SLOs for this course have been identified, measured, assessed, and revised accordingly since 2005. In fall 2008, the College developed a formal reporting mechanism, the Course Level Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report, which is now used by the library faculty to assess not only LRNR 30, but library orientations and reference desk instruction as well. The most recently completed LRNR 30 report reveals mixed results (**IIC.42**). Information competency in this course is measured in two ways, through performance in a Capstone project and completion of weekly essays. The Capstone project involves compiling an extensive annotated bibliography that exhibits a variety of information competency skills. Weekly essays are designed to allow the student to demonstrate familiarity with the same skills. The benchmark of these assignments was set at 70 percent of students successfully completing the Capstone project and 85 percent of students successfully completing four of the five assigned essays. In Section 1 of LRNR 30, 76 percent passed the Capstone and 72 percent passed the essay portion. Section 2 had extremely poor results with 55 percent passing the Capstone and 58 percent passing the essay portion (**IIC.42**). While a variety of factors were identified as possible causes for the overall poor performance and the discrepancy between sections, the primary causes were thought to involve a lack of sufficient prerequisites and/or co-requisites, and placement of a large number of athletes in one section who were forced to miss substantial class time because of athletic commitments.

Evaluation of library orientation instruction regarding information competency has also been conducted by library faculty for several years and the first formal assessment was completed in fall 2008. This report revealed that there was some improvement on post-test scores vs. pre-test scores, demonstrating increased knowledge of information competency elements. Pre-test scores had an overall average of 4.1 (out of a possible 6) and post-test scores averaged 4.88, an average increase of 19 percent. However, the report also reflected that the pre- and post-test evaluation instrument, which had been previously refined for content regarding accurate assessment of instruction of information competency skills, was reflecting a bias based on the achievement level of the English course taking the test. English 84 courses averaged 3.275 on the pre-test, less than the English A courses (4.29), which in turn were scoring, on average, less than the English 1A courses (4.66) (**IIC.46**) (**IIC.47**). It was theorized that the scores were being compromised by the one-test-fits-all approach. The orientations and tests have since been tiered on three cognitive levels to attempt to remove any bias resulting from individual weaknesses based on vocabulary or reading level. The new test results will be evaluated at the end of the fall 2009 semester (**IIC.48**) (**IIC.49**) (**IIC.50**).

Instructive interactions at the reference desk conducted by faculty librarians are a third way in which information competency is imparted to students. These interactions are also subjected to the formal assessment process. In a typical reference situation, students will inquire as to how to locate information on a given subject. The faculty librarian uses this opportunity to talk about the different types and formats of information, the strategies to access electronic databases, and key access points to and among information centers. To determine the effectiveness of

this one-to-one instruction, students are asked to complete anonymous reference surveys rating their experience. Students are asked to evaluate whether they were able to formulate a question that reflected their exact needs, how helpful they found print and electronic resources, and whether the faculty librarian was helpful during the process. The spring 2009 reference surveys revealed that 86 percent "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that they were able to formulate a question that accurately reflected their needs, 97 percent "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that they found print or electronic resources to help with their assignments, and 97 percent "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that the faculty librarian was helpful during the research process (**IIC.44**).

The preceding evaluative data pertain only to the Merced campus library. Similar data collection and assessment efforts have recently been initiated at the Los Banos Campus. However, the limited availability and turnover of faculty librarians, who are frequently adjunct, has made the consistent collection of meaningful data difficult. Sample sizes are often small and not uniformly obtained as orientations or reference services are not all conducted by faculty librarians.

The results of these assessment reports and surveys indicate that the College takes very seriously its duty to provide ongoing instruction for library users so that they have ample opportunity to develop information competency skills. Providing library faculty contact on multiple levels, making information competency skills the focus of all instructional opportunities, and constant measurement and evaluation of these sessions are evidence of this commitment. While there is work to be done to meet benchmarks in the LRNR 30 course and refining the library orientation evaluation instruments, adherence to the SLO process should ensure progress in these areas. Additionally there is work to be done to provide increased faculty librarian availability at the Los Banos Campus. The programs currently in place are considered to be effective in meeting the goal of Standard II.C.1.b concerning the library at the Merced campus.

Learning Support Services

The learning support services do not assess the information competency skills because, as described above, they are not directly appropriate to the goals of those areas.

Planning Agenda

Library

- Advocate for resources to provide a similar level of ongoing instruction for users of library services to all students regardless of location.

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

Descriptive Summary

The College greatly improved physical access to library and audiovisual services on the Merced campus with the opening of the new Learning Resources Center (LRC) in February 2007. This

new building tripled the shelving space for the book collection, created more student study space, allowed for more library instruction within the building, and added media viewers for student use, more study rooms, meeting rooms, and computers for database access. The building occupies 53,000 assignable feet dedicated to library and audio-visual services compared with less than 25,000 assignable square feet in the former LRC (**IIC.06**) (**IIC.07**). The library hours were not increased with the new building. However, improved access for disabled individuals and individuals who had difficulty using stairs was facilitated with the design of the building. The information and circulation desks, as well as the signage, doorways, bathrooms, and furniture meet ADA requirements.

The Merced campus library is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. to noon during the regular semesters. The library is not open during non-instructional days, weekends, or holidays. Faculty librarians are available 53 of the 56 hours the library is open. Library hours have been very limited during summer school because there is no ongoing funding for faculty librarians, student assistants, and the extension of classified library staff contracts to include summer months. The challenge in funding additional library hours for summer with one-time money is exacerbated by summer school extending over two different fiscal years. One-time funding set aside in the fiscal year ending in June does not cover the July summer school days which fall at the beginning of the next fiscal year. Summer hours in 2009 were Monday and Tuesday 1 to 5 p.m. and Wednesday and Thursday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Reference services, library orientations, and tours were not available to students during summer school (with the exception of four days) due to lack of funding for a faculty reference librarian.

The Los Banos Campus moved to its new location with new facilities in 2007. The new library facility slightly increased the student space from the former campus (from 1,980 square feet to 2,342 square feet) (**IIC.09**) (**IIC.08**) with one third of the increase dedicated to the campus bookstore. The new library did not provide for increased access to library and audiovisual services. The Los Banos Campus library is open Monday through Thursday 8:45 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Friday 8:45 a.m. to noon during regular semesters. It is not open during non-instructional days, weekends, or holidays. The Los Banos Campus library has no full-time faculty librarian and only 18 hours of faculty reference librarian assistance during the week in regular semesters. It has very limited open hours during summer school.

Students on campus, online, or at remote locations are able to access library databases using the student portal (**IIC.67**). Students with Internet access have more than 23,191 full text books, multiple journal, newspaper, encyclopedia and magazine databases available to them at all times. EbscoHOST, SIRS, LexisNexis, Ethnic Newswatch, Newsbank, Issues and Controversies on File, CountryWatch, Encyclopedia Britannica, Netlibrary and the Webcat library catalog are all provided through the Portal. However, all of the online databases and subscription resources were purchased with funding from the state (TTIP and State Instructional Equipment) that has been cut from the budget. The budget for 2009-2010 included funding on a one-time basis for the databases. The cost for online subscriptions and databases has been included in the ongoing general fund budget for Merced College beginning in the 2010-2011 budget year.

The Los Banos Campus has a tutorial program available for all students requesting the services. The campus also provides limited support to English and math students through the voluntary

study hall staffed with faculty using their office hours. In addition, the campus provides a computer lab during the day Monday through Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., one evening per week from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., and from noon until 3 p.m. on Friday.

Self Evaluation

Library

Merced College has improved physical access to library services for those students who are able to come to campus. The 2007 ACT Student Evaluation Survey ranked the library as the number one service used by students and 53.3 percent of the student population reported using the library. Statistics on use of the online databases for 2008-2009 show a total of 152,000 articles viewed (**IIC.10**). The online databases had only one-time funding in previous years, using TTIP and SIE dollars. The cost for online subscriptions and databases has been included in the College's ongoing general fund budget in the 2010-2011 budget year. The Merced campus library's open hours are not sufficient to meet the needs of students as indicated by student and faculty surveys. Academic Senate Resolution 11-08 called for more hours during the fall and spring semester as well as the summer session (**IIC.34**).

The Los Banos Campus library has faculty librarians available only 36 percent of its open hours, providing faculty and students at the Los Banos Campus significantly less access to faculty reference services and library instruction.

The Learning Resources Center has completed two program reviews (2006 and 2009) as part of a regular program review cycle. Requests for resources, including requests for funding for more hours, staffing and materials, have been developed from these reviews and have been included in the College's master planning process for three years. The Los Banos Campus library was not included in this program review because the classified staff and library activities at the Los Banos campus library are under the direction of the dean of the Los Banos campus.

Learning Support Services

Learning support services have suffered reductions this year due to reduced funding from the state for the Student Success Initiative. The tutorial center and computer lab have maintained their hours and staffing levels. However, the computer lab was moved to a new location in fall 2009 with 30 percent fewer student computers. The computer lab was ranked number three by students in the 2007 ACT Student Opinion Survey with 54.5 percent of the student population reporting use of the computer lab. The new location appears to not have diminished the support for the computer lab, with 75 percent of students surveyed on the Merced campus continuing to agree that the student computer labs meet student learning needs. (**IIC.68**)

The math lab reduced hours for the 2009-2010 year following an assessment of use (**IIC.26**). Study Central and the Writing Center on the Merced campus were not available for fall 2009 semester. They will be reopened in spring 2010 for limited hours with less staff. The programs are available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All are required to complete assessments through the review process. The Tutorial program was scheduled for program review for fall, 2009. The retirement of the director and the decision

to not hire a replacement for that position due to budget cuts has postponed that effort; however the position will be filled in fall 2010.

Planning Agenda

Library

- Conduct regular program reviews and advocate for resources based on findings from the reviews through the master planning and budgeting process.

Learning Support Services

- Complete program reviews or course level assessments for the various learning support areas or courses.

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

Descriptive Summary

The Merced campus library was designed to give optimal line of sight supervision to most areas of the library. In addition, all study and meeting rooms have windows so activities within can be observed by library staff. Additionally, a new state of the art 3M security system was installed to prevent unintentional theft. Two part-time library media technicians were added to audio visual staff to supervise the use of the student computer stations during most of the open hours of the library. There has been little vandalism of furniture or materials in the new library, which can be attributed in part to respect students have for the facility and in part to the vigilance of staff.

Funding for replacement and repair of technology, furniture, and service contracts, such as that for the 3M Security system, has come from one-time funding sources. As the facility is still relatively new, there has not been a large demand for replacement or repair of furniture to date. Use, oversight, and maintenance of library technology were evaluated in the Fall 2009 Learning Resources Center Program Review.

The LRC has begun to exhibit signs of extensive use and there is a lack of necessary maintenance. These signs include stains on the carpet, dirty walls, odorous bathrooms, and dust and cobwebs on stairs and bookshelves. There are three main reasons for the deterioration in facility maintenance. The first is the overwhelming use of the building, up over 30 percent in one year (the gate recorded 280,774 visitors in 2008-2009) (**IIC.03**). The second is that custodial staff was not increased despite a twofold increase in floor space in the new facility. The third is that students are now allowed to bring drinks into the library where previously they were not and there is no staff to clean spills on carpets or floors, or wipe down tables or counters during the day.

There has been a continuing problem with students acting out in an abusive and threatening manner to staff and other students. In 2008-2009 when funds were available, part-time security officers were employed to patrol the library at busy times. This funding is no longer available.

Other strategies have been employed to deal with this type of behavior, including monitoring computer stations (locations where much of the abusive activity occurred) and having staff walk through the building on a more regular basis. Merced College police are also quick to respond to any incidents in the library. In addition, homeless persons have begun using the library as a safe haven. They stay and sleep in the library and do laundry in the public bathrooms. While there have been no hostile encounters reported between students and homeless visitors, several students have reported being intimidated.

The Merced campus's open computer lab falls under the direction of the Area 4 dean, while the Los Banos Campus's open computer labs are under the dean of Los Banos Campus. Computers in those areas are maintained by instructional support technicians. Supervision is provided by the professor who staffs the lab with the help of work study students during the open hours. Software security and computer upgrades are provided by the Information Technology services department of the campus. At the Los Banos Campus, supervision is provided by the instructional support technician with the help of work study students.

Self Evaluation

Specific strategies, including designing the building for visibility and installing a new security system, have been employed and have decreased vandalism and theft. The 3M security system has not proven to be uniformly reliable and ongoing efforts have been undertaken between campus maintenance and the 3M company to establish more reliable detection.

The cost of the 3M security maintenance is in the 2009-2010 ongoing budget. One-time funds were used to refresh the student computer stations in summer 2009.

Library staff has taken a more active role in cleaning up non-hazardous spills and roping off areas from traffic where spills have taken place. In addition, library staff members have increased their participation in dusting shelves and doing other housekeeping chores to assist in the maintenance of the facility.

Abusive and threatening behaviors by students, which were a serious problem in 2008-2009, seem to be on the wane in 2009-2010. Although security personnel are no longer available due to cost-cutting, other strategies seem to be minimizing the more dangerous behaviors. These strategies included checking computer stations, having staff monitor the building and assess situations for police intervention. No strategies have been developed for homeless persons doing laundry in the bathrooms, which are located in the outer lobby and away from areas supervised by LRC staff.

The computer labs meet this standard. A lifecycle plan for replacement of computer equipment is part of the technology master plan; however, this plan has not been funded.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIC.1.e.

When the institution relies on or collaborates with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible, and utilized. The performance of these services is evaluated on a regular basis. The institution takes responsibility for and assures the reliability of all services provided either directly or through contractual arrangement.

Descriptive Summary

The Merced College Library is a contracted member of the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization. As a member, the library is one of 71,000 libraries in 112 countries and territories around the world using OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend and preserve library materials. The library uses OCLC services for cataloguing and interlibrary loan as well as analysis of the library's collections.

OCLC cataloguing services provide for both copy cataloguing and the framework within which the faculty librarians can do original cataloguing of materials. OCLC also has the ability to download all catalog records locally created into the library's automated library system.

Through OCLC, our primary sources for borrowing interlibrary loan materials are CSU Fresno, CSU Stanislaus, and University of the Pacific libraries, which are also members of OCLC.

Self Evaluation

While the library's need for interlibrary loan has declined with the increased availability of online databases, there is a persistent need from both professors and students for print resources. Professors use interlibrary loan for research and for additional resources for their students, and students use the resource to successfully meet curriculum requirements. There have been very few instances in the last 20 years when a specific requested resource has not been available through OCLC

The OCLC database of materials is sufficient for the majority of resources the College acquires and catalogs. Of particular note was the success faculty librarians had in matching the CD music titles donated by Dr. Rojas' estate to the records of sound recordings already catalogued through OCLC. In addition to the ability to copy catalog, the framework for cataloguing unique materials has proved sufficient for the library's needs.

Planning Agenda

- None

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

Descriptive Summary

Library

The library routinely assesses its programs and services using SLOs, faculty input, faculty and student surveys, and comprehensive program review. The LRC has undergone two comprehensive program reviews in 2006 and in 2009 as a part of a continuous three-year program review cycle.

Library faculty members teaching the LRC course LRNR 30 have been fully engaged in the SLO process for instructional programs. SLO assessment reports are completed at least once a year for the course. Faculty reference librarians have developed, assessed, reviewed, and reestablished SLOs for reference interactions with students and for library instruction sessions that take place as a part of library orientations. Orientation sessions are subjected to the same SLO assessment process as the individual course offerings. Currently, orientations for English classes are evaluated by cognitively tiered pre- and post-tests to more accurately determine knowledge gains regarding information competencies unbiased by variances in achievement levels. Separate tests are used for English 84, English A, and English 1A students (**IIC.47**) (**IIC.48**) (**IIC.49**) (**IIC.50**). The SLO assessment is made for every library orientation for English A and English 1A at the Merced campus library and for those orientations conducted by faculty librarians at the Los Banos Campus library.

Substantive individual student research inquiries are used as "teaching moments" to enhance student comprehension of the competencies. This interactive process is also subject to the aforementioned SLO assessment reports and evaluated at least annually using point of service surveys (**IIC.44**). LRC staff developed SLOs for library services in fall 2008 and collected data to assess them through the 2008-2009 year. The information and the process for collecting data as well as the SLOs themselves were reviewed and revised in fall 2009 (**IIC.01**). The library also collects and evaluates data for several annual reports including the California State Library Report and the California Community College Library Data Survey. The Los Banos Campus library was not included in the LRC Program Review because its operations and classified staff are under the supervision of the dean of the Los Banos Campus.

The library sought the opinion of students and faculty about library services during spring 2009 as part of the program review process. The faculty survey was sent to all faculty via email as well as to adjunct faculty (who often do not read college email) through printed surveys placed in their mail boxes. Student surveys were distributed in the library, in the cafeteria, in classrooms (vocational, transfer, and developmental courses), and in the quad. Examples of the questions asked and the resulting answers follow in the self evaluation portion of this standard.

Descriptive Summary

Learning Support Services

Learning support services at Merced College are varied. These include the computer lab, math lab, Tutorial Center, Supplemental Instruction, and the Los Banos Campus study hall and tutorial services. Each area has had a different procedure when dealing with SLO evaluation as most are under the direction of separate faculty or staff. In September 2005, the College applied

for a SSPIRE Program grant to establish a learning assistance center which would coordinate many of the efforts of learning support offered at the main campus (**IIC.51**). With grant funding, the first step in the planning process was with the establishment of Study Central and the Writing Center. Those programs are included in this self study.

The Tutorial Center at the Merced campus, with an enrollment of about 700 students per semester, was under the direction of a faculty coordinator until her retirement in spring 2009. The tutorial center evaluated the tutors' performance through evaluations completed by the students receiving assistance every semester. A comparison of the students who received tutoring assistance with grades in the target course was completed in the spring of 2009 (**IIC.52**). That data has not been formally assessed by the faculty or staff in the tutorial center at this time due to the freezing of the hiring for the replacement position for the tutorial center coordinator. Students are enrolled in a noncredit TUTR 106 course. All tutors are trained in the TUTR 35 course. Full-time faculty working in the tutorial center are beginning a dialogue on assessment, evaluation and planning with the assistance of the dean of English, Basic Skills & Child Development (**IIC.53**).

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) program was part of a SPECC grant from the Carnegie Foundation until 2008. Long-term goals were established for the SI programs in math and English, and those goals were evaluated every semester (**IIC.54**). One goal was to have the SI program become part of the campus process and not be simply a grant-funded effort. This goal was accomplished in the 2008-2009 school year. The SI instruction program continues under the direction of the dean of Student Success. The fall 2009 semester has seven classes receiving SI assistance in English, math and biology, and more are planned for the spring 2010 semester.

The math lab has a faculty coordinator. The lab offers support for all math students with no established course link as many discipline specific labs on campus provide. Students are able to come to the lab and work on any math problem at any level at any time. Students are enrolled in EDUC 112B as part of the use of the lab. Approximately 600 students attend the math lab each semester. There is a set faculty roster for available help but all faculty can provide math assistance.

The Los Banos Campus tutorial center is open by arrangement with the student needing tutoring. The center is supervised by a 19-hour staff member, supplemented with student tutors. Students are tutored on all topics offered at the Los Banos campus. The Los Banos Campus tutorial center has completed an assessment report every semester and uses that for sustainable continuous quality improvement (**IIC.22**). Los Banos Campus study hall is organized by English and math faculty. This study hall is an open faculty office hour to support the students enrolled in the target courses, and assessment is done as part of the target course assessment.

The computer lab is an open lab available to students for any computer-based need. Faculty members staffing the lab are hired as non-credit faculty in the EDU 112 series courses. SLO assessment for those students is done individually by faculty rather than as a class. For the fall 2009 semester the computer lab was moved from the Bizzini Interdisciplinary Academic Center to the Communications Building, reducing by more than half the number of computers available to students. This decision was made to support the changing English and reading curriculum for the lab courses, and the former computer lab space is now designated a reading and

writing lab for the English courses.

The Los Banos Campus computer lab is open for limited hours but provides the same services as the Merced campus lab. Word processing and Internet services are available to students. Students are assessed individually rather than the computer lab as a whole.

Study Central was part of a SSPIRE grant from 2006-2009. During the three years of service, focus groups and surveys allowed for a cycle of assessment, evaluation and change. Study Central's hours changed according to the evaluation as did staffing levels. In addition, the weekly workshops for students were adjusted every semester to better reflect the identified needs based on evaluations (**IIC.55**).

The Writing Center started in August 2005 under the SPECC grant and then moved to SSPIRE grant funding. Outcomes were determined for the center under both grants, and those outcomes were evaluated accordingly. Most of the students using the center were developmental students, with approximately 40 percent from non-developmental level courses. Editing strategies were the goals for most students using the service (**IIC.56**). EOPS tutorial services were offered on both the Merced and Los Banos campuses. Merced tutorial staff tutored students who were identified as needing the services. At the Los Banos Campus EOPS students were tutored in the campus tutoring center by an EOPS tutor. This service was suspended as of spring 2010 due to state budget cuts. EOPS students requiring tutorial assistance will receive help in the tutorial center on each campus.

Self Evaluation

Library

As part of the program review process, the library surveys students and faculty. In 2009 the same questions posed in 2006 were used for comparison purposes.

The following questions were asked of students outside the library in spring 2009:

I am familiar with services offered by the Library.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.0%	482
No	15.0%	85
answered question		567

I have used the services at the Library.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.8%	482
No	14.2%	80
answered question		562

The Library assists students in successfully completing their academic goals.		
Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree	3.85	552
Additional comments		0
	answered question	552

(IIC.35)

These same questions were asked of students while they were in the library in spring 2009.

I am familiar with services offered by the Library.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86.2%	137
No	13.8%	22
	answered question	159

I have used the services at the Library.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.4%	135
No	14.6%	23
	answered question	158

The Library assists students in successfully completing their academic goals.		
Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree	4.11	159
Additional comments		0
	answered question	159

(IIC.35)

In comparing these results with the same survey questions given in 2006 to students outside the library, a substantial increase was noted in the percentage of students who indicate that they are familiar with library services, from 60 percent in 2006 to 85 percent in 2009. There is an even larger increase in the number of students surveyed outside the library who indicate that they have used library services – from 53 percent in 2006 to 85.8 percent in 2009. The percentage of these students who thought the library assisted them in achieving their academic goals indicated a minor change from an average rank of 4 to 3.85 out of a top ranking of 5. Answers to the questions yielded similar results when comparing students who took the survey outside the library with those who took the survey inside the Library. The conclusions drawn include that

the library is successful in informing students about library services, offering students relevant services, and helping students achieve academic success.

These questions were asked of professors through print and online surveys in spring 2009.

Are you familiar with services offered by the Library?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	90.9%	90
No	9.1%	9
answered question		99

I have referred students to the Library.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.0%	95
No	4.0%	4
answered question		99

The Library facilitates student success.		
Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
1=strongly disagree,5=strongly agree	4.36	94
Comments		7
answered question		94

(**IIC.37**)

In comparing these results with the same survey questions given in 2006, the percentage of faculty who indicate that they are familiar with services offered by the library has risen from 71 percent to 90.9 percent. Faculty who indicate that they have referred students to the library has risen from 70 percent to 96 percent. Faculty who indicate that they believe the library facilitates student success has risen from an average rate 3.58 of to 4.36 out of a top ranking of 5.

In addition to surveys, the library developed SLOs mapped to institutional learning outcomes. Currently, the three-unit course, LRNR 30—*Information Competency in the Electronic Age*, the library orientations, and the individual instruction provided by faculty librarians at the Reference Desk are all evaluated each semester (**IIC.42**) (**IIC.51**) (**IIC.56**). Evaluative data pertain only to the Merced campus library while similar data collection and assessment efforts have recently been initiated at the Los Banos Campus. However, the limited availability and frequent turn-over of faculty librarians (frequently adjunct) has made the consistent collection of meaningful data difficult. Sample sizes are often small and not uniformly obtained as all orientations or and reference services are not conducted by faculty librarians.

A detailed description and evaluation of these processes are available in Standard IIC.1.B.

Demand for library services, technology, study and meeting rooms, and materials dramatically increased in 2008-2009. Use statistics document this increase. Here are illustrative examples:

	2007-2008	2008-09	Percentage Change
Door Count	207,478	280,774	35.3%
Circulation	31,045	41,974	35.2%
Use of Databases	132,916	204,384	53.8%
Orientations/Students	140/3,696	164/4,135	17.1%/11.9%

While less developed than instructional SLOs, SLOs for library services were developed by LRC staff. These outcomes were developed through dialogue among library staff members through-out spring 2008 and finalized at the LRC staff meeting on August 15, 2008 (**IIC.30**).

Institutional Student Learning Outcome	Expected Student Learning Outcome	Method for Evaluation	Number for 2008-2009
Cognition	Construct and present appropriate information to obtain a Library card	New Library card applications	2,984
Personal Growth	Demonstrate ethical and academic standards by returning borrowed materials	Returned materials as a percentage of all borrowed materials	99%
Cognition	Appraise and make best use of Library resources	Student surveys	85.8% use Library services
Personal Growth	Planning and implementing collaborative activities with use of meeting rooms	Use of student meeting rooms	14,374 uses

These outcomes and their measurements will be evaluated and refined by LRC staff prior to the spring 2010 semester. An annual evaluation process will be developed and implemented at that time

Learning Support Services

The Merced campus tutorial center conducted tutor and student evaluations. These have been correlated to SLOs in target courses, beginning spring 2009. The CCESSE Survey 2009 found that 15 percent of the students who used the service were very satisfied and 26 percent were somewhat satisfied. The importance of the service had 49 percent of respondents finding it very important and 31 percent somewhat important. Students receiving tutoring assistance are enrolled in TUT 106, a non-credit course. SLOs for this segment of the service have not been analyzed. The tutor training course TUTR 35 has been assessed as part of the sustainable continuous quality improvement cycle for course SLOs (**IIC.57**). The tutorial center had a retirement in spring 2009 and the replacement position was frozen with the current budget challenges. The dean of English, Basic Skills and Child Development has assumed responsibility for this area.

The Los Banos Campus tutorial center compiles a report every semester detailing the students who offered tutoring by subject, analyzing the workflow, assessing recommendations from the previous semester and offering recommendations for the following semester (**IIC.22**). The math lab has analyzed attendance data and adjusted lab hours to correlate with student use. A comparative analysis of student success in the target math course and use of the lab has not been done. There is an awareness of the need for SLO analysis for this lab. The math lab is funded as a noncredit course for which a rubric needs to be developed and assessed (**IIC.26**). Computer labs on both campuses have also analyzed attendance data and have adjusted their hours as well as the location of the lab on the Merced campus for 2009-2010. No correlation of student success in the noncredit course associated with lab use has been completed. Students are assessed individually by the professors in the computer lab. The CCSSEE survey did, however, rank the satisfaction and importance of access to the computer lab as very important (85 percent), satisfaction of the services at 73 percent and use of the computer lab at 63 percent. Additionally, the 2007 ACT Student Evaluation Survey ranked the computer lab as number three in satisfaction of services and was used by 54.5 percent of the student population surveyed.

Study Central, the Writing Center and Supplemental Instruction learning support services were grant funded for several years. As part of the grants, these areas were able to evaluate their success using research methodology. The results for SI determined that students who participated in the SI sessions had improved success rates in their learning outcomes. Study Central conducted research as part of the grant as well using the CCSSE survey, focus groups and surveys. Results determined that students believed they were more successful as a consequence of the learning support they received. According to the report from the funding agency:

- CCSSE data indicated that: Of all students, 13 percent were very satisfied with peer or other tutoring, compared with 17 percent of students in the national sample.

- The CCSSE data and internal survey and focus group data provided the Study Central coordinators with evidence that academic and social support services needed improvement at Merced. These data also suggested that Study Central might provide that improvement, especially because other data, such as information from the focus groups, had indicated that Study Central participants — both students and instructors — felt that Study Central and its sponsored workshops were beneficial. Yet these data fell short of showing if Study Central would lead to increased success of students at Merced — a concern that senior administrators raised with the Study Central coordinators.

- MDRC used data from Cal-PASS to analyze course success and persistence rates for a group of SSPIRE students who attempted developmental math or English during academic year 2007-2008 and shared the results with program coordinators at Merced. As Table 3.3 shows, members of the Study Central sample passed two "gatekeeper" developmental courses at higher rates than average: 78 percent of the sample passed the highest level of developmental English, compared with 54 percent of all students; 56 percent of the sample passed the highest level of developmental math, compared with 47 percent of all students.

- In addition, all of the students in the Study Central sample who attempted either

of these developmental courses in fall 2007 returned to Merced for the subsequent semester; this persistence rate is higher than the 73 percent of the comparison group who persisted from fall 2007 to spring 2008 (**IIC.56**).

Study Central and Writing Center programs were not funded for the fall 2009 semester because of budget cuts to the Student Success fund. Funds were found to open both programs for spring 2010. The Associated Student president was instrumental in advocating for the reopening of the service (**IIC.58**).

EOPS tutoring services has done expected student outcome assessments for 2007 and 2008. This assessment follows the student services SLO model. This assessment has identified several areas of concern and indicates a direction for planning and evaluation (**IIC.53**).

The Student Success Committee has a five-year plan for centralizing learning support services on the Merced campus. This plan was the basis for the Carnegie and SSPIRE grant applications (**IIC.28**) (**IIC.59**). With the retirement of the tutorial center's director in spring 2009, the position of Academic Center coordinator was developed to coordinate all of the learning support services. However, the position was frozen for the 2009-10 budget year.

Current budget challenges offer a chance to evaluate services and the way in which they are offered, and are forcing the campus to rethink its efforts. The first step will be to complete program reviews for the learning support service areas which have not completed them. The EOPS tutoring program is planning to merge with the current tutorial center at the Merced campus to provide services to EOPS students as well as other students in need of tutoring services (**IIC.60**).

Planning Agenda

Library

- See C1c response.

Learning Support Services

- Conduct a program review for Tutorial Center. Conduct course level SLO assessments for noncredit TUT and EDU series courses.

STANDARD IIC EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIC.01	LRC_Program_Review_FALL_09_Sec_I.doc
IIC.02	VPTechnology_OrganizationChart_2009.pdf
IIC.03	Library_Statistics_1994to2009_wgraphs.xlsx
IIC.04	LosBanosLibraryBookstoreClerksJobDescription.doc
IIC.05	Latham and Piro emails on Los Banos bookstore help.docx
IIC.06	New Library (LRC)_SpaceInventory.pdf
IIC.07	Old Library (Lesher)_SpaceInventory.pdf
IIC.08	Los Banos New Library_SpaceInventory.pdf
IIC.09	Los Banos Old Library_SpaceInventory.pdf
IIC.10	Merced_College_Library_Statistics-2008-09
IIC.11	Library_SIRSI_Average_Age_Nonfiction_September2009.docx
IIC.12	Library_SIRSI_Average_Age_fiction_September2009.docx
IIC.13	MercedCollege_BP4040.pdf
IIC.14	Merced College Library _Monthly_statistics-2008_2009.xls
IIC.15	LBCLibrary_PeriodicalSubscriptions_2009-2010.pdf
IIC.16	MercedCollegeLRC_Facebook_March-22-2010.docx
IIC.17	Merced CollegeComputerLabsWebpage_ 2009-10.mht
IIC.18	Merced CollegeComputerLabsWebpage_2008-09.mht
IIC.19	LearningResourcesCenter_ComputerLab_StudentSurveyOnline_Spring_2009.xls
IIC.20	LearningResourcesCenter_ComputerLab_StudentSurveyPrint_Spring_2009.xls
IIC.21	Notes from Meeting with Margie Glazier_2009-05.docx
IIC.22	LosBanos_TutorialReport_2006-2009.pdf
IIC.23	CarnegieHewlettFoundation_GrantApplication_2004-10-27.pdf
IIC.24	StudentSuccessCommittee_Notes_2009-08-31.docx
IIC.25	StudentSuccessCommittee_Notes_2010-02-01.docx
IIC.26	MathLabHourlyDistributions_2009-Fall.xlsx

IIC.27   StudentSuccessCommittee_Notes_2009-10-26.docx

IIC.28   Student Success Committe_Five Year Master Planning Form_2006.doc

IIC.29   Flatt, Susan_The Case for Study Central_2009-12.docx

IIC.30   LRC_Program_Review_FALL_09_Sec_II.doc

IIC.31   Library Computer

IIC.32   Library_ComputerUseTotals_-_Spring_09.xlsx

IIC.33   Computer Pass Student Study Rm Stats Fall 2009

IIC.34   Academic Senate Resolution 1108.pdf

IIC.35   Library_Program_Review_StudentInside_Survey_S09.xls

IIC.36   Library_Program_Review_StudentOutside_Survey_S09.xls

IIC.37   Library_Program_Review_faculty_Survey_F09.xls

IIC.38   StudentSuccessCommittee_Priorities_2009-04-27.docx

IIC.39   Student Success Committee_ Notes_2009-11-23.docx

IIC.40   StudentSuccessCommittee_ Notes_2010-02-01.docx

IIC.41   Title_5_reviewed_courses_from_2004_to_2009.pdf

IIC.42   LRC_ LRNR30 Course Level SLO Assessment Report_2008-12.doc

IIC.43   LRC_English 1A Library Orientation Powerpoint_2009-08-17.pptx

IIC.44   Library_ReferenceSurvey_Fall_2009.xlsx

IIC.45   Library_Workshops_2008-2009.pdf

IIC.46   Orientation Assessment SLO's_2008-Fall.xls

IIC.47   LRC_Orientation_SLOAssessmentReport_2008-12-11.doc

IIC.48   Library_PreandPostOrientationQuizENGL84_2009-Fall.doc

IIC.49   Library_PreandPostOrientationQuizENGLA_2009Fall Fall.doc

IIC.50   Library_PreandPostOrientationQuizENGL01A_2009-Fall.doc

IIC.51   MercedCollegeAcademicSuppCtr_SSPIREGrantApplication2005-09-23.pdf

IIC.52   EOPSTutorialCenter_ESO'sResultsofAssessment_2008.doc

IIC.53   StudentSuccessCommittee_Notes_2010-03-01.docx

IIC.54   SPECCReport_2005_ContinuationProposal_2006.pdf

Standard III
Resources

STANDARD III TEAM LEADERS

Mazie Brewington
ADMINISTRATION

Marie Bruley
FACULTY

Mike Cuchna
ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD III
Resources

The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.

IIIA. HUMAN RESOURCES

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human Resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

IIIA.1.

The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.

IIIA.1.a.
Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.

Descriptive Summary

The District's hiring policies form the basis for a careful recruitment and selection process to employee well-qualified personnel interested in student success. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for overseeing the process for hiring personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training and experience. The District recruits, selects and hires employees in the following categories:

- Faculty (both full-time and part-time)
- Non-class-room assignments such as counselors and librarians
- Academic administrators
- Managers
- Supervisors

- Classified staff

Each category listed above has specific regulations and procedures governing recruitment and selection.

Full Time Faculty Recruitment and Selection

The District philosophy states that, "faculty hiring procedures and guidelines are established to provide a college faculty composed of highly qualified people who are experts in their disciplines, who are skilled in teaching and serving the needs of a varied student populations, who can foster overall college effectiveness, and who are sensitive to and who represent the racial and cultural diversity of the adult population of the State of California."

Criteria and minimum qualifications for all faculty positions are established by the Board of Governors for California Community Colleges. Occasionally, departments require additional locally-determined minimum qualifications for specialized faculty positions. Applicants who hold degrees from non-U.S. institutions are required to go through the District's equivalency process to determine whether they have the qualifications equivalent to the statewide minimum qualifications for the specific discipline.

To be employed in a faculty position, the individual under consideration for employment must present proof of an appropriate degree from an institution accredited by a recognized accrediting agency or a degree from non-United States institutions certified as equivalent to degrees granted by accredited United States institutions.

The recruitment and selection process for full-time faculty positions is set forth in Board Policies 4308, Contract Faculty Hiring Criteria (under revision), BP 7120, Recruitment and Selection and Administrative Procedure AP 7211, Faculty Service Areas, Minimum Qualifications, and Equivalencies (**IIIA.01**) (**IIIA.02**) (**IIIA.03**).

The College has a well-defined prioritizing process for recommending full-time faculty positions to the college president to maintain the District's AB 1725 requirement. The Instructional Faculty Prioritizing Committee is composed of discipline faculty from each area, including Los Banos, the faculty senate president, and three instructional administrators.

Each fall semester in late October, the full-time faculty hiring prioritization process starts employing a list of established criteria supported by information and data from program reviews. It is used to develop a ranked list of faculty positions to be considered for recruitment (**IIIA.04**) (**IIIA.05**). The College's research department provides all data elements based on the established criteria. The process starts with discipline faculty completing a request form for a position and forwarding it to the area dean. Area deans meet with all faculty leads and coordinators to prioritize within their area. Thereafter, the district wide prioritizing committee receives all area prioritized lists for review. The process then requires discipline faculty to present the justification for their position to the committee over a two day period. The committee then makes recommendations to the vice president of Instruction.

A parallel process occurs when positions are requested for counselors through Student Services and for librarians through Information Technology. The positions eventually are reviewed by

the Educational Master Planning Committee. As the institution works toward linking planning to resource allocation, the 2010-2011 prioritization process will include two additional steps: 1) The Instructional Master Planning Committee (IMPC), Student Service Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) and Technology and Research Master Planning Committee (TRMPC) will hold meetings to review rankings for respective positions. These will be forwarded to the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC); and, 2) EMPC will review recommendations as part of its planning process. By mid-December, the EMPC submits an agreed-upon ranked list of new faculty positions to the college president for review and final approval.

In determining how many new faculty positions to fill from the list developed by the hiring committee and approved by the president, the District relies on the number of additional full-time faculty that must be hired to comply with the District's full-time faculty obligation and in good financial times anticipates "growth" positions to support selected programs.

Once a new or replacement faculty position has been approved, Human Resources works with the appropriate vice president, as well as at least one administrator or certificated manager from the area for which the position will be hired, to develop a job announcement and determine the best recruitment strategies to attract a large and diverse candidate pool. The job announcement identifies selection criteria that include knowledge of the subject matter to be taught and the potential to contribute to the College. At a minimum, all job announcements are listed on the District website and are submitted to the California Community College Registry. The District maintains an online application (download and complete) process that allows interested candidates to review information relevant to the job position as well as to submit an application (**IIIA.06a-c**).

An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Committee is established by the president in consultation with the Academic Senate regarding the faculty (instructors, counselors and librarians) membership of this committee. An EEO monitor is assigned to each committee and is expected to review the job description and announcement, review composition and procedures of the selection committee, and verify adequacy of the applicant pool. Trained monitors also observe the processes used by the selection committee.

The selection process begins with a Human Resources review of the application materials. This is followed by a review of application materials by an appointed committee. A separate selection committee is formed for each position. The selection committee consists of faculty members, educational administrators and an EEO monitor (non-voting member of the panel). Each member of the selection committee receives training on diversity sensitivity.

The selection committee determines which candidates are invited for an interview based on the consideration of multiple factors, including knowledge of subject matter and effective teaching skills. The same committee conducts the initial interviews and is encouraged to include a demonstration component in the interview process. After interviews are conducted, the selection committee submits to Human Resources a non-ranked list of finalists to be considered for final selection.

Finalists are interviewed by the president or designee and the chair of the selection committee. After the president or designee makes a selection, the individual's name is submitted to the Board of Trustees for employment.

Part-Time Faculty Hiring

All part-time faculty members must meet the minimum qualifications or establish an equivalency for the discipline they will be teaching. The process for recruitment and selection is conducted with District practices and procedures for employment of full-time faculty. Board policies 7120, recruitment and Selection, BP7211, Faculty Service Areas, Minimum Qualifications, and Equivalencies, and Administrative procedure AP7212, Part-Time faculty Screening (**IIIA.07**) apply to this category.

 As a matter of past practice, full-time faculty are offered all available sections first to fill each full-time faculty members' required load then on an overload basis up to 9 units. All remaining classes are then offered to part-time faculty.

Academic Administrators, Managers and Supervisors Hiring

Board Policy 4308 references the hiring of administrators, but other management and supervisory positions are not covered. The process that follows is what has traditionally been done as a past practice and has worked well for the institution. All requests to fill an academic administrator position or a classified management position are reviewed by the President's Cabinet in consultation with the Academic Senate. Historically, a Staff Planning Priorities Committee assisted with the prioritizing non-faculty positions, but this group became inactive as hiring was reduced. The request is vetted with respect to the need for the position as well as the financial resources available to support it. Academic administrators must meet the minimum qualifications for their position or establish an equivalency. In the event a position request is approved, Human Resources develops a recruitment plan in conjunction with the appropriate vice president or area administrator. The selection committee for academic administrators typically includes a diverse mix of administrators, managers/supervisors, faculty and classified staff. The president makes the final selection and then the individual's name is submitted to the Board of Trustees for employment. In the event that the position of president is being filled, the process/procedure in BP2431, CEO Selection, shall be followed for recruitment, selection and hiring (**IIIA.08**).

Classified Staff Hiring

Human Resources is responsible for the recruitment and selection of classified staff. The College does not have a written policy on hiring classified staff. However, Human Resources adheres to a legally sound recruitment and selection process well known by the campus. If a need arises for a new classified position, or if a current classified position becomes vacant, it is up to the department to request approval to fill the new or vacant position.

The President's Cabinet approves all classified positions to be filled. In determining whether to fill a position, the President's Cabinet takes into consideration the need for the position and the available financial resources. Positions are advertised at a minimum in appropriate newspapers or other periodicals and listing on the District's website takes place. Minimum requirements are established for each classification as well as the job duties to be performed.

When the District proposes recruiting for a new classification, the minimum requirements and the specific job duties are determined prior to actual recruitment and set forth in a formal job description. The selection process includes an initial screening of applications to determine if

the applicant possesses the minimum requirements for the position. The District also utilizes either a written test or job performance exam to further identify an adequate candidate pool.

Once a qualified applicant pool is developed, a selection committee is established for the specific position. The selection committee consists of appropriate administrators and/or managers/supervisors and classified staff. The selection committee is responsible for conducting interviews and forwarding a list of at least three qualified candidates to the appropriate vice president or designee for final selection. The name of the person selected is then forwarded to the Board of Trustees for employment.

Self Evaluation

The process for selection of full and part-time faculty, administrators, managers/supervisors and classified staff effectively results in the selection of highly qualified personnel. The District adheres to selection processes which are based on good personnel practices and which support the institution's stated mission and goals. The District's turnover rate is low and there are very few terminations, indicating a good match between employees' qualifications and their job responsibilities.

Using the Disciplines List established by the Faculty Senate in conjunction with faculty from each discipline, Human Resources and the hiring committees assure that criteria for selection of faculty includes knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed. Human Resources assures that the minimum qualifications listed on the position announcement are met before applications are forwarded to hiring committees. Instructional candidates invited to interview are required to perform a teaching demonstration on a selected topic, may complete a short written test, and also submit to an interview by a hiring committee. Counselor candidates demonstrate a counseling session. The hiring committee is chaired by a dean, and consists of a minimum of three faculty members (area lead, two other discipline faculty) recommended to the college president by the Faculty Senate president, an area administrator, and a monitor as outlined in 1994 *The Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan*. The finalists are interviewed by the president or designee, and the chair of the selection committee. After the president or designee makes a selection, the individual's name is submitted to the Board of Trustees for employment

Foreign faculty applicants must submit their degrees to various institutions (some of higher learning) that offer Education Records Evaluation Services to obtain a certification of educational equivalency. Applicants refer to the equivalency criteria that outline documents candidates need to submit.

There is generally a positive view of the hiring processes with the exception of the part-time faculty where the process has not been reviewed in a number of years. In response to this concern, the vice president of Instruction created a committee with cross representation of the campus community (chaired by the Academic Senate president) to review and make recommendations for an improved hiring process. The Academic Senate has also passed a resolution in support of this recommendation. The committee has begun to review and recommend a process for part-time faculty hiring that more closely mirrors the full-time faculty recruitment and selection processes. It is anticipated the committee will complete this work by the end of the spring 2010 semester.

Job descriptions for new full-time faculty positions and for academic administrators, managers and supervisors are generally developed for recruitment and selection purposes. The specific job duties for a full-time faculty member are set forth in the collective bargaining agreement between the District and the Merced College Faculty Association (MCFA) as outlined in Article X, Faculty Agreement and Workload (**IIIA.09**).

Human Resources, in cooperation with faculty, management, administration, and supervisors, announces criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel. These are clearly posted online with the CCC Registry, Higher Education Jobs.com, published in The Chronicle of Higher Education and appropriate discipline journals and/or websites after consultation with deans and vice presidents, and sent to select community colleges and universities as appropriate.

To assure that the hiring process is consistently applied, Human Resources appoints EEO monitors to oversee all selection committee hiring processes.

Most classified job descriptions are current and reflect the job duties and responsibilities required of staff. The Human Resources director is in the process of conducting a complete review of all job classifications and in the interim has made some recommended changes to several job descriptions based on reorganization needs, reclassifications and hybrid job duties and titles. A full review of all job descriptions will start next fall and should be completed by the end of 2010-2011 academic year.

Due to current budget constraints, the District instituted a hiring freeze in 2009 resulting in very few positions being filled for administrators, management, supervisory and classified staff members. Once positions become vacant either through resignation or retirements, a President's Cabinet review process determines the mission critical need for a replacement. On the other hand, the District has continued to fill vacant or required full-time faculty positions to meet the state mandated full-time faculty obligation.

While the recruitment and selection process for managers/supervisors and classified staff has worked well and is responsive to the District's needs, it would be helpful to have written procedures for the hiring process for each of these categories. Human Resources is currently working on a comprehensive review of Human Resources-related board policies and procedures. There are some established guidelines and specifications for the hiring of administrators. The recruitment and selection process for the president position is outlined in Board Policy 2431 (**IIIA.08**).

Planning Agenda

- Review and update the Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan as needed.

- Establish written guidelines and specifications for the hiring of administrators, managers, supervisors and classified staff.

IIIA.1.b.
The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties

and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.

Descriptive Summary

Every regular District employee (full- and part-time faculty, management, supervisor, confidential and classified staff) is evaluated through a formal written process with specific timeframes established for each group. The performance evaluation process communicates standards and expectations to an employee and evaluates the extent to which the employee meets those standards and conforms to the expectations. Procedures for evaluating the majority of employees are mandated by and outlined in contractual agreements between the District and the Merced College Faculty Association (MCFA) and California Schools Employees Association Chapter 274 (CSEA). Confidential, management and supervisory employees are unrepresented but are evaluated at the end of the first year by the appropriate administrator according to Administrative Procedure 7150 (**IIIA.10**). Evaluations then occur every two years.

The Board of Trustees evaluates the president's performance. Informal evaluations serve to assist the president's personal and professional growth and development and are a routine aspect of the relationship between the president and the Trustees. Formal evaluation, basic or comprehensive, is documented and occurs each spring and is completed no later than the last day in August. The criteria for evaluation are based on the president's job description, and performance goals and objectives developed in accordance with Board policy and Administrative Procedure 2435, Evaluation of the Superintendent/President (**IIIA.11**).

Full-Time Faculty

The evaluation process for full-time faculty is guided by the collective bargaining agreement between MCFA and the District under Article IX "Evaluation and Tenure" (**IIIA.09**). Faculty evaluation is limited to the evaluatee's primary areas of responsibility. The main items for consideration in faculty evaluations are:

- Effectiveness in working with students
- Expertise in subject matter or areas of responsibility
- Techniques of instruction, guidance, student health services, or library practices
- Acceptance of responsibility

Tenured faculty conduct all evaluations by using a team approach that includes student evaluations. The immediate supervisor coordinates with the appropriate faculty lead to initiate and monitor the evaluation process for timeliness and due process. Faculty are evaluated every third year in keeping with the requirements of the Education Code.

Contract (Non-tenured, tenure track) Faculty and Full-time Adjunct Faculty

The contract faculty evaluation process follows a four-year cycle which begins the first fall semester of District employment and occurs every fall semester for the first four years of employment. Contract faculty are evaluated by a tenure review team composed of the faculty lead or

a discipline faculty selected by the faculty lead, a faculty member from an appropriate area of expertise selected by the evaluatee and the evaluatee's immediate supervisor or designee.

Part-time Faculty

Adjunct faculty members are evaluated in the first year of employment and thereafter at least once every three years. The collective bargaining agreement provides that adjunct faculty members are evaluated by a full-time faculty member from an appropriate area of expertise.

Evaluation Procedure:

- The first step in the evaluation process is self-evaluation. Faculty members examine their educational objectives and instructional, guidance or library methods of their program.

- A pre-evaluation conference is held between the evaluation team and the evaluatee to discuss the employee's goals and objectives.

- A minimum of one observation is made and advance notification of the class to be observed is provided to evaluatee.

- A student evaluation is conducted.

- A summary evaluation document is prepared and signed by all members of the evaluation team, and presented to the evaluatee no later than the last week of the semester.

- A post evaluation conference is held with the evaluatee and the elements of the evaluation are discussed with an opportunity for response by the evaluator, including an opportunity to respond in writing.

- A second evaluation may be conducted in a timely manner by an administrator's request or the evaluatee's request. The second team consists of a faculty member selected by the evaluatee, an administrator, and a faculty member mutually acceptable to the evaluatee and the division chair and area director.

Educational Directors

The evaluation procedure for management employees is set forth in Administrative procedure AP7150 (**IIIA.10**). Educational directors, including administrators except for the president, are evaluated a minimum of once each probationary (contract) year and at least once during each two years during their period of regular status. The form "Management Appraisal Instrument" is the primary document used for evaluation. The president is responsible for evaluating educational directors, with some delegation to subordinate administrators. Management employees are evaluated on performance related to the assigned job responsibilities and personal qualities.

Operational Directors and Confidential Employees

The evaluation process for classified supervisors and confidential employees is set forth in Administrative procedure AP7150 (**IIIA.10**). The administrative procedure, which follows the

classified staff's evaluation procedure, outlines the process for the evaluation of all supervisor/confidential employees. A newly hired or promoted supervisor/confidential employee is considered probationary for one year and is evaluated a minimum of once during the probationary year and at least once during each two years during their period of regular status. The form "Classified Evaluation Report" is the primary document used for evaluation. Operational directors may also use the form "Management Appraisal Instrument." The immediate supervising administrator or educational director performs the evaluation.

Classified Staff

The evaluation process for classified staff is guided by the agreement between CSEA and the District under Article 23 "Employee Evaluations." Each immediate supervisor with regular classified employees evaluates them by means of a performance evaluation. For regular probationary employees, this would be the end of the second and fifth months of service. For all regular permanent employees, it is once per year for four years after becoming permanent, and once every three years after the fourth year of service. The immediate supervisor discusses the evaluation with the employee.

The College has done an exceptional job with only two or 1 percent of full-time faculty evaluations recorded as late. Conversely, 71 (27 percent) classified staff evaluations were late, and eight (20 percent) management evaluations were late. The College does not have a well-documented process for classified and management evaluations. The Human Resources director and vice president of Administrative Services are working with staff to bring all evaluations to a current status.

Self Evaluation

The institution requires a systematic evaluation of all personnel. A faculty evaluation process is in place that is negotiated with and monitored by MCFA. Immediate supervisors evaluate classified staff members, as referenced in the CSEA agreement. Managers are also evaluated. Administrators are to be regularly evaluated by the president or designee. The president is evaluated annually by the Trustees. Classified staff are evaluated at the end of two months and at the end of five months (at which time they become a permanent employee), then once a year for four years, then every three years thereafter. However, several classified staff members have not been evaluated in compliance with the schedule monitored by Human Resources.

Board Policy 7150 establishes a clear schedule for administrative evaluation, and, while the president has been regularly evaluated, administrators have not been evaluated according to the schedule established by the Board policy (**IIIA.10**).

Planning Agenda

- Work with managers and supervisors to bring classified and manager evaluations into current status.

IIIA.1.c.
Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, ef-

fectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.

Descriptive Summary

In December 2004, the Trustees adopted a Faculty Senate resolution recommending Institutional Student Learning Outcomes as well as adoption of the Principles for Assessment of institutional SLOs. From the Trustees' action and as detailed in Standard IIA.1.c., there has been continued faculty involvement in the creation, development, evaluation and implementation of institutional SLO's (**IIIA.12**).

The general criteria for teaching effectiveness and the achievement of SLOs is to demonstrate competence in performing classroom procedures and other professional responsibilities included in the teaching load assignments. Faculty members are evaluated on 14 specific criteria related to good teaching and fulfillment of professional responsibilities (**IIIA.13**). A student survey was administered in 2010 to address courses, programs and facilities. Survey results indicate that 59.8 percent of students feel the College promotes the integrity of the teaching/learning process, 43.5 percent agree that the College identifies needs of different types of students, and 51.9 percent agree SLOs are emphasized in courses.

SLOs are directly considered in the Program Review process and are linked to resource allocation and master planning (**IIIA.14**). Merced College has established institutional SLOs for each course. These are provided to students in the syllabus and are available in course outlines searchable on the College website. In the evaluation process of faculty, the presentation of institutional SLOs on the syllabus and the correlation of the institutional SLOs to course content are assessed under the area that evaluates the appropriateness of handouts and course documents. Therefore, SLOs are indirectly considered in faculty evaluations.

Self Evaluation

Teaching effectiveness is currently measured using a variety of criteria. As SLOs are assessed and fully integrated into course outlines and program reviews, there will be opportunity for discussion regarding direct faculty evaluation on effectiveness of achieving SLOs. Evaluation standards and processes are negotiated by the District and the faculty union, MCFA.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIA.1.d.
The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College's published core beliefs and values express the basic tenets of ethical behavior expected of all employees (**IIIA.15**). Board Policy 7640 describes employee standards and the faculty handbook describes faculty duties and responsibilities. Other written policies involving employee ethics are: Conflict of Interest (BP/AP 2710); Conflict of Interest Code (AP 2712); Nondiscrimination (BP/AP 3410); Equal Employment Opportunity (BP/AP 3420); Prohibition of Harassment (BP/AP 3430); Workplace Violence (BP/AP 3510); Sexual and other Assaults on

Campus (BP/AP 3540); Drug-Free Environment and Drug Prevention Program (BP/AP 3550); Acceptable Use Policy (BP/AP 3720); Academic Freedom (BP/AP 4030); and Nepotism (BP 7310). **(IIIA.16) (IIIA.17) (IIIA.18) (IIIA.19) (IIIA.20) (IIIA.21) (IIIA.22) (III.23) (IIIA.24) (IIIA.25) (IIIA.26) (IIIA.27)**. Additionally all employees are required to sign a loyalty oath prior to being hired **(IIIA.28)**.

The Academic Senate presented its Ethics Statement for Faculty on March 26, 2009, which was then adopted by the Trustees. In general, faculty members follow the code and interact with each other and with students on a professional basis. After adoption, the code of ethics was disseminated to all faculty members and included in the fall 2010 faculty handbook. **(IIIA.29)**

The Board of Trustees BP 2715, *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* was adopted on May 4, 2004 **(IIIA.30)**.

Self Evaluation

The District has a written code of professional ethics for faculty and board members. Board policy 7640 along with the others described above does imply expected ethical standards for all its employees. Management and classified staff personnel will evaluate whether a statement of ethics is needed for their particular groups. Unethical behavior is addressed through the evaluation process, Human Resources Policy and grievance processes.

Planning Agenda

- Evaluate whether or not statements of ethics are needed for management and classified staff.

IIIA.2.
The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.

Descriptive Summary

To support our annual enrollment of approximately 21,000 students, the District employs 175 full-time faculty, 350 adjunct faculty, 31 administrators/managers, four supervisors, three confidential and 263 full-and part time classified staff. The college is organized into four major divisions: Instruction, Student Services, Administrative Services and Technology and Institutional Research. In December 2007, the Trustees, through the president, hired KMR Consulting Services to review the administrative structure in the Office of Instruction to determine whether it is the most effective and efficient use of College staff and resources. The study recommended a blended approach to management of instructional divisions by moving to an area dean administrative structure, while maintaining elected faculty representation, called "faculty leads," to preserve the faculty voice. The new structure was implemented in fall 2008.

The president also directed that a reorganization committee be formed to evaluate the effectiveness of this change after one year **(IIIA.31a-b)**. The committee plans to conclude its work at the end of the spring 2010 semester and forward its recommendations to the president.

Since the last comprehensive visit in 2005, the District has kept pace with the California State requirement Faculty Obligation Number (FON) published by the California Community College Systems Office and required by Title V, Section 51025 (**IIIA.32**). Determination of the FON for the College is based on previous and projected resignations and retirements and the documented need for growth positions. The Fall 2010 FON is 174.6 The primary criteria used to determine the number of faculty the District hires are, the state FON, projection of sustained growth, and fiscal constraints. At the beginning of each academic year, the President's Cabinet reviews the FON, projected growth, and financial status of the District to determine the number of faculty that should be hired. Program Review plays an integral role in the determination of new faculty hires. The number of retirements and resignations in 2009-2010 has resulted in five vacant faculty positions being filled in 2010-2011, including Digital Arts, Theater Arts, Math, Chemistry and Business Management. At the writing of this report, the District is in the process of recruiting for these positions and expects to have faculty in place for the fall 2010 semester.

All of the District's faculty meet or exceed the minimum qualifications as established by the State Academic Senate and State Chancellor's Office for the discipline in which they are teaching. Approximately 11.8 percent of the District's full-time faculty members have a doctoral degree. Several other faculty members have Master's Degrees in Fine Arts, also considered a terminal degree.

From 2005 until early 2009, replacement of classified staff positions occurred on a fairly routine basis due to resignations and retirements. During this period, the College hired 4.0 full time equivalent (FTE) employees in the custodial department, 2.5 FTE in the grounds department, and 1.5 FTE in Police Department to support the new and expanded facilities brought online with Measures H & J Bond construction programs. Student services, instructional services, administrative services, library/media technology, research and food services combined hired a total of 14.0 FTE classified personnel to support expanded District programs and services. A dean of Student Services—Special Programs was hired in 2008 to support the student services program. In 2009, the president imposed a hiring freeze due to the state fiscal crisis and reduced funding for California Community Colleges. As positions become vacant they are evaluated through the President's Cabinet to determine if there is a mission critical need to fill the position. This includes all administrator, management, supervisor and classified positions. Approximately 17.0 FTE classified positions have been frozen, which are composed of full- and part-time staff paid for by the General Fund (**IIIA.33**). The 2009-2010 budget act contained unprecedented cuts to categorical programs reducing college income by approximately $2.5 million. The District worked to salvage budgets and save jobs, but due to the reduction in programmatic requirements and services along with a lack of sufficient resources 19 employees were laid off in 2010. Twelve were state categorically funded positions and the balance of the layoffs were a combination of staff (classified and non-tenure track faculty) working with special grants and contracts that ended either through the state or Merced County Office of Education. One manager was laid off when another grant funded program ended.

Academic administrators, managers and supervisor are qualified for their positions and are currently replaced based on mission critical needs. Staffing levels are adequate to support the mission and strategic initiatives of the institution.

It has been expressed, by a number of master planning and shared governance committees that the District reconstitute the Staff Planning & Priorities Committee that was first established in 1991 to address classified and management staffing needs. The committee's overall responsibility is to prioritize staffing needs in coordination with the overall staff master plan. The committee coordinates its efforts with the five college master planning committees and forwards recommendations to the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC).

Self Evaluation

The number of full-time faculty is sufficient to meet the needs of the programs. In order to provide a balanced budget, the District reduced 47 sections offered during the 2009 summer session and 170 sections offered during the 2009 fall semester. This resulted in not hiring approximately 80 adjunct faculty members. The District does maintain a sufficient number of full-time and adjunct faculty members to meet the College's current mission and purposes. Currently, approximately 70 percent of the courses are taught by contract full-time faculty with the remaining taught by adjunct instructors.

Recent and ongoing reductions in state funding of community college Districts have required the District to drastically limit hiring of classified staff, administrators/ managers and supervisory employees. The District has kept pace with the full-time faculty obligation as required by AB 1725, maintaining a sufficient number of administrators, managers, and supervisors. The number of classified staff mostly meets the mission and purposes of the college, but an extensive review is needed due to the recent layoffs and freezing of classified positions.

Through the master planning process, campus constituent groups have expressed a need to reconstitute the Staff Planning and Priorities Committee in some form to begin to address classified staff positions.

Planning Agenda

- The District will reconstitute and update the Staff Priorities Committee to begin to address the classified, supervisory, manager and administrator needs in order to fully support current programs and services.

IIIA.3.

The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.

IIIA.3.a.
The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available to employees and the public, either in the Human Resources office or on the District website. Poli-

cies and procedures are reviewed by the President's Advisory Council (PAC) before Trustees' approval. PAC has constituent representation from across campus.

Human Resources is primarily responsible for ensuring that all personnel related policies remain current and are equitably adhered to. The director uses available resources, including specialists employed at the District, to ensure that personnel policies and procedures are observed. District managers and Human Resources staff review job announcements and application materials to ensure that they meet board policy requirements.

Board policy 3410, Nondiscrimination clearly establishes criteria supporting the District's commitment to equal opportunity in educational programs, employment, and all access to institutional programs and activities (**IIIA.19**). The related Human Resources procedure notes that "all employments decisions, including but not limited to hiring, retention, assignment, transfer, evaluation, dismissal, compensation, and advancement for all position classifications shall be based on job-related criteria as well as be responsive to the District's needs." Further, under Board Policy 7100, Commitment to Diversity, the Trustees are committed to hiring and ensuring staff development processes support the goals of equal opportunity, diversity, and provide equal consideration for all qualified candidates seeking employment opportunities at the College (**IIIA.34**).

Board policies 7120, "Recruitment and Selection," 7211, "Faculty Service Areas," "Minimum Qualifications, and Equivalencies," and 7212, "Part-time Faculty Screening," were developed to ensure that hiring procedures guarantee fairness to all applicants (**IIIA.02**) (**IIIA.03**) (**IIIA.07**). All selection procedures are designed to be job related and the policies require that minimum and desirable qualifications must relate to the knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics needed to perform tasks, duties, and responsibilities as stated in the official position description.

Faculty and management position announcements are publicized nationwide and classified positions are publicized in the Central Valley. Announcements are placed in both general and targeted publications and on the internet to encourage as large and diverse an applicant pool as possible.

All participants in the faculty selection process are required to complete a hiring workshop that emphasizes fairness at least once every three years, Specific orientations are also held for participants in the selection process for classified and management positions.

Self Evaluation

The College follows the written hiring policies and procedures, which are found in a number of board policies and relevant portions of the CSEA and MCFA agreements. Human Resources and designated hiring managers assure compliance with these policies and procedures. The District receives very few complaints alleging unfairness and/or irregularities in its hiring processes.

Hiring committee members are well-trained and comfortable in their roles in the process. They use only job related criteria to evaluate all applicants. Hiring processes are completed in a timely manner, almost always resulting in an offer to a well-qualified candidate.

A current review of all policies and procedures related to personnel is underway. The Academic Senate, along with management, has formed a committee to review and recommend changes to the part-time faculty recruitment, selection and hiring processes. The College has committed itself to reviewing, and revising all Human Resources policies and procedures by the end of fall 2010.

Planning Agenda

- Human Resources will move forward with its policy and procedure revisions and will put in place a process for systematic updates and evaluations of all Human Resources related policies and procedures.

IIIA.4.
The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.

IIIA.4.a.
The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College's Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan has clearly established policies that ensure fairness and equity in all employment procedures. The College's Vision Statement states, "We value and respect all members of our community and diversity is the strength of our institution." The Core Values and Beliefs that support the mission statement affirm "Fostering and maintaining diversity is a strength of the institution" (**IIIA.15**) (**IIIA.35**).

Merced College demonstrates its understanding of and concern for equity and diversity in its policies and practices. Its written policies ensure appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel. This is delineated in BP7100, *Commitment to Diversity*, which states, "The Board recognizes that diversity in the academic environment fosters cultural awareness, promotes mutual understanding and respect, and provides suitable role models for all students" (**IIIA.34**). The College's commitment to equity and diversity can be found in other board policies such as, BP 3410 *Nondiscrimination*, BP3420 *Equal Employment Opportunity*, BP3430 *Prohibition of Sexual Harassment*, BP5300 *Student Equity* and BP7120, *Recruitment and Selection* (**IIIA.02**) (**IIIA.19**) (**IIIA.20**) (**IIIA.21**) (**IIIA.41**).

The College widely publishes its non-discrimination policy in such publications as the catalog, schedule of classes, brochures and advertisements, and is committed to establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of harmony and mutual respect among its administrators, faculty, staff and students without regard to racial, religious, cultural, ethnic or gender differences.

Each campus hiring committee has a non-voting diversity representative who has the responsibility of monitoring EEO procedures as described in the College Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan, including but not limited to a review of the job descriptions and announcements, composition and procedures of selection committees, and the adequacy of the applicant pool. Human Resources trains the diversity representative who has the ability to challenge any inappropriate

conduct during the selection process. In addition, Human Resources provides ongoing training in sexual harassment and discrimination prevention.

The College has renovated and constructed facilities to comply with the American with Disabilities Act. During the past eight years or so, $1.5 million has been spent to make the facilities handicapped accessible, including modifications to doors, restrooms, parking lots and ramps. All new facilities, including those on the main campus, in Los Banos and at the Business Resource Center, meet all of the latest access requirements. A campus wide ADA study is currently under way to address any changes needed in older facilities based on recent changes in ADA rules and regulations.

Diversity awareness and support occurs on the campus because of strong student, faculty and staff involvement. The following list provides examples of programs, services and events that support and promote diversity among our personnel:

- Puente Program (see Standard IIB for program details)

- Offices of DSPS, EOPS/CARE, Student Services, Student Support, Associated Students, Student Development, CalWORKs and Financial Aid.

- Student Panel Presentation addressing the learning needs of Students of Color—Flex Days for Faculty

- Classified Staff Development Day, which is designed to meet the expressed needs of the staff through workshops, and other activities involving the campus community. The classified employee of the year is also announced at this venue.

- Classified Employee Week, which is official recognition of classified school employees to honor their invaluable contributions to the College (**IIIA.36**).

- Campus Change Network, in which Merced College participated, is a community college initiative that provides technical assistance to colleges interested in developing comprehensive reform strategies to improve academic success among its rapidly changing student bodies.

- Diversity Committee organizes and supports on campus events to promote increased understanding and acceptance of diversity.

- Events that celebrate diversity are encouraged and supported, such as Cinco de Mayo, Gospel Jubilee/African-American Heritage Month, International Poet and Spoken Word Theater Artist (Shalja Patel) presentation (Oct 2006), World Cultures Music and Dance Festival, World Cultures Soccer Tournament (April 2006).

- College committees, including recruitment committees, are composed of diverse representatives from different constituency groups.

Self Evaluation

The institution's policies and practices in promoting understanding of equity and diversity issues are fairly effective. The College's mission, vision, values and beliefs statement defines an

accepting and welcoming environment for all students.

The Trustees, faculty, staff and management embrace the diversity of the campus population as evidenced in Board Policy 7100. Many associations on campus and activities support and promote diversity. To further expand the celebration of diversity, the college could broaden this area to include events such as Women's History Month.

The 1994 Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan has not been updated since the last visit as detailed in the planning agenda. The College is now moving forward in the review and update of this publication and expects to complete its work by spring 2011.

The College has expanded its recruitment and selection processes to encourage a broader representation of applicants and to ensure a selection process free of discrimination. Human Resources advertises positions on the Internet in an effort to increase diversity in the applicant pools, since the Internet reaches a worldwide audience. According to the applicant pool data for complete applications, faculty hiring pools have remained fairly consistent over the last five years, with diverse candidates remaining at about the same percentage. However, the Human Resources supervisor believes that job announcements are reaching more potential candidates by using the California Community Colleges registry of open positions.

Planning Agenda

- Review and update the College's Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan as needed by spring 2011.

IIIA.4.b.
The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.

Descriptive Summary

The College continues to support and implement policies on nondiscrimination and equal opportunity. Every effort is made to attract diverse applicant pools. The College annually reviews employment equity and staff diversity and formulates a comprehensive report that it sends to the Chancellor's Office.

The District is committed to employing and retaining a diverse workforce and over the last several years has increased the number of employees hired from traditionally underrepresented groups. Since the 2004 report, the District has experienced a 17 percent increase in its number of Hispanic and Asian classified staff respectively. As of the 2008/2009 academic year, approximately 55 percent of employees are female versus 45 percent male. The chart below represents all campus employee groups.

Self Evaluation

The District's recruitment and selection processes are designed to encourage a broad representation of applicants and to ensure a selection process free of discrimination. Although information related to diversity in recruitment and hiring is compiled, the College has yet to utilize the

data in its hiring processes.

Planning Agenda

- The College will update its diversity plan.

IIIA.4.c.
The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.

Descriptive Summary

The District's board policies, regulations and collective bargaining agreements provide for a general framework to ensure that administration, faculty, staff and students are treated fairly and with respect. The District, through the Human Resources office, prides itself on maintaining an environment in which employees feel comfortable in addressing their needs through direct discussions with their supervisors.

Students are invited and encouraged to serve on shared governance committees so that the student perspective regarding significant college issues can be expressed. These include key governance committees such as Academic Senate, Educational Master Planning Committee, and the Budget Committee. A student trustee serves on the Board of Trustees.

Sexual Harassment workshops have been given on a regular basis, and such policies are regularly broadcast to faculty and staff and posted in appropriate areas.

To assure integrity in the treatment of its students, the College follows Board Policy 5530 *Students Rights and Grievances* which is separated into informal and formal stages (**IIIA.37**). Complaint procedures also exist for employees at all levels who feel they have not been treated equitably or fairly. Board Policy 7366 *Complaint Procedure for Staff Members* outlines these policies and procedures and is published in the various employee agreements (**IIIA.38**).

Self Evaluation

College administration is committed to treating employees and students with integrity and consistently tries to follow existing policies, procedures and contracts. The College has experienced a small number of employee grievances over the years, indicating compliance with collective bargaining agreements, which are designed to protect employee rights.

College policy prohibits sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination. Procedures are in place for staff and students to address concerns about fair and equal treatment. The District has regularly conducted sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination training programs. The president has encouraged all staff to have collaborative and open communications across constituent groups.

Planning Agenda
- None

IIIA.5.
The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.

IIIA.5.a.
The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College provides numerous opportunities for continuing professional development for classified staff, faculty and managers, all relating to the college mission and designed to enhance institutional and individual effectiveness. Some activities include convocation, sabbatical leaves, FLEX seminars and workshops, new faculty orientation, technology training and conference funding.

Two subcommittees of the college's Staff Development Committee, composed of management, faculty, and classified staff, organize the District's professional development offerings for both the faculty and staff. The Staff Development Committee organizes and conducts Convocation, FLEX activities and other professional development activities offered to faculty and staff. The program is managed by the vice president of Administrative Services with a faculty development coordinator who organizes the work of the committee and the professional development activities. The Classified Staff Development Committee organizes professional development for classified staff. The committee is composed of classified staff and two advisors, the vice president of Administrative Services and the Human Resources director and is primarily responsible for Classified Development Day. These committees meet regularly to develop policies and plan activities for their respective constituent groups. Both committees organize workshops and training sessions in the use of technology and other activities for the faculty and staff. The committee's goals are to provide professional development activities that support the faculty and staff and are relevant to the work that the faculty and staff do at the College. To ensure the relevance of the professional development program, a process of data collection is used and the committees engage in a cycle of evaluation and assessment to continually improve the program to meet the needs of the faculty and staff (**IIIA.39**). (Staff Development minutes, agenda, and organizational chart)

The College is committed to providing faculty and staff quality professional development programs. For example, the Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA) was created to provide development activities for new faculty hires. The TLA is composed of 18 sessions aimed at supporting faculty during their first year of teaching. The TLA has developed over time to include sessions that support faculty in their teaching of a diverse student body. Full-time faculty is encouraged to participate in TLA sessions, which are advertised at the beginning of the year. The TLA academy and the professional development program are supported by the administration and faculty who volunteer to facilitate workshops and activities. The Staff Development Committee has demonstrated a willingness to branch out and try a variety of different strategies to attract more part- and full-time faculty participation (**IIIA.40**).

Training for faculty teaching online classes is provided by two classified employees. These employees also assist faculty, and to a lesser degree other employees, other methods of using technology in the classroom or workplace.

Self Evaluation

The College is committed to providing faculty and staff with quality professional development programs. Therefore, the TLA will continue in the next academic year with five new full-time faculty members. Feedback through the evaluation and assessment process informs the need for this professional development activity.

The College has utilized faculty and staff to provide workshops and activities that support them in the important work they do at Merced College. A commitment to reaching out to adjunct faculty and all faculty and staff is evident in the approaches that the committees have taken to provide robust offerings at FLEX, convocation, and other events. The committee is committed to collecting data on the workshops offered to ensure that they continue to support faculty and staff.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIA.5.b.
With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College offers its faculty and staff FLEX and professional development activities derived from faculty and classified staff input. The Staff Development Committee is composed of representation from a variety of areas on campus that offer perspectives on professional development needs. The staff development committee and coordinator have visited other colleges and have utilized staff development conferences in order to shape the staff development offerings at the College. The Classified Staff Development Committee performs the same role as the Staff Development Committee for the needs of the classified staff. This committee goes through the same process of collecting input from staff to develop workshops. Classified staff members are invited to teach workshops relevant to faculty needs during faculty development days. They are also encouraged to participate in workshops offered through both committees.

A process of self-reflection at the end of each school year helps these committees prepare for the next year's activities. An annual survey of the college is conducted to determine the professional development needs of the faculty and staff. In this process, the committees analyze faculty and staff surveys to inform the development of workshops, committee goals for the coming year, and other staff development offerings. All campus staff development opportunities such as convocation and FLEX day workshops are evaluated upon their completion. The information is synthesized by the committees where it informs the planning process (**IIIA.39**).

The staff development coordinator regularly and systematically evaluates FLEX day

workshops, surveying the needs of faculty and developing FLEX day agendas. Classified Senate surveys classified staff and the College uses the information to develop workshops for classified staff. All workshops have evaluation forms for participants.

Self Evaluation

Merced College uses faculty and classified staff feedback to plan its professional development offerings to meet the needs of its constituents. The College assesses its professional development activities and uses the results for improvement.

A regular cycle of reflection that utilizes surveys and other evaluative tools takes place at the end of workshops and other professional development activities. The surveys are also used to recruit presenters and to provide topics of interest for workshops. The surveys are not always representative of the views of the entire faculty and staff members since not all surveys are submitted in the designated time frame. There is still work to be done in the area of adjunct input and participation in professional development activities. The College is working to increase the number of adjunct faculty participating in professional development opportunities. The staff development committee has taken on the planning for the beginning of semester orientation/training of adjunct faculty. FLEX workshops open to all faculty now are offered during the adjunct faculty orientation, beginning in fall 2009. This strategic move was designed to increase participation from adjunct faculty who play a vital role in the delivery of instruction.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIA.6.
Human Resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

The College formally assesses the effective use of its human resources during the annual Program Review process in which each organizational unit evaluates its ability to achieve its objectives in terms of the required human, financial and technology resources.

Planning for new full-time faculty positions is directly linked to the process engaged in between the District and the Academic Senate through the Instructional Contract Faculty Prioritizing Process. This committee, with direct participation from faculty and administrators from various departments, identifies and plans for additional full-time faculty. This process is used to identify and recommend to the president which full-time faculty positions will be filled in order to maintain the District's full-time faculty obligation. Further, program review data and other criteria provide a direct link between resource allocation and institutional planning. All faculty hiring requests must be supported by instructional program review reports. The process flows through a number of channels with final approval made by the president. Adjunct faculty members are hired as needed to teach classes and staff the library and counseling.

Classified positions are usually filled when the appropriate vice president deems the need

urgent and forwards the classified position request to the President's Cabinet for consideration and approval. The management team regularly assesses the effectiveness of the College's human resources by conducting periodic evaluations of the overall college structure.

In December 2007, the Trustees, through the President's Office, hired KMR Consulting Services to review the administrative structure in the Office of Instruction to determine whether it is the most effective and efficient use of staff and resources. The study concluded a blended approach to management of instructional divisions by moving to an area dean administrative structure, while maintaining elected faculty representation as faculty leads to preserve the faculty voice. The president also directed that a reorganization committee be formed to evaluate the effectiveness of this change after one year.

Budget constraints in recent years have limited the College's ability to fill vacancies. Only those vacancies considered mission critical have been earmarked for staffing. Administrative, management, supervisory and classified positions must go through an extensive approval process to gain approval for replacement of staff. However, despite the budget crisis, the College has kept pace with the required faculty obligation and will hire five full-time faculty members for the next academic year.

From the point of long-term planning, the campus community has asked that the Staff Planning and Priorities Committee be reconstituted. This shared governance committee has the responsibility for prioritizing staffing needs in coordination with the overall staff master plan.

Self Evaluation

Merced College bases human resources decisions on college wide and division-specific goals driven by program review. The Instructional Contract Faculty Prioritizing Process is completed each fall semester and recommendations are forwarded to the president for a final decision on which disciplines will be filled.

While this standard is met, inadequate funding from the state and the current budget crisis has required that the District impose a hiring freeze of all classifications except full-time faculty needed to meet the state mandated obligation.

The president directed a reorganization committee be formed to evaluate the effectiveness of the change from department chairs to deans and faculty leads. The committee continues to meet and plans to wrap up its work at the end of the spring 2010 semester and forward its recommendations to the president.

The College is in the process of reconstituting the Staff Planning Priorities Committee to further evaluate human resources needs in all classification with the exception of the full-time faculty where a solid process is currently in place.

Planning Agenda

- None

STANDARD IIIA EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIIA.24   Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 3550 Drug Free Environment Drug Prevention Program

IIIA.25   Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 3720 Acceptable Use Policy

IIIA.26   Board Policy 4030 Academic Freedom

IIIA.27   Board Policy 7310 Nepotism

IIIA.28   Merced College Loyalty Oath

IIIA.29   Merced College Faculty Handbook 2010-11

IIIA.30   Board Policy 2715 Code of Ethics Standards of Practice

IIIA.31a   Merced College Administrative Structure in the Office of Instruction

IIIA.31b   Merced College Administrative Structure in the Office of Instruction Executive Summary

IIIA.32   Fall 2010 Faculty Obligation Number

IIIA.33   Merced College Frozen Positions

IIIA.34   Board Policy 7100 Commitment to Diversity

IIIA.35   Merced College Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan

IIIA.36   Education Code Section 45460 Classified School Employee Week

IIIA.37   Administrative Procedure 5530 Student Rights and Grievances

IIIA.38   Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 7366 Complaint Procedure for Staff Members

IIIA.39a   Staff Development Webpage

IIIA.39b   Staff Development Minutes Agenda and Organizational Chart

IIIA.40   Teaching Learning Academy Schedule Fall 2009

IIIA.41   Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 5300 Student Equity

IIIB PHYSICAL RESOURCE

Physical Resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Descriptive Summary

The Merced Community College District (District) was established in northern Merced County in 1963, originally consisting of 110 acres presented as a gift by the C-H-M Company and the Yosemite Land and Cattle Company through the efforts of City of Merced officials.

Classes began for students on September 10, 1963 on a temporary campus at the Merced County Fairgrounds. The College began construction on the permanent campus in summer 1966 and moved completely to the new campus at the beginning of the spring 1967 semester. Today, the District serves a geographic area of approximately 2,380 square miles and includes the addition of two physical sites, a state approved educational center known as the Los Banos Campus, which is located in Los Banos and the Business Resource Center (BRC) located in downtown Merced. Over the last 47 years, the District has leveraged state and local dollars and engaged in a master planning process that visualized the growth and change of its educational programs and services and the facilities needed to support the educational mission of the District.

Merced Campus—Today, the Merced campus is located on approximately 271 acres in Merced, California bounded on three sides by city streets—Yosemite to the south, G Street to the east and M Street to the west. The campus currently has approximately 390,793 assignable square feet of facilities. On November 5, 2002, voters approved Bond Measure H to build new facilities at the Merced campus to support education and occupational training in sciences, agriculture, technology, health, and business. This included classrooms, labs and lecture halls, a new library with computer/research facilities, and the renovation of existing buildings, including provisions for disabled access, and for other specified projects.

Los Banos Campus—The Los Banos Campus is a full-service educational center 40 miles from the Merced campus, serving the people of Los Banos, Dos Palos, and the immediate surrounding areas. Merced College has operated a center in Los Banos since 1971, starting in a rented building. The campus offers a wide variety of coursework for personal, professional, and academic enrichment.

On November 4, 2002, voters approved Bond Measure J to assist in establishing a new and permanent Los Banos Campus on donated land. In 2003, the state approved a project proposal for the Los Banos Site Development/Permanent Educational Facilities Project. The new Los Banos Campus is housed on 120 acres to the west of the City of Los Banos along Highway 152. It is immediately adjacent to the city limits. A community celebration was held on September 7, 2007 to mark the grand opening of the campus. Three buildings at the Los Banos Campus house three teaching labs, four general purpose classrooms, offices and a small library (Building A); seven general purpose classrooms, three science labs, two computer labs, one art lab, and one nursing labs (Building B); and the Operations and Maintenance Department (Building C). The campus serves approximately 1,600 students and generates approximately 924 FTES per academic year

Business Resource Center—since opening its doors in January 2008, the BRC has become the focal point for area businesses and employers seeking job training opportunities. The 21,360 square foot two-story facility includes computer labs, lecture rooms, study rooms, meeting rooms, and offices. The BRC, centrally located in downtown Merced on 19th Street between M & N streets, provides expanded learning opportunities for students and staff and the Merced Community. BRC programs and services include:

- The **Workplace Learning Resource Center (WpLRC)**, which provides local employers and citizens of the greater Merced area with customized training, leadership, and development programs. The programs offered are functional in context to the job by providing skill enhancement that employees can apply immediately to their job after training. Since 2000, the WpLRC has offered a module-based training program through the **Customer Service Academy (CSA)**. CSA class topics include communicating with people, customer service, team building, attitude in the workplace, values and ethics, stress management, time management, conflict management, decision making, and managing organizational change.

- **The Center for International Trade Development (CITD)** provides quality training and services to small- and medium-sized enterprises that are potential or current exporters or importers. CITD often offers businesses conferences, workshops, and seminars designed to provide information and tools to help capitalize on global business, reference, and referral services, regulatory and operational challenges.

- The **Career Advancement Academy (CAA)** provides training and certification programs for students interested in computers in business and medical assisting. These educational tracks are designed to provide instructional programs for adult learners to meet the current workforce needs of the community's businesses and medical offices.

- The **Community Services Program** provides opportunities for education, enrichment, and adventure. The non-credit courses range from ceramics to fitness boot camp and from kid's camps to animal care. Community Services hosts a wide variety of excursions throughout the year, including trips to sporting events, theatre shows, cultural functions, educational venues, and recreational activities.

The Merced College Planning Model was established in 1990 as a collaborative, integrated process that utilizes effective communication and significant input and planning guidance from all levels of the campus community. The Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) serves as the oversight committee for all five master planning committees (Administrative Services, Facilities, Instructional, Student Services and Technology and Research) to

- Ensure a student-centered focus in the Merced Community College District (MCCD)
- Recommend resource allocations to the president
- Evaluate institutional resource requests forwarded by other master planning committees
- Foster communication among master planning committees, and
- Ensure that institutional outcomes are evaluated and implemented.

These master planning committees process information related to staffing, facilities, instruction, technology, administration and student services needs and integrated these needs with the College's budgetary resources. Planning committees identify institutional priorities and influence the acquisition and allocation of human, financial and physical resources.

The Facilities Master Planning Committee (FMPC) was established in 1991 as one of five master planning committees and includes membership that is chosen from representative campus groups that include: faculty and classified senates, faculty and classified associations, student government, and the management team. There is also representation from the Los Banos campus.

The function of FMPC is to plan for new and remodeled facility projects, to produce the appropriate requests for "campus build out" and to submit Capital Outlay Budget Change Proposals, Preliminary Plans Proposals and Final Project Proposals to the state. FMPC, in coordination with the EMPC, is also responsible for *In Cadence With the Future*, an educational and facilities master planning document. As a follow up to *In Cadence With the Future*, the College's Long-Range Master Plan was completed in March 2001 to "graphically depict the facility needs of the campus at its build out, as well as address some incremental first steps." This plan projects the growth of the campus through 2040.

EMPC uses enrollment projections to drive requests for new buildings and remodeled facilities. Areas can also request new facilities and remodels through FMPC which is informed by the requests made through the program review process. FMPC oversees the submittals and acts as a recommending body to the president.   EMPC is informed through its representative serving on FMPC.

Self Evaluation

Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning documents such as the Educational and Facilities Master Plans. The District is in the process of reviewing and updating their educational and facilities master plans due to their dynamic nature and the need to remain flexible and adaptable as future opportunities may arise.

 The Five-Year Construction Plan uses projected growth and weekly student contact hours (WSCH) information to determine the sufficiency of the College facilities through the capacity/load ratio. Educational and facilities master plans are developed with the involvement of students, staff and faculty, as well as consultation with the District's master architectural firm and the District's educational planner.

Since completion of the initial campus, the evolution of instructional methods and technology has created the need to modify existing space (classrooms, laboratories, and offices) and develop additional capacity in telecommunications and distance learning capabilities. The District's Educational Facilities Master Plan presents a framework for land use and capital investment that meets the goals through 2040.

The planning document includes core objectives addressing the renovation and expansion of campus facilities, infrastructure, as well as improvement of campus vehicular and pedestrian circulation in support of the educational goals for the expanding student population and the many communities served by the District.

The master planning model has proven to be highly effective for the District when it comes to state resource allocations for physical resources. For example, the College was in line for state funding for new facility projects when former Governor Davis announced his economic recovery plan, resulting in the District receiving state funding for the new Interdisciplinary Academic Center (IAC), which opened in spring 2005. The extensive facilities planning process also assisted the District in qualifying for state funding for three additional projects, which included the Science Building Remodel, the new Learning Resource Building, and the Los Banos Campus permanent site infrastructure and first building.

The voter-approved passage of Measures H & J in 2002 reflects the community's desire to make the Merced College the premier community college district in the central valley region.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIB.1.
The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.

Descriptive Summary

The District provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support its programs and services regardless of location. The District maintains the Merced and Los Banos campuses and the downtown BRC. From the initial start of the institution, the community has been supportive of the District's facility master planning efforts and in November 2002, voters in the Merced and Los Banos areas approved General Obligation Bonds Measures H and J respectively. Combined, the bonds totaled $65.43 million to fund both facilities improvements and construction of new facilities at the Merced campus, Los Banos campus and the BRC.

The Delhi Unified School District allows the District to offer classes in an 8,000 square foot facility at their educational park, enabling an expansion of services in the northern part of the District. This facility is being provided to the College at no cost. Classes at this new facility began in the fall of 2004. This facility is safe and provides sufficient physical resources to support programs and service offerings.

Classes are also held at several community locations, including high schools, nursing homes, and other public facilities. Each of these locations provides a safe environment and is accessible to persons with disabilities. The facilities are visited regularly by college employees, and any safety issues are addressed as needed. The owners of these facilities are responsible for maintenance or structural repairs. All off campus sites outside of Los Banos and Merced offering enough credit courses that could equal 50 percent or more of a degree or certificate have been visited and approved by the Commission.

The vice president of Administrative Services oversees the maintenance and safety of the District's physical facilities through the departments of Maintenance, Operations & Grounds, Transportation, Facilities, Health and Safety, and Police Services. Three departmental managers

(director of Maintenance, Transportation and Facilities Construction, director of Operations, Grounds and Health and Safety Training, and the Chief of Police) oversee the physical facilities of the campus and strive to provide the highest quality physical environment in support of the college's goals.

Maintenance—The director of Maintenance, Transportation and Facilities Construction oversees a staff of nine trades people dedicated to District maintenance of over 50 buildings at the Merced campus, three at the Los Banos Campus, and the BRC. The Maintenance Department is responsible for maintaining all buildings and facilities in order to ensure a safe and comfortable learning and working environment for students, staff, and faculty. The following services are provided: heating, ventilation, and air conditioning upgrades and repairs, carpentry projects, remodels and repairs, maintenance of electrical panels, breakers and equipment, painting of buildings, parking lots, and signs, plumbing upgrades and repairs, installation and maintenance of door locks and automatic doors, and daily general maintenance of the campus.

Facilities are inspected annually for safety issues by the District's risk management consultant, Bickmore Risk Services and Consulting, as well as by the Merced City Fire Department and several other governmental agencies. Bickmore also conducts an annual hazardous materials inventory to ensure compliance with state requirements for regulated substances **(IIIB.01).**

The Merced campus's Maintenance and Operations Department currently has a service request and work order process in place. The District processes approximately 1,560 requests annually. To report an emergency, request a repair, or report a safety issue, an individual contacts the Maintenance and Operations coordinator, who then initiates a Maintenance Service Request Form for the work to be done **(IIIB.02)**. Upon completion, the reporting individual receives a copy of the Service Request. For larger or more costly requests, such as remodeling, re-painting, or re-carpeting a room, a work order process is in place. The Work Order Form is completed by the requester, and then forwarded to the area vice president for approval **(IIIB.03)**. After approval, the work order is forwarded to the Maintenance or Operations manager for an estimate and then it is processed accordingly. The College processes approximately 110 work orders annually.

Each fiscal year, the vice president of Administrative Services approves the five-year maintenance master plan and submits it as a funding application to the Chancellor's Office. Upon approval of the projects for funding by the Chancellor's Office and following Trustees' approval of bids and execution of the contracts, the director of Maintenance proceeds with the completion of the projects. In addition, the Maintenance Department conducts a preventative maintenance program for all equipment attached to or primarily serving buildings, e.g., air conditioners, fans, and lighting. Equipment is visually inspected periodically, and a file of permanent records is maintained for the life cycle of the equipment.

Operations/Grounds—The director of Operations & Grounds oversees the operation of the Grounds and Custodial departments. Twelve Grounds staff members provide services for the 271 acre Merced campus, which includes four major soccer fields, one baseball field, one softball field, football practice fields, and the main stadium football field. The Operations staff consists of 30 employees, 23 full-time custodians, two part-time custodians, one-full-time aquatics attendant, one full-time events specialist, one full-time events technician, one full-time lead custodian

and one full-time Maintenance and Operations coordinator. The Operations staff employees are responsible for daily cleaning of College facilities, which includes more than 390,793 of assignable square feet and 534,363 gross square feet as reflected in the Annual Space Inventory Report submitted to the Chancellor's Office each October **(IIIB.04)**. The events staff is responsible for all set-ups and field preparation for all athletic and special events, and maintenance of the College's million-gallon Olympic-sized pool.

Transportation—The Transportation Department, which has a staff of four, provides transportation for students, instructional and conference travel, field trips, and special events. The following services are also provided: maintenance of vehicles, trucks, golf carts, and various pieces of equipment used by other departments on campus, collection and disposal of hazardous materials, maintenance of "Right to Know" Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), and annual inventory of chemicals.

Facilities—The Facilities Department consists of the director of Facilities & Construction and the Facilities Planning and Development specialist. This office is responsible for overseeing the construction and maintenance of campus facilities, including all off-site locations, and ensuring compliance with the District's educational and facilities master plans **(IIIB.05)** to provide facilities that are clean, efficient, safe and aesthetically pleasing. The department is also involved in access, safety, security, and hazard mitigation through continual evaluation, planning and execution of new and retrofit projects.

The Facilities Department is also responsible for the coordination of program planning with all user groups, selection of consultants, implementation and oversight of construction, budget oversight, scheduling, and the commissioning and personnel training of the completed facilities. User groups consist of staff from each department that will occupy a new or renovated building space and assist in the planning and designing of the space from the initial project proposal through the design development and construction drawing stages. User groups work directly with the architect to plan their spaces to ensure that they meet program and instructional needs that support the District's mission.

Health and Safety—The director of Operations and Grounds chairs the Health & Safety Committee, oversees the training of District personnel in all aspects of safety, and maintains the District Injury, Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) **(IIIB.06)**. The director also serves on the Valley Insurance Program Joint Powers Authority (VIPJPA) Safety and Loss Control Committee and the District Health & Safety Committee **(IIIB.07) (IIIB.08)**. The below list highlights a few of the training classes offered through this Department:

- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Fork Lift Operator Licensing
- Aerial Boom Lift Operator Licensing
- Scissor Lift Operator Licensing
- Safe Lifting Practices
- Hazardous Communication
- Injury Illness and Prevention Program (IIPP)

- Lockout/Tag out
- Heat Prevention and Chemical Safety

Another key aspect of the director's work is the management of the District Health and Safety Program to include maintaining personnel training records, other health & safety related documentation, and publication and distribution of the quarterly Health and Safety Bulletin which is distributed campus wide **(IIIB.09)**.

Recycling—The director of Operations and Grounds manages the District's Annual Integrated Waste Management Program and completes the annual report **(IIIB.10)**. In September 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed into law the Per Capita Disposal Measurement System (SB 1016.) This changed the way State agencies and local governments measured their progress toward meeting the statutory diversion mandates. Each state agency and large facility must submit an annual report to the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) summarizing its yearly progress in meeting the 50 percent waste diversion mandate. Since the annual reporting requirement began, the District has met the mandated obligation. In 2008, the District met the requirement by diverting and recycling at least 50 percent of its waste. The most recent report was submitted in September 2009.

Security—The District's police department currently consists of three full-time police officers, two 19-hour citation officers and approximately 12 8-hour security officers. The department also has a full-time office manager and contracts with the Merced County Sheriff's Department for supervision, training and logistical support services. The supervisor is a full-time Sheriff's deputy assigned as the law enforcement manager for the police department and is assigned in a full-time capacity. The department is recognized and fully certified as a police agency by the State of California Commission on Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) and its police officers are trained and certified by the Commission in the same manner as all peace officers within the state and have the same authority. The relationship with the Merced County Sheriff's Department has proven advantageous for the District's police department in many ways including the following examples:

- Access to the California Law Enforcement Teletype System (CLETS)
- Shared data-basing (Report management System – RMS)
- Training in perishable skills (Firearms, Emergency Vehicle Operation, Tactical Communications, etc)
- Specialized/Formal Training (Active Shooter, Patrol Rifle Deployment, etc.)
- Investigative Services
- Traffic Enforcement Support
- Dispatch Services
- Report Transcribing Services
- Report Management Services
- Report Management System (RMS)
- Access to specialized equipment and teams

- Additional resources in the event of an emergency (Personnel, Mobile Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Communications equipment, etc.)

The police department responds to all types of emergency calls in addition to providing other services related to campus safety. Obviously, responses to life threatening emergencies take priority over all other types of actions, but the department is actively involved in other types of law enforcement related activities including crime prevention. The department investigates all crimes that are committed and reported on campus as well as enforcing all traffic and parking codes and regulations. Upon request, the department offers escort service to students, staff or visitors to their vehicles for safety. The department is involved in several campus programs and has direct representation on the following committees and teams:

- Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)
- Crisis Consultation and Assessment Team (CCAT)
- Security Committee
- Health and Safety Committee

The campus police department is located in the Services Building on University Avenue directly across from the Learning Resources Center. There, the daily operations of the department are conducted and an extensive video surveillance system is monitored.

Security Cameras—Per the recommendation and implementation of the College's Security Committee, the video surveillance maintained by the college and monitored by the police department has been modified and improved with current technologies and expanded from a system of two active cameras to the current system of over 20 cameras active and monitored, as well as recorded **(IIIB.11)**. The system is continually evaluated by the Security Committee and recommendations for improving and/or expanding the existing systems are in turn evaluated and implemented by the committee if deemed appropriate and feasible.

Mass Notification—After considerable study and evaluation, the Security Committee selected the use of a wireless mass notification system to be utilized in the event of an emergency wherein an evacuation or lockdown of the campus might be necessary. The committee selected the current system for several reasons including the following:

- Ease of installation (solar or AC compatible)
- Wireless (radio wave activities pre-set alerts – no cable required)
- Easily expandable (add and/or move units with minimum effort and expense)
- Accessibility (alerts can be activated by a base unit or by telephone from those authorized)

As per the Security Committee's planning, the mass notification system currently has the capability of sending pre-set alerts (evacuation or lockdown) to exterior portions of both the Merced and Los Banos campuses. The campus systems run independently of one another and are actually two separate systems that are programmed and managed identically. It is the Security Committee's intention to next expand the system to include interior locations that are frequent-

ed by large numbers of the campus population (i.e., cafeteria, gymnasium, student services etc.) **(IIIB.12)**.

Code Blue Stations—At the Security Committee's recommendation, the District recently installed six Code Blue Emergency Communication Stations on the main campus and two on the Los Banos Campus **(IIIB.11)**. These stations are highly visible to the populations of the campuses and provide two-way communications between users, local security and law enforcement as well as access to local transportation providers. Aside from being highly visible, the devices offer hands-free, interactive voice communication between the user and the security-law enforcement agency that is summoned.

Self-Evaluation

Bond Measures H & J made it possible for the District to advance the quantity and quality of physical resources necessary to support its programs and services. The District's facilities departments, with cooperation and support of the Facilities Master Planning (FMPC) and Educational Master Planning (EMPC) committees have done a remarkable job since the passage of Measures H & J in the construction program and are to be commended in this regard.

The facilities office continues to apply for state funds to leverage local bond dollars and the District continues to maximize the balance of need, eligibility, state support and local resources to continue the building program. The success of this process is evident in the District's ability to turn the Los Banos campus Measure J bond of $11.2 million into $24 million and the Merced campus Measure H bond of $53 million into well over $125 million.

The Five-Year Facility Construction Plan utilizes capacity/load ratios to identify and evaluate current and future physical resource needs **(IIIB.13)**. Shared governance committees, such as FMPC and EMPC also participate in evaluating the institutions facilities needs.

The Maintenance and Operations Department continues to provide an aesthetically pleasing, comfortable learning and working environment for students, staff, and faculty. The work order and service request process provides an efficient method for campus personnel to report items needing repair or replacement.

Annual service/maintenance agreements that are in effect include Cummins West (Generator), Siemens (Fire Alarms), EMCOR (Energy Management/HVAC), Gateway (Fire Extinguishers), Hoffman Electronics (Security Systems), and Thyssen (Elevators).

The Health and Safety Department meets all compliance issues with regard to the IIPP and District-required safety training. All staff receives quarterly health and safety training. The District continues to have representation on the VIPJPA Safety and Loss Control Committee in an effort to keep updated on all aspects of Health and Safety.

The Security Department continues to provide students, staff and faculty with safe facilities and services. The installation of security cameras, the mass notification system, and Code Blue Stations, provides evidence of the District's efforts to provide safe facilities for all visitors. The Security Department continues its efforts by continuing training in scenarios such as active shooter and violent intruder defense trainings.

These same criteria and processes are used to establish safety standards for off-campus sites. This includes regular safety inspections by-in house staff, as well as district consultants. Annual inspections by the fire department and by a consulting fire extinguisher company continue to take place. A pest management company has been contracted to control vermin on campus.

The District has processes in place that address issues raised regarding the sufficiency of institutional facilities and equipment and to prioritize needs within the scope of available resources.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIB.1.a.
The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

The District utilizes an integrated planning process to build, maintain, upgrade or replace its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services. "In Cadence with the Future," the District's educational and facilities master plan, serves as the institution's primary planning document, incorporating educational and facilities planning through 2040. The master plan, approved by the Trustees in 2001, was developed by architectural firm Lionakis Beaumont Design Group Inc. in consultation with representatives of all campus constituent groups (management, supervisors, faculty, staff and students).

Since the last facilities master plan was developed in 2001, the District concluded that reliance on state funding alone would not be sufficient to implement the building program necessary to meet student needs. Therefore, in November of 2002, local voters approved the $53.5 million Measure H bond measure for the Merced campus and the $11.93 million Measure J bond measure for the Los Banos Campus **(IIIB.14).**

Measures H and J were approved under the requirements of Proposition 39, California's Strict Accountability in Local School Construction Bonds Act passed by voters in 2000. As required by Proposition 39, the Trustees appointed an independent committee of citizens to oversee the required strict accountability safeguards for all bond expenditures. The Committee is charged with ensuring that the District adheres to the requirements of Proposition 39, including spending funds only on those projects identified and approved by voters. The Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee includes representatives from taxpayer groups, business and industry, senior citizens' organizations, and students. Since the passage of the bond measures, this committee has met biannually to review the District's bond-funded construction program, ensuring that the program maximizes all funding sources while making sure the District has made the most prudent use of taxpayer dollars. The committee submits an annual report to the Trustees **(IIIB.15)** and maintains a webpage on the Merced College website (**IIIB.16**).

With local bond funds totaling $65.43 million, the District was able to maximize the balance of

need, eligibility, state support and local resources to continue the building program. Below is a project chart, which shows the success of the District's project planning.

Merced Campus

PROJECT	State Funded	Local Funded	Total Project Cost
North Loop Road	$2,152,962		$ 2,152,962
Science Building	$ 12,958,000	$ 4,446,166	$17,404,166
Science Swing Space		$ 1,918,334	$ 1,918,334
Business Resource Center		$ 7,636,430	$ 7,636,430
Learning Resources Center	$ 9,542,000	$ 8,338,749	$17,880,749
Central Plant Upgrades	$ 3,501,548	$ 2,098,050	$ 5,599,598
Lesher Building Remodel	$ 2,572,000	$ 2,750,845	$ 5,322,845
Allied Health Complex	$ 8,232,000	$ 2,838,434	$11,070,434
Administration Building Remodel		$ 2,147,867	$ 2,147,867
Student Union Building Remodel		$ 1,422,969	$ 1,422,969
TOTAL	**$ 38,958,510**	**$ 33,597,844**	**$ 72,556,354**

Los Banos Campus

PROJECT	State Funded	Local Funded	Total Project Cost
Site Development & Permanent Educational Facilities	$11,199,000	$1,183,723	$12,382,723
Academic/Vocational Facility		$10,095,545	$10,095,545
Parking Lots		$210,974	$210,974
Off-Site Development		$934,065	$934,065
Operations & Maintenance		$459,627	$459,627
TOTAL	**$11,199,000**	**12,883,934**	**24,082,934**

Additionally, the District has successfully obtained matching state funds for scheduled maintenance projects over the last several years amounting to $1,785,357 **(IIIB.17).**

The District has the following Scheduled Maintenance Projects planned in the near future:

- Merced campus: Communication Building, HVAC Economizers
- Merced campus: Theater Art Gallery HVAC Replacement

From 2002 to 2009, the District added 189,551 square feet of facility space. The critical factors that allowed the District to move so quickly with the state are: 1) our growth, 2) our relationship with the Chancellor's Office, 3) our ability to contribute funding towards a project, and 4) our planning processes.

Merced Community College District
GSF Growth History
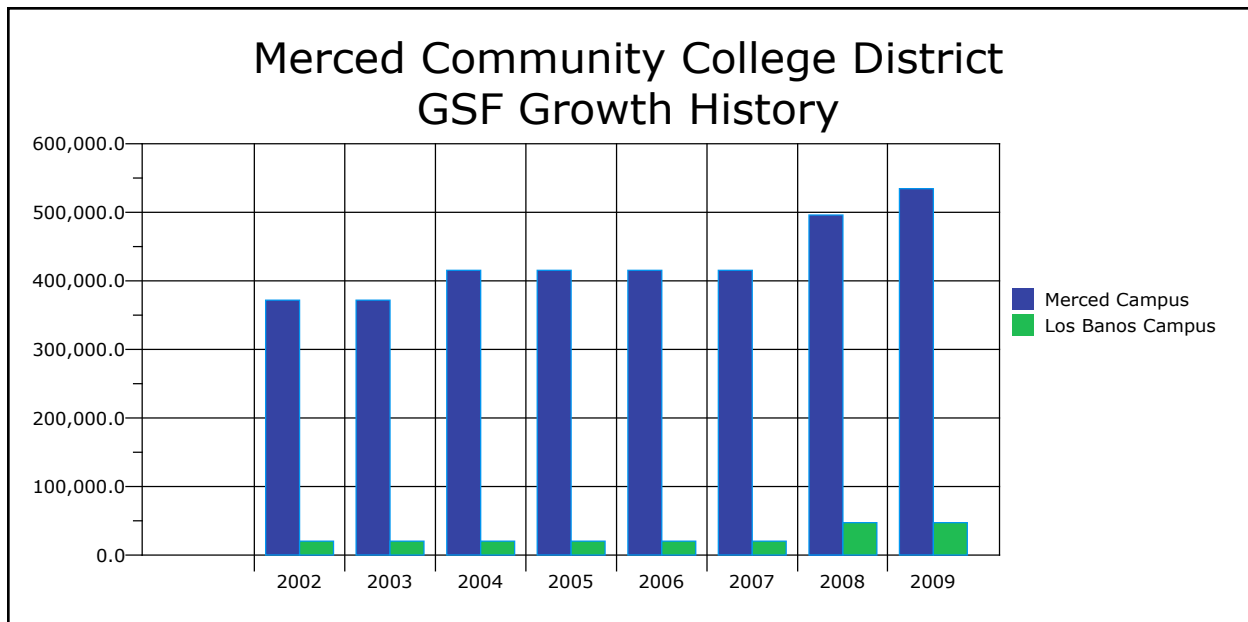
There are over 50 permanent buildings on the Merced campus, three new buildings at the Los Banos campus, and the single-building BRC. At the same time facilities were expanding on the Merced and Los Banos campuses, the College also renovated facilities on the Merced campus.

The process for designing each of the instructional spaces involved planning meetings with faculty, staff, and students. The design meetings occurred through the final project proposal, working, and construction document phases. The end users are also involved in the equipment design for each of the projects. This planning process ensures that the instructional needs of the facility are addressed and that all end users are involved in the designing of the facility.

Merced Campus Completed Projects

- **The Learning Resources Center** (LRC) was completed in January 2007 and opened to students on February 20, 2007. This project addressed the need for expansion of the library and media services identified as critical in the College's educational program. New library space expanded from 16,716 to 38,000 square feet and was configured to accommodate today's technology needs. Likewise, media space, which has become an increasingly important method of instructional support, was expanded from 3,331 to 9,000 square feet. This facility is the largest building on campus with more than 74,000 square feet of space.

- **The Science Building** Remodel Project opened to students during the fall 2007 semester, providing teaching and learning spaces to accommodate increased enrollment in the sciences and math areas on the Merced campus. With expanding pressure for additional lower division courses at the community college level, enrollment has increased significantly in the physical sciences.

- **The Business Resource Center** (BRC), which includes space for employment training and economic development programs, was completed in time for the spring 2008 semester. The building contains classrooms, computer laboratories, conference rooms, and

community meeting spaces for college/business collaboration, and faculty/staff space. The BRC is located off-campus on 19th Street in downtown Merced near City Hall.

- **The Lesher Student Services Center** (formerly known as the Lesher Library) Remodel Project was completed in March 2008 and reactivated 21,660 square feet of remodeled space to address the need for the development of centralized student services on the Merced campus (i.e. Admissions & Records, Registration, Counseling, Financial Aid, EOPS, and DSPS).

- **The Student Union and Administration Building** Projects allowed the District to remodel space vacated as a result of the Lesher Building Remodel Project. The Student Union now has improved facilities for disabled students, alternative media, student book rentals, and the Study Central program. Facilities for student government and club meetings have improved. A new, state-of-the-art, Board Room was also included as part of this project. These projects were completed and opened in spring 2009.

Los Banos Campus Completed Projects

- **The Los Banos Campus** is housed on 120 acres of donated land located west of the City of Los Banos along Highway 152. A communitywide grand opening celebration was held on September 7, 2007.

- **Los Banos Site Development/Permanent Educational Facilities** project was entirely financed through state funds and provided on-site development of facilities and the extension of infrastructure onto the permanent site. This project delivered the first building for the new campus, which consists of three teaching labs, four general purpose classrooms, offices and a small library.

- **Academic and Vocational Technology Project** was funded through Measure J and provided the new campus with its second facility. The new academic building focuses on technology (i.e. science labs, computer labs, classrooms, lecture space and meeting and faculty space).

- **Operations and Maintenance Project** was funded through Measure J and provided the campus with a service building to house grounds, custodial and maintenance operations.

In addition to these construction projects, the District recently underwent a Siemens energy retrofit. Merced College has been a leader in initiating energy conservation measures and started in the early 70's on an evaluation of systems for retrofit and energy management. The retrofit project addressed energy conservation in the following areas:

- **Controls** – added additional buildings to the building automation control system

- **Upgrade Interior Lighting** – changed 4,000 lights to 1st generation T-8

- **Cogeneration** – for more efficient heating of the swimming pool and additional electric power for the college.

- **High Efficiency Air Cooled Chiller** – installed for Theater Arts Building for use when central plant is not in operation.

- **Vending Miser Controllers** – installed 18 vending machines to control refrigeration electrical consumption and improve vending machine efficiencies.

The following benefits are a direct result of the energy retrofit project:

- Much needed capital infrastructure improvements at very favorable financial terms
- Technology upgrades with building automation expanded to additional buildings
- A more secure environment with improved lighting security
- Operational savings resulting from efficiency measures (a savings goal of 108 percent was reached and over a three-year period actual energy cost was reduced by $844,015)
- Lessening of the College's carbon footprint with the reduction in energy consumption
- Public utility rebates totaling $255,000

All new or remodeled facilities are built utilizing Title 24 requirements for optimum energy conservation. The District is in regular contact with the Energy Commission to continue searching for funding and support to further implement energy conservation measures.

The District continues to update and integrate new facilities into its inventory so that the students are instructed with the most up-to-date and state-of-the-art facilities. Following are some of the projects that have been completed over the past 15 years:

- In 2009, the District remodeled the Welding Lab. The lab now consists of two new Donaldson exhaust systems, along with major electrical and ADA upgrades throughout the facility. This remodel supports the instructional mission of the welding program and provides students with the most up-to-date facilities.

- In 2005, the District renovated and repaired its existing infrastructure and grounds including the installation of a co-generation plant at the pool, new boilers, new chillers, a new chiller at the Theater and the installation of piping for the Learning Resources Center Project.

- The District constructed several outdoor spaces such as the Administration Building Amphitheater in 2002, and the Interdisciplinary Academic Center Amphitheater in 2007, providing accessible spaces for students to enhance their learning experience.

- In 2003, the District constructed an East Stadium Restroom project, which includes a locker room facility.

- In 1998, the District underwent an Architectural Barrier Removal Project, which included a new library elevator, new ADA locksets, ADA handrails, automatic doors, restroom upgrades, and access compliance in the Science and Vocational buildings.

- In 1996, the District performed a campus wide infrastructure corrections project that included a storm drainage system, sewer line upgrade, new electrical/conduit and vaults and a fire alarm system.

To continue providing students and staff with the safest pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular circulation on the main campus the College contracted with Pinnacle Traffic Engineering in 2008 to compile a comprehensive traffic circulation study. The recommendations outlined in the study were presented to FMPC on April 24, 2009 and to the Trustees on May 5, 2009. FMPC, through the annual resource allocation process, has gained initial approval to fund approximately $25,500 of circulation study recommendations starting in fiscal year 2010-2011 (**IIIB.18**).

Projects in Planning

The Facilities Department has several projects in line for state funding. Following is a description of these projects:

- The Agriculture and Industrial Technology Complex is at the Final Project Proposal stage. This 35,000 square foot, $23.7 million dollar project combines Agriculture and Industrial Technology divisions in response to changing education and technical training requirements of persons entering and continuing employment in the agriculture and industrial technology sectors of Merced County, as well as the state. Faculty, staff and students were involved with all planning phases to ensure the project is built to support the District's instructional mission. It is anticipated the project will be included in the Governor's 2010-2011 budget (**IIIB.19**).

- The Vocational Complex Renovation/Expansion Project is also at the Final Project Proposal stage and is a result of space being vacated from the Allied Health Complex Project. Space is remodeled to provide additional lecture, lab, and office space for the campus. In addition, a new wing will be added to accommodate the criminal justice program. Faculty, staff and students were involved with all planning phases to ensure the project is built to support the District's instructional mission. It is anticipated the project will be included in the Governor's 2011-2012 budget at a cost of approximately $9,828,990 (**IIIB.20**).

- The Theater/Arts Renovation Project was initially submitted as an Initial Project Proposal on July 1, 2009. However, because of the need to provide accessible facilities to all students, the District is moving forward with the project by utilizing local bond funds. Faculty, staff, and students are involved in the planning phases to ensure the project is built to support the District's instructional mission. It is anticipated the project could begin as early as Spring 2011 (**IIIB.21**).

The District is proud to have three award winning projects designed by Lionakis Design Group Inc. The Interdisciplinary Academic Center won the 2005 AIA SV Design Excellence Award. The Los Banos Campus won a 2007 CCFC Design Excellence Merit Award for the Complete Campus Design. The Learning Resource Center won the 2007 AIA SV design Excellence Award. Just recently, the College was notified that the Allied Health Complex was awarded the 2009 AIA SV Design Excellence Award **(IIIB.22).**

Merced College continues to plan future projects that will provide students and staff with the most up-to-date facilities. Following are a few of the projects in the planning phase:

- Districtwide ADA survey

- Merced campus Allied Health parking lot

- Merced campus Operations and Maintenance yard expansion

- Energy Conservation Project Phase II

- Los Banos Campus chemical storage facility

- Merced campus transportation water recycling system

- Merced campus Business Office renovation

Merced College maintains a Construction Update Page on the college website (**IIIB.23**).

Self Evaluation

The District has a culture that supports and provides resources for ongoing renovation, replacement and new construction of facilities. Prior to the passage of the Measures H and Measure J general obligation bonds, the District had applied for and received funding from state bonds for construction and renovation of its facilities. The completed facilities master plan confirmed that local resources would be required to complete the necessary projects to support growth and programs the District proposed. The Trustees supported the bond measures for inclusion in the November 2002 election. Passed by voters within guidelines of Proposition 39, the measures made available $65.43 million for facility improvements and new construction of a permanent state approved education center in Los Banos.

> The bond measures made it possible for the District to advance the quantity and quality of physical resources necessary to support its programs and services. Construction of new and renovated facilities occurred in a systematic way in response to the educational needs of students. District staff has done a remarkable job leveraging state and local resources to augment bond proceeds.

> The Citizens Oversight Committee is very active in the bond program expenditures and meets biannually with the appropriate District staff to ensure compliance requirements as outlined in Proposition 39. The committee also publishes an annual report to the communities of Merced, Fresno and Madera counties.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIB.1.b.
The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.

Descriptive Summary

All facilities are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthy learning and working environment while meeting instructional and institutional goals. Buildings are constructed to meet state standards and are approved by the Division of State Architect (DSA).

The Field Act of 1933 requires that public school buildings be built to stringent seismic and safety standards set forth in the California Building Code (CBC). All building projects are continuously monitored by a state certified building inspector, pursuant to Title 24 requirements (**IIIB.24**).

One of DSA's primary criteria is access compliance. Therefore, all new and remodeled facilities are fully accessible and meet or exceed all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and building codes. Aside from recently passing a local bond that specifically earmarked funding for access compliance, the District has instituted and delivered numerous facility-remodeling projects to address Architectural Barrier Removal (ABR) requirements for increased accessibility and shortened paths of travel for the disabled. FMPC and the Health and Safety Committee, composed of representatives from every campus constituent group, oversee matters impacting physical access and general facility-related issues. The District, through its police department monitors and patrols the campus for the security and safety of its students, staff and facilities. The department does not operate on a 24/7 schedule at this time, but specific weekend assignments are made when the administration feels there is a need to respond to certain threats, mostly attempts involving property damage.

The Maintenance and Operations departments schedule the majority of their preventive and predictive maintenance on a routine basis; however, several other factors drive and guide maintenance efforts, including ongoing compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and observations, evaluations and inspections by District staff, governmental agencies, contracted professionals and third-party insurance administrators. This input is used to help assess, prioritize, and schedule routine and non-routine maintenance and repair including equipment replacement and minor remodeling.

District facilities are inspected annually for safety issues by risk management consultant, Bickmore Risk Services and Consulting, as well as by the Merced City Fire Department and various other governmental agencies. Bickmore also conducts an annual hazardous materials inventory to ensure compliance with state requirements for regulated substances.

The director of Operations routinely inspects and continually repairs and replaces deteriorating walkways across the campus suffering from root-heaving, cracking and weather damage. This effort assists with eliminating potential trip hazards and providing safe, well-lit paths throughout campus. Funding sources for repair is allocated through the institutional prioritization process that starts with the Administrative Master Planning Committee's (AMPC) recommendations to EMPC. Additional funding is also allocated through the Measure H bond fund.

All new employees are provided with a safety guide for awareness of safety precautions. Emergency response procedures flip charts, which are distributed college wide and posted in all classrooms, labs and offices, include information such as emergency telephone numbers, emergency response procedures, building evacuation procedures and basic first aid. The Health & Safety director periodically updates and distributes the charts. While emergency response information has been invaluable to the campus community, the District is working toward conducting regular emergency training drills and offering a more comprehensive training program to familiarize faculty and staff of proper emergency preparedness.

The vice president of Administrative Services oversees the maintenance and safety of the District's physical facilities through the departments of Maintenance, Operations & Grounds, Transportation, Facilities, Health and Safety, and police. Three departmental managers (director of Maintenance, Transportation and Facilities Construction, director of Operations, Grounds and Health and Safety Training, and the chief of police) oversee all physical facilities, striving to provide the highest quality physical environment in support of the College's goals.

The vice president holds bi-weekly staff meetings split into two segments: the Direct Management Group (DMG), which includes the Business Services manager, director of Maintenance, Human Resources supervisor and the facilities planner, and the Maintenance and Construction Planning and Coordinating Team (MACPAT), which also includes the directors of Fiscal Services and Purchasing. The first segment includes general professional development items and emerging priorities in Administrative Services. The second segment focuses on facilities, master planning, ongoing construction projects, and campus safety issues. Meeting notes and tasks lists are organized to provide the necessary reference for follow-up on open items (**IIIB.25**).

Custodial staff members are assigned specific buildings or areas of responsibility and the custodial lead conducts nightly inspections of these areas to ensure campus cleaning standards are maintained. The Maintenance and Operations departments currently have a service request and work order process in place. To report an emergency, request a repair, or report a safety issue, an individual contacts the Maintenance and Operations coordinator, who then initiates a Maintenance Service Request Form for the work to be done. Upon completion, the reporting individual receives a copy of the form. The District processes approximately 1,560 requests annually. For larger or more costly requests, such as remodeling, repainting, or recarpeting a room, a work order process is in place. The Work Order Form is completed by the requester, and then forwarded to the area vice president for approval. After approval, the work order is forwarded to the Maintenance or Operations manager for an estimate then it is processed accordingly. The College processes approximately 110 work orders annually.

The District regularly applies for state scheduled maintenance funds to be earmarked for repairs to existing structures. The availability of these funds varies from year to year with specific guidelines for qualifying projects. Allocation of these funds requires a match from the College. The College updates the list of scheduled maintenance projects every year.

Self Evaluation

Since the passage of the two local bonds in 2002, the District has made significant progress in its capital facilities program, ensuring that physical resources at all locations where the District offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthy learning and working environment.

The District adheres to safety measures established in federal, state and local laws and regulations. Various local and state agencies regularly inspect District facilities to ensure compliance with these regulations including fire, hazardous materials and backflow prevention devices. Facilities are constructed with safety and security in mind. The same maintenance agenda that applies to the Merced and Los Banos campuses is applied to the downtown Business Resource Center (BRC).

The Facilities Department is responsible for overseeing the construction and maintenance of campus facilities including all off-site locations, while ensuring compliance with the District's educational facilities master plan to provide facilities that are clean, efficient, safe and aesthetically pleasing. The department is also involved in access, safety, security, and hazard mitigation through continual evaluation, planning and execution of new and retrofit projects. The department is also responsible for the coordination of the program planning with all user groups, selection of consultants, implementation and oversight of construction, budget oversight, scheduling, and the commissioning and personnel training of the completed facilities. User groups consist of staff from each department that will occupy a new or renovated building space that assist in planning and designing the space from the initial project proposal through the design development and construction drawing stages. The groups work directly with the architect to plan their spaces to ensure that each space meets program needs.

The College's police department responds to all types of emergency calls in addition to providing other services related to campus safety. Per the recommendation and implementation of the Security Committee, the following lists security and emergency response enhancements that are in place:

- **A video surveillance system**—Maintained by the College and monitored by the police department, the system has been modified and improved with current technologies and has expanded from two active cameras to the current system of over 20 cameras. These are monitored and used to record campus activities.

- **A wireless mass notification system**—Utilized for emergencies, this system is used in the event an evacuation or lockdown of the campus' population becomes necessary.

- **Six Code Blue Emergency Communication Stations on the Merced campus and two on the Los Banos Campus**—Highly visible to the populations of both campuses, these stations provide two-way communications between the users, local security and law enforcement as well as access to local transportation providers.

Administrative Services staff has performed successfully in the maintenance of campus grounds, buildings and equipment, and in administering the District's construction and environmental, health and safety programs.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIB.2.
To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

Descriptive Summary

Facility and equipment evaluations occur on a regular basis as outlined below:

- **Monthly**— Elevators are regularly inspected by Thyssen.

- **Quarterly**— Maintenance staff performs mechanical inspections on HVAC systems and filters. EMCORE conducts inspections to campus and pool boilers and chillers.

- **Semi-Annually**—Maintenance staff check fire suppression systems and all roofs are inspected for leaks and general wear and tear. Maintenance staff lubricates and exercises all gas and water valves.

- **Annually**— Siemens tests and services all fire alarms. Gateway inspects and services all fire extinguishers. Maintenance staff performs a campus wide power shutdown to evaluate electrical equipment.

Required repairs and/or replacements are made with district funds or through the Five-Year Replacement Plan with Scheduled Maintenance and Hazardous Substance Funding.

Self Evaluation

The facility regularly plans and evaluates facilities and equipment and makes required repairs and replacements.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIB.2.a.
Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.

Descriptive Summary

The District' long-range capital planning program consists of several elements: The Educational and Facilities Master Plan 2001, the Five Year Construction Plan, and the Scheduled Maintenance Plan. The Five Year Construction Plan, a report that is filed annually with the state, lists construction projects planned for the future and fully describes how existing and projected facilities will be used. The report uses current and projected enrollment data, as well as the District's current space inventory, to plan facilities and to accommodate future enrollment growth.

The District has been successful in developing a variety of funding sources for facilities improvements, including state and local bonds. Overall, since 2002 the District has expended over $125 million in construction and facility projects.

Self Evaluation

Detailed updates of current facility issues and construction projects are presented at the Facility Master Planning Committee Meetings and Measures H and J Citizens' Oversight Committee. Faculty, staff, students and committee members are expected to disseminate

the information to all members of their constituent groups and community groups. The Bond oversight Committee information is provided on the college website (**IIIB.16**). An annual report to the Community is also produced by the Measures H & J Citizens' Oversight Committee and is also available on the website.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIB.2.b.
Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Physical resource planning is fully integrated with institutional planning at Merced College. In 2000, a Facilities Master Planning Committee was formed to develop a facilities master plan titled "In Cadence with The Future." This 2001 facilities master plan was the result of a year-long effort involving all college constituency groups. The consultant's hired to develop the plan, Lionakis Beaumont Design Group Inc., interviewed administration, faculty, and staff and the community for an initial assessment of perceived facilities needs. After reviewing census data and analyzing projected enrollment growth, Lionakis Beaumont determined student enrollment would reach 18,500 by 2040. The facilities master plan is intended to meet the eventual needs of the District at 18,500 student enrollment—its educational programs and services, its modes of delivering instruction and services, its physical appearance and campus climate, and the influence of technology on all of these components by 2040.

The District also submits a Five Year Construction Plan to the state on an annual basis. This entails an annual, systematic assessment on the effective use of physical resources, and the results are evaluated to serve as the basis for improvement.

Self Evaluation

The facilities master plan is the blueprint for educational and facilities master planning. Construction occurs in an organized and systematic way in response to the College's educational needs through the cooperation of the Office of Instruction and the Facilities Department.

Through the passage of local bond measures, state bonds and scheduled maintenance funding, the District has successfully implemented the facilities priorities as outlined in the facilities master plan. Three remaining projects that include the Agricultural Science and Industrial Technology Complex Project, Vocational Building Remodel Project and Theater Arts Architectural Barrier Removal Project will all be completed within the next five years.

Planning Agenda

- None

STANDARD IIIB EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIIB.01   Bickmore Annual Hazardous Material Inventory 2009-2010

IIIB.02   Merced College Maintenance Service Request Form

IIIB.03   Merced College Work Order Form

IIIB.04   Annual Space Inventory Report 2009-2010

IIIB.05   *In Cadence With The Future*-Educational And Facilities Master Plan 2001-2020

IIIB.06   Merced College Injury and Illness Prevention Program August 2009

IIIB.07   Valley Insurance Program Joint Powers Authority Safety and Loss Control Committee Charter, Agenda and Minutes 2009-2010

IIIB.08   Merced College Health and Safety Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes and Membership 2009-2010

IIIB.09   Health and Safety Bulletin 2009-2010

IIIB.10   State Agency Waste Management Annual Report for Merced College 2008-2009

IIIB.11   Merced College Campus Map Code Blue and Security Camera Locations

IIIB.12   Merced College Campus Map Mass Notification Merced and Los Banos

IIIB.13   Merced Community College District Five Year Construction Plan 2011-2015

IIIB.14   Merced Community College District SFID1 and 2 Measures H and J Ballot

IIIB.15   Merced Community College District Proposition 39 and Measures H and J General Obligations Bonds Performance Audit June 2009

IIIB.16   Merced College, Citizens Bond Oversight Committee Website

IIIB.17   Scheduled Maintenance Projects 2004-2009

IIIB.18   FMPC Resource Allocation Document

IIIB.19   Final Project Proposal COBCP Agriculture and Industrial Technology Complex Project 2010-2011

IIIB.20   Final Project Proposal COBCP Vocational Complex Renovation Expansion 2011-2012

IIIB.21   Initial Project Proposal COBCP Theater/Arts Remodel 2012-3013

IIIB.22   Citizen Oversight Committee Design Award Buildings Included Annual Report 2008-2009

IIIB.23   Merced College, Construction Updates Website

IIIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. *The Institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, and college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.*

   a. *Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.*

Descriptive Summary

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 the latest AT&T network technology called Opt-E-MAN, providing the Merced campus with port speeds of 100Mbps and 50Mbps each to the Los Banos Campus and the BRC. AT&T guarantees a base 10Mbps 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 connection is accomplished using a Gig-E-MAN product with connection speeds of 1Gbps. This is another AT&T product available through the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC) and is sufficient to support the Merced campus as well as the two remote centers. 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. This was followed by the purchase and deployment of new Ethernet switches that significantly increased network access speeds. The new switches provide 10 Gigabit Ethernet Core speeds that could eventually be scaled to substantially increase capacity. 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 prevented 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 five enclosed server and storage racks is redundantly powered, as well as each core and distribution switch. The core server system is composed of 34 physical servers. VMware is used to manage 42 servers. Microsoft Server 2003/2008, VMware 4.x, HP-UX, and Linux comprise the list of server operating systems. The Datatel Strategic Academic Enterprise (SAE) system is housed on a redundantly powered UNIX system. Data storage is housed within 2 HP Fiber Channel attached Storage Area Networks (HP SAN EVA6100 – 30TBs; HP SAN EVA4100 – 1.3TBs).

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 six single-mode pairs. The fiber is connected redundantly with the IDF switch stacks utilizing a spanning tree.

Connectivity between campuses or the WAN was also upgraded. High-speed optical service was purchased from AT&T in 2009 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 3Mbps to 10Mbps and from 4.5 to 10Mbps 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. Since 2007, the District has deployed wireless network access points to some of the facilities on campus and at off-campus sites. To date, 64 wireless access points have been installed providing faculty, staff, students, and guests secure access to network resources. Faculty and staff have the ability to access the same type of resources they would be able to access through a network-wired 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 Datatel (allowing access to WebAdvisor on remote devices) the demand for wireless access is expected to increase substantially.

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 use network resources using portable devices. The system currently supports 802.11G WiFi connectivity. 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.

Student Portal—The District provides a number of critical technology services to students, including access to the College's Web Portal. Through the Portal students can access many important academic and administrative resources. These include email, grades, enrollment information, financial aid advice, and library resources. Other Portal resources available to students include individual faculty and department web pages containing course-related information critical to their success, access to the distant education site based on the Blackboard platform through which students take online 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. Professional instruction on the use of the databases is provided to students by the faculty librarians through scheduled library instruction sessions. In 2008-09 4,135 students received instruction on the library database through group instruction and 152,269 full-text articles were viewed. The current student portal was implemented in January 2010 and has been very effective in providing network resources access to many students. The following

Student Portal Statistics were tracked by Google Analytics:

- The Portal has been visited 23,857 times
- There have been 63,664 page views
- On average, 2.67 pages are viewed per visit
- Three minutes and 12 seconds is the average time on site per visit.
- 26 percent of the visits are new.

Security—The security of all students, employees, and guests on campus is one of the District's more important and critical priorities. A committee was created to identify the most technologically effective ways to provide security in all District facilities. The committee recommended several technologies that have been implemented in the last three years. One of these resulted in the installation of 40 digital and analog security cameras on parking lots and buildings on the Merced and Los Banos campuses and at the BRC. This has greatly enhanced the campus police's ability to protect students and staff and to solve some criminal incidents. Additionally, the District installed Code Blue Emergency devices at strategic points on the Merced and Los Banos campuses. These devices allow either access to general emergency information or quick access to police or medical help. A new mass announcement system was also installed with the purpose of quickly notifying the campus community of any impeding emergencies or active shooter scenarios. This system has pre-programmed emergency broadcast messages that can be initiated by a campus security device or remotely from a cell phone. The system takes cell phone live messages that can be directed to the entire system or to one of the specific speakers in the system.

Datatel—The institution purchased and deployed a Strategic Academic Enterprise (SAE) software system from Datatel in 1999. The Datatel system allows for the effective management and administration of student records, financial data, and human resources information. Datatel is fully integrated into the networks and is available on the Merced campus and off-campus centers. Student access to Datatel was made with the purchase, installation, and deployment of the WebAdvisor software. WebAdvisor allows students, staff, and faculty to access information directly from a dedicated client utility or remotely through the Web. The software also allows students to enroll, obtain grades, and pay fees through the Web. Functionality was further extended with the advent of a SharePoint single sign-on portal to all other student network resources. WebAdvisor has greatly expanded student access to pertinent data such as student email, provided by Microsoft Live@Edu, library research data bases, scheduling information, distance education, etc.

Communication Technology—The District provides effective district wide communication channels to enhance productivity through the Portal, Gateway 2 Success, and through the College's primary web site (**IIIC.01**). 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. More recently, the District has begun to disseminate information using social tools such as Facebook, Myspace and Twitter. These social networking sites are free and available to anyone who wants to sign on and find more information about Merced College. The District is also in the process of providing a more robust online

communication and collaborations channel in the form of the Microsoft SharePoint environment. The SharePoint site will provide a number of information management tools that enhance collaboration and more effective information distribution.

Altiris—The institution provides 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.

Facilities—Several new College facilities have come online since the last accreditation self study, including the new Learning Resources Center (LRC), Allied Health Center, Business Resources Center, and the Los Banos Campus. In addition, the Science Building was completely remodeled. A key component of these projects was the integration of technology into instruction and services provided in the facilities. Merced College is particularly proud of the design of student computer spaces in each of these facilities. All classrooms in these new facilities are equipped with technology that meets the District's current multimedia standards for instruction. Instructional equipment in each of these facilities is configured to support a variety of pedagogical styles and thereby provide the technological support needed to achieve mission critical instructional goals. To support institutional student learning outcomes, one of the District's primary goals was to research and identify technology that can be most effective for classroom instruction. The result of this research has been the implementation of a set of District standards that relate to the purchase and use of technology in classrooms. The current list of the standards and the policy on the use of instructional technology are posted on the college's intranet site **(IIIC.02).**

Instructional Technology in Classrooms and Labs—The District has used these standards effectively for the design and deployment of technology in all buildings. This includes outfitting recently constructed facilities such as the Allied Health Center, Business Resources Center, Interdisciplinary Academic Center, and the new Los Banos Campus with the latest District-approved technologies. Additionally, the District has remodeled and retrofitted some of the existing buildings such as Lesher, Vocational, Arts, Science, Music, Gym, Art, Industrial Technology, Communications, and Student Union with the same type of technology. The current District classroom inventory shows a total of 119 all-purpose classroom and labs that have been outfitted with instructional technology. At a minimum, most of these classrooms include a podium, computer, and multimedia projector. Eighty-nine of these classrooms include multimedia podiums and Crestron technology that allow users to easily switch between any of the devices available in the podium.

These classroom multimedia installations include a computer, DVD/CD player, document camera, close captioning device, multimedia projector, screen and the Crestron switching system. The latest District inventory shows 12 of these multimedia installations in the Allied Health Center, 11 in the Business Resources Center, 14 in the Interdisciplinary Academic Center, 21 in the Los Banos campus, two in the Lesher building, 21 in the Science Building, and one in the Student Union, for a total of 82 Crestron-based classrooms. The inventory also shows two class-

rooms in Agriculture, 19 in Vocational, one in Mechanical Agriculture, four in Art, one in Communication, two in the Gym, three in Industrial Technology, one in the library, and two in Plant Science, all outfitted with podium, computer, projector, document camera, DVD/VHS player, and screen for a total of 35 non-Crestron-based classrooms.

Meeting Rooms and Other Technology Enabled Facilities—In addition to the 117 multimedia classrooms, the District also provides access to a number of other rooms where technology is installed to support administrative and operational programs and functions. The Administration Conference Room is outfitted with a Polycom system and large plasma display that allows users to videoconference with remote units. The room is also outfitted with a multimedia projector and screen for multimedia presentations. The Board of Trustees meeting room features a dual multimedia projection system, computer display for each of the board member, screens, server and system. The Los Banos Campus has two Polycom-based videoconference rooms that can quickly dial and connect to the Merced campus.

Support—A Help Desk is available to all staff and is supported by two employees and tracked by the Altiris software. The average monthly number of tracked calls is 253. Datatel programming support is accomplished by one full-time programmer and a senior analyst responsible for a part-time effort in programming. There are currently 49 standing requests for changes in the Datatel system. There are also many other requests that have not been documented

Classroom Support—The District provides timely technical instructional support services to faculty in the use of classroom instructional technology. The services range from providing stand-by technicians to assist instructors with multimedia classroom technology to solving complex problems with multimedia projectors and Crestron controls. Calls to the Audio Visual (AV) Department for support usually originate when faculty members can't make a component or software of the instructional classroom technology work during one of their instructional sessions. A direct call to the AV help line usually follows. Faculty, however, routinely use the Help Desk line to route their calls for support. These two points of contact provide maximum coverage during all hours of instruction. Access to support is also facilitated by the posting of the AV direct help line number on large labels on all of the instructional multimedia podiums deployed throughout the District and also by the contact information that is provided on AV and IT web pages. As calls are received, library media technicians and/or the AV supervisor determine which technicians are available to immediately respond to the call. If technicians are not available at that time, the call goes in to a queue. Technical support calls that come in when the system is unattended are posted into the same AV help line queue. Calls received via the help-desk email system are routed to the AV supervisor and to AV library media technicians. This ensures that all calls are logged and responded to. These are then distributed to AV's senior audio visual technician or to the educational media technicians to provide the requested technical support.

Hardware and Software—District hardware falls into a number of different categories, including instructional classroom computers, faculty office computers, lab computers, laptops, and staff computers. These categories are further subdivided into the type of PC (Mac or Windows) and number and type of peripheral hardware. An annual inventory (Table 1 below) is conducted on the current status of computers and to plan for an appropriate replacement. The Altiris

inventory currently shows approximately 700 staff and faculty computers, 1,000 student computers and 60 laptop computers. A total of 400 printers and 60 fax machines are also currently active on the network and distributed throughout multiple locations on the Merced campus and on off-campus facilities.

Merced College Computer Inventory—March 1, 2010					
Combined PC & Mac	2,094	**PC**	2,048	**Macintosh**	46
Classification	**Count**	**Classification**	**Count**	**Classification**	**Count**
Classified	338	Classified	336	Classified	2
Faculty	257	Faculty	247	Faculty	10
Classroom/Multimedia	121	Classroom/Multimedia	121	Classroom/Multimedia	--
Management	92	Management	90	Management	2
Other Computer Stations		Other Computer Stations	139	Other Computer Stations	--
SARS: Track	12	SARS: Track	12	SARS:Track	--
Virtual Systems	13	Virtual Systems	13	Virtual Systems	--
Work Study and Reception	12	Work Study and Reception	12	Work Study and Reception	--
Servers	30	Servers	29	Servers	1
Student Labs—Total	**1,080**	**Student Labs—Total**	**1,049**	**Student Labs—Total**	**31**
Student Labs—Merced	656	Student Labs—Merced	625	Student Labs—Merced	31
Student Labs—Los Banos	111	Student Labs—Los Banos	111	Student Labs—Los Banos	--
Student Labs—Ashby	140	Student Labs—BRC	140	Student Labs—Ashby	--
Student Labs—Delhi	24	Student Labs--Delhi	24	Student Labs—Delhi	--
Student Labs—LRC	138	Student Labs—LRC	138	Student Labs—LRC	--
Student Labs—TCC	11	Student Labs—TCC	11	Student Labs—TCC	--

TABLE 1 ALTIRIS INVENTORY 1

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 include Microsoft Office Suite, available to faculty, staff, and students, the Datatel administrative and student data management system, the Blackboard online education system, the automated library SIRSI system, Curricunet, a course enrollment and management system available to students, and SharePoint, a document collaboration and management system. All of these packages are used extensively throughout the District. The Microsoft Office Suite has become the faculty standard for instructional PowerPoint presentations and the tool of choice for student reports and presentations. The SAE system, in use since 1999, is frequently used by staff to obtain information and manage financial accounts.

Datatel integrates academic and administrative information, allowing for more productivity in processing student information requests (e.g. grades, fees, courses, etc.). Datatel also works well 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 Datatel. ImageNow has improved student services by eliminating the long and tedious process of keying individual student record forms into the Datatel systems. Staff can scan forms and other documents

with ImageNow and automatically upload them to Datatel. This has streamlined a number of student record management processes and has made it easier for faculty and staff to access and process student requests, all while providing better service to students and better allocation of counseling and instructional resources.

The District also provides a system for creating student photo identification cards. Flow, a product purchased from Jolly Technologies, is the leading software solution for the management and production of secure photo identification cards. The software is built around an advanced record management platform that integrates with existing Datatel systems. The system allows for the production of high quality student identification photo ID cards used by students to obtain access to District resources. For example, after obtaining a library barcode, students can then access all of the libraries resources.

The Blackboard online education system is widely-used for course management in the delivery of online instruction. Blackboard was chosen for online instruction after a careful technical and instructional evaluation conducted by the Distance Education Committee.

The SIRSI automated library system software package provides high-quality library services and is the library's primary operating system, supporting many functions such as circulation, the online catalog, and other library resources. SIRSI enhances library productivity by providing access to a Workflows client software package that allows staff to easily catalog and manage library resources. The system was chosen because of its ease of use and intuitive structure, both of which appeal to students and staff. The SIRSI online catalog provides points of access to more than 40,000 books, over 23,000 full text e-books, 280 print magazines and journals, over 10,000 journals, magazines and newspapers available through online database subscriptions. All electronic resources are available to students and personnel regardless of location. Along with these major software packages, a number of other individual software packages in support of instruction are used, including Dreamweaver, Adobe Photoshop, and Camtasia.

Self Evaluation

Infrastructure and Services—Areas providing technology infrastructure and related hardware, software, and support services are periodically evaluated to ensure their effectiveness in supporting institutional goals. Primary among these evaluation methods is the use of a full program review evaluation, based on Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC) standards. For examples, the Learning Resources Center's 2006 and 2009 program reviews included reviews for the library and AV areas. The 2010 Information Technology Services program review included reviews of the Network Services and Information Technology Services (ITS) areas. These reviews are available on the SharePoint site at: http://mcs/LRC/LRC_Program_Review/default.aspx for the LRC (**IIIC.03a-e**); and at; http://mcs/EMPC/TRMPC/TIR/ITS/default.aspx for ITS (**III.04**).

Network Infrastructure Evaluation—Review of the network infrastructure shows that the current network configuration and substantial investment made on fiber optic cable meet the District's technology infrastructure needs. The current configuration of network switches, servers, and wireless access points is adequate to meet network access needs and the system provides room for scalability and expansion for future bandwidth needs. The connection to the internet

through CENIC is also adequate to meet current internet access needs. The current upgrade to the WAN that connects the Merced and Los Banos campuses and the BRC also meets District needs. Although the wireless network meets current needs for wireless access, it will need upgrading as the demand for this technology increases.

Instructional Technology Evaluation—The District is successful in providing access to instructional technology. According to the most recent inventory, 117 of 136 classrooms have multimedia with 86 percent of all classrooms and labs outfitted with multimedia instructional technology. A recent survey of the effectiveness of classroom technology in supporting institutional goals shows that 89 percent of faculty who responded indicated that they were very satisfied with the classroom technology. A high percentage of students in a similar survey responded positively to the use of these technologies for instruction.
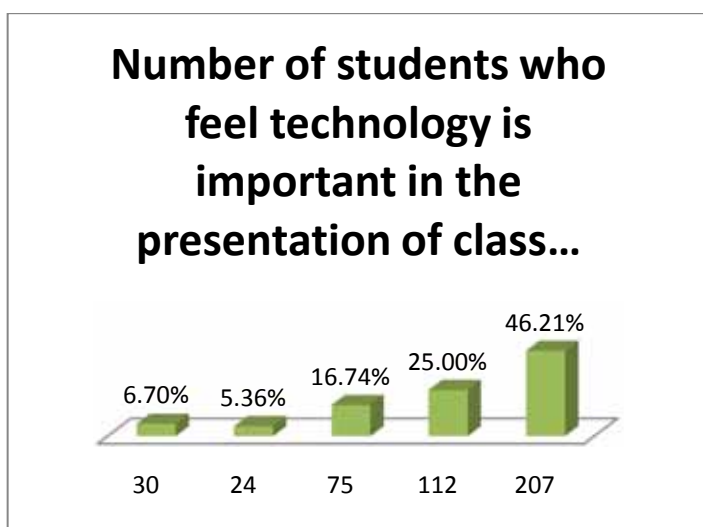
FIGURE 2 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Support Services Evaluation—LRC and ITS program reviews identify the need for additional technical support in specific areas such as Admissions and Records and Financial Aid, which have ongoing programming needs that would improve access for students to college financial resources and other academic information. Additional programming support would also improve the accessibility of information to managers, faculty, and staff in charge of providing ancillary services to students. A variety of other programming requests for services continually arrives from most areas on campus; however, the District has only one programmer available to support these requests and this creates a continuing frustration for faculty and staff.

Technical instructional support for classrooms is also needed. Over the last 10 years, the number of classrooms with multimedia has more than doubled and the number of locations housing multimedia classrooms and or installations has tripled. This includes four new sites, the Business Resources Center, Allied Health Center, the Bizzini Interdisciplinary Academic Center, the Delhi center, and expanded multimedia in the remodeled Science Building, the remodeled Lesher building, the Los Banos Campus, and the expanded Learning Resources Center. (Figure 3 below illustrates this growth).
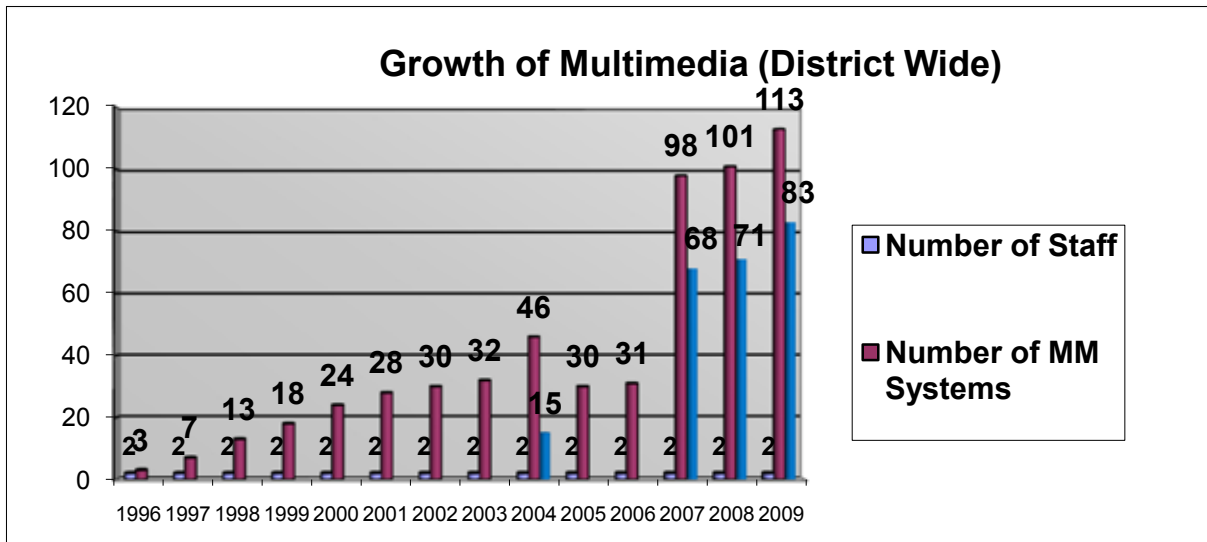
Growth of Multimedia (District Wide)

Figure 3 Multimedia Classrooms

However, technical support staff for these installations has not increased (LRC Program Review 2009 (**IIIC.03b-e**). Instructional support services were evaluated in two ways, one quantitative and one obtained by analyzing the ratio of open service calls to the number of calls that were resolved satisfactorily. These numbers are obtained from AV's call logs, and from the Help Desk system. Several types of instructional service calls and emails are received by AV and the solutions and status of each of these calls is logged by AV staff. AV statistics show that some service calls during late hours go unanswered due to a lack of sufficient staffing.

Planning Agenda

- Merced College will seek additional funding for technical staffing of Information Technology Services and the Learning Resources Center through the master planning and resource allocation process.

IIIC.1.b.
The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College provides training to students in the effective application of information technology through two general methods, by one-on-one assistance at the point where help is needed, and through print and online learning media.

One-on-one training for students generally happens at the point where a student needs to access information through a college resource. Two of the places where this training happens are the Student Help Desk and library information stations. Data has been gathered since August 2006 on Student Help Desk activities. Incident categories include OCS access problem, Web Advisor access problem, Web Advisor access request, Web Advisor how to access, Blackboard access problem, Blackboard other, General information request, Web Advisor request to drop

a class, and Web Advisor request to register for class. A total of 7,072 help incidents have been reported between that date and April 23, 2010 (**IIIC.05**). Contacts by students were made in the following ways: 18 percent by email, 9 percent in person, and 74 percent by telephone (**IIIC.06**). At library information stations, AV technicians provide technical support to all students using the library's internet computers. Three of AV's measurable SLOs relate directly to this specific service. The first of these is that students will know how to access computer files stored in a USB or similar personal file storage device. A second outcome is that students will learn how to access their email messages. Third, students will learn how to analyze and apply networked printer technology to successfully print information from student computer stations. AV technicians gather this data to measure these SLOs. In spring 2009, 632 students were successfully trained on the printing system, 201 students were trained to access email, and 295 students were trained to access USB files (LRC Program Review 2009 Section II p.21 (**IIIC.03c**)).

In addition to one-on-one student training, technical staff and faculty produce training materials in print and media formats. The Student Help Desk's web page is linked directly from the Merced College home page **(IIIC.07)**.   A variety of links for students including Access Blackboard; Access My Portal; Access WebAdvisor; Buy Software; Waitlisting; Wireless and FAQ's are on this page to assist them with typical problems **(IIIC.07)**. The Library has several learning videos that students can access through the library web page **(IIIC.08)**. These videos cover how to find items in the library, how to find a reserve textbook, how to use the College Portal and databases, and how to use the Ebscohost database. Merced College provides training to faculty and other personnel in the effective application of information technology through three general methods. The first method is through online training via the Microsoft IT Academy (**IIIC.09**). Merced College has purchased a license for the Microsoft IT Academy for the last two years and this online resource provides training in all aspects of Microsoft software including Excel, Word, Access, and Sharepoint. A second training method occurs through group training on Flex and Staff Development Day workshops (**IIIC.09**). Every Flex Day for the last eight years has included specific training opportunities on technology. New faculty members also receive training from the Teaching and Learning Academy, a required program for faculty development (**IIIC.09**). Faculty training has included workshops on how to use a multimedia podium, how to access the Portal, how to develop and maintain a grade book in Excel, how to use Web Advisor, and how to access the online subscriptions databases. The third method for training is one-on-one training. Faculty can also access individual technology training through the AV Department. AV educational media specialists are available to train instructors one-on-one on a variety of software and hardware through the AV Technology Resources Center (TRC). From 2007 through 2009, 80 faculty members received individual training in the TRC and another 265 received training on how to use multimedia podiums (LRC Program Review 2009 Section II p.25 (**IIIC.03c**). The AV Department has also developed a training video on how to use the multimedia podium which is available online through the AV web page (**IIIC.10**).   Distance Education faculty also receive one-on-one training through the Distance Education Educational Media specialist, who has full-time responsibility to support faculty. The College's webmaster provides training to classified staff on how to maintain web pages. The vice president of Technology and Institutional Research has also offered a variety of training opportunities to administrative support staff on using Datatel resources to their fullest advantage.

Microsoft's IT Academy—Since January 2009, the College has provided technical training to all staff through the Microsoft IT Academy (MITA) (**IIIC.09**). Through MITA, staff can access more than 200 technology courses ranging from basic introductions to Microsoft suite applications, such as Word and Excel, to far more advance programming courses that teach SharePoint and Visual Basic development and programming. As of January 2010, MITA has been used as the primary channel to train faculty and staff on the use and development of SharePoint.

Library Staff Training on SIRSI—Timely and effective training was provided to library staff on the use of a new version of its SIRSI automated library system. The training included individual and group training sessions on the use and configuration of the new SIRSI clients. The LRC contracted with SIRSI in July 2009 to provide access to online training courses and library staff successfully completed 18 online training sessions. The District provided hands-on training that led to the successful deployment of the new SIRSI software in the library. Due to budget constraints, travel has been restricted to mission critical events; however, one employee was selected to attend the annual Datatel conference. The other mission critical travel need was a SharePoint 2010 conference in which two employees attended.

Self Evaluation

The District evaluates the effectiveness of the MITA as a training tool by counting the number of logins and completion rates of courses accessed by staff. As of May 2010, MITA has been accessed 395 times by staff with a 95 percent completion rate. Although the completion rate is reasonably high, the District intends to increase the number of MITA logins.

Flex Days and Teaching and Learning Academy workshops are evaluated through written responses by participants and the resulting feedback forms are turned over to the Staff Development Committee and then forwarded on to the workshop presenter.

While the Staff Development Committee is led by a faculty member and has broad representation across the campus, an unfilled need for training on technology resources still exists. The College has no overall plan or strategy on how to train students or faculty or staff on the emerging technologies and software on campus which include Microsoft Office 2010, Windows 7, Sharepoint, Datatel upgrades, the Datatel Portal, and communications technologies including Polycom and the new student email interface.

Planning Agenda

- Develop a staff development training process focusing on technology training and emphasizing emerging technologies, and seek funding for implementation through the resource allocation process.

IIIC.1.c
The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.

Descriptive Summary

Planning—Merced College's Technology and Research Master Plan sets the vision for planning, acquiring, maintaining, and upgrading technology.

Vision: *Merced College will provide students, faculty, staff and administration with the necessary technology to function in a modern collegiate environment.*

Mission: *Merced College will incorporate technology into all programs and services through an evolving, integrated plan. This plan will actively engage the college community, to build and maintain an appropriate infrastructure for today and plan for its enhancement tomorrow. Merced College will use technology as a tool for student success by providing instructional support, personalized student services, and a mechanism for administrative and operational processes to be developed and changed as needed by the college community* (**IIIC.11**) .

The Technology and Research Master Planning Committee (TRMPC) explores new technologies and evaluates requests for new technologies that would improve instruction and increase institutional effectiveness. TRMPC formally recommends District standards developed by ITS and AV technicians for technology in all areas of the District from the office to the classroom. These standards are available on the intranet. The College has chosen to set as its standard professional grade equipment from Tier 1 Gartner ratings in order to provide for a longer life cycle (five years).

Individual department and discipline program reviews also illustrate the need for additional technology as well as the need to upgrade technology. An example is the 2009 LRC program review (**IIIC.03b-e**).

Maintenance—Maintenance contracts are in place to protect vital hardware and software in many departments throughout the District. The Hewlett Packard contract covers the Datatel UNIX server and associated software. Datatel is also contracted to cover the software suite and ensure software enhancements. The District contracts with Microsoft for licensing of all software products. Other technology maintenance needs are met by individual departments through their budgets or through one-time funding requests.

Upgrades and Replacements—Much of the District's technology and equipment is purchased with funding provided for new and remodeled facilities, and this is how technology was purchased for the Los Banos Campus, the Bizzini Interdisciplinary Academic Center, Learning Resources Center, Business Resources Center, Allied Health Center, and the remodeled Administration and Science buildings. Technology upgrades and replacements have typically been funded through one-time funds (i.e. Title III/Title V Hispanic Serving Institution grants, state instructional equipment funds, Vocational and Technical Education Act funds (VTEA), or general fund carryover dollars saved from one fiscal year and distributed in the following fiscal year. For example, replacements and upgrades for classroom multimedia have been funded through State Instructional Equipment funds (SIE). These funds are no longer available. The only ongoing upgrades and replacements that are funded are core servers and storage and network connectivity equipment, which are on a funded five-year lease cycle. This funding was developed through the switch from Cisco technology to Hewlett-Packard technology with lifetime warranties. The maintenance contract funds were changed to lease funds.

Self Evaluation

Merced College buys professional grade technology to extend the useable life of each item (computer, printer, server, etc.). As the vast majority of technology purchased for classroom and

student use comes from one-time funds, this delays the replacement of aging or failing equipment. Technology purchases for areas and departments are requested through the planning and budgeting process which recognizes both program review and sustainability as key factors in granting funding requests. Merced College made a strategic decision with technology funding for core servers and network connectivity by changing vendors and redirecting funds into leases.

Planning Agenda

- The District will plan and seek funding for a total cost of operations mechanism to upgrade and replace mission critical technology in the classrooms, labs, and student support and administrative areas.

IIIC.1.d.
The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

Technology resources are distributed and utilized to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. As described in Standard IIIC.1, technology resources were distributed and utilized in facilities built and remodeled in the last several years. These resources were developed to enhance programs and services in Instruction, Student Services, Administrative Services, Board of Trustee functions, and the library and AV departments. The needs of specific programs and services drove the distribution and utilization of technology in these facilities.

Requirements for specific programs also direct the distribution and utilization of technology resources. Student Services areas including Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, and Assessment, provide specific examples where technology was distributed and utilized for their support. Admissions and Records has a need to register students online and to comply with formats and standards for records so that information is easily transferrable to other educational institutions and to the Chancellor's Office. While complete functionality is still a work in progress, steps have been taken to make CCC Apply and online registration fully functional. Financial aid needs technology to assist students in filling out the online Free Application For Federal Student Aid form. Computers serving this one need have been made available to Financial Aid. Assessment needed a lab setting to meet the demand for incoming students and the demand was met with a computer room in the Lesher Student Services Center.

Another example of technology resources that have been distributed and utilized to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services is highlighted in the design and application of technology at the Los Banos Campus. The Los Banos Campus developed several new science labs to support a full range of science instruction. The former campus lacked sufficient laboratory spaces. The present campus has three science laboratories, which support biology and chemistry courses.

Another example is the expanded collaborative use of Datatel to support grants and research activities. With further refinements of Datatel applications and the implementation of ODS re-

search function in Datatel, information that was once deeply buried in an ocean of data can now be displayed in dashboard formats.

There are numerous instances in the instructional area where technology resources have been distributed and utilized to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. These include the development of a laptop lab that works with the wireless network in an Agriculture classroom, development of Allied Health technology resources to support the registered nursing and radiologic technology program, development of a state-of-the-art welding lab in the Industrial Technology Division, and the previously mentioned deployment of multimedia equipment in the vast majority of classrooms.

Self Evaluation

Despite limited funding, the College does a good job distributing and utilizing technology resources to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. A variety of funding sources are used to meet the needs of instructional and non-instructional areas on campus including VTEA, SIE, grant funding, and private philanthropic gifts.

Some technology resources, such as staff to fulfill essential programming needs and to maintain and repair technology, remain insufficient to meet the needs of areas and departments to maintain and enhance their programs and services. These needs and the planning agenda attached to them are illustrated in Standard IIIC.1.a.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIIC.2.
Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis of improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College integrates its technology planning with institutional planning and systematically assesses the effectiveness of technology and services it provides through a number of quantitative and qualitative research methods. These methods are integrated into the program review process of each technology support services area. Planning for technology support services is the primary function of the Office of Technology and Institutional research (TIR). TIR is composed of six areas that support a variety of instructional, administrative, operational, and research activities and programs in support of the District's institutional learning outcomes. Managers of each TIR area meet periodically to discuss issues related to technology and to analyze technology trends, needs assessments, and prioritized technology service needs. TIR and its six areas follow a District planning process that focuses all resources in a continual evaluation of the effectiveness of all functions and programs. Allocation of resources and planning are based on the continual process of program review and resource allocation and evaluation. Each area aligns its mission, research, and goals with the institutional mission and goal of promoting student success. This leads to a planning process created through open dialogue and the evaluation of the data collected for each program in support of SLOs. This results in short- and long-

term plans that are moved forward to the master planning committees for support and funding.

The Technology and Research Master Planning Committee (TRMPC) is a shared governance committee composed of administration, management, faculty, staff, and students and is in charge of reviewing all technology requests. TRMPC is also responsible for evaluating the use of technology throughout the District and for planning for technology that will used across areas and departments such as Datatel, Polycom, Microsoft applications, and SharePoint.

TRMPC uses program review to evaluate the effectiveness of existing technology and programs. Upon evaluation, TRMPC recommends programs and/or services and sends the request to the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) for consideration, or it may recommend alternatives. Two current examples of this planning process illustrate the District's specific technology review and evaluation process. Data in the 2009 LRC program review (**IIIC.03b-c**) and the 2010 Information Technology Services program review (**IIIC.04**) were used to request funding and staffing. Both of these program reviews identify staff, software, and hardware technology resources needed to support services campus wide with evidence to support these requests. This evidence was used by TIR and TRMPC to prioritize the institution's technology resource needs. The technology planning process is completed when the vice presidents review and combine all requests that serve similar college wide needs, such as purchase of computers. Finally, EMPC reviews the master planning committees' requests and the requests of the vice presidents and makes recommendations to the president. Funding is then allocated and the process begins again with program review for each area.

Self Evaluation

Merced College does a good job of integrating technology planning in the institutional planning process. The institution uses program review effectively at the program level to allocate critical resources. The District is also doing a good job of using evidence collected through the program review process to prioritize resource allocation and to evaluate the effectiveness of technology in supporting its mission.

District wide assessment of the use of technology resources should be improved. There is no cross-campus assessment tool for end users of technology resources and the availability of technology-use tracking is limited.

Planning Agenda

- Develop a process by which the institution can systematically assess the effective use of technology resources in order to use the results of evaluation as the basis of improvement.

STANDARD IIIC EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIID FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Descriptive Summary

The Merced Community College District's fiscal policies are guided by sound principles of simplicity, neutrality, transparency and stability. Annually, the budget is developed based on realistic revenue and expenditure projections through a well-defined inclusive budget development process **(IIID.01)**. Working with the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) and other shared governance committees, institutional priorities are developed to ensure the integrity of the educational programs and adherence to the College's mission.

Since 2003-2004, the unrestricted general fund revenue has increased from $36.1 million to a projected $51.2 million in 2009-2010, an increase of 41.8 percent. During that same period of time the District has maintained an average fund balance of 11.9 percent, well above the Board of Trustee's (Board) required 6 percent reserve. This balance has afforded the District with the fiscal stability needed to set institutional priorities and support educational improvements for students.

For fiscal year 2009-2010, the Board adopted an unrestricted general fund budget with projected revenues of $51,225,852 and projected expenditures of $51,401,698. The projected ending balance was $7,364,679, which is 12.5 percent of the total unrestricted general fund. Of the projected expenditures, 82.5 percent is allocated to salaries and benefits.

California, like the rest of the nation, is mired in an economic downturn that is expected to last for a few more years. Assembly Bill X4 1 revises the 2009-2010 Budget Act to include categorical flexibility language for the programs' operations, program requirements and reporting from 2009-2010 through 2012-2013 **(IIID.02).** The language in this assembly bill is the Legislature's projection for the duration of this economic downturn. Merced College has begun its planning strategies to address revenue reductions with limited opportunities for generating additional revenues.

It is important to note that fiscal year 2009-2010 is the second consecutive year community colleges have not received a cost of living adjustment (COLA) and for the first time in decades all growth funding has been removed from the state budget act. In addition, a state apportionment shortfall, totaling $192 million or 3.35 percent of the general apportionment revenues, was reduced from each community college district. The negative fiscal impact on Merced College is $1,672,701 **(IIID.03).** Categorical programs were subjected to severe revenue reductions which prompted Assembly Bill X4 1. For Merced College, selected categorical programs were reduced from $6.820 million to $4.07 million for a net reduction of $2.749 million or 40.3 percent **(IIID.04).** The State Budget Act had initially allocated $130 million of the 2009 American Re-

covery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to support categorical programs from the severity of the revenue reductions. However, the ARRA funds were based on a federal calculation and community colleges only received $35 million of the promised $130 million. For Merced College, the allocation declined from a projected $1,379,864 to $337,736. This reduction of categorical revenue has resulted in additional burden being absorbed into the District's unrestricted general fund as the College tries to maintain an acceptable level of service to students and its educational programs.

The Enrollment Management Team, formerly Management and Planning for Long-term Enrollment, is developing strategies to plan for growth and, in times of recession, plan for the reduction of sections while maintaining the integrity of instructional programs **(IIID.05).** This committee plans strategies that will be used for college outreach and marketing efforts. From fiscal year 1998-1999 to 2008-2009, the District's FTES increased by 29.1 percent, moving the District from a small to a medium district generating over 10,000 FTES.

The District resource allocation process provides a means for setting priorities for funding institutional improvements. This is most notable when looking at the District's fiscally conservative approach when spending the voter-approved Proposition 39 bonds on facility improvement and new construction projects. The building program has leveraged $56.56 million of bond dollars with $53.41 million of state dollars, and $2.57 million in local funds to construct $112.54 million in construction projects. One of these projects, the Business Resource Center, provides an instructional and professional service presence in the downtown area. On the west side of Merced County, the District built the new Los Banos Campus on 120 acres of donated land. The new campus has laboratory facilities that the previous 10 acre modular building site did not offer. Each of the construction projects was planned, constructed and completed with the outcome designed to meet the needs of our students.

Self Evaluation

Merced College's largest revenue source is state funding. The depressed economy and projected slow economic recovery will translate into reduced state funding for at least the next three to five years. In addition, political divisions and the inability of the governor and Legislature to agree on a common and effective budget resolution will also continue into the foreseeable future. The impact of these two factors will likely mean that budgets for most community colleges will continue to diminish.

The long-term economic downturn that California is currently experiencing requires extensive planning and meaningful strategies to address current and future shortfalls while maintaining the District's core mission. The District's shared governance committees, coupled with strong Trustees-approved fiscal policies, will assist the institution in moving forward and addressing these current challenges.

The District has sufficient reserves to ensure the support of its educational programs and services in the short-term. The District receives 93.1 percent of its unrestricted general fund revenue from the generation of full-time equivalent students (FTES), which is dependent upon the health of state revenues. Drastic cuts to the categorical programs that serve our most disadvantaged students will provide new challenges to the College in meeting their needs.

The budget planning process promotes participation by the entire college community. The Budget Committee develops the annual budget that supports the operations and provides for all short-term and long-term obligations to ensure fiscal stability. Area deans and financial managers monitor their respective budgets in a manner that ensures the fiscal integrity of the College.

There will be more emphasis placed on grant and contract development to generate additional revenues for college programs during this economic downturn. The Economic and Workforce Development program and contract education, working with the director of Grants Development & Institutional Research, will be integral for the generation of new revenues.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.1.
The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.

IIID.1.a.
Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.

Descriptive Summary

Financial planning at Merced College is integrated with and supports institutional planning. Board Policy 6200 *Budget Preparation* states "The annual budget shall support the District's master and educational plans" **(IIID.06).** The tools that drive financial planning include the Educational and Facilities Master Plan 2001, program review, institutional learning outcomes, and the adopted budget. Program review is built at the department level with each academic department receiving an annual update of enrollment data, student equity, student success, and core indicators (if applicable). The data incorporating SLO assessment information is the foundation used to complete program reviews on a five-year cycle. An annual program review process is scheduled to start in 2011.

Fiscal planning oversight is led by the Budget Committee, which is composed of all college constituent groups including senior administration, management team, faculty senate, faculty association, classified senate, classified bargaining group and students. As part of the shared governance structure, the Budget Committee ensures that the budget planning process supports institutional goals and is linked to other institutional planning efforts.

The Budget Committee also develops the budget calendar, which provides the timelines to be used in the development and delivery of the budget to the Board **(IIID.07)**. The steps in the budget development process are outlined in the procedures for budget development **(IIID.08).**

The Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC) serves as the oversight committee for all college master planning committees to:

- Ensure a student-centered focus
- Evaluate institutional resource requests forwarded by other master planning committees

- Recommend resource allocations to the president
- Foster communication among master planning committees
- Ensure that institutional outcomes are evaluated and implemented **(IIID.09)**

The College's master plan, as developed by EMPC, establishes the institution's goals, which are compiled from goals established by the other subsidiary planning committees: Instructional (IMPC), Student Services (SSMPC), Administrative Services (ASMPC), Facilities (FMPC), and Technology and Research (TRMPC). The goal of the master plan is to direct financial planning. Funds that are spent at the College must be tied to the master plan, as well as to the mission and goals set by the Board. Each master planning committee submits a list of priorities to address SLOs, program review, institutional SLOs and sustainability requirements. The recommendations are forwarded to EMPC, which then evaluates and validates the priorities on the basis of the institutional SLOs **(IIID.10)**. Evidence that the budget is directed toward achieving institutional plans and goals can be found in documents such as the annual budget and program review reports **(IIID.11)**.

In Cadence with the Future, the Educational and Facilities Master Plan, projects facilities requirements that will reach an enrollment forecast of over 18,500 students by 2040. Since its adoption, the plan's project list has driven the District's resource allocations. In 2002, the Board approved $65.43 million in bonds (Measures H & J) for capital improvement projects that significantly increased the College's ability to implement projects listed in the facilities master plan.

Self Evaluation

The College's planning process is integrated with and supports institutional planning. EMPC and Budget Committee subcommittees have met on several occasions to ensure integration of the budget development calendar, the master planning calendar and the program review cycle. The resource allocation process through EMPC and program review has led to a deeper and necessary integration of planning to ensure all college entities are guided through a timely planning process that addresses institutional priorities.

The College's current program review cycle is five years rather than an annual review. The process is currently manual, but the College is working toward an annual electronic program review process to include instruction, student services, technology and administrative services. The process will also evaluate the prior year's augmentations used in meeting its desired outcomes. This review will provide evidence that the College's finances are supporting institutional planning.

Merced College's planning and budgeting process integrates institutional planning with fiscal planning to support the integrated master plan's mission and goals. The College's established culture of annual and ongoing planning is based on its mission and goals, program reviews, planned expenditures by the executive team, Board goals that drive budget development, and resource allocation decisions. Decisions affecting financial resource distribution are derived from the collaborative efforts of all constituents.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.1.b.
Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.

Descriptive Summary

The District's institutional planning reflects a realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships and expenditure requirements. In an institution the size of Merced College, which has a reputation for academic excellence, the demand for continuous improvement and innovation exceeds the financial resources available. Thus, the necessity of linking financial planning to institutional goals has become paramount and has resulted in an effective and crucial planning model. The integration of the educational master planning model, the budget development process, and program review brings credibility to the institutional planning process and allows for accurate information regarding available funds. EMPC receives budget updates from the chair of the Budget Committee as determined by the planning calendar. These updates include budget assumptions, available resource allocation of funds, reviews of the preliminary, tentative, and final budgets prior to Board approval.

Under the leadership of the vice president of Administrative Services, the budget process has become more transparent and the availability of budget information throughout the year is more widespread, reaching most campus constituents. To illustrate this point, the Budget Committee now has a complete review of the quarterly financial report (CCFS 311) that informs the committee of the actual unrestricted general fund revenue and expenses, compares these numbers to the adopted budget, identifies whether or not a prudent reserve of 5 percent exists, and identifies any future anticipated fiscal commitments. In addition, budget forums are held to inform the wider campus community. The Board receives monthly budget presentations, quarterly budget updates are published to the campus community, and Budget 101 lessons are held on campus allowing participation from all constituent groups.

As detailed above, Budget Committee members are provided regular updates regarding current financial information impacting the current budget, as well as projections for budget development. The committee uses this information to make recommendations regarding current budget expenditures and how to address changes that might affect future budgets. It is the committee's responsibility to inform EMPC of the availability of financial resources. When EMPC is informed of available funds, it provides a list of priorities to the president and the Board recommending funding for institutional improvements.

EMPC focuses financial resources on student learning. This is driven by EMPC's first goal, which is to develop and maintain an instructional process that provides students with appropriate and effective modes of instruction **(IIID.12)**. This focus on student learning is further supported by an institutional goal stating, "it is an institutional goal to designate the largest share of fiscal resources possible to expenditures that directly support students" **(IIID.13).**

College revenue calculations are developed in conjunction with the Assumptions Committee, a Budget Committee subcommittee. All supporting documentation (State Apportionment P2, Apportionment Attendance Report - CCFS-320 with supplemental information, contracts, grants and state budget) are used to develop the College's current year revenue. Due to the conservative nature of the College, the adopted budget does not include any provision for full-time equivalent students (FTES) growth. Growth budgets for FTES are built separately and submitted to the Board at a later date. In past years, when growth funds were available, the Board took action at an open meeting providing the transparency to the college community of its growth plans to generate FTES.

The reserve at the time of budget adoption is explained in terms of the Reserve for Contingency (6 percent of the total available in the unrestricted general fund), Set Aside for On-going Expenditures and Set Aside for One-time Expenditures. For many years, there have been insufficient on-going dollars to address the need for growth, to restore past expenditure budget reductions, or program enhancements when the state's economy had declined. Departments began using one-time allocations to pay for on-going expenditures necessary for daily operations. The College is addressing this past practice to assure that operating budgets are sufficient to run the College without relying on one-time funding. Future one-time budgets will truly be for one-time items.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to pursue external funding from local, state and federal sources. Those writing and applying for grants are encouraged, but not required, to coordinate with the director of Grants Development and Institutional Research. The approval of area deans or department managers and the appropriate vice president is required before grants may be submitted on the Contract Request Form (MC 2141). The vice presidents review the grant proposals to assure that the grant meets the educational goals and mission of the College prior to submitting to the president for signature.

Self Evaluation

The District plans and acts conservatively with regard to budget assumptions for revenues and expenditures, using sources from general and categorical funds. Decisions are made after much college wide dialogue and input at all levels, aligning planning priorities and realistic needs analyses.

The College encouraged and supported staff and faculty to develop grants and contracts as a means to increase its revenue. Departments and individuals worked independently to develop grants and contracts without any coordination as to how they fit within the District's mission and institutional SLOs. The College does not have a review process that can be used to assess the total available resources with expenditure requirements, and which tie together grants, contracts, and categorical programs with the unrestricted general fund.

Planning Agenda

- The District will develop Board policy and administrative procedures for the development and handling of grants by July 1, 2010. The procedures will include a designated individual responsible for monitoring all grants to ensure a coherent and compliant

grants program, and create a single repository for all grants. It will define the role of the Budget Committee in the acceptance of and participation in grants and contracts.

IIID.1.c.
When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College takes into account long-range financial priorities when making short-term financial plans, identifying and planning for payment of liabilities and future obligations. To assure financial stability, the District is committed to maintaining significant reserves to meet long-range financial priorities. The California Community College Chancellor's Office recommends a 5 percent unrestricted general fund reserve. The District has maintained a reserve between 9 percent and 15 percent for the last 10 years and is committed to maintaining adequate general fund reserves throughout the fiscal year. The current fiscal crisis at the state level, the anticipated Title 5 Code of Regulations changes regarding non-vocational, recreational, non-credit PE classes, along with the legislative analyst's prediction that the budget situation will not improve until 2014-2015, threatens the maintenance of such reserves.

The principle of maintaining long-term fiscal stability has been publicly stated not only by the Board, but also by all negotiating groups as one of the mutual interests arrived at through inter-est based bargaining **(IIID.14).**

The District's annual resource allocation process uses one-time unrestricted general funds that flow through the five master planning committees (ASMPC, IMPC, TRMPC, SSMPC and FMPC) to address resource requests tied to program review, institutional SLOs and sustainabil-ity requirements. EMPC serves as the oversight committee for all master planning committees, ensuring that short- and long-range resource allocations are student-centered. EMPC recom-mends directly to the president, who represents the Board. Prior to 2009-2010 fiscal year, this process took place after the adoption of the final budget in September. The vice president of Administrative Services, with consensus from the President's Cabinet and Budget Committee, has changed this process to align with the budget development calendar and therefore, gain Board approval for a complete operational budget in the 2010-2011 fiscal year. This change in process provides a realistic budget of the College's short-range operational financial plans, and allows the District to effectively engage in a long-range planning cycle **(IIID.15).**

The Budget Committee advises EMPC, the president, and the Board of short-and long-term funds available for expenditure and revenue projections. The Budget Committee accomplishes its mission by:

- Educating the campus community about the status of the budget through shared gover-nance representation and dialogue **(IIID.16)**

- Assessing current District revenues and expenditures to develop projected revenues and expenditures for the current and future academic years

- Reviewing the draft budget as presented by the Assumptions and Planned Expenditures Committees, which is based on priorities established by EMPC

The District has determined that Budget Committee accountability is designed to be an integrated and circular process consisting of surveying the current environment related to revenues and expenses, anticipating changes in program area needs for revenue and expenses, making assumptions related to future revenue and expenses, and evaluating the correctness of the planned expenditures and assumptions.

All long-term obligations are budgeted and reported in the notes to the financial statements in the annual district audit. The two largest of these obligations are the Proposition 39, General Obligations (GO) Bonds for Schools Facilities Improvement District (SFID) #1 (Measure H) and SFID #2 (Measure J) approved by the voters in November 2002. SFID #1 was authorized by the voters in the amount of $53,500,000 for the Merced Campus and SFID #2 in the amount of $11,930,000 for the new Los Banos Campus. The District has sold $45,000,000 of the SFID #1's authorized allocation and all of SFID #2's authorized amount. These bond funds have been used to construct the new campus in Los Banos, the new Business Resource Center (BRC), in downtown Merced, and for the construction and renovations of buildings on the Merced campus.

Lease purchase agreements and other financing sources has funded the latest energy saving measures, as well as replacement of the District's network system, campus wide fiber optics, servers that house the District's software, and Print Service's high speed copiers. The District has determined that computer technology and the Print Services' copiers are to be replaced every five years. The payment of all debt is given the highest priority for funding and, in the case of the energy saving measures; the revenue source is the unrestricted general fund.

In June 1992, the District established the Retiree Health Benefit Fund to begin setting aside dollars for Post Employee Retirement Benefits (PERB) with an initial investment of $250,000 **(IIID.17).** In 2004, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued GASB Statement No. 45 *Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions* for local public agencies. This new accounting standard is the result of growing concern that public agencies were not recognizing the total cost of promised post-employment health benefits for retired employees in their annual financial statements, and thus not assessing the potential impact of these growing liabilities on future cash flow. An actuarial study of the District's retiree health benefit liability was completed on September 21, 2005. The actuarial study indicated that if the District pre-funded its retiree health benefits as it had with its pensions, the District would have had to set aside $63,867,650 to meet this liability, referred to as the "actuarial accrued liability."

On February 7, 2006, the District adopted its plan to fund the PERB obligation **(IIID.18).** In 2005, the District joined the Community College League of California (CCLC) Retiree Health Benefits Joint Powers Agency (JPA) to invest its post-retiree health benefit funds in a pooled investment program. The Retiree Health Benefits JPA provides an irrevocable trust for the deposit of the District's PERB. Merced College has also negotiated with the employee bargaining groups to reduce its post-retirement health benefit liability, moving from lifetime benefits to age 65 for classified hired after February 1, 1989, and faculty and management team members hired after January 1, 1991. The District has negotiated other changes affecting retiree health benefits

that have further reduced the PERB liability, including rules about addition of dependents, moving to a three-tier rate structure that reduced costs, changing language for Part A Medicare recipients, and changing employee deductibles.

For the latest actuarial study for the period ending August 1, 2009, the actuarial accrued liability is estimated to be $52,359,974. As of April 27, 2010, the District has already set aside $5,506,602 or 10.2 percent towards funding the other post employment benefits liability. In 2009-2010, the annual contribution of $427,115 came from the unrestricted general fund and represents less than 1 percent of this budget. The District plans to continue its current funding policy into the foreseeable future. Given the present funding level, projections indicate that in 30 years the District's debt funding will match the remaining liability. The reduction in actuarial accrued liability from the 2005 level can be attributed to changes in eligibility requirements for retiree health benefits as negotiated by the District with the employee bargaining groups.

Self Evaluation

Payments of long-term liabilities and obligations are included in both short- and long-term financial planning. While general apportionment for community colleges was reduced by 3.35 percent and categorical funding was reduced by over 40 percent during the past year, Merced College was able to respond to these reductions while maintaining its core instructional programs and student services. The College took measures to freeze vacant positions, reduce travel to "mission critical only," and other cost saving measures. As positions become vacant, only those positions deemed mission critical will be approved for replacement. Even in bad budget years, the College was able to address budget concerns with the allocation of $1.1 million to address institutional goals and sustainability needs. In prior years, the College had allocated all one-time dollars in excess of the Board's required 6 percent reserve; however, due to the California's fiscal condition and the uncertainty of funding, only $1.1 million of the $3.6 million available was allocated in fiscal year 2009-2010. The remaining $2.6 million was held to address future economic uncertainties and the unlikely funding of growth and COLA in the 2010-2011 state budget. Board Policy 6200 requires a 6 percent reserve, which is 1 percent above the prudent reserve required by the Chancellor's Office. Over the last five years, the District's unrestricted general fund reserve has been greater than 10 percent.

EMPC and the Budget Committee have moved to an integrated process that more closely links planning to the budget. The campus community is more knowledgeable about resource allocation processes and shared governance committees continue to evaluate the outcomes of the current master planning model.

Long-term payments for liabilities and future obligations for the general obligation bonds have no impact on the unrestricted general fund. Future principal and interest payments are made through taxes levied against voters in Merced and Madera counties. Lease/Purchase agreements have been self-sustaining through budget savings.

The College will continue to provide for an actuarial study every two years to assess retiree health benefits and determine the amount of unfunded liability. While the College has taken measures to reduce its total unfunded liability through negotiations, it will continue to review all sources and options to further reduce this liability.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.1.d.
The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget developments, with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.

Descriptive Summary

The preparation and presentation of the annual budget is one of the most significant responsibilities of a community college district. At Merced College, budget information is shared in an open and transparent manner through a number of avenues, including campus budget forums, quarterly budget updates through the Administrative Services newsletter, the launching of Budget 101 sessions, monthly budget updates to the Board , periodic updates at President's Cabinet, weekly updates at Vice President's Council, detailed budget committee meeting agendas and minutes, and comprehensive review of quarterly and annual financial statements (311Q & 311) with EMPC and the Budget Committee **(IIID.19) (IIID.20) (IIID.21) (IIID.22) (IIID.23) (IIID.24).**

The Budget Committee is a shared governance committee composed of representatives from senior administrators, managers, Faculty Senate, Faculty Association, Classified Senate, the classified bargaining group, and students, and includes voting members, ex-officio members, and staff. Its central charge is to act as a resource to the president and the Board in establishing the framework for the College budget. The first step in the budget development process is the establishment of a well-defined budget calendar outlining when each component of the budget is to be completed and the responsibility for completion. Publication of this document notifies the College community of the process to be used for developing the budget. The Budget Committee creates the budget structure, including projected revenues and expenditures, with input from three subcommittees, including the Anticipation Committee, Planned Expenditures Committee, and the Assumptions Committee **(IIID.25)**.

The Anticipations Committee provides information from member constituents concerning anticipated needs for their respective areas and forwards the list of anticipated needs to the Assumptions Committee, which develops a short- and long-term projection of revenues and expenditures. The revenues and expenditures list is presented to the Budget Committee for review and approval. The Planned Expenditures Committee develops a list of planned expenditures critical to the District's operation and mission and includes items not yet funded with ongoing dollars for prioritization with one-time dollars. The list is submitted to the Assumptions Committee and a meeting with the Planned Expenditures Committee is sometimes required for further explanation. Planned Expenditures Committee membership is continuous and includes the president and all vice presidents. The Assumptions Committee makes budget assumptions based on historical data, printed documentation, state sources, and other related financial information and creates a summary of projected revenues and expenditures for the following year's budget, including a list of planned expenditures submitted by the Planned Expenditures Committee. The Assumptions Committee reviews the list of planned expenditures and assumptions and

accepts or modifies it as needed. Once consensus is reached, the committee forwards its recommendation to the president. The information provided by these committees is presented to the Budget Committee to accept, reject, or modify for inclusion in the development of the budget.

Starting with the 2010-2011 fiscal year, a well-established budget development process was introduced to budget managers to gain more input into the budget process. Departments begin the budget cycle by preparing budget requests in three areas: 1) position control verification, 2) ongoing discretionary budgets and, 3) budget augmentations based on inflationary increases for such items as supplies, maintenance agreements, fees and permits, and services. Budget worksheets are distributed three times in preliminary, tentative, and final phases during the budget building process for review and modification. Position control worksheets are critical to the process, with careful consideration given to overload and adjunct assignments. Ongoing discretionary budgets are not allowed to exceed the prior year's allocation, and augmentation worksheets are only completed for inflationary reasons. All budget worksheets require vice presidential review and then are submitted to the Business Office for input. Business Services provides budget input for all increases in liabilities, such as the costs of health and welfare benefits and worker's compensation insurance.

Self Evaluation

The College's budget information is widely disseminated. The state budget, as it affects the college budget, is distributed broadly through the Budget Committee, Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Vice Presidents' Council, Management Team, EMPC, and Direct Management Group meetings. Online reports, email updates, preliminary, tentative and final budgets are made available to the campus community via the college intranet. All Budget Committee meeting minutes are available, along with minutes from all Board meetings. Expenditure reports are available online, and detailed reports are distributed if requested. The president emails campus wide updates from the CCLC as well as memos from the Chancellor's Office with updates on legislation and current state budget information. Additionally, a campus budget forum held early in 2009-2010 shared budget news and the potential impact of the state fiscal crisis on Merced College. All faculty, staff and students are invited to attend the budget forums.

Currently, the vice president of Administrative Services offers Budget 101 workshops to the campus community. The objectives are to

- Become familiar with key aspects of California community college finance
- Become familiar with the Budget and Accounting Manual
- Understand Merced College's Budget Development/Resource Allocation Processes
- Understand financial and other reporting requirements (local, state and federal level)
- Understand Fiscal Standards IIID under the accreditation process
- Know where to find reference materials.

The Budget Committee remains active in the continual flow of open dialogue and relevant discussions that affect the College's planning and resource allocation processes.

Regular financial updates, including the fiscal health of the current budget, as well as projec-

tions for the developing budget, are provided to committee members. The committee uses this information to make recommendations regarding current budget expenditures and how to address changes that might affect future budgets. The Budget Committee informs EMPC of the availability of financial resources, providing an essential link of planning to budget/resource allocation. When EMPC receives the financial information, it provides a prioritized list of recommending funding for institutional improvements to the president and the Board.

Merced College has well-defined guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development based upon the College's mission, values and goals. These open processes provide opportunities for participation by all college constituents.

The college budget process follows the planning and budget cycle described in the EMPC Master Plan. The budget calendar provides a clear timeline of when budget managers can expect certain information to be available and dates when items are due.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.2.
To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.

IIID.2.a.
Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflects appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

The District utilizes Datatel software for its financial management system. This fully integrated system assists in maintaining appropriate internal controls over financial resources. Datatel also provides employees access to a variety of financial information, as well as the ability to generate various reports. Transactions are posted at least daily and employees have immediate, online access to view the status of district accounts. Financial accounts are in real time, as accounts are updated as each transaction occurs. For example, as managers generate a requisition, the obligation is immediately recorded against their unencumbered funds.

Upon Board approval, the director of Business Services uses Datatel to populate each departmental budget for the new fiscal year. Transfer or expenditure requests from available funds can be initiated by either departmental staff or the Business Office. Available funds can be reduced by a variety of ways, including budget transfers and revisions, vendor payments, internal journal entry transactions, or purchase encumbrances and requisitions. Prior to completion of the process, each type of transaction normally must be approved by the director of Business Services, director of Fiscal Services, or an appropriate level of management.

In general, Datatel will not allow vendor payments, encumbrances, or requisitions to be pro-

cessed when accounts do not have sufficient available funds. However, budget transfers/revisions and journal entries can be completed, which might overdraw accounts. All expenditure accounts are periodically monitored during the fiscal year to identify those overdrawn. Overdrawn accounts are communicated to the budget manager for correction, and are typically handled with a budget transfer.

Budget managers and other involved staff are strongly encouraged to monitor their accounts on a regular basis to ensure that transactions are reflected accurately and timely. To support this fiscal monitoring, the Business Office provides Datatel training for new staff or for those managers and support staff who want to improve their knowledge and use of this software system. The Business Office reviews any concerns or questions.

The Budget Committee includes projected revenues and expenditures in the final budget structure and provides a summary of the available on-going and one-time funds to EMPC to address and support institutional SLOs. EMPC's outcomes accountability is designed to be an integrated and circular process consisting of a thorough evaluation of institutional SLOs, resource allocations and coordination of resource requests between master planning committees, including prioritization of all requests. The vice president of Administrative Services provides a District quarterly financial status report to the Board and the Budget Committee.

The District uses an external public accounting firm to perform its annual audit as required by Education Code Section 84040 (b). The primary purpose of the audit is to express an opinion on whether the District's collective financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects. In addition, the audit assesses the District's internal controls related to financial reporting and tests its compliance with certain provisions of law, regulation, contract, grant agreement and other matters.

In forming their opinion and assessing internal controls, auditors examine the District's supporting documentation and test various samples of underlying transactions. Minor, immaterial audit findings are communicated to management for resolution. All significant, material audit findings are included in the final audit report presented to the Board. These findings are reviewed and responded to by the Audit Committee, a Board subcommittee.

Formal responses to findings are provided and included in the final audit report. In addition, circumstances that led to the original findings are monitored during the subsequent fiscal year to ensure appropriate compliance and to avoid repeat occurrences.

Self Evaluation

Financial documents reflect appropriate use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services.

Datatel, the College's integrated computer software, has appropriate control mechanisms and is capable of producing dependable and timely resource allocation and expenditures information for sound financial decision-making. Finance, along with a number of other departments, is currently assessing Datatel to determine which capabilities need enhancement, including the underdeveloped Human Resources Module. Updating this module would substantially assist with the position control module and provide additional budget information for the campus community.

Upon notification of an audit finding, the District makes every effort to correct it in a timely manner, and should a finding be reported during the pre-audit, the District will make the correction prior to the completion of the audit. Audit reports subsequent to the year of the finding will report whether the District has fully implemented the recommendation.

In the 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 fiscal year audits, the findings totaled one, four, and three respectively. In 2006-2007, the audit finding was a state compliance issue that requires the District to include all instructional service agreements in the schedule of classes. This finding was corrected.

In 2007-2008, the District had to address four audit findings, three of which concerned internal controls and one federal compliance finding. The first internal control finding was to correct the District practice of not recording the accrual for construction retention on capital outlay projects. The second finding recommended that the District track construction-in-progress throughout the year rather than at the end of the year in preparation of closing of the books. The third finding was that Information Technology Services does not have formal procedures or documentation for managing access and security within Datatel. The federal compliance finding involved the Return to Title IV (R2T4) for a financial aid student that had dropped all of their classes. The refund (transfer) to the federal government exceeded 45 days. The findings, except for the establishment of procedures and documentation of security in Datatel, were corrected.

In 2008-2009, the District had two new findings and one repeat finding. The repeat finding was for the lack of progress on the formal procedures and documentation for managing access and security within Datatel. The District was in the process of creating security procedures using the software Altiris' Workflow; however, the software company sold its product making this a non-viable option. The District is working with Datatel for a workflow product to resolve this issue. The two new findings are state compliance issues. The first was for concurrent enrollment involving a student enrolled in an off-campus class for which proper documents were not verified. The second finding was that the student health fee exemption was not included in a Board Policy nor was the procedure for claiming the exemption. The two state compliance items have been corrected.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.2.b.
Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Financial information is provided throughout the institution through a number of different pathways. The annual budget is posted on both the Budget Committee's webpage for access by the college community and the Merced College webpage for students and the public. The campus community has access to specific budget details in quarterly and annual financial statements (311Q and 311) posted on the college intranet. The public can find this information in Board documents. Monthly budget reports are presented to the Board in public sessions, and

these updates include any changes to the current budget and the projected impact of legislation on district budgets. Annual audits are also presented in public sessions and copies of the audit report are provided to the College's constituent groups. Datatel users have open access to all their financial transactions. These transactions include budget transfers, expenditures, encumbrances, and requisitions in process. The Business Office provides detailed accounting information to managers and select staff by upon request. Individuals with access to Datatel can run line-item reports for all funds. For individuals and the public without Datatel access, copies can be requested from the Business Office. Fiscal updates from the Chancellor's Office are emailed to the campus community by the president. The Business Services manager has met with several deans and directors and set up open meetings to help explain and distribute updated budget information for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscal years. In addition to the webpage, copies of the annual budgets and audits are provided to the Learning Resources Center (LRC) for student, staff and general public viewing. Copies of these documents are available upon request and they are also available in an electronic format.

The Budget Committee is the primary channel for disseminating financial and budget information to the college community. Representatives from each constituent group serve on the committee, which meets on a regular basis to discuss the latest budget information from the state and the Chancellor's Office. Meeting minutes are available to anyone on campus to review. Reports are given at EMPC and at various constituent group meetings to keep campus staff and students informed **(IIID.26).**

Starting with planning for the 2010-2011 fiscal year, a well-established budget development process was introduced to budget managers in order to gain more input into the budget process. Departments begin the budget cycle by preparing budget requests in three areas: 1) position control verifications; 2) ongoing discretionary budgets; and 3) budget augmentations based on inflationary increases for such items as supplies, maintenance agreements, fees and permits, and services. Budget worksheets are distributed three times in preliminary, tentative, and final phases during the budget building process for review and modification. Position control worksheets are the critical starting point of the process with careful consideration given to overload and adjunct assignments. Ongoing discretionary budgets are not allowed to exceed the prior year allocation and augmentation worksheets are only completed for inflationary reasons. All budget worksheets require vice presidential review and are then submitted to the Fiscal Services office for input. Fiscal Services provides budget input for all increases in liabilities, such as the costs of health and welfare benefits and worker's compensation insurance.

Self Evaluation

Budget and financial information are widely disseminated through budget forums, Budget 101 sessions, Administrative Services quarterly newsletter, Budget Committee and department meetings, distribution of the preliminary, tentative and adopted budgets, distribution of audit reports, and monthly PowerPoint presentations at public board meetings. All financial information is easily accessed through the district intranet. Business Office staff members provide all available resource information to faculty and staff upon request and frequently meet to discuss this information with campus groups during the fiscal year. Fiscal transparency allows the College to measure and modify its ability to distribute budget and financial reports effectively and consistently.

Further, Merced College is redesigning its webpage to be more user-friendly to staff, students and the public. All information concerning the educational programs and the administration of the College, including financial information, will be posted on the webpage and will be made available for public access.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.2.c.
The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

Descriptive Summary

The State of California is currently facing an unprecedented revenue shortfall. The severity of the economic downturn has impacted all entities that rely on state funding, including community colleges. Unlike previous economic downturns lasting a year to 18 months, California is expected to be in an economic recession for a much longer period.

The District's 2009/2010 fiscal year budget is being impacted in the following ways: 1) state apportionment deferrals of $703 million from 2009/2010 to 2010/2011, 2) elimination of all growth funds, 3) no Cost-of-Living adjustment, 4) drastic cuts to categorical programs, ranging from 27-54 percent, and 5) reduction of 3.35 percent ($1,672,701) of general apportionment funding. In addition, there remains the possibility of additional property tax and student fee shortfalls and additional apportionment reductions due to increases in unpaid growth.

Merced College has developed expenditure reduction strategies to address the impact of these cuts: 1) not filling current vacant positions, 2) only filling mission critical positions as they become vacant during the fiscal year, 3) reduction of instructional class sections to reduce the FTES workload measure, 4) reduction or elimination of non-critical expenditures and travel, and 5) reduction of personnel. During these uncertain economic times, these cost reduction measures will greatly assist the College in maintaining adequate cash flow to meet its financial obligations.

The Chancellor's Office defines a prudent reserve as 5 percent of the restricted and unrestricted general fund expenditures. Historically, the College is fiscally conservative in its approach to spending. Board Policy BP 6200 requires unrestricted general fund reserves to be budgeted at no less than 6 percent, unless changed by Board action. This reserve helps provide the cash flow necessary to meet operational expenditures and allows the College to participate in categorical programs that operate on a reimbursement basis. This approach has allowed the District to easily attain the Board-stipulated reserve over the years, and have sufficient cash flow for operations when the State began its cash deferral method of funding community colleges.

The District also utilizes Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRAN) to protect and manage its cash flow. The College participates in the CCLC TRAN program, providing pooled financing options at a minimal cost. The funds are typically made available in July, with half the pro-

ceeds required to be repaid in January and the remaining balance due in April. A new challenge for community colleges will begin in 2009/2010 when inter-year cash deferrals will total $703 million, coupled with the annual $200 million end-of-year cash deferral. In addition to the traditional TRAN, the College will explore with the CCLC the necessity for a separate mid-year TRAN, or a different type of borrowing instrument. The decision to participate in a mid-year TRAN program will depend upon any mid-year revenue reductions by the State and the results of cash flow projections.

Merced College's risk management program is under the direction of the vice president of Administrative Services. The College is part of the Valley Insurance Program Joint Powers Authority (VIPJPA), along with the State Center and Yosemite community college district, for its property, liability, auto, and workers comp insurance. Under VIPJPA guidelines, the College maintains adequate property and liability insurance. College representatives on the VIPJPA, include a Board of Trustees member, the vice president of Administrative Services, the college president (or an alternate member) and the Human Resources director. The Health and Safety Committee is responsible for the College's injury and illness prevention program. The College is moving its risk management program under the Office of Human Resources, which will oversee the District's health and safety program, risk management, workers comp, and will develop and monitor its safety training programs.

Self Evaluation

Merced College is maintaining a larger reserve balance than is required by Board policy to ensure sufficient cash balances and to conduct all College business without interfering with the instructional process. The College is participating in the CCLC's 2009-2010 TRAN program and has issued $5 million in bonds. In anticipation of the magnitude of the deferrals imposed upon community colleges, the Board approved the issuance of up to $15 million in bonds. Should cash flow projections reflect the need for a mid-year TRAN, the College has authorization to participate and prevent any interruption of instruction.

The College has not experienced any unforeseen emergencies in the last several years. Both physical and financial emergencies have been addressed due in large part to the healthy reserve of the unrestricted general fund and bond program proceeds.

The College maintains a reasonable cash balance and monitors its cash flow to ensure adequate funds for payroll and payment of expenditures. In addition, the Business Office conducts ongoing cash flow analyses, reporting the results to the President's Cabinet and the Board. Managing cash flow has been a high priority since 2008-2009 due to delays in adoption of the state budget, and most recently, the state deferral in monthly appropriations.

The District maintains adequate insurance to protect itself against risks and potential liability. Staff continually review unforeseen budget circumstances and plans are in place to meet financial emergencies.

The Board-approved Disaster Response, Evacuation, and Security plans are currently under review and will be combined into one Emergency Operations Plan.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.2.d.
The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

Descriptive Summary

The vice president of Administrative Services provides general oversight of the College's finances, while the directors of Business Services and Fiscal Services are responsible for day-to-day fiscal management. Vice presidents, deans, managers, categorical accounting technicians, and other Business Office staff provide further oversight. An independent CPA firm conducts an annual audit of all financial records and internal controls. An opinion is rendered on the financial position of various college funds, as well as the adequacy of accounting procedures, safeguards, and internal controls.

The District, including auxiliary organizations, adheres to the California Community Colleges Accounting and Budgeting Manual, the California Education Code, Chancellor's Office guidelines, and Generally-Accepted Accounting Principles in the management and accounting of its financial resources. The District's Business Office establishes and maintains internal control practices that support financial integrity and ensures that financial resources are used for institutional programs and services.

The director of Financial Aid has responsibility for all financial aid programs. Financial Aid processes thousands of applications annually, adhering to federal and state regulations governing the financial aid program. As required by law, the financial aid program undergoes an annual compliance audit. Financial Aid packages and awards financial aid for students; however, the Business Office has the responsibility to generate financial aid checks, collect student debt and over payments, and physically disburse checks to students. Financial Aid works closely with the Business Office to reconcile awards and disbursements after each grant payday, including "Return to Title 4" funds.

A wide range of interest groups participate in the College's auxiliary activities and fundraising efforts. Interest groups include athletics, fine and performing arts, other campus departments and student organizations. The Merced College Foundation, an auxiliary 501 (c) 3 corporation with its own Board of Directors, is the District's major fundraising entity that collects and oversees donations, bequests and charitable gifts for the benefit of the College, faculty, and students. A Finance Committee, operating under the Board of Directors, meets quarterly to monitor the Foundation's operational budget, review the Foundation's investments and cash reserves, approve scholarship disbursements, authorize creation of new foundation accounts or endowments, and review quarterly and annual financial statements. The Foundation's accounts are also subject to an annual audit, independent of the annual College audit **(IIID.27).**

California and federal regulations and contract provisions are strictly adhered to in the over-

sight of grants, contracts and other categorically funded programs. Program directors and appropriate vice presidents or area deans oversee the management of these funds, with assistance from assigned accounting technicians in the Business Office. Expenditure reports are prepared and submitted to the appropriate granting agencies within the required reporting timelines. A monthly Fiscal Services review of other College programs includes review of the Merced College Farm, Child Development Center, Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC), and Community Services. Should fiscal concerns arise in these areas, Fiscal Services staff schedule meetings with appropriate mangers to resolve the issues. Stronger internal control procedures around grants management are currently being established in order to ensure appropriate financial tracking and determination of whether or not the District wants to institutionalize the grant. Dialogue within the Budget Committee has reaffirmed the need to improve in this area of financial resource management **(IIID.28).**

Self Evaluation

Recent reviews by external auditors have resulted in excellent results. The College ensures that all funds from auxiliary activities, including fundraising and grants, are used with integrity in a manner consistent with institutional mission and goals. The appropriate approval processes and review are in place to ensure that grant activities and fundraising efforts support the programs and services of the institution. Evidence of this is found in the annual audit, which is approved by the Board of Trustees.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.2.e.
All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

The Merced College Foundation, operating as an auxiliary organization, supplements the College's mission and goals through various fundraising activities, and administers gifts, bequests, and other revenue to provide scholarships and to enhance the teaching and learning environment. The Foundation's Finance Committee, working with a Merrill Lynch financial adviser, reviews and evaluates fund managers to handle its endowment investments (which total over $1.6 million) and for performance of its fiscally conservative investment policy. Foundation management is performed by the Director of Institutional Advancement, assisted by a part-time staff member.

The Bookstore operates as an Enterprise Fund, with two outlets on the main campus and one at the Los Banos Campus. The Bookstore manager coordinates services at the Los Banos Campus Bookstore to assure that students are well-served. During fiscal year 2008-2009, the Bookstore generated $3.17 million in net sales with an operating loss of $61,314. The Bookstore, like all college bookstores, must compete with on-line providers as well as local booksellers. These providers take profit away from campus bookstore operations, reducing its ability to provide

services, enjoy a profit, or to break even. The new Higher Education Act requires that by July 1, 2010 bookstores will provide online access to a list of current textbooks with associated costs by section number for student review while registering for classes, as well as providing a pilot textbook rental program.

Financial aid is an indirect financial resource providing educational access to students who might not be able to afford their educational costs. Financial aid awards have substantially increased since 2009 due to the general economic downturn and the double digit unemployment rate in Merced and Madera counties.

The Merced College Farm, operating as a Special Revenue Fund, is the Agricultural Department's instructional lab on the Merced campus. The MC Farm operates on approximately 90 acres on the Merced campus and at the 108-acre Krafft Ranch property in Le Grand. These instructional labs provide a practical application to classroom instruction.

All auxiliary, enterprise, special revenue, and grants are coordinated and overseen by program managers, directors, and deans, who report to area vice presidents responsible for approving expenditures that adhere to the College's educational mission. Accounting for these funds resides in the Fiscal Services office and is subject to an external audit and federal and state compliance.

Self Evaluation

All auxiliary activities, fundraising and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. Appropriate approval processes and review are in place to ensure that grant activities and fundraising efforts support the institution's programs and services. Evidence of this is found in the annual audit, approved annually by the Board of Trustees.

The Bookstore has experienced increased competition from outside vendors that have affected its ability to be profitable or break even. It has outgrown its current space on the Merced campus and must use additional areas for online textbook sales, Allied Health textbooks and supplies, and the future requirement for a textbook rental program, which will require each location to add additional staffing.

Planning Agenda

- The Bookstore will work with Administration to develop a strategy to address the new requirements for a textbook rental program as required by the Higher Education Act effective July 1, 2010.

IIID.2.f.
Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 6340 *Contracts* delegates to the president and the vice president of Administrative Services the authority to enter into contracts on behalf of the District **(IIID.29).** The director of

Purchasing is empowered to contract for recurring purchases, services, and maintenance agreements within the limits set by Public Contract Code Section 20651. Contracts are not enforceable until they have been Board-approved and ratified.

Contracts with external agencies are consistent with the College's mission and goals. The College has a variety of contractual agreements, including purchase orders, construction contracts, consultant contracts, service contracts, and lease purchase agreements. Contracts with external entities follow a specific form that maintains institutional integrity.

All grants and contracts are processed using MC Form-1241, a college form that requires review by area deans, department managers, and/or area vice presidents. The review process includes terms and conditions, transfer of risk, insurance requirements, potential long-term commitment and the other items included in contract and grant management. The area vice president's signature was added to the contract form as assurance that the contract being submitted to the Board for approval or ratification is consistent with the College's educational mission and institutional SLOs. The vice president of Administrative Services reviews all contracts, and all require board approval.

The District's purchasing policies define bidding and expenditure limits of purchasing activities. The Purchasing Department is responsible for ensuring the best possible price while adhering to state regulations. The Purchasing Department employs both formal and informal bidding processes, depending on the projected cost of a purchase order and/or if it falls above or below the state-mandated threshold requiring competitive bidding.

Consistent with established district wide procedures, College personnel submit purchase requisitions through Datatel. Each request goes through appropriate channels for authorization. Once authorized, the requisition goes to the Business Office, which checks whether funds are available and whether the purchase is coded correctly. The Purchasing Department then reviews all expenditure requests and arranges for the purchase, ensuring the best price possible. Purchase orders are sent to the Accounts Payable Department for confirmation that the item was received, and then processes the invoice for payment. All purchase orders are Board-approved and recorded in Board minutes for public review.

The Purchasing Department and the Business Office are responsible for reviewing all contractual agreements with external entities for compliance with established codes, regulations, policies and procedures. After review, contract documents are prepared for signature of the vice president of Administrative Services, committing the District to expend or accept receipt of funds. The Purchasing Department follows all established guidelines ensuring that all contractors are licensed and approved to perform the services specified and, when necessary, have appropriate insurance to cover the students, staff and the college.

Self Evaluation

Merced College ensures that all contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with institutional mission and goals. Contractual agreements are entered into and monitored following specified processes. The Business Office ensures that contractual agreements with external entities are carried out properly.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.2.g.
The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.

Descriptive Summary

The College regularly evaluates its financial management processes. Annual audits are the primary external sources for evaluating these processes. Feedback and findings from the audit are used to improve financial management systems. Besides annual audits, many categorical programs, particularly financial aid, undergo specific independent audits. Sources of informal evaluation include feedback from the program review process and the resource allocation process through EMPC. Business Office staff, through the direction of the vice president of Administrative Services, identifies certain financial topics to be examined and reviewed.

The Board of Trustees approves both a tentative budget and an adopted budget each fiscal year. Quarterly and annual financial statements (311Q & 311) are presented to the Budget Committee, EMPC and the Board. These reports are also available online for public review.

The Purchasing Department plays a large role in this support system by assigning a purchase order to all requests and by providing the initiator with a copy. Requisition and purchase order numbers are used to track activity and the location of the item. Most purchases are delivered to the Purchasing Department, which certifies receipt of the item(s) and approves payment of the purchase order by Accounts Payable. Purchasing Department and Business Office staff members communicate regularly by e-mail regarding the status of purchase orders.

Merced College has several evaluating groups that continually evaluate and recommend changes to the Datatel software for the delivery of financial and student services information. The Datatel information system affects all areas of college operations. From the student perspective, Datatel tracks all types of records, including application information, financial aid, attendance accounting, billing, and transcripts. The Merced College Datatel User Group (MCDUG) meets monthly to review current and future programming requirements. The membership includes Instruction, Student Services, Administrative Services, and Technology and Institutional Research. MCDUG reviews and recommends changes to the current operating system.

The financial system is reviewed for changes and compliance with government codes. MCDUG is responsible for providing training of all module trainers. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted to the intranet under the Technology and Institutional Research page **(IIID.30).**

The charge of the Budget Committee (formerly the Committee on Budget Recommendation and Review, or CBRR), was revised in 2008 to become more transparent and to invite more inclusion in the budget development process. The Budget Committee's functions are being expanded to include reviewing the budget development process for recommended changes that will enhance the process. The committee also reviews the financials for the purpose of monitoring and assessment of the College's fiscal condition (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 58311).

This monitoring and assessment would include any recommendations from the College's external auditors to improve the financial management process, which would be presented to the Budget Committee for information and discussion.

Self Evaluation

Annual audits of financial management systems are completed on a regular basis and the District uses the results to improve its financial management systems. The Business Office, budget managers and the entire College have reliable, timely, responsive, and comprehensive data on which to make prudent budgetary decisions. Budget to actual expenditures are compared on a regular basis. Evidence can be found in the annual audit report as well as Board minutes when the audit is presented for review.

Planning Agenda

- None

IIID.3.
The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

The vice president of Administrative Services is charged with maintaining and monitoring the College's finances, financial aid allocations, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations such as the Foundation, institutional investments, and assets. The College maintains a 6 percent reserve throughout the fiscal year per Board policy. The budget is developed and monitored using a system of checks and balances and is overseen by the Board of Trustees, president, vice president of Administrative Services, and the Fiscal Services director. Several different college programs conduct periodical internal audits. All college requests for equipment, services and contracts are submitted by divisions and departments to their deans for approval, and are then forwarded to the appropriate vice president.

The Board of Trustees approves both a tentative budget and an adopted budget. Quarterly financial reports are made to the Board and to the Budget Committee. Independent auditors evaluate the District's financial management on an annual basis. In addition to the annual audit, many categorical programs, particularly Financial Aid, have specific independent external audits, as well as annual reporting on program expenses.

Budget Managers review their respective budgets on a regular basis to utilize discretionary line items effectively. Online financial reports are available at all times for up-to-date viewing, and the Business Office requests budget transfers when line items are over-expended. The Budget Committee reviews the financial planning processes by working with the budget calendar and Assumptions Committee prior to Board approval and dissemination. The budget calendar and budget assumptions processes are the first step in the budget building process. Distribution of preliminary, tentative and adopted budget sheets to budget managers ensures another step in assessing the effective use of the prior year's budget while making plans for the upcoming fiscal year. Program review and SLOs are priorities during this initial budget process.

Self Evaluation

The College completes an annual evaluation and audit of its financial management processes, using the results to improve its financial management systems. The College maintains at least a 6 percent reserve. Each year, the College links program review recommendations and current budget priorities with SLOs.

Planning Agenda

- None

STANDARD IIID EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IIID.01   2010-11 College Budget Development Process

IIID.02   Assembly Bill X4 1   Categorical Flexibility Language

IIID.03   State Chancellor's Office & College Financial Statements

IIID.04   State Chancellor's Office & College Financial Statement

IIID.05   Minutes-Enrollment Management Committee

IIID.06   Board Policy 6200-Budget Preparation

IIID.07   2010-11 Budget Development Calendar

IIID.08   2010-11 Budget Development Procedures

IIID.09   Educational Master Plan Committee Document

IIID.10   College Resource Allocation Process Document

IIID.11   2009-10 and 2010-11 Annual Budgets

IIID.12   Educational Master Plan Committee Document (extract of EMPC goals)

IIID.13   Educational Master Plan Committee Document (extract of intuitional goals)

IIID.14   2008-09 Interest Base Bargaining Documents

IIID.15   2009-10 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

IIID.16   Educational Master Plan Committee Document (extract of Budget Committee Charge)

IIID.17   College Retiree Health Benefit Fund Document

IIID.17a   Merced Community College District Actuarial Study of Retiree Health Liabilities dated September 21, 2005 and June 1, 2007

IIID.17b   Merced Community College District Actuarial Study of Retiree Health Liabilities as of August 1, 2009

IIID.18   Board Agenda Item "Funding Plan for Retiree Health Benefits under GASB 43/45" dated April 4, 2006

IIID.19   Power Point-Campus Budget Forum Presentation

IIID.20   Administrative Services Newsletters

IIID.21   Budget 101 Training Outlines & Power Points

IIID.22   Power Point Budget Updates to the Governing Board/Board Minutes*

Standard IV
Leadership & Governance

STANDARD IV TEAM LEADERS

Sue Chappell
FACULTY

Benjamin T. Duran
SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT

STANDARD IV
Leadership and Governance

The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.

IVA. DECISION-MAKING ROLES AND PROCESSES

The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

IVA.1.

Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.

Descriptive Summary

The District creates an environment for dissemination and discussion of goals and values using the master planning process (**IVA.01**). The master planning committees—key to the master planning process—include all campus constituents, including Administration, managers, faculty, staff, and students. Many additional campus committees participate in this process, including the President's Advisory Council, the Staff Development Committee, the Health and Safety Committee, and others.

District goals, adopted by the Board of Trustees (Board) in 1998 and reviewed and reconfirmed in 2010, are recognized by the Administration as the basis for the direction of the District. The goals recognize the value of creating long-term planning and fiscal stability to produce an environment of participation and success. The goals are especially strong in stating the District's commitment to teaching and learning, encouraging diversity, and student success. The goals, taken in their totality, are designed to encourage empowerment, stimulate innovation and institutional excellence (**IVA.02**).

Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in improving the practices, programs, and services of the District through the program review processes. Examples of programs and innovations initiated by faculty and staff include the pursuit and implementation of the MDRC Grant and the collaboration with the Hewlett Foundation and Carnegie Foundation in the development of innovative approaches with respect to basic skills students. Another example of faculty innovation is the development of the statewide and nationally recognized Customer Service Academy developed by a Merced College Business and Marketing professor. Also, Student

Services staff have worked together to create an electronic waitlist system and have been instrumental in the implementation of a new web portal. A consultation team to deal with student crises has also been formed as a result of Student Services staff participation.

Institutional goals are adopted by the Board of Trustees and serve as guideposts as the institution proceeds with its planning and delivery of programs and instruction. Goals are consistent with the District's vision and mission statements developed in 1998 and later revised in 2004. Committee work and projects on campus work toward achieving the objectives under the institution's goals, and reflect the purposes of the goals.

The institution's mission and vision statement, core values and beliefs are clearly disseminated and understood by all. These statements affirm the high standards of the institution and its commitment to serving the needs of its students and the community (**IVA.03**). Merced College's mission statement, "Students are our focus and we are known by their success," is frequently invoked by college leadership and faculty and is used in marketing campaigns, advertising, banners, and on the College's website.

The mission statement, vision statement, core values and beliefs were created through an evaluative process during a campus wide retreat and the institutional goals were developed out of this process. Work has begun on a strategic planning process to review the mission, vision and core values statements and institutional goals.

Information about institutional performance is circulated on the campus intranet and is available to staff, but not at the present time to students. Program reviews and SLO reports are only a few examples of what is available on the intranet. Program review data is regularly used in all planning committees and the Budget Committee to prioritize resource allocations. Also available on the intranet is the Office of Grants Development and Institutional Research's Fall 2008 Fact Sheet which contains information about institutional performance such as degrees earned, transfer rates, and student gender, age and ethnicity statistics (**IVA.04**).

The Chancellor's Office Data Mart is also accessible for student demographic information about institutional performance. (**IVA.05**)

Individuals and groups with ideas for institutional improvement are able to articulate their ideas by bringing program reviews to the various master planning committees, resulting in ideas being forwarded to the Administration and/or the Academic Senate for discussion and/ or recommendation to the Board. The Student Success, Health and Safety, Schedule and Catalog committees, as well as other operational committees, bring ideas forward for institutional improvement and the enhancement of student learning.

Self Evaluation

The District promotes a culture of shared governance which is demonstrated by the complete representation from all college constituencies, including students. The process by which representatives are selected is well-understood and implemented. Constituent groups are invited to select representatives from within their memberships. There is widespread participation as evidenced by full campus involvement in all committees.

The review and refinement of the master planning process has produced a climate that requires discussion about student learning outcomes (SLOs), institutional SLOs, and program review as they relate to creating an innovative learning and teaching environment. This process has resulted in tying master planning, program review, and resource allocation together to meet the needs of students. Although decision-making among master planning and shared governance committees works toward accomplishing the objectives of the institution's goals, the goals themselves are not widely distributed and understood by all. The goals should be more widely disseminated and used in dialogs. The connection between institutional goals and institutional SLOs needs to be better articulated, disseminated, and used in the decision-making process. Information from the Fact Sheet is not regularly used in institutional discussions and decision-making sessions.

Planning Agenda

- The District will continue to develop its strategic plan, engaging college constituents and the community in a discussion leading to refined mission, vision, core values and beliefs statements, as well as reviewing and refining institutional goals. Institutional goals will be integrated with institutional SLOs and will be widely disseminated. The District's vision, mission, core values, and goals will be distributed college wide beginning in spring 2010 and will be distributed at least once per semester from that point on.

IVA.2.
The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.

IVA.2.a.
Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.

Descriptive Summary

The Academic Senate shared governance policy has been in place at the District for 20 years (**IVA.06**). The policy has recently been revisited by the college president and the Academic Senate president. The decision-making process revolves around the master planning committee structure. In 2009-2010, following a year-and-a-half effort, the Educational Master Planning Committee (EMPC), in collaboration and consultation with other master planning committees, refined the planning process, clearly defined the committee membership and goals of each planning committee, and established each committee's relationship to each other and the Board. Seven master planning committees (Educational, Administrative Services, Student Services, Instructional, Technology/Research, and Facilities and Budget), are outlined in the College's Planning Handbook and on the master planning page on the College's intranet. These shared governance committees are composed of representatives from all campus constituencies. At this

time, faculty, staff, and students have a clearly defined role in governance through the master planning committees.

For example, EMPC serves as the oversight committee for all master planning committees to ensure the District's student-centered focus, recommending resource allocations to the president, evaluating institutional resource requests forwarded by other master planning committees, fostering communication among master planning committees, and ensuring that institutional outcomes are evaluated and implemented. Each master planning committee's role is defined in the Merced College Planning Handbook (**IVA.01**).

Program review and SLOSs are the primary vehicles for items considered for funding under the newly established planning model. The mechanisms for participation in planning and budgeting are written in the College's planning handbook. Voices from all constituents are slowly being empowered. Recommendations are made to the president from EMPC with input from the Budget Assumptions sub-committee regarding projected costs for the coming fiscal year.

All campus constituent groups have a defined role in planning and budgeting. For example, in spring 2010, the District bought software that will allow for automated program review budget requests. This will provide another means of campus wide participation in budget and planning. Additionally, the vice president of Administrative Services has implemented a series of Budget 101 workshops for the general college population to make everyone aware of the status of the current State budget and how planning and budgeting processes work on campus (**IVA.07**).

Students are becoming more involved in shared governance committees. This year, the Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC) has been successful in having student representation on every campus committee. The result is greater student participation on all the college wide college wide committees (**IVA.08**).

Self Evaluation

In 2009-2010, the master planning committees refined the planning process, clearly defined committee membership and goals of each planning committee, and established each committee's relationship to each other and the Board of Trustees. Program review and SLOs are the primary vehicles for funding consideration under the newly established master planning model. With the implementation of program review software, feedback will be more organized and prompt.

Planning Agenda

- Implement the use of the program review software.

IVA.2.b.
The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

The official responsibilities and authority of the faculty and academic administrators in cur-

ricular and other educational matters are described in Board Policy 2500 *Role of the Faculty Senate* (**IVA.09**). Board policy BP 2750 *Consulting Collegially on Academic and Professional Matter* establishes the methods whereby the Trustees and Academic Senate come to mutual agreement on academic and professional matters. Commonly referred to the as the 10 + 1 Agreement, this policy establishes the Academic Senate as the primary avenue for recommendations about student learning programs and services, including curriculum (**IVA.10**). The District has regular curriculum meetings and the Academic Senate meets regularly (**IVA.11**). Responsibilities and authority of the faculty is further spelled out in the Board-approved Academic Senate Constitution (**IVA.12**).

Academic Senate Resolutions are posted on the intranet (**IVA.13**) and resolutions are brought to the president on a regular basis and shared with the Board for action (**IVA.14**).

Board Policy BP 3700 *Shared Governance and Procedure* spells out the Board's commitment to shared governance. It also includes procedures which define shared governance terms (**IVA.06**).

Self Evaluation

Shared governance policies and procedures have been in effect for 20 years. Faculty and academic administrators have clearly defined roles in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget. The president and vice president of Instruction meet regularly with the Academic Senate president. Academic Senate resolutions are regularly brought forward to the president and/or the Board.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVA.3.
Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.

Descriptive Summary

The Educational Master Planning Handbook, revised and refined in December 2009, defines the roles of all the constituent groups on campus in regards to planning and budgeting. Five master planning committees report to EMPC: Instructional (IMPC), Administrative Services (ASMPC), Facilities (FMPC), Technology and Research (TRMPC) and Student Services (SSMPC). All have college wide participation, each with student, staff, faculty and administrative representatives. Continuous refinement of the role played by master planning committees has occurred for the last 15 years (**IVA.15**).

With the hiring of two new vice presidents in 2008 and 2009, the Master Planning Calendar was created to strengthen the link between budgeting and planning. It will be fully implemented in 2010. (**IVA.16**) The work of all the master planning committees is published on the College's intranet.

The Faculty Handbook was developed to help professors in their academic roles in student educational programs and services planning (**IVA.17**). For example, under the section "Duties and Responsibilities of Instructors," it clearly states that faculty should "strive for excellence in instruction, including the investigation and implementation of new teaching methods, [and make] helpful changes in course structure, and other curricular changes."

Faculty are also oriented to the District's polices during the New Faculty Orientations held at the beginning of each fall semester. The Teaching and Learning Academy provides staff development and pre-Flex Day workshops that facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication (**IVA.18**). The vice president of Administrative Services has also implemented a series of Budget 101 workshops for the general college population to make everyone aware of the status of the current state budget (**IVA.19).**

This year, ASMC has made an effort to have a student on every committee and there has been more participation from students on all the campus committees (**IVA.08**).

College communications are accomplished primarily through email. All students are issued an email address upon enrollment. The intranet is being moved to a SharePoint website, which will provide more access to college information for students, faculty and staff, and the community. Campus communication takes other forms, such as newsletters from the Office of Instruction, Office of Administration, and the Office of Technology and Institutional Research. In addition, newsletters from the Faculty Association and the Academic Senate are issued several times each semester.

All essential information about institutional efforts to achieve goals and improve learning is located on the College's website and intranet. Faculty has access to several web pages, including the Academic Senate, SLO and Curriculum sites that address institutional goals (**IVA.20**).

Self Evaluation

Administrators, faculty, classified staff, and students are informed of their respective roles in educational planning through the master planning committees and through various campus communications vehicles. As the District continues to grow, the website will become more important to internal communications. The website is in need of redesign to more fully function as a major communication tool.

Planning Agenda

- The District will continue to update the website. To better define the role of campus committees, the District will implement orientations for all committees as part of its new planning process at the beginning of each academic year.

IVA.4.
The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to

recommendations made by the Commission.

Descriptive Summary

This District has responded with honesty and integrity to all Commission reviews and mid-term reports. The preparation of the focused midterm report submitted to and accepted by the Western Association of Schools and College (WASC) was all-inclusive and represented the work of the whole college community (**IVA.21**). The District is very much engaged in the Commission's Standards, Policies, and Guidelines. The College has an ongoing relationship with the U.S. Department of Education with respect to compliance with Federal Financial Aid regulations and programs. Additionally the District is a designated Hispanic-serving Institution and has received HSI Grants in the past from the Department of Education.

Self Evaluation

The District has never had its accreditation status challenged by the Commission. The self study process is comprehensive and involves all campus constituent groups. Administration encourages members of the faculty and administration to serve as members of other accreditation teams. Letters from the president reflect his approval of participation and about seven people have served on other teams (**IVA.22**). Draft documents from the self study are available on the SharePoint website for review by the entire college community and final drafts posted on the college homepage for students and the general public.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVA.5
The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Beginning in 2008, the District instituted a series of meetings and coordinated an ongoing dialogue among master planning committees to review and evaluate its master planning process. This model includes a means to evaluate the planning and resource allocation processes. The Merced College Planning Handbook was presented to the Board in a series of meetings leading up to the final adoption in December 2009. The new model was implemented immediately and continues to be reviewed and revised as required by the evaluation element imbedded in the new model. Master planning and budget development calendars have been aligned to ensure that resource allocation is integrated with master planning and program review. Program review recommendations are brought to each planning committee and forwarded to EMPC through the budget development process. Results of these evaluations are published in the minutes of the all the master planning committees on the college intranet.

The Academic Senate and the Classified Senate, along with Administration, continuously review district policies through the President's Advisory Council.   Currently, the Administration

and the Academic Senate are reviewing and evaluating procedures for hiring adjunct faculty.

Self Evaluation

The College's planning handbook currently ensures evaluation of decision-making processes. The Academic Senate provides recommendations for policy revisions through resolutions sent to the President's Advisory Council. The Classified Senate uses the master planning committees to make recommendations for governance revisions. Identified weaknesses are evaluated in the master planning process. For example, one indentified weakness was the disconnection between resource allocation and master planning. The District undertook the process of simultaneously developing a resource allocation model that included planning and program review while reviewing the entire master planning process, leading to the development of the master planning handbook

Planning Agenda

- The District will evaluate the effectiveness of the President's Advisory Council and will use identified weakness as the basis for further improvement in the decision-making process. The District will communicate the results to the campus community. Shared governance, which is outlined in Board policy BP3700, will also be evaluated.

STANDARD IVA EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IVB. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

IVB.1.
The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.

Descriptive Summary

The District is governed by an elected seven-member Board of Trustees. A student trustee participates and votes in an advisory capacity. The District's comprehensive manual and Board Policy and Administrative Procedures, contain information on board policies with respect to student learning programs and services as well as the financial stability of the institution (**IVB.01**). These policies are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis as necessary. Statements about the quality of programs, institutional actions, and student learning programs can be found throughout the Board Policy and Administrative Procedures manual and the institutional goals.

Board policy BP 1100 *The District* describes the organization of the District. Board policy BP 2200 *Board Duties and Responsibilities* describes the role and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees. Board policy BP 2210 *Officers* defines the role of officers of the Board. Policy BP 2220 *Committees of the Board* describes the purposes of committees. Policy BP 4020 *Program and Curriculum Development* establishes the institution's commitment to high quality, relevant programs and curricula.

The policy describing the procedure of selecting the chief administrator is contained in Board policy BP 2431 *CEO Selection,* which was updated in April 2004. Merced College has had only five presidents during its 40-plus years of existence. The most recent presidential hire took place in 1998 when Dr. Benjamin T. Duran was selected through a nationwide search with input from a wide variety of constituencies. The final decision was properly made by the Board.

Self Evaluation

The District meets the standard. The Board of Trustees conducts a biannual self-evaluation as established by Policy BP 2745 *Board Self-Evaluations* (**IVB.02**). Board meeting minutes reflect the Board's adherence to its policies (**IVB.03**).

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.a.
The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.

Descriptive Summary

Board policy BP 2010 *Board Membership* states that no person who is an employee of the District may be a member of the governing board, and further directs that no member of the Board of Trustees shall hold an incompatible office during their term of service (**IVB.04**).

The District is part of the California public system of higher education; therefore, no members of the Board are owners. Board policy BP 2100 *Board Elections* mandates that individual Board members represent seven geographic regions within the College's service area (**IVB.31**). The most recent redistricting occurred in 2001. According to correspondence with the Civil Rights Division, dated January 28, 2002, the Board decided that the "District should study the feasibility of revising the process by which board members were elected so that members of the Board would be elected by and represent only the voters of their individual trustee areas rather than the District at large." In addition, the Board chose to establish a majority-minority trustee area. It has been 10 years since the redistricting and the establishment of the majority-minority district. In 2010-2011, the District will once again revise Board of Trustee boundaries based on population shifts and guidelines of the U.S. Department of Justice.

At the present time, any person who meets the criteria for Board membership (such as geographical representation and lack of conflict of interest) is eligible for election to the Board. The current Board of Trustees is diverse in ethnicity and gender and reflects the population of the community. Board members are active and visible in the community and at the state and national level.

Self-Evaluation

The District's policies reflect appropriate representation of the public interest and lack conflict of interest. All the board members are non-owners of the institution.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.b.
The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.

Descriptive Summary

The College mission statement, as described in Board policy BP 1200 *Mission*, places our "focus on students and their success." Specific language is included in this statement reflecting Board of Trustee expectations: "We set high standards to encourage students to reach their highest potential in a supportive environment." On the College's website, the Board of Trustee's goals

contain expectations regarding strengthening teaching and learning, providing access to all students, keeping technology available and current, and building and maintaining facilities that meet student needs (**IVB.05**). Board policy BP 4020 *Program and Curriculum Development* also mandates that "programs and curricula of the District shall be high quality, relevant to the community and to student needs, and evaluated regularly through program review and vocational advisory committees" (**IVB.32**).

Self Evaluation

The Board of Trustee's goals clearly describe the expectations for quality, integrity and improvement of student learning programs and services.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.c.
The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees acknowledges its responsibilities through their actions at each meeting. All shared governance committees explicitly recognize the Board's authority. The Board is responsible for approving all contracts and budgets, as well as addressing legal matters. The Board's role is delineated in several policies, including Board policy BP 2410 *Policy and Administrative Procedure*, which states that "The Board may adopt such policies as are authorized by law or determined by the Board to be necessary for the efficient operation of the District" (**IVB.06**).

The Board is subject to the California Education Code, regulations established by the legislature, and Chancellor's Office reporting requirements. As long as its decisions do not conflict with state laws and regulations, the Board establishes policy and makes financial and other decisions affecting Merced College. Normally, these actions are considered final. However, the Board reserves the right to review and alter policies as needed. The Board also solicits the advice of experts when needed.

Self Evaluation

Based on its own policies, the Board is independent and its actions are final and are not subject to the actions of any other entity.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.d.
The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.

Descriptive Summary

The District's Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are available at several locations within the District, including the President's Office and several other administrative offices, the library, and online through the College's public website and the intranet. The College's policies and administrative procedures are readily available to the college community.

Self Evaluation

The District publishes Board bylaws and policies specifying the Board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.e.
The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.

Descriptive Summary

Merced College's board policies are continually being updated as part of the District's participation with the Community College League of California (CCLC) Policy Update Service. CCLC produces standardized board policies that may be adopted and revised as needed by member institutions. This process ensures high quality policy development that has been reviewed at several different levels. Policies that are required or highly recommended are given priority for updating. Others are reviewed and developed as needed, some of which are local in origin. Policies are reviewed first by the President's Advisory Council, a shared governance committee tasked with the responsibility of reviewing new and revised policies with input from their respective constituencies. Policies are then sent to the Board for first and second readings, which give the Board and the public an opportunity to become familiar with proposed revisions or the introduction of new policy. The Board believes that it acts consistently with its policies and bylaws and, along with the president, believes that the process for updating policies and procedures is working well. The numerical system allows for implementation of new policies based on a priority basis **(IVB.27)** **(IVB.28)**.

Self Evaluation

Records of the Board's actions indicate that its actions are consistent with its policies and bylaws. The District has a system for evaluating and revising its policies on a regular basis and the system is implemented.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.f.
The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

Descriptive Summary

Board policy BP 2100 *Board Elections* provides for four-year terms for each board member. Elections are scheduled every two years on even numbered years. A list of all trustees and their terms of office is included in the Standard IV archival information (**IVB.07**). Terms of trustees are staggered so that, as nearly as practical, one half of the Board is elected every two years. Vacancies may be filled by special election or by provisional appointment, according to Board policy BP 2110 *Vacancies on the Board*. Student participation is achieved by having a student serve in a non-voting capacity, as outlined in Board policy BP 2105 *Election of Student Members*.

Special Board meetings are scheduled each year to increase the Board's knowledge of college operations and procedures, especially the budget. There is a long history of trustee leadership in statewide organizations and individual trustees have attended various statewide meetings to gain broader perspective. Trustees have copies of the *Trustee Handbook*, a CCLC publication that provides a general overview of the California Community College system. At the time of this writing, all trustees have been in office since at least 1998. Two of the three most recently elected trustees are retired Merced College faculty members who are very familiar with community colleges. They have also served as trustees for school districts. The third trustee received more intensive mentoring and orientation at the time of her election. Any potential Board candidate is offered an opportunity for a general orientation to the College, as well.

Trustees receive information about the accreditation standards and process on an ongoing basis (**IVB.08**) (**IVB.09**). In addition, they have always been involved with approval of curriculum and other programs related to learning outcomes. It is the Board's perception that the College's administration and faculty keep them apprised of new developments and issues in a thorough and timely way.

At the mid-term report, the plan was to develop a more formalized orientation system for new Board members. The District's goal is to complete this plan in 2010. It is anticipated that new trustees will be elected in November 2010, especially since an incumbent will not running for re-election.

Self Evaluation

The Board has a formal, written method of providing for continuing membership and staggered terms of office. The Board has a program for development and orientation, although the orientation has not yet been revised. The Board is apprised of accreditation standards and expectations.

Planning Agenda

- Revise the board Orientation.

IVB.1.g.
The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.

Descriptive Summary

Board policy BP 2745 *Board Self-Evaluation* states, "The Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a Board and to identify those areas of board functions which are working well and those which may need improvement. The Board assessment speaks to the Board as a whole, not to individual trustees, and is an evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the Board as a group making decisions." New tools from the CCLC were distributed to the Board in December 2009 and a Board subcommittee was formed to review the new tools and to determine recommendations (**IVB.10**).

Self Evaluation

The Board's self-evaluation policy establishes an ongoing cycle of self-evaluation, which the Board uses to regularly evaluate its own performance. The process provides an effective review.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.h.
The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.

Descriptive Summary

The Board is committed to acting in an ethical manner both individually and collectively, as defined in Board policy BP 2715 *Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice* referenced below (**IVB.33**).

The Board maintains high standards of ethical conduct for its members. Members of the Board are responsible for:

- Acting only in the best interests of the college, community, and district, and being aware of their responsibility to all citizens of the District.
- Exercising authority only as a board, remembering that at all times individual trustees have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and conducting relationships with college staff, students, the local citizenry and the media on that basis.
- Recognizing that under all circumstances the Board is legally responsible for the effective operation of the District and that establishing policy is the primary function of the Board.
- Ensuring public input into board deliberations, adhering to the law and spirit of the open meeting laws and regulations.

- Preventing conflicts of interest and the perception of conflicts of interest.

- Using appropriate channels of communication.

- Respecting others, acting with civility, and working with fellow board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation.

- Basing decisions on all available facts in each situation and abiding by and upholding the final majority decision of the Board.

- Being informed about the district, educational issues, and responsibilities of trusteeship.

- Maintaining confidentiality of closed sessions, recognizing that deliberations of the Board in closed session are not to be released or discussed without the prior approval of the Board by majority vote.

- Being original, creative and regenerative.

- Demonstrating and requiring distinctive service.

- Requiring commitment and devotion of time, thought, energy, effort, and ability whenever needed.

- Enhancing one's potential through participating in educational conferences, workshops and training sessions.

- Being informed about the actions and positions of state and national community college trustee associations, and

- Being informed of all relative Federal and State legislation pertaining to community colleges.

At this time, there is no stated or written process for dealing with unethical behavior, beyond the submission of an annual conflict of interest statement.

Self Evaluation

The Board has a code of ethics, but does not have a stated process for dealing with unethical board behavior.

Planning Agenda

- The District will develop Administrative Regulations to accompany Board policy BP 2715.

IVB.1.i.
The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.

Descriptive Summary

Trustee Robert Haden has been appointed as a liaison to the current accreditation Self Study team. He serves as an information conduit to the Board regarding the Self Study and is working

with the Board to inform them of changes in the accreditation standards.

The vice president of Student Services, with Self Study team co-chair and faculty member Lee Anne Hobbs, has provided Board training and information about accreditation on an ongoing basis (**IVB.08**) (**IVB.09**). The Board is apprised of and receives copies of Commission reports typically during Board meetings. Board members are involved with the Self Study both as sources of information, as well as in its planning and oversight responsibilities. Board actions demonstrate a commitment to institutional improvement, particularly in the area of educational master planning. The Board is supportive of SLOs in those areas where there is flexibility. Curriculum with SLOs is regularly approved by the Board (**IVB.29**) (**IVB.30**).

Self Evaluation

The Board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.1.j.
The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively. In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees' established policies and procedures address the selection of the superintendent/president (Board policy and Administrative Procedure BP 2431) (**IVB.11**), the evaluation of the superintendent/president (Board policy BP 2435) (**IVB.12**), and the delegation of authority to superintendent/president) (Board policy BP2430) (**IVB.13**).

Board policy BP 2431was utilized when the current president was hired in 1998. The evaluation of the President has been regularly accomplished using the procedures listed above. The president is also empowered to interpret Board policy and is expected to perform the job duties as defined in the job description, making sure that laws and regulations are followed, required reports are completed as specified, and assisting with policy development.

Self Evaluation

The process for selecting the superintendent/president works well for Merced College. Delegation of authority and responsibility by the Board to the president has been clear and effective. The President is evaluated annually.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.2.
The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.

IVB.2.a.
The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.

Descriptive Summary

The president oversees and administers an administrative and management structure designed to best serve the college community by working to create a suitable and safe environment for teaching and learning. The president meets weekly with the vice presidents and meets monthly with senior administrators (vice presidents and deans) and the Management Team (**IVB.14**) (**IVB.15**) (**IVB.16**).

As a result of a review by the president and the Board in 2008, an objective review by an external consulting firm took place to move the College from a division chair model in the Office of Instruction to a dean model (**IVB.17**). The reorganization was approved Board on March 4, 2008 (**IVB.18**). The newly implemented instructional dean model was stabilized with the addition of three new deans, and then the former divisional chair structure was abandoned. Faculty and classified staff were involved in discussions and strategies prompting this change (**IVB.19**). Currently, the vice president of Administrative Services, with the approval of the president, is exploring options for the reorganization of Operations, Maintenance, and the Business and Human Resources offices. The reorganization will include a dialogue with staff members affected by the reorganization before it is taken to the president as a recommendation to the Board for approval.

The College's new organizational chart lists all administrators and staff responsible for working with the president to direct the institution's goals and to provide effective and efficient management of the District (**IVB.20a-e**). As part of an ongoing dialogue with his cabinet, the president continuously evaluates the need for change in the administrative structure. The 2008 reorganization of the Office of Instruction resulted from this process. Additionally, the investigation of the need for reorganization of the Office of Administrative Services is another example of how ongoing dialogue leads to changes in the administrative structure.

Self Evaluation

In light of the state's financial condition, the administrative structure is organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.2.b.
The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following:

• establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities;

• ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions;

• ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; and

• establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts.

Descriptive Summary

The District uses a collegial process to set values, goals, and priorities and has developed mission and vision statements reflecting the College's core values and beliefs. The Board and the College are undertaking a strategic planning process that will critically evaluate and revise the mission, vision and core values and belief statements.

The Board-developed *Board of Trustees Goals Statement* reviews long-term goals, institutional advancement, fiscal stability, student access/success, diversity, outreach and collaboration, physical resources/facilities, technology, and teaching and learning. The current strategic planning process will result in the review and revision of these long-term goals.

The planning process consists of several committees such as EMPC, the Budget Committee, and other master planning committees that follow shared governance processes. The roles of these committees have been described extensively elsewhere in the Self Study. The current master planning process, which integrates program review, resource allocation, and master planning, was collegially developed in 2008 and culminated with the adoption of the current master planning document by the Board of Trustees (**IVB.21**).

The District relies on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions for its planning, resource allocation and evaluation of course and program success. The Office of Technology and Institutional Research (TIR) proposed establishing institutional effectiveness measures through the use of a "balanced scorecard" with metrics established by EMPC. Each metric would include historic trend data, provide delineated measures of established goals, current status in relation to the goal, and be graphically represented on the appropriate college website, i.e., the internet and/or intranet. Examples of proposed metrics include FTES, WSCH/FTEF, student success, student retention, student persistence, online enrollments, and fiscal measures (budget and expenditures). As the scorecard was developed, a mechanism was also developed to automatically gather and populate metrics from Datatel. This system is intended to be user-friendly, web-based, and allows for individuals to seek answers to research ques-

tions without direct assistance. Ad hoc requests for research continue to dominate the time of the District's researcher. Discussions have taken place that would facilitate an organized mechanism to assess and assign research requests. The continuing need for additional research analyst prompted recommendations from the Student Success Initiative focus groups to fund a second research analyst.

As faculty develop course SLOs, a greater need to track student progress becomes apparent. More than 150,000 data points are managed each semester to adequately assess students against course SLOs. The SLO steering committee concurs with the need to establish a system for tracking student progress against established SLOs. A Convocation presentation was made to faculty about research and discussions continue to take place at the SLO steering committee meetings (**IVB.22**).

TIR has made presentations to the president and vice presidents, the Academic Senate, and EMPC on the development of the "Balanced Scorecard for Institutional Effectiveness." The metrics were developed in conjunction with the assistance of the researcher. The high cost of an appropriate data warehouse infrastructure has hampered significant progress. However, estimated costs for the development of a data warehouse have been obtained and an EMPC subcommittee will review alternative scenarios. The subcommittee has provided recommendations on institutional metrics and cost analysis of data warehouse alternatives. EMPC has also discussed vendor webinars for storing progress of students against SLOs and securing resources to facilitate a mechanism for tracking student SLO progress (**IVB.23**) (**IVB.24**).

The SLO planning committee met with representatives from Student Services, EMPC, IMPC, program review, the SLO coordinator, and TIR. SLOs and program review implementation are integrated.

The Office of Institutional Research has posted SLO research data on courses and programs for program review. The resource allocation process now includes specific information on how funds are allocated with respect to each instructional program review request. The posting of program review data has enabled faculty to access data without having to query the database.

The evaluation of data for instructional programs is conducted by faculty involved with program review. Instructional program review data is progressing and program reviews and institutional data are posted to the intranet.

The review and revision of the master planning process in 2008-2009 focused on ensuring that all master planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution of resources to achieve institutional learning outcomes. The planning process requires that institutional SLOs, program SLOs, and program review are utilized before resources are allocated. Priorities are established based on dialogue in each master planning committee.

EMPC takes information and input from all master planning committees to prepare the College's overall educational master plan and to form the basis for resource allocation by the Budget Committee. EMPC, as the ranking committee in the master panning model, is the conduit of master planning recommendations forwarded to the president and ultimately to the Board for final approval and implementation. Information about the Educational Master Planning Committee can be found in the Merced College Planning Handbook (**IVB.25**).

The District has established procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts. These procedures, based on shared governance principles, are located in the master planning document, revised in December 2009, and located on the intranet. The president follows procedures that have been evolving over the past decade.

The College's master planning process incorporates input from various institutional planning committees and involves a comprehensive process that encompasses both short- and long-range planning in a broad-based committee structure. Master planning committees evaluate information related to the needs of staffing, facilities, instruction, administration, and student services and connect these needs with the College's budgetary resources. Based on both institutional SLOs, program SLOs, and program review, planning committees identify institutional priorities that influence the acquisition and allocation of human, financial and physical resources. The educational master planning process provides for the evaluation of the overall master planning process on an annual basis (**IVB.26**).

Self Evaluation

The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity, delegating authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities as appropriate. The president guides institutional improvement of teaching and learning by establishing values, goals and priorities, by relying on high quality research, by integrating resource planning with resource distribution to achieve the SLOs, and by establishing procedures to evaluate institutional planning and implementation efforts. The president is committed to communicating the institution's values, goals, and purposes by reviewing and updating Board goals and continually improving the shared governance process.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.2.c.
The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.

Descriptive Summary

As specified in Board policies BP 2410 and BP 2430, the president assures implementation of statutes, regulations and governing board policies by directing administrative staff to follow rules and regulations. The president may also utilize attorneys or other specialists as needed for compliance of statutes, regulations and governing policies. District policies are reviewed by the Board, the president, and governance groups on an as-needed-basis to ensure that they are consistent with the District's mission and policies (**IVB.27**) (**IVB.28**).

Self Evaluation

The president ensures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies by using a planning process that makes sure that board goals are consistent with district goals.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.2.d.
The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.

Descriptive Summary

The President effectively controls budget and expenditures by utilizing institutional guidelines and priorities established by the Board of Trustees. The Budget Committee provides advice and recommendations for the development of the College's annual budget. With each new budget cycle, the budget development process is reviewed and recommendations for improvement are provided to the president.

Once the Board adopts the budget, the president meets with all the vice presidents on a weekly basis to review the budget as needed. The vice presidents meet frequently with their managers to review major expenditure plans. Managers are primarily responsible for their account balances. The vice president of Administrative Services is charged by the president to ensure that internal controls are in place to keep expenditures consistent within allocated budget amounts.

The president and the vice president of Administrative Services give the Board a periodic budget update. The report also includes state updates as needed **(IVB.09)** **(IVB.03)**. The Board has adopted goals to remain fiscally stable and the president controls expenditures to meet this standard.

Self Evaluation

Internal controls, clearly defined responsibilities, and district policies ensure that the president effectively controls the budget and expenditures.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.2.e.
The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Under the direction of the president and vice president of Student Services, the District has established the Public Affairs function of the Office of Institutional Advancement to communicate effectively to the community. The director of Institutional Advancement meets periodically with the president to carry out the District's communication needs. The director also meets weekly with the vice president of Student Services in this regard. Communication takes place through press releases and public service announcements, opinion and editorial columns under the president's signature, various marketing and advertising programs, online social networking sites, and other traditional and non-traditional communications avenues. The Office of Institutional Advancement strives to be a comprehensive, full-service operation supporting Merced

College through a variety of public relations, community outreach, and fund-raising activities through the Merced College Foundation. Institutional Advancement encompasses a range of programs and services that enable the College to develop a positive public image, build lasting and beneficial relationships with all college constituencies, and raise private financial support.

The mission of the Office of Institutional Advancement is to enhance the image of Merced College through a meaningful public relations and marketing program, to build relationships between college and community, and to advance the College's educational programs and services by generating financial gifts from potential donors.

Institutional Advancement effectively communicates with the communities served by the institution through college outreach events, special community events, participation in service clubs, fundraising events, and distribution of a wide variety of public information materials.

The president serves on a number of community boards, as well as several regional and statewide organizations. The president is perceived as an important educational leader and has lent his time and talents to initiatives for improving the region's economic and social status. He is extremely involved with economic development and was instrumental in the acquisition of the land donated for the new Los Banos Campus. The President serves on statewide committees such the Economic and Workforce Development, Program Advisory Committee at the Chancellor's Office, and has recently been appointed to chair the Commission on the Future Committee established by the Community College League of California (CCLC).

Self Evaluation

Because of the positive work of the Office of Institutional Advancement and the president's wide recognition and participation in the community and at the state level, he effectively works and communicates with the communities served by the College.

Planning Agenda

- None

IVB.3.

In multi-college districts or systems, the district/system provides primary leadership in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity throughout the district/system and assures support for the effective operation of the colleges. It establishes clearly defined roles of authority and responsibility between the colleges and the district/system and acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board.

IVB.3.a.
The district/system clearly delineates and communicates the operational responsibilities and functions of the district/system from those of the colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

IVB.3.b.
The district/system provides effective services that support the colleges in their missions and functions.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

IVB.3.c.
The district/system provides fair distribution of resources that are adequate to support the effective operations of the colleges.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

IVB.3.d.
The district/system effectively controls its expenditures.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

IVB.3.e.
The chancellor gives full responsibility and authority to the presidents of the colleges to implement and administer delegated district/system policies without his/her interference and holds them accountable for the operation of the colleges.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

IVB.3.f.
The district/system acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board. The district/system and the colleges use effective methods of communication, and they exchange information in a timely manner.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

IVB.3.g.
The district/system regularly evaluates district/system role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the colleges in meeting educational goals. The district/system widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

Self Evaluation

These standards are not applicable to Merced College as it is not a multi-college district.

STANDARD IVB EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

IVB.27   Board Minutes 2009-06-16

IVB.28   Board Minutes 2009-08-04

IVB.29   Board Meeting Packet 2009-04-07

IVB.30   Board Meeting Packet 2009-12-01

IVB.31   BP 2100

IVB.32   BP 4020

IVB.33   BP 2715

Appendix C:
Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation

APPENDIX C: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Authority

Merced College is authorized or licensed to operate as an educational institution and to award degrees by an appropriate governmental organization as required by each of the jurisdictions or regions in which it operates. The college is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is a part of the California Community Colleges system.

2. Mission

The institution's educational mission is clearly defined, adopted, and published by its governing board consistent with its legal authorization, and is appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education and the constituency served. The mission statement defines the college's commitment to student achievement, and may be found in multiple locations including the college catalogue and planning documents.

The college's mission, vision and core values statements may be found on page eight of the college catalogue. The mission statement originally was adopted on December 15, 1998 and **(C.01)** updated on May 7, 2002 **(C.02)**. It was reviewed most recently on November 3, 2009 **(C.03)**. It will be reviewed again in the Fall of 2010 as part of a strategic planning process.

3. Governing Board

Merced College has a functioning governing board that is responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of the institution, thus ensuring that the institution's mission is being carried out. It is responsible for ensuring that the college's financial resources are used to support a sound educational program. A seven member Board of Trustees is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill all board responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees is an independent policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interests in board activities and decisions. A Conflict of Interest declaration is completed annually to ensure that governing board members are impartial. None of the current board members has any employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in Merced College, which is a public institution.

Biographical information about the governing board members may be found in attachment **(C.04)**. Information about governing board policies may be found in Board Policies and Administrative Procedures 2000 Series, posted on the college's website **(C.05)**. Board Policy/ Administrative Procedure 2710 and Administrative Procedure 2712 address conflict of interest **(C.06)**.

4. Chief Executive Officer

Merced College has a chief executive officer who is appointed by the Board of Trustees and holds the necessary authority to administer board policies. The chief executive officer is not a member of the Board of Trustees. The name, address, and educational information about the chief executive officer may be found on page six of the 2009-2010 college catalogue and a fuller resume is available at the following link **(C.07)**. The Superintendent/President's contract

makes it clear that it is a full time position.

5.   Administrative Capacity

Merced College has sufficient staff, with appropriate preparation and experience, to provide the administrative services needed to support its mission and purpose. A copy of the District's organizational structure may be found in the college's website **(C.08)**. The names and educational backgrounds of college administrators may be found beginning on page six of the 2009-2010 college catalogue, with more extensive resumes available at the following link **(C.09)**.

6.   Operational Status

Merced College has been in operation for over forty seven years, with students actively seeking degrees and/or transfer to universities. A copy of the college's current class schedule may be found on the home page at mccd.edu. An enrollment history of the past three years may be found at California Community Colleges Data Mart site **(C.10)**. The degrees awarded may be found at the same location **(C.11)**.

7.   Degrees

The majority of Merced College's educational offerings are programs that lead to degrees or certificates, and a significant proportion of its students are enrolled in them. The college catalogue includes a list of the degrees, course requirements, and length of study for each program. There is information available regarding each credit class **(C.12)**. Student enrollment in degree and non-degree programs may be found at **(C.13)**.

8.   Educational Programs

The college's principal degree programs are consistent with its mission, are based on widely recognized higher educational fields of study, and are of appropriate length and breadth. The levels of quality and rigor are consistent with the degrees offered and culminate in identified student outcomes. Most degree programs last at least two academic years in length.   Information about college programs, courses, and curricular sequence, and locations may be found in the college catalogue, website, and current class schedule.

9.   Academic Credit

Merced College awards academic credits based on generally accepted practices of institutions of higher education. Merced College is governed by the statutory and system regulatory requirements of the California Community College's Chancellor's Office. The college follows the Chancellor's Office's requirements for the awarding of academic credit. Information regarding the awarding of credit may be found in the college catalogue and board policies. The formulas used to calculate units of credit are predicated by Title 5 Section 55002.5, which governs the California Community Colleges **(C.14)**.

10.   Student Learning Achievement

Merced College defines and publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and achievement of outcomes. Assessment is regular and systematic in order to demon-

strate that students who complete programs, no matter how or where they are offered, achieve these outcomes.

Information regarding student learning outcomes may be found in the college catalogue **(C.15)**. Outcome data may be found in departmental program reviews which are posted in **(C.16)**. Other outcome data may be found in the college website that provides individual course descriptions and their student SLO's **(C.17)**.

11. General Education

Merced College defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. The general education component includes demonstrated competence in writing and computational skills and an introduction to some of the major areas of knowledge.

General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it. Degree credit for general education programs is consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

A list and description of the general education classes offered may be found in the college catalogue. All classes offered by Merced College must be approved the California Community College's Chancellor's Office in order to ensure rigor. Course outlines are posted on "Curricunet," which may be located at **(C.18)**.

12. Academic Freedom

Merced College's faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic/educational community in general. Merced College maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. The right to academic freedom may be found in Board Policy 4030 **(C.19)**.

13. Faculty

Merced College has a substantial core of qualified faculty with full time responsibility to the institution. The core is sufficient in size and experience to support all of the institution's educational programs. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities is provided to all faculty members. A list of all full time faculty members and their degrees may be found in the college catalogue. Adjunct faculty records are kept in the Office of Human Resources. The current class schedule lists the faculty members who are assigned to each class. The Merced College Faculty Association contract describes faculty responsibilities beginning on page 23 **(C.20)**.

14. Student Services

All Merced College students are provided student services that support learning and development appropriate to the mission of Merced College. The college catalogue and website provide information about student services, including those for special populations. Information about these services begins on page ten **(C.21)**. Demographic information about students may be found at the Data Mart site **(C.22)**. Information about student services student learning outcomes may be found at the college's website **(C.23)**.

15. Admissions

Merced College has adopted and adheres to admissions policies that are consistent with its mission and also specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs. Information about college admissions policies may be found on page twelve of the college catalogue **(C.24)**. Application may be done on line using a system wide application called CCCApply, which may be viewed at **(C.25)**. Hard copies of applications also are available **(C.26)**.

16. Information and Learning Resources

Merced College provides specific long term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs in whatever format and wherever they are offered, as documented in Standard IIC.

17. Financial Resources

Merced College documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability.

Budgetary and financial information may be found online or in the Office of Fiscal Services (**C.27**). Budgetary information about the Merced College Foundation may be located in the Office of Fiscal Services (**C.28**). The college's funding is provided by the State of California, and managed through the California Community College's Chancellor's Office.

18. Financial Accountability

Merced College holds annual audits, which are made available to the Chancellor's Office and the public. Audit information also is sent to AACJC along with annual reports. Audits are prepared by an outside certified public accountant. Audits are certified and any exceptions are explained (**C.30**).

Past, current, and proposed budgets may be found in the Office of Fiscal Services, where audit reports and management letters also are kept (**C.29**). Financial aid reviews also may be found in the Office of Fiscal Services (**C.31**). The college does not participate in a student loan program.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

Merced College evaluates and provides public notification about how well and in what ways it is meeting its goals, including assessment and student learning outcomes. Evidence is provided about planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. Progress is assessed regarding achievement of stated goals. Decisions are made through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation.

20. Public Information

Merced College provides a catalogue that is precise, accurate and current regarding general information, requirements, and major policies affecting students. All public information specified by the Commission is listed in the college catalogue. Examples of recent print or media advertisements may be found in (**C.32**).

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

Merced College provides assurance that it adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the Commission. It describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities. Merced College will comply with Commission requests, directives, decisions and policies.

Three programs at Merced College are accredited by other organizations. The Diagnostic Radiologic Technology program is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Radiologic Technology (**C.33**). The sonography program is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Diagnostic Medical Sonography (**C.34**). The Addiction Studies program is accredited by the California Association for Alcohol and Drug Educators **(C.35)**.

Board Policy 3200 Assures compliance with the Commission's standards. Page nine of the college catalogue states that the college is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

APPENDIX C EVIDENCE

To access the evidence in this section, please follow this link.

C.01   Merced College Catalogue, p. 8

C.02   Merced College Board of Trustees Minutes, May 7, 2002; December 15, 1998

C.03   Merced College Board of Trustees Minutes, November 3, 2009

C.04   Merced College Board of Trustees Biographical Information

C.05   Merced College Board Policies and Administrative Procedures

C.06   Merced College Board Policy 2710 and Administrative Procedure 2712

C.07   Merced College Catalogue, p. 6-CEO Resume

C.08   Merced College Office of the President Organization Chart

C.09   Merced College Catalogue, p. 6-Administration Resumes

C.10   Merced College Enrollment History, Fall 2007 to Spring 2010

C.11   Merced College Degrees Awarded, Fall 2007 to Spring 2010

C.12   Merced College Catalogue

C.13   Student Enrollment in Degree and Non-degree Programs

C.14   Title 5, Section 55002.5

C.15   Merced College Catalogue, p. 8 (Institutional Student Learning Outcomes)

C.16   Merced College Intranet (Program Review webpage)

C.17   Merced College Intranet (Student Learning Outcomes webpage)

C.18   Curricunet

C.19   Merced College Board Policy 4030

C.20   Merced College Faculty Association Contract

C.21   Merced College Catalogue, p. 10

C.22   Merced College Student Demographics

C.23   Merced College Student Services Student Learning Outcomes

C.24   Merced College Catalogue, p. 12

C.25   CCCApply

C.26   Merced College Application, hard copy

Glossary of Acronyms
Commonly Used
at Merced College

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Following is a list of acronyms commonly used at Merced College.

ASMPC—Administrative Services Master Planning Committee

ACT—American College Testing Student Opinion Survey

ANSI—American National Standards Institute

ARRA—American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

ASSIST—Articulation System Stimulating Inter-institutional Student Transfer

AV—Audio Visual Department

Board—Board of Trustees

BRC—Business Resource Center

BSI—Basic Skills Initiative

CAA—Career Advancement Academy

CalSOAP—California Student Opportunity and Access Program

CalWORKS—California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids

CAN—California Articulation Number

CARE—Cooperative Agencies Resource for Education

CCLC— Community College League of California

CCSSE—Community College Survey of Student Engagement

CENIC—Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California

College—As capitalized, in all cases this refers to Merced College.

CSA—Customer Service Academy

CTE—Career Technical Education

District—Merced Community College District

EEO—Equal Employment Opportunity Committee

ESL—English as a Second Language

FAFSA—Free Application for Federal Student Aid

IAC—Bizzini Interdisciplinary Academic Center

IGETC—Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum

IGTC—I'm Going to College

IIPP—Injury, Illness Prevention Program

IMPC—Instructional Master Planning Committee

IPRC—Instructional Program Review Committee

ISSP—International Student Services Program

ITS—Information Technology Services (ITS)

LAN—local area network

LASSI—Learning and Study Strategies Inventor

LSSC—Lesher Student Services Center

MAN— Metropolitan Area Network

MAPLE—Management and Planning for Long-term Enrollment Committee

MBTI—Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator

MCDUG—Merced College Datatel Users Group

MC-net—Merced College's intranet

MITA—Microsoft IT Academy

OCLC—Online Computer Library Center

OGIR—Office of Grants and Institutional Research

OSHA—Occupational Safety and Health Administration

PAC—President's Advisory Council

PERB—Post Employee Retirement Benefits

President—In all cases, this refers to the Superintendent/President of Merced College

RAT— Research Assistance Team

R2T4—Return to Title IV

SAE—Datatel Strategic Academic Enterprise

SARS—Scheduling and Reporting System

SHS—Student Health Services

SI—Supplemental Instruction

SLO(s)—Student Learning Outcome(s)

SLOAC—Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle

SPAM—Student Personnel Administrative Managers

SPEC—Student Personnel Executive Committee

SSPIRE—Student Support Partnership Integrating Resources and Education

TAGs—Transfer Admission Agreements

TANF—Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TLA—Teaching and Learning Academy

TRAN—Tax Revenue Anticipation Note

TRC—Technology Resources Center

TRMPC—Technology & Research Master Planning Committee

VIPJPA—Valley Insurance Program Joint Powers Authority
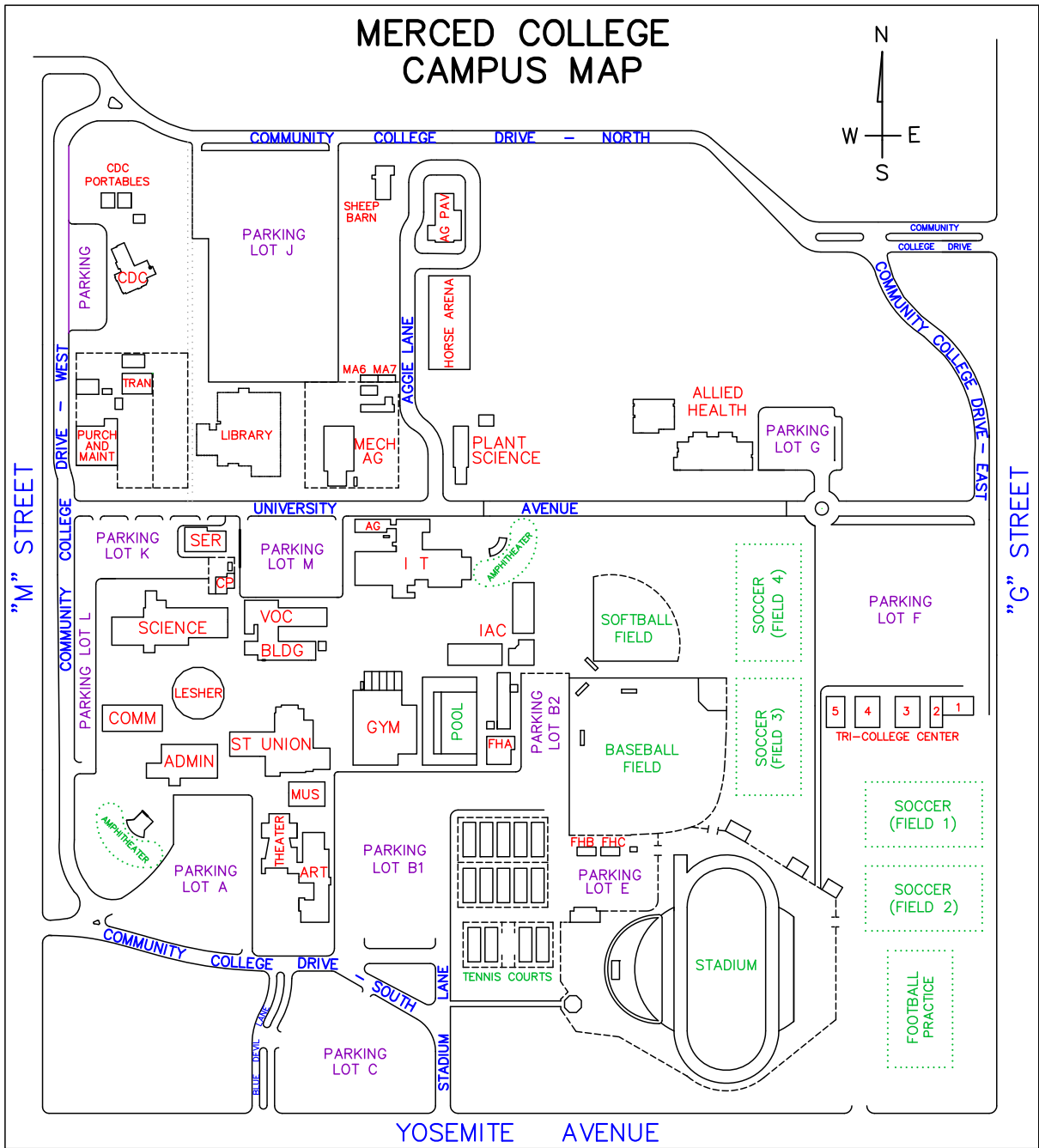
VTEA—Vocational and Technical Education Act

WAN—Wide Area Network
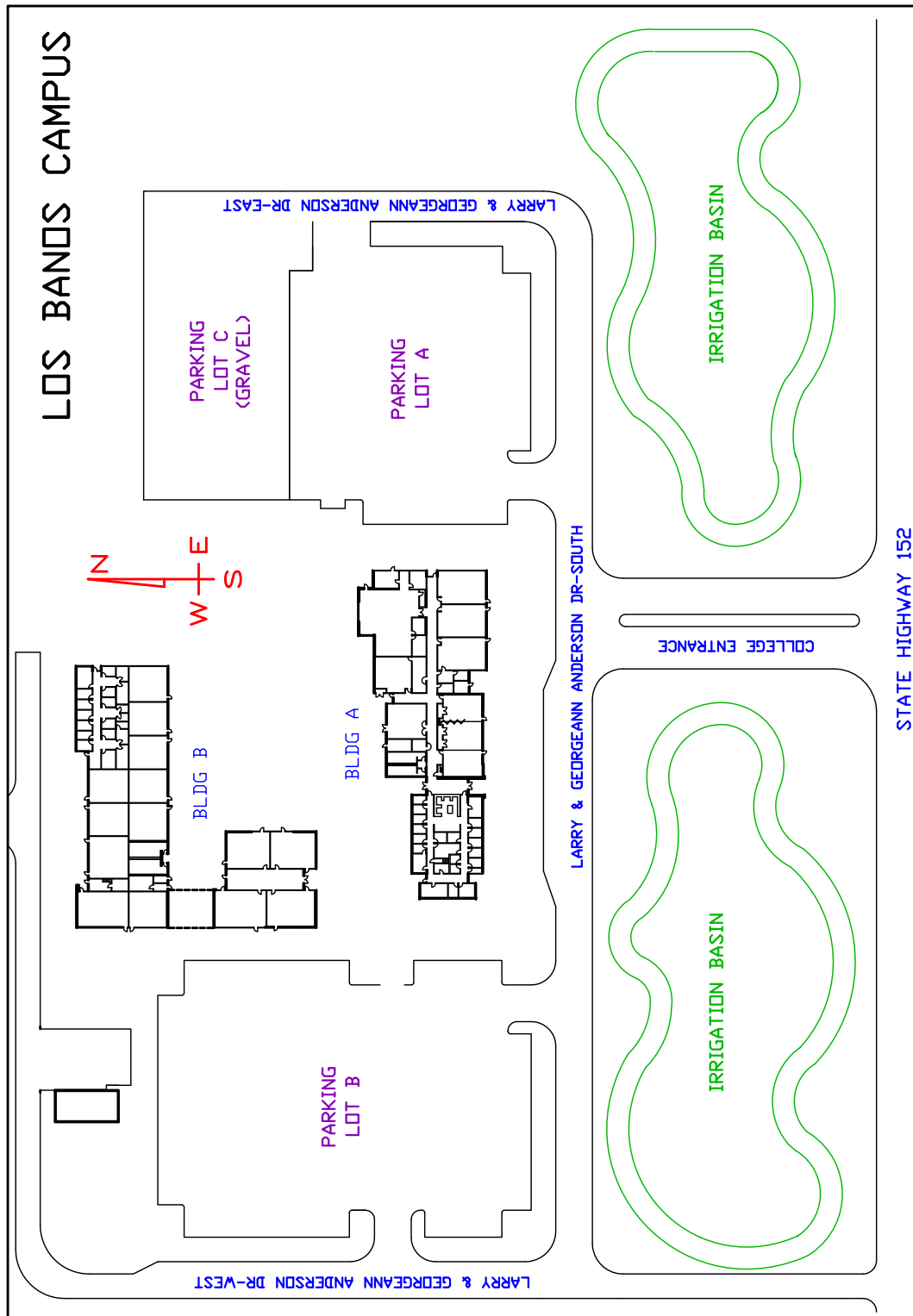
WASC—Western Association of School and Colleges

Maps of the Merced and Los Banos Campuses

MERCED COLLEGE
CAMPUS MAP

N
W E
S

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DRIVE — NORTH

CDC PORTABLES

PARKING

CDC

PARKING LOT J

SHEEP BARN

AG PAV

HORSE ARENA

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DRIVE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DRIVE — WEST

"M" STREET

TRAN

PURCH AND MAINT

LIBRARY

MA6 MA7

MECH AG

PLANT SCIENCE

AGGIE LANE

ALLIED HEALTH

PARKING LOT G

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DRIVE — EAST

"G" STREET

UNIVERSITY AVENUE

PARKING LOT K

SER

PARKING LOT M

AG

I T

AMPHITHEATER

SOFTBALL FIELD

SOCCER (FIELD 4)

PARKING LOT F

CP

SCIENCE

VOC BLDG

IAC

SOCCER (FIELD 3)

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DRIVE — NORTH

PARKING LOT L

LESHER

COMM

GYM

POOL

FHA

PARKING LOT B2

BASEBALL FIELD

5 4 3 2 1
TRI-COLLEGE CENTER

ST UNION

ADMIN

MUS

THEATER

ART

PARKING LOT B1

FHB FHC

PARKING LOT E

SOCCER (FIELD 1)

AMPHITHEATER

PARKING LOT A

TENNIS COURTS

STADIUM

SOCCER (FIELD 2)

FOOTBALL PRACTICE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DRIVE — SOUTH

BLUE DEVIL LANE

STADIUM LANE

PARKING LOT C

YOSEMITE AVENUE

REVISED OCTOBER 2010

LOS BANOS CAMPUS

PARKING LOT C (GRAVEL)

PARKING LOT A

PARKING LOT B

LARRY & GEORGEANN ANDERSON DR-EAST

LARRY & GEORGEANN ANDERSON DR-WEST

LARRY & GEORGEANN ANDERSON DR-SOUTH

BLDG B

BLDG A

N
W — E
S

IRRIGATION BASIN

IRRIGATION BASIN

COLLEGE ENTRANCE

STATE HIGHWAY 152

AUGUST 2010