

EVALUATION REPORT

COLUMBIA COLLEGE

11600 Columbia College Drive
Sonora, CA 95370

A Confidential Report Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Columbia College from October 24 through October 27, 2011.

Dr. Cynthia E. Azari, Chair

Columbia College Comprehensive Evaluation Visit Team Roster October 24 -27, 2011

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Summary of the Evaluation Report

INSTITUTION: Columbia College

DATE OF VISIT: October 24–27, 2011

TEAM CHAIR: Cynthia E. Azari
President, Riverside City College

A ten-member accreditation team visited Columbia College in mid-October for the purpose of evaluating the institution's request to reaffirm accreditation.

Established in 1968, Columbia College is a small, public comprehensive two year college in California. It is the smaller of two institutions, including Modesto Junior College, comprising the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD). The district is one of the largest in California, transecting more than 100 miles of the San Joaquin Valley from the Coast Range on the west to the Sierra Nevada on the east. The college is located in Sonora, California on 280 acres of forestland in the historic Mother Lode.

Columbia College's service area consists of all of Tuolumne and Calaveras counties and portions of Stanislaus County including Oakdale, Knights Ferry, Valley Home, Riverbank and Waterford. The majority of Columbia students are from Tuolumne County.

Columbia College staff prepared well for the team's visit beginning with developing an organized and detailed self-study report, although it was quite lengthy. The team room was spacious, comfortable, and contained information the team required to complete their work. Team requests both before and during the visit were quickly met by college faculty and staff. In addition to open forums and one-on-one interviews, the team had numerous opportunities to observe Columbia College dialogue in action. Team members were greeted with hospitality and candor in every interaction and were provided with open access to all documents, faculty, staff, administrators, and students needed to gather evidence related to the accreditation standards.

The team prepared for its visit by reviewing the Columbia College self-study report, responses to the previous accreditation team report, college publications, such as catalog and schedule, and online resources and evidentiary documents.

Overall, the team perceives the college and its community of faculty, staff, and students to be thriving, thoughtful, creative, and optimistic. Specifically, team members were impressed with:

- The governance process is a transparent and inclusive process that facilitates open dialogue in a trusting environment with strong and concerted efforts to include students.
- The Academic Wellness Educators have been successful in basic skills development and support encourages students to progress in their educational pursuits.
- The Unit Plans Tool software for unit plans, student learning outcomes and program reviews has streamlined those processes and established a data repository.
- Collaboration among all students services units to better serve students.
- The college and district are to be commended on the recently completed buildings and campus improvements and for attaining LEED certification on the Science and Natural Resources Building and the Child Development Center. The college and district are also to be commended on the collaborative processes used to ensure the buildings met programmatic needs.

Recommendations

District Recommendations (Shared in team evaluation reports for Columbia College and Modesto Junior College)

After carefully reading the self-study report, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel and students, and discussing the findings in light of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2002 Standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) and its colleges.

District Recommendation 1:

In order to fully meet the standard and improve the effectiveness of its human resources the team recommends the systematic evaluation of all personnel at stated intervals with appropriate documentation (Standard III.A).

District Recommendation 2:

In order to fully meet the standard, the teams recommend that the district and the colleges review institutional mission and their array of course offerings and programs in light of their current budgets (Standard IV.B.3.c).

District Recommendation 3:

The team recommends the district and Board of Trustees develop policies on the Delegation of Authority to the college president (Standards IV.B.2; IV.B.3; IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.e).

District Recommendation 4:

The team recommends the district develop policies that clearly define and follow, the process for hiring and evaluating the college president (Standards IV.B.1; IV.B.1.j).

Columbia College Recommendations

After carefully reading the self-study report, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel and students, and discussing the findings in light of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2002 Standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Columbia College.

College Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution complete the development and assessment of student learning outcomes for all courses and programs and develop and assess learning outcomes in administrative services, student services, as well as the Library and Learning Support Services and use the results for improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standards I.B.3, I.B.7).

College Recommendation 2:

In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends the institution continue to assess the evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, the library and other learning support services (Standards I.B.6; IV.A.5).

College Recommendation 3:

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the institution employ a substantial core of qualified faculty with full time responsibility to the educational programs (Eligibility Requirement #13, Standards II.A.1.c; II.A.2.e; II.B.4; II.C.2.).

College Recommendation 4:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution develop, implement and evaluate counseling and academic advising that takes into account the needs of students enrolled in Distance Learning courses (Standards II.A.1.b.; II.A.2.d; II.B.3.a; II.C.1.c).

College Recommendation 5:

In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution implement planning and program review processes in administrative services, and use the results to inform technology decisions, physical resource needs and resource allocation (Standards III.A., III.B.2, III.C.1, III.C.2).

College Recommendation 6:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution systematically assess the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for institutional improvement (Standards IIID, IIID.3).

College Recommendation 7:

In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution develop a comprehensive staff development plan designed to meet the needs of its personnel and develop a systematic evaluation process (Standards IIIA, IIIC.b).

**Accreditation Evaluation Report for
Columbia College
October 24-27,2011**

Introduction

Columbia College was established in 1968 and is the smaller of two institutions (including Modesto Junior College) comprising the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD). Columbia College served approximately 4,233 students in 2009 semester, with approximately 46% of those students under the age of 25. Over 22% of the students are age 50 or over. Student demographics indicate:

- Columbia College enrolls a greater percentage of white students and fewer African-American, Asian and Hispanic students than the state community college system. Over 63% of the students are white Non-Hispanic, with 3% African –American and 11.1% Hispanic.
- More female students (52%) than male students (46.7%) attend Columbia College.
- Distance Education enrollments have increased by 179% from fall 2008 to fall 2009.
- In 2009, 173 associate degrees and 73 certificates were awarded.

Recent Accreditation History for Columbia College

The 2005 comprehensive accreditation visit to Columbia College resulted in five recommendations, with a 2007 Progress Report and a 2008 Focused Midterm Report.

In January of 2009, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges accepted the Columbia College 2008 Midterm Report. A total of five recommendations were included in the team accreditation report, and all five were to be addressed in both the Progress and Mid-term reports.

Recommendation 1: Communication

The team recommends that the college and district develop a concrete and systematic process to improve collaboration, communication and cooperation. The process should include, but not be limited to, an examination of whether any current functions provided by the district office should be centralized or decentralized to better serve students (Standards 1.B.1; 1.A.4; III.B; IV.A; IV.B).

Recommendation 2: Planning

The team recommends that the college establish an integrated, comprehensive planning process in all areas of the college by emphasizing and strengthening the link between planning, budgeting and program review. Particular focus should be in the following areas: communication of a planning calendar with timelines and delineated with the persons responsible; instituting and communicating processes that produce evidence that program evaluations lead to the improvement of college programs and services; and develop[ment of a strategic plan that will guide the college in integrating the planning processes that result in the college meeting its goals set forth and in line with its mission. (Standards I.A.4; I.B.2; I.B.5; II.A.2; II.C; III.B):

Recommendation 3: Resource Allocation

The team recommends that in order to best serve the needs of students, the district and the college engage in a collaborative process to ensure a transparent and equitable allocation of financial resources and that the district and the college implement a process to communicate budget issues with each other on an ongoing basis (Standards III.C.1a; III.C2; III.D.1a, b, c; III.D.2a; III.D.2b; III.D.2d; III.D.2e; III.D3;IV.B.3d; IV.B.3g).

Recommendation 4: Research

The team recommends that the institution adopt a culture of evidence by developing and implementing, with timelines, responsibilities, and evaluation, a research process based on quantitative and qualitative analysis that assesses institutional effectiveness and documents the need for resources, technology, staffing, programs, and facilities which best serve the student's needs (Standards I.A; I.B; II.B.1, 3.4; II.C).

Recommendation 5: Student Learning Outcomes

The team recommends that the college adopt an aggressive approach with specific timelines and responsibilities for developing student learning outcomes including documentation and assessment at the course, program, and institutional level and demonstrate that evidence is being used for institutional improvement. All employees of the college must assume responsibility to improve student learning outcomes (Standards II.A.1, II.A.2; II.B; II.C).

Columbia College Self Study

The self-study document submitted August 15, 2011 is well-written and is presented in a professional, easy-to-follow format. The photographs and document lay-out are excellent. The self-study includes sections on institutional history, demographics, status of prior recommendations, and reports on each accreditation standard. College and district demographic information is comprehensive and clearly presented.

The Self Study Report is 566 pages long, and the report presents much description and evidence. However, the first sentence in the self evaluation section of each standard is “The college meets this standard.” The college should consider more analysis before stating that the standard is met. Generally, the analytic sections following each lengthy description are relatively short, and there are a few planning agendas.

Commendations for Columbia College

Overall, the team perceives the college and its community of faculty, staff, and students to be thriving, thoughtful, creative, and optimistic. Specifically, team members were impressed with:

- The governance process is a transparent and inclusive process that facilitates open dialogue in a trusting environment with strong and concerted efforts to include students.
- The success of the Academic Wellness Educators in basic skills development and providing support encourages students to progress in their educational pursuits.
- The Unit Plans Tool software development for unit plans, student learning outcomes and program reviews has streamlined those processes and established a data repository.
- The Student Services program is commended for its commitment to student learning and success, innovation and collaboration in its delivery of service to students.
- The college and district are to be commended on the recently completed buildings and campus improvements and for attaining LEED certification on the Science and Natural Resources Building and the Child Development Center. The college and district are also to be commended on the collaborative processes used to ensure the buildings met programmatic needs.

After carefully reading the self-study report, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel and students, and discussing the findings in light of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2002 Standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) and its colleges.

District Recommendation 1:

In order to fully meet the standard and improve the effectiveness of its human resources the team recommends the systematic evaluation of all personnel at stated intervals (Standard III.A).

District Recommendation 2:

In order to fully meet the standard, the teams recommend that the district and the colleges review institutional mission and their array of course offerings and program in light of their current budgets (Standard IV.B.3.c)

District Recommendation 3:

The team recommends that the District and Board of Trustees develop policies on the Delegation of Authority to the College President (Standards IV.B.2; IV.B.3; IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.e).

District Recommendation 4:

The team recommends that the District develops policies that clearly outline the process for hiring and evaluating the College President (Standards IV.B.1; IV.B.1.j).

Columbia College Recommendations

After carefully reading the self-study report, examining evidence, interviewing college personnel and students, and discussing the findings in light of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges 2002 Standards, the team offers the following recommendations to Columbia College.

College Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution complete the development and assessment of student learning outcomes for all courses and programs and develop and assess learning outcomes in administrative services, student services, as well as the Library and Learning Support Services and use the results for improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standards I.B.3, I.B.7).

College Recommendation 2:

In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends the institution continue to assess the evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, the library and other learning support services (Standards I.B.6; IV.A.5).

College Recommendation 3:

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the institution employ a substantial core of qualified faculty with full time responsibility to the educational programs (Eligibility Requirement #13, Standards II.A.1.c; II.A.2.e; II.B.4; II.C.2.).

College Recommendation 4:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution develop, implement and evaluate counseling and academic advising that takes into account the needs of students enrolled in Distance Learning courses (Standards II.A.1.b; II.A.2.d; II.B.3.a; II.C.1.c).

College Recommendation 5:

In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution expand planning and program review processes in all areas of the college, and use the results to inform technology decisions, physical resource needs and resource allocation (Standards III.A., III.B.2, III.C.1, III.C.2).

College Recommendation 6:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution systematically assess the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for institutional improvement (Standards IIID, IIID.3).

College Recommendation 7:

In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends that the institution develop a comprehensive staff development plan designed to meet the needs of its personnel and develop a systematic evaluation process (Standards IIIA, IIIC.b).

Responses to Recommendations of the 2005 Comprehensive Evaluation Team

Aspects of the 2005 recommendations that remain unmet have been incorporated in the recommendations crafted by the 2011 visiting team.

Recommendation 1: Communication

The team recommends that the college and district develop a concrete and systematic process to improve collaboration, communication and cooperation. The process should include, but not be limited to, an examination of whether any current functions provided by the district office should be centralized or decentralized to better serve students (Standards 1.B.1; 1.A.4; III.B; IV.A; IV.B).

The college has met this recommendation. The response to the first recommendation is satisfactory and reflects the most recent changes that took place at the institution with respect to communication, collaboration, and cooperation between the college and Yosemite Community College District. The issues raised by the previous team have been resolved, particularly in light of the new leadership at the college and at the district. The communication infrastructure appears to be in place with respect to the separate and joint responsibilities of each entity. This is evidenced by the 30-page document included in the 2011 self-study, delineating the responsibilities of the college and the district with respect to responding to accreditation standards.

The outcome of ACCJC's Team visit in October 2005 was a reaffirmation of accreditation with a requirement that the college complete a Progress Report submitted by October 15, 2007 followed by a visit by Commission representatives. The Progress Report was to focus on the five recommendations and concerns that were noted by the visiting team and Commission. Additionally the college was directed to submit the Midterm Report by October 15, 2008 indicating the progress toward meeting the evaluation team's recommendations, the college-identified concerns expressed in the self-study, and forecasting where the college expects to be by the next comprehensive evaluation.

Evidence supports that the institution took the recommendations seriously, began changing the culture and working on their internal relationships. When the 2005 evaluation team visited the institution they found a large disconnect between the district and the college, and between the college leadership and the employees and students. It appears that they lacked foundational structure that would support sustainable and ongoing participatory governance that is found when there are efforts to be collaborative, cooperative and to communicate in a transparent style. The district and college immediately acted upon the team's recommendations and by the time of

submitting the 2007 Progress Report and hosting the Commission's visit they found a new executive leadership who had established effective methods of communication and an increased participation on district committees that created a more transparent pipeline for communication. However the other recommendations were still lagging and the Commission extended Columbia College's time to correct the other deficiencies due to the college's significant work recently made to address them. The Commission stated that their Focused Mid-term Report must give evidence of resolution of the recommendations selected for emphasis by the Commission.

Columbia College provided the Commission a comprehensive Focused Mid-term Report that provided their resolutions to each recommendation and self-identified issues which was accepted by the Commission. This Focused Midterm Report represented the in-depth work the whole college engaged in to increase the institution's effectiveness.

Recommendation 2: Planning

The team recommends that the college establish an integrated, comprehensive planning process in all areas of the college by emphasizing and strengthening the link between planning, budgeting and program review. Particular focus should be in the following areas (Standards I.A.4; I.B.2; I.B.5; II.A.2; II.C; III.B):

This recommendation is still not fully met.

The college revised its mission statement, developed an educational master plan, created a master planning calendar, and streamlined the strategic planning process. Included in this process is a delineation of the components that link program review, planning, and budget allocation.

Examination of the planning documents prepared by the college indicates the existence of a robust planning environment that includes 18 different plans. However, the team questions the effectiveness of the college in maintaining and updating these dozen and a half plans on a regular and systematic basis. The team also found a reasonable level of confusion regarding the strategic plan, which includes three separate documents: the educational master plan, the facilities master plan, and the campus master plan. The team suggests that the institution resolve this confusion.

In 2008, responding to the 2007 midterm progress report, Columbia College cited the following:

- The College completed a 2008-2015 Educational Master Plan.
- The College Council approved a Strategic Planning process in 2008.
- The College is revising its Annual Planning Calendar.
- The College will seek feedback about the efficacy of its planning process cycle and update it as necessary.

- The College is poised to maintain a sustainable level of planning.

Program Review, Distance Education, and Student Learning Outcomes were among over a dozen items addressed in the annual planning calendar. The current self-study includes extensive documentation of program review, an active distance education group, and a group actively working on student learning outcomes. However, it is not clear what has been done with the collected data: whether data have been analyzed, and whether such analysis has been considered in decision-making. Furthermore, some of the evidence described in the Self Study, including some of the collected data, was not available for evaluation by the site visit team.

Recommendation 3: Resource Allocation

The team recommends that in order to best serve the needs of students, the district and the college engage in a collaborative process to ensure a transparent and equitable allocation of financial resources and that the district and the college implement a process to communicate budget issues with each other on an ongoing basis (Standards III.C.1a; III.C.2; III.D.1a, b, c; III.D.2a; III.D.2b; III.D.2d; III.D.2e; III.D.3; IV.B.3d; IV.B.3g).

The college met this recommendation.

The District Budget Allocation Task Force was formed to review and make recommendations on the allocation model and to foster and establish dialog across the district regarding the budget process. The task force was co-chaired by the Columbia College President and Executive Vice Chancellor of Yosemite, and was charged to report its findings and make a recommendation to the District Council. The group reviewed multiple allocation models and reached consensus that the problem was not the allocation of resources. Rather, it was the lack of transparency and understanding of the allocation and budget process that resulted in the issues. The task force completed their charge and reported its findings and recommendations. A budget allocation model summary sheet was developed to help communicate the current YCCD budget allocation. The college and district have continued to keep communication lines open and have held budget forums and workshops. The budget is discussed at the College Council, which is the college's primary collegial consultation group. The College President has disseminated budget updates throughout the year to keep the college informed regarding budget issues. Budget issues and needs are communicated through the campus utilizing the Technology Plan and the unit planning process.

Recommendation 4: Research

The team recommends that the institution adopt a culture of evidence by developing and implementing, with timelines, responsibilities, and evaluation, a research process based on quantitative and qualitative analysis that assesses institutional effectiveness and documents the need for resources, technology, staffing, programs, and facilities which best serve the student's needs (Standards I.A; I.B; II.B.1, 3.4; II.C).

The college has partially met this recommendation.

In 2007, the college hired a director for institutional research and planning with the responsibility to move the college toward a culture of evidence at various levels. Examination of accomplishments in the past four years reveals significant improvements in the use of research data for linking planning, program review and resource allocation. Several areas have come to depend on the research office for their data needs including program review, strategic plans, unit plans, and monitoring of SLOs, to name just a few. This self-study provides ample evidence of the efforts invested in this area. However, the team found that the position of research director is currently vacant. The college has recently hired an interim director of research until May 31, 2012. The team found Columbia College to be committed to hiring a permanent full-time director in 2012. The college strengthened the research function last year when it was selected to work with the BRIC-TAP consultants from the Research and Planning Group (RP Group) to support its ongoing efforts in sustaining a culture of evidence based on relevant and reliable data.

The process of developing and assessing institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes is evolving and has yet to set firm roots in this new soil. The team believes the institution made significant strides in creating the environment and mechanisms that are conducive for future enhancement. It may take several cycles of planning, assessment as well as implementation and re-evaluation to integrate this process throughout the institution and to make it more sustainable. The high level of turnover in key leadership positions at the college is a matter of serious concern for the team since continuity and sustainability are important components of institutional effectiveness. The position of the president has changed hands several times within a relatively short period. The departure of the director of research and the temporary one-year assignment for the VP of Student Learning raises questions about stability in this key function at the college. The existence of a large number of plans raises questions about the effectiveness of the college in implementing and updating them.

Through a program review and unit planning process, the college establishes procedures for collecting and applying evidence to the evaluation of student services programs. The college uses evidence and data on student characteristics and profile, enrollment patterns, student success and

learning. The college also utilizes statewide indicators through the Accountability Report for Community colleges and the Basic Skills Initiative for decision making. The Institutional Effectiveness Report and other planning documents such as the Student Equity Plan and the Educational Master Plan are also replete with data and evidence. Student Services units participate in the evaluation of programs through program reviews and surveys. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), as evaluative tools, are also included in some program reviews. However, while the Student Services programs at the college reflect a move towards a culture of evidence with the collection of, and use of data, in the evaluation of their activities, the full spirit of this recommendation has not yet been fully met, at least in terms of aspects of Standard IIB that relate to evaluation for improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness. While there are semblances of a research process based on quantitative and qualitative analysis that documents the need for resources, especially as they are reflected in the Unit Planning Tool, the Student Services Program Reviews and SLOs do not effectively demonstrate a strong linkage among program review, SLOs and institutional improvement.

There has not been a consistent description of how these planning processes are used to close the loop in the evaluation and assessment of student learning and progress. Additionally, the move towards the culture of evidence that should lead to an assessment of institutional effectiveness may be affected as the college is currently in a transition phase of filling the vacant Director of Research position, which was instrumental in establishing the modalities for a research process at the college.

Recommendation 5: Student Learning Outcomes

The team recommends that the college adopt an aggressive approach with specific timelines and responsibilities for developing student learning outcomes including documentation and assessment at the course, program, and institutional level and demonstrate that evidence is being used for institutional improvement. All employees of the college must assume responsibility to improve student learning outcomes (Standards II.A.1, II.A.2; II.B; II.C).

The college has partially addressed this recommendation.

The college has provided evidence to document efforts towards meeting this recommendation. Descriptions in the Self-Study reflect activities towards this end. The college established an SLO Workgroup with representation from campus constituent groups, and as of 2009, the college has made progress in identifying and assessing SLOs at the course and program levels. The college has also developed an SLO Tools page, which serves as a base for documenting and reviewing SLO activities at the college. Assessment of SLOs is occurring at the college as reflected on the SLO Tools page. However, the page does not provide sufficient evidence that SLOs are being

used for improvement in student learning and institutional effectiveness. While the college has adopted an aggressive approach to develop SLOs with attendant assessments, it does not provide, through the SLO Tool page, sequential iterations of how these assessment results are utilized for decision making or whether they have resulted in institutional improvements. Also, SLO assessment has not embraced all areas of the college, and is currently relegated to academic and student services programs.

In its 2007 midterm progress report, the accreditation team acknowledged progress in SLO development, but cited a lack of focus and uniformity in course SLOs in particular. (In contrast, instructional support and student services were largely compliant.) In response, the college provided benchmarks for work to be completed by April 2012. By the time of the site visit in fall 2011, the college expects to develop SLOs and assessments in 80% of all courses, in 50% of program SLOs, and those assessments will have been completed and discussed. Committees have been formed and members identified. The college response states that there is broad institutional support (and resource allocation) and that the Board has strived to be informed about its progress. Finally, the response states that SLOs have been integrated into program review.

It should be noted that the ACCJC expects that colleges being reviewed this year should be at the “Development” level, at least, for Student Learning Outcomes. Columbia College describes activities that indicate that it has achieved this level.

Eligibility Requirements

The team found Columbia College to be in compliance with all eligibility requirements established by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges except numbers 10 and 13, which are cited in the team's recommendations in Standard II.

1. AUTHORITY

Columbia College has the authority to operate as a degree-granting institution due to continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), an institutional accreditation body recognized by the Commission of Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education. The college is an institution of the California Community College system and is authorized to provide educational programs by the California Education Code.

2. MISSION

The Columbia College Mission Statement clearly defines its commitment to achieving student learning. The mission statement is posted on the college's website and published in various documents, such as the college *Educational Master Plan* and the college catalog. The college reviews the mission statement every two years, revises it as needed, and presents it to the Yosemite Community College District governing board for final approval.

3. GOVERNING BOARD

A seven member Board of Trustees governs the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD). The trustees are elected from five trustee areas comprising the district. The governing board is an independent policy-making body and adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that a board member does not have a financial interest in actions taken by the board. A student trustee, elected by students of either Modesto Junior College or Columbia College, serves a one-year advisory term and the student representative rotates from college to college on an annual basis. The chancellor of the YCCD serves as Secretary to the Board. The board holds monthly meetings, which are open to the public. Notices of scheduled meetings and the agendas are widely posted in advance, and all meetings are recorded. The team confirmed that the board makes policy for the district and exercises oversight of its operations.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The board selects the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the college. Columbia College has a CEO who has been appointed by the governing board and whose primary responsibility is to the institution.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

The administrative staff of Columbia College is adequate in number, experience, and qualification to provide appropriate administrative oversight to enable the college to fulfill its purpose and mission.

6. OPERATING STATUS

Students are enrolled in a variety of courses and programs that lead to associate degrees, certificates, occupational-skills awards, and transfer to four-year institutions.

7. DEGREES

The Columbia College catalog describes a variety of degrees and certificates offered by the institution. The majority of the college's courses apply to these degrees or certificates.

8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Columbia College's principal degrees are congruent with its mission, are based on recognized higher education fields of study, and are sufficient in content and length. The college Curriculum Committee and approval process ensures programs of study are congruent with the college mission and meet all legal requirements related to length, content, quality, and rigor, regardless of location or modality.

9. ACADEMIC CREDIT

Columbia College awards academic credit in a manner conventional for community colleges and consistent with generally accepted good practice in higher education and with state regulations.

10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Course outlines for both degree credit and non-degree credit include student learning outcomes and plans for the assessment of these student learning outcomes is at the beginning stages. Student learning outcomes are published in the catalog, and are accessible to faculty through the SLO tool. Assessment data is available in educational programs reviews.

11. GENERAL EDUCATION

Columbia College defines and publishes specific requirements for incorporating general education into its degree programs. A substantial component of general education is designed to

ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. General education programs and courses meet the requirements of Title 5 (55806), requirements of the California Community College system. The quality and rigor of Columbia College general education is consistent with the academic standards appropriate to higher education.

12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Columbia College promotes academic freedom, free inquiry and intellectual independence as a central feature of its programs and certificates. Further, college faculty and students are free to examine and test knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic/educational community in general.

13. FACULTY

Columbia College employs 48 full-time and approximately 37 part-time faculty members. All meet or exceed state minimum qualifications. Over 43% of the courses are taught by part-time faculty and several full time faculty have taken responsibility for “orphaned” programs (i.e., programs without a full time faculty member) outside of their field of study.

14. STUDENT SERVICES

The team reviewed the size and scope of student services provided by Columbia College and found them to be consistent with the needs of the student body and the college’s mission statement.

15. ADMISSIONS

Columbia College has a clear statement of open admission in compliance with both California Educational Code and Title 5. The policies are published in the course catalog and on the college website.

16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Columbia College provides specific, long-term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs regardless of where they are delivered or in what format they are delivered.

17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Columbia 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.

18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Columbia College's financial management is evaluated through an annual external audit conducted by an independent certified public accounting firm.

19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Columbia College has a documented Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Campus Master Plan and Technology Plan. Planning processes and outcomes are integrated, consistent, evaluated and updated on a regular basis.

20. PUBLIC INFORMATION

Columbia College publishes in its catalog, class schedule, website and other publications information concerning the college's mission, admission requirements and procedures, and rules and regulations affecting students, degree requirements, et cetera.

21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

Columbia College adheres to the eligibility requirements, standards, and policies and complies with the Accreditation Commission requests, directives, decisions and policies. The Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) Board of Trustees and college fulfill their obligations to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. The Accreditation Standards and recommendations of the ACCJC are incorporated into the board's planning activities.

Evaluation of Columbia College Using ACCJC 2002 Standards

This report pertains to a request for reaffirmation of accreditation for Columbia College. The college followed the 2002 ACCJC Standards in preparing a self-study pursuant to this reaffirmation request. The team developed four district recommendations that are repeated in the team report for Modesto Junior College and seven college recommendations. The college recommendations cross the standards and may be presented in the conclusion of more than one standard.

Standard I Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Standard IA. Mission

General Comments

The current Columbia College mission statement is:

Columbia College is a dynamic institution of learners and creative thinkers dedicated to high standards of student success. We prepare students to be fully engaged in an evolving world by offering comprehensive and high quality programs and services. Columbia College is committed to a culture of improvement through measuring student learning across the institution. We strive for excellence, foster a spirit of professionalism and celebrate diversity.

Columbia College's mission statement describes the college's intended population and clearly articulates its commitment to a "culture of improvement through measuring of students learning across the institution." The mission statement is posted on the college website and published in the college catalog, the Foundation's annual report, business cards, posters and in most buildings across campus. The 2011-2012 college catalog provides evidence that the college offers courses aligned with its identified population (Standards I.A.1 and I.A.2).

Standard IA. Mission

Findings and Evidence

The college uses the Institutional Effectiveness report to identify the characteristics of its student population and those of the college service area population. This report also includes labor market trends for the counties served by the college. Student's profile is used to help the college develop programs and services to meet the needs of the students. The college

offers numerous student learning services and programs, including comprehensive basic skills, English as Second Language (ESL), adult noncredit, workforce training, services for students with economic disadvantages, distance education, as well as transfer degrees and Career Technical Education. The purpose is appropriate for Columbia College and it reflects its character as a small rural comprehensive community college that has traditionally focused on vocational programs. (Standard I.A.1).

Two separate surveys of faculty/staff and students in 2010 showed a sizable majority of constituents agree that the college is meeting its mission through the implementation of its ten goals and numerous strategies. Columbia College has a unique geographical setting in the Sierra and a unique student body, where almost one-fourth of the students represent persons of 50 years and older. This is a rate that is almost twice as large as that of the state community colleges, taken as a whole. The college has acknowledged its geographical uniqueness by offering programs in forestry, fire protection, watershed and hospitality management. To honor its uniqueness of having a large segment of adult learners, the college emphasizes lifelong learning in its vision statement. (Standard I.A.1)

College goals were first identified by College Council in April 2007. The council examines the progress toward attaining the goals through the College Goal Progress Reports that track the projects from inception to completion. The strategies that are used to accomplish the goals are reviewed biennially. This process ensures the alignment of the unit plan projects to college goals. The unit planning tool is the central hub that connects the college mission to resource allocation and coordinates aspects relating to institutional effectiveness. As a result, institutional improvements have been made to the college service areas, including federal support for TRIO, Title III grant for distance education, expanded ESL, expansion of services to veterans and disabled students, a student success initiative called Academic Wellness Educators (AWE), and others. Finally, the campus-wide survey of fall, 2010, concluded that a sizable majority of the respondents agreed that the college understands student support service needs, strives to meet those needs and the college is successfully meeting its mission (Standard I.A.1).

The college has clearly defined the biennial review process for the mission statement and uses the campus-wide shared governance body, the College Council, to review, revise, and reaffirm the college's commitment to achieving student learning. The current mission statement was adopted by the College Council on April 6, 2007 to align with the Educational Master Plan, and was reaffirmed in 2009 with no changes. Board approval was reflected in the minutes of their meeting on May 9, 2009. The mission statement evolved from college-wide dialogue as did the vision and core values which "provide a framework for the college

to establish and maintain student learning programs and services.” These statements are visible and referenced throughout the college’s integrated planning documents. Currently, the College Council is reviewing and revising the mission statement through the established biennial process. The revision will be available as a draft for the November 4, 2011 Council meeting (Standards I.A.2, I.A.3).

The revised college mission statement led to the revision and updating of the Educational Master Plan (EMP). The 2008-2015 EMP is the foundation for all planning documents for the entire college. The Strategic Planning Process Cycle (SPPC) depicts the decision-making processes for integrated, institutional planning. The annual program review process provides data and resource requests to the strategic planning process using a web-based application, making it all transparent. The team found that the program review template does not require justification for resource needs, which is a concern. In addition, some program review documents did not include sufficient analysis and reflection on the data. Of particular concern is the lack of commentary or analysis on the significantly lower student success rates in certain academic programs, such as speech and communication, social science, and psychology (Standard I.A.4).

Conclusions

Standard I.A has been met.

The college has been effective using the biennial review process for reviewing its mission, as well as using the Institutional Effectiveness report to provide a clear understanding of the characteristics of the students. The college created an integrated planning process driven by the mission that has begun to meet the college’s goals. A centralized shared governance committee, the College Council, provides the necessary monitoring and oversight of the strategic projects outcomes. Program review provides the programmatic information to support the planning process for resource requests on an annual basis by providing evidence-based needs.

However, the team suggests continuous revision and update of the guidelines/instructions for completing the program review documents to provide sufficient analysis and reflection on the data, particularly those that represent significant deviations from the norm.

Standard I.B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

General Comments

Columbia College uses different methods to facilitate and encourage campus-wide understanding about improving institutional effectiveness. The college created more effective transparent measures by placing the college planning processes on the campus web site, thus affording all employees and members of the public the opportunity to read about the updated planning processes and the achievement of goals. Planning begins at the department level, moves to the division level and trickles upward through the college strategic planning processes that support the EMP. The introduction of College Goal Progress Reports provides an opportunity for assessing the accomplishment of goals and enhancing institutional effectiveness to support continuous and sustainable quality improvement (Standards I.B.1; I.B.2).

Standard I.B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Findings and Evidence

In order to increase an open exchange of ideas campus-wide, Columbia College shares their dialogue with the community through the college's website. That includes meeting minutes from College Council, the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Curriculum Committee, Facilities Committee, Technology Committee, Distance Ed Committee, Title III Committee, and others. Some committees have gone beyond the simple sharing of meeting minutes to include sharing of improvements in student learning. Notably among these groups is the Academic Wellness Educators (AWE) committee. AWE, the largest campus-wide committee, publishes a monthly e-newsletter, increasing depth and breadth of information on their projects and successes (Standard I.B.1).

The campus homepage has the 2011 self-study organized with all the evidence for the Standards Committees, encouraging self-reflection, and sharing information and dialogue. Recognizing how ineffective folders are for storing information, the college has a new SLO Tool to store and organize SLOs online. The team discovered that this tool is beginning to stimulate meaningful dialogue about student learning by tracking progress and documenting the analysis and improvements for teaching and learning that promotes openness and dialogue. However, the team also discovered when reviewing the SLO Tool, some departments and programs have not begun and/or completed a full assessment cycle (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3).

The unit planning tool where specific priorities are derived from program review data represents yet another form of campus dialogue because it is collaborative in nature, requiring each department to identify the planning strategies and activities, and the resources

needed to accomplish the unit goals. The unit planning tool is a district-wide document that has served the college in the past few years. However, there is a need to upgrade this tool and adapt it to the colleges' needs that would establish better linkage with the college program review processes and the college strategic plan. There is evidence that Information Technology (IT) is currently evaluating the unit planning tool and plans to modify it as necessary (Standard I.B.1).

The college's EMP is the document designed to help determine its priorities and set goals and objectives. Based on the new processes that have been developed since 2008, there are several documents that reflect the institution's commitment to achieve their identified goals, i.e., College Goal Progress Reports, Primary College Goal Progress Report, Secondary College Goal Progress Report, and College Goal Assessment Process. Overall, it appears that the college has created processes and mechanisms that will eventually facilitate the integration of evidence-based needs to begin addressing programs operating in isolation as well as establish the necessary means to prioritize and meet college goals. The college has many new evaluation processes and documents it has employed to conduct system self assessment. Now the challenge is to establish sufficient interfaces or links that will insure they are appropriately aligned. For example, the College Goal Progress Reports were created in December, 2010, to evaluate the progress toward addressing college goals. However, as was explained to the team, neither the program review software nor the unit planning tools are intelligently linked to activity projects and the planning goals to provide these updates and tracking. The college has begun a cyclical planning process to "encourage and reinforce continuous quality improvement in support of student learning." Both program review and SLO assessment are also operating based on the ACCJC rubric as a guideline. Program review is the primary means used for the college to evaluate and assess whether student needs are being met. The team found that not all areas of the campus are currently participating in program review. Student Services just completed their first cycle of program review this past year, while Administrative Services has yet to begin. Assessment of SLOs through a Planning Chart and Timeline tracks the stages of attainment for the campus to meet the proficiency level in the rubric. This is transparent and easily accessible to campus employees and yet, based on the team examination of the SLO Tool, there are still departments, programs and divisions that have not fully completed their first assessment cycle (Standards I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.5).

The Strategic Planning Process Cycle appears to bring together all the planning pieces of the colleges' new processes. The college is in the early stages of receiving input from many constituents because participation is built in to these processes at all levels. The team learned from members of College Council, for example, that more constituents are beginning to

understand the processes and see their value for planning. Program Review's data are being used as evidence when needs have been identified. For example, the faculty hiring process is soundly linked to this strategic planning process and uses program review to justify each position. Other major committees that the team interviewed seems to have similar experiences that include participation for solid input and some links to the planning processes, i.e., increased ESL offerings and a grant for the development of distant education. (Standard I.B.4).

The college has made most of its planning and assessment results available to the public through the campus internet. This includes goals, progress toward attaining those goals, program review data, enrollment data, and campus safety reports. SLOs are available through the campus intranet system, where sharing and dialoguing is encouraged by the SLO Workgroup. In the past year, the college has created processes to review and assess all the new planning and related processes to assure achievement of the goals. The team learned this evaluation is to become an ongoing tool and be integrated successfully to allow for any needed improvements. The assessment process is part of the Master Planning Calendar to keep the college focused and on track. Overall, the college survey indicated that faculty and staff members agree with the college's effective planning and assessment processes. The survey also indicated a need for improvement related to the planning and evaluative resources needing to be integrated into a single web-based interface (Standards I.B.5, I.B.6.).

The college appears to be in the embryonic stages with the evaluation mechanisms that will assess institutional effectiveness. The faculty evaluation process "has been reviewed and revised". However, team members learned that the personnel evaluation process is in need for improvement. For example, some full-time faculty indicated that they have not been evaluated in some years, nine years for one member. The team is concerned that the evaluation mechanism is not effective, suspecting that the "reviewed and revised" process did not uncover problems that seem to be stemming from the union contract. The college successfully worked with the BRIC-TAP consultants to create an action plan that is directly related to the assessment of the evaluative processes but it has yet to be implemented. The timeline and planning calendar are reviewed and revised regularly. Also a retreat was held for College Council members to reflect on the use of an assessment tool for the evaluation process, but the results are pending. Overall, the team believes this area needs serious improvement. Not only did the assessment of the faculty evaluation process miss the essential issues, the lack of sufficient mechanisms is also reflected in the fact that program review is not in place college-wide. In the instruction area, which has completed program review for a while, the team discovered that there was no analysis or plan for improvement based on the available data. The team is particularly concerned because there is no linkage

between program review and budgeting. Furthermore, validation of the final program review documents before using them appears to be inconsistent. Finally, the team recommends the completion of the first assessment cycle across the institution to support achieving the proficiency level for next fall's deadline (Standard I.B.7).

Standard I.B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Conclusions

The college partially meets Standard I.B.

The college meets the standards governing the adoption and dissemination of its mission statement by having taken significant strides in establishing and implementing planning processes. The college has begun to meet the core areas within this standard of Institutional Effectiveness with the massive amount of work already done that will undoubtedly improve the quality of student learning and will enhance the effectiveness of the institution. There is evidence of commitment, organization and dialogue among the campus constituents. The team believes that integration of existing and nascent research and assessment activities can be improved at some levels of the institution, there remains opportunity for greater involvement of staff in understanding and using assessment results to establish more effective links between planning and resource allocation.

Compliance with the US Department of Education Regulations HEOA 2008 and regulations effective July 1, 2010 and 2011

The team examined the institution summary data on course completion rates, program/certificate completion data, and graduation data. The team found that the information on the above items provide sufficient evidence of the institution's accomplishments of its mission.

Standard I. Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Recommendations

Two college recommendations address the team's conclusions for Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness.

College Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the institution complete the development and assessment of student learning outcomes for all courses and programs and develop and assess learning outcomes in administrative services, student services, as well as the Library and Learning Support Services and use the results for improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard I.B.3, I.B.7).

College Recommendation 2:

In order to fully meet the Standard, the team recommends the institution continue to assess the evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, the library and other learning support services (Standards I.B.6; IV.A.5).

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Services

Standard IIA. Instructional Programs

General Comments

Columbia College has developed a variety of instructional programs, consistent with its mission, to serve its student body with attention to degrees, certificates, transfer, or job training to meet student needs. It meets the educational goals of its students through traditional and online course offerings. The college uses procedures and data from several sources including the district educational plan and institutional effectiveness reports to identify learning needs of its students and continuously assesses programs through its program review process. The college seeks outside funding as another means of serving their students - this was demonstrated through successfully acquiring a Trio, Title III and Hewlett Grant in the last couple of years (Standards II.A, II.A.1).

The establishment of Columbia's Academic Wellness Educators (AWE) Committee demonstrates that the college seeks to improve student learning and increase student success in basic skills and beyond. These educators have developed a variety of projects ranging from Early Semester Experience, registration assistance, Early Alert, and personalized coaching (Standard II.A.1.a).

The relatively smaller number of full-time faculty members raises a question about work overloads and extended responsibilities as a result of the significant changes introduced at the college in the past three to four years. The team is concerned about the human fatigue and exhaustion. The team found evidence showing a list of 46 full-time faculty members consisting of 38 full-time instructional faculty and eight full-time administrators. The team questions the sufficiency of such a small core of full-time faculty members for approximately 4,400 students. The absence of full-time faculty members in 14 academic (orphan) programs represents a serious concern that has direct implications for the college's ability to meet eligibility requirements (ER13).

Measurable academic program outcomes, including comprehensive learning outcomes for general education and vocational education, were identified and published in the college catalog. Columbia also publishes information about courses, degrees and certificates in their 2011-12 Catalog, schedule of classes and their college website (Standard II.A.1.a).

Standard IIA. Instructional Programs

Findings and Evidence

Columbia has developed instructional programs that address needs of students in its rural service area through examination of data from environmental scans, Office of Economic Development publications, and basic student demographics (Standard II.A.1.a).

Regarding course delivery systems, the college has developed a Distance Education Plan that guides its online course development. A distance education coordinator chairs the Distance Education Committee and serves on the college-wide Technology Committee. An excellent DE handbook provides comprehensive information for distance education, and the DE coordinator oversees training. Additionally, Title III grant funds available since 2008 have been used for training and to develop online student services, as well as funding reassigned time for the coordinator position (Standard II.A.1.b).

The distance education faculty have implemented numerous approaches to assisting students to achieve success in their online courses, such as an assessment tool to determine the capability for online instruction; tutoring on Blackboard in the college library; and access to generic web-based tutorial services. As for student verification, the distance education coordinator and instructors have discussed extensively the issues with their students, as well as each other. They include a procedure for student identity verification in their Distance Education Addenda (Standards II.A., II.A.1; II.A.2; II.A.2.c,d,e; II.A.7; II.B.1; II.B.2.c; II.A.3.a; II.C.1; Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education).

There are five main components in the annual program review process. The process provides a tool for evaluating effectiveness in improving/supporting student learning. The college is engaged in an effort to fully implement course level learning outcomes, according to the planning agenda. Program outcomes are published in the 2011-2012 college catalog. The BRIC-TAP action plan, designed to strengthen assessment practices for SLOs, was launched in spring 2011. There is campus wide dialogue on Student Learning Outcomes. Their curriculum approval process includes development of new courses, revisions to existing courses, and the discontinuation of courses for all delivery modes.

In addition to the program review process, Columbia College uses systematic processes and procedures to assess instructional programs for currency, teaching and learning strategies, and learning outcomes. These include their contributions to the College Master Plan 2007, Educational Master Plan 2008 and Addendum 2010, Institutional Effectiveness Report 2009. Columbia has established a strong partnership with Sonora High School District in the creation of the Sonora/Columbia Middle College High School. The Columbia and middle

college high school staff members support a seamless transition from high school to college as means of meeting the educational needs of its community. (Standard II.A.1.a)

The self study reports that Columbia used their locally designed student survey in spring 2011 and the college faculty and staff survey in 2009 to assess satisfaction on several campus services and provide some indirect measures of whether students learning needs are meeting stated institutional student learning outcomes. Additionally, Columbia assesses online courses through student surveys and program review process to ensure that distance-learning courses meet the needs of students. Success data for online courses are also collected by the Distance Education Coordinator as means of assessing their effectiveness. (Standard II.A.1.a)

A review of the courses offered online indicated that students are able to earn a certificate or degree by taking 50 percent or more of their courses online as their method of delivery. The Accrediting Commission web page and Columbia's accreditation web page confirmed that a "substantive change proposal" had been submitted and approved for the distance education offerings which included 19 associate's degrees and 7 certificates and general education requirements where 50% or more were composed of approved distance education delivery mode. This is required by ACCJC policy on distance education (Standard II.A.1.b).

The college has deployed many resources to address student learning outcomes, including SLO Mentors, an electronic SLO Tool, Workgroup meetings and trainings, and the formulation of a SLO-specific component of the BRIC-TAP research action plan. The dialogue and trainings are well documented (Standard II.A.1.c).

Examination of the SLO tool shows that assessment is taking place and being recorded. However, analysis is rudimentary at this time, and thus is not linked to planning. This is acknowledged by a wide variety of constituencies at Columbia who cite the following challenges:

- the small number of faculty and staff available to do the work;
- frequent turnover due to layoffs and transfers which disrupts the continuity of effort;
- the lack of an institutional researcher between January and October 2011;
- the fact that the technological linkages of SLO, curriculum, and planning are not fully integrated;
- the amount of time required to enter and analyze the data in their electronic tools.

It is apparent that the personnel at Columbia College are dedicated and committed to completing this work, and believe that this will genuinely improve teaching and learning at Columbia. They describe a great deal of informal discussion of the findings from their Unit Tools, Institutional Program Review, and other exercises. They cite frustration and fatigue, but have developed some creative tools that, when completed and implemented, should

achieve their goal of making this analysis manageable.

The online curriculum database system, CurricuNet ,extensively involves faculty in the curriculum design, identification of student learning outcomes, and course evaluation. The course descriptions are recorded separately from the Student Learning Outcomes within CurricuNet. Discipline faculty design and implement learning outcomes for programs and courses in the process of curriculum review and program review processes. Faculty are carefully hired and well-suited to teach the wide variety of courses and programs that the college offers (Standards II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, c).

Columbia demonstrates its commitment to making education available and accessible to all of its students by offering a variety of instructional modalities. Traditional classes include a variety of media-based enhancements, modes of delivery, pedagogical approaches, and instructional methods and techniques. Distance education formats include web-enhanced, hybrid and online courses. In addition, supplemental assistance of instruction is available through tutoring services (face to face) and math lab. The District provides to Columbia a 24-hour online help desk service along with web-tool kit for online students (Standards II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d).

With regard to identification, assessment, and use of assessment results to improve student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees, Columbia meets the ACCJC rubric for development level and had been making steady progress toward the proficiency level of Student Learning Outcomes for instructional programs before losing their institutional researcher. The recent hiring of an interim researcher is a temporary solution (Standards II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f).

Besides assisting on various district and local committees responsible for monitoring the quality and rigor of general education courses and transfer degrees, the college also promotes career/technical education programs under the guidance of faculty experts and industry advisory groups. The Office of Institutional Research along with the Career/Technical Education administrator surveys employers' perceptions of occupational students and graduates, and results would inform program changes and improvements. The college collects the annual review of the Perkins VTEA core indicators as means of providing feedback to the occupational programs. Although the data from all these sources are available they have not yet been assessed in program review (Standards II.A.2.a-c, II.A.5).

Columbia uses Accuplacer as a means of assessing student placement for English and Mathematics courses. In fall 2008, The Office of Institutional Research conducted a

consequential validity test study to validate appropriateness of placement from student and faculty perspectives. In addition, a study was also conducted to determine if any group was disproportionately impacted based on the assigned cut-off scores. English as a second language appears primarily in non-credit course offerings for low to medium levels. The advanced level of ESL is taught as a single basic skill level course through the English department. It is unclear how students are placed in this course since Columbia does not currently assess for placement in English as a Second Language programs. The college is currently updating the math cutoff scores. In conclusion, all departmental examinations must be validated for their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizing test biases. Columbia does not currently offer programs that require a licensure examination (Standards II.A; II.A.1c; II.A.2.a,b,f,g,h; II.A.5; II.A.6; ER 10).

Columbia awards credit for courses based on student achievement of the course's stated outcomes. Additionally, Columbia adheres to standards established by the district and campus academic senates and any articulation agreements with other community colleges and institutions to which students transfer. Four courses were evaluated:

- Distance Education: BIOL 50 Nutrition; and ENG-1C, Critical Reasoning and Writing. For both courses, scope of work is appropriate for the units awarded. The Distance Education addendum recounts the modalities used, student evaluation, and the process by which student authenticity is confirmed. Both courses are UC/CSU transferable.
- Classroom based course with a laboratory: BIOL 2, Principles of Biology, and CHEM 11, Fundamentals of Organic and Biochemistry. Both are UC/CSU transferable, and the outlines reflect appropriate content and scope of the work for the type of course offered.
- Columbia College does not offer classes with clinical components nor classes that convert clock hours to credit hours.

Columbia College implemented a compressed calendar in the 2002-3 academic year. All of the courses sampled are in compliance with the Carnegie Unit, and this is reflected in the schedule of classes (Standards I.B; I.B.1-6; II.A; II.A.1; II.A.2.II.2.h-i; II.A.6.a-c; ER 9-Academic Credit; Policy on Award of Credit).

The College has developed general education SLOs and is working to align the course-based outcomes to these SLOs. The Columbia College Academic Senate has created the Columbia College Philosophy and Criteria for Associate of Science and Associate in Arts degrees and General Education. (Standards II.A.3.a,b,c).

All degree programs at have at least one disciplinary or established interdisciplinary core. The college offers 19 degree programs and 4 certificate programs with identified program outcomes for each. The Campus 2011-2012 Catalog lists all degree and certificate program requirements.

The design of these programs undergoes periodic updates through program review, VTEA core indicators, consultation with advisory committees regarding essential employment skills, and the changes in curriculum (Standard II.A.5).

The college represents itself accurately, clearly and consistently to the community with regard to courses, programs, course cancellation, transfer of credit policy, and general policies. This information is communicated in the course catalog, and on the web site. For articulation of courses to four-year institutions, the college adheres to articulation agreements using Title V and State Academic Senate guidelines. The college maintains a catalog that is updated annually and publishes schedules of classes each academic term. Both print and electronic copies of the semester schedule are published. The electronic schedule is grouped on a web page with links to the catalog, faculty contact information, registration procedures, and information regarding the transferability of courses (Standard II.A.6.a).

The Academic Senate recently revised its Program/Services Reduction Process. The real estate program was eliminated through this process, and a grant-funded program in tourism is currently going through program reduction. Students can submit an Academic Requirements Petition if a course is no longer offered or is not offered in a timely manner, and discipline faculty and administrators work to provide the student with a course substitution or a waiver as circumstances require (Standard II.A.6.b).

The college catalog is updated annually and a running list of changes is maintained in the Student Services office. The Curriculum Committee works closely with the office to ensure that changes are reported consistently. The catalog is clear and comprehensive, including an academic calendar, information about student services, academic procedures, requirements for transfer, and features of the degrees and certificates. A two-year schedule of course offerings provides a clear graphic that helps students plan their programs when course offerings are limited (Standard II.A.6.c).

The Yosemite Community College District Board policy 6030 on academic freedom affirms the rights of the teacher and student in a teaching and learning environment. The college publishes policies on the student code of conduct and academic honesty in the college

catalog, the schedule of classes, and faculty contract. Article 28 of the Yosemite Faculty Association contract defines academic freedom and professional autonomy. The professional code of ethics, memorialized in Appendix C-2 of the contract, describes the rights and responsibilities of faculty as teachers, scholars, and citizens (Standards II.A.7.a,b,c). Standard II.A.8 is not applicable to Columbia College.

Standard IIA. Instructional Programs

Conclusions

Standard IIA is partially met.

The college addressed the previous recommendations to ensure full compliance with the previous report through dialogue and employee participation and effectively addressed the commission's recommendations in relation to communication, planning, resource allocation and research. Additionally, they addressed over 30 planning agendas from the previous self-study, completed and received approval of substantive change to ACCJC and January 2009 the college focused Midterm Response was also approved by the Commission.

Columbia offers a wide variety of instructional programs to serve its diverse student body. It clearly represents the college with accurate, clearly and consistently to the community in regard to courses, programs, course cancellation and general policies. The range of courses, programs, and degrees are consistent with Columbia's mission goals. The college offers varied delivery modes of instruction with qualified faculty and staff to appropriately meet the mission of the institution with integrity. The college has implemented an online tool for Student Learning Outcomes for program review and budget allocation.

In order to meet the standard Columbia must continue to complete the full student learning outcomes cycle for the assessment that will include the analysis of the data for each program. The processes must include an integrated process with planning, program review, student learning outcomes and all linked with resource allocations. Although the learning outcomes were identified in the instructional units, it was clear that the analysis for decision making for human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve instructional effectiveness was missing.

College personnel have clearly demonstrated their commitment to the institution, not only through their work on these analytical tools, but through taking on much additional teaching, curriculum work, and multiple administrative duties. However, the reality is that the full-time faculty have been asked to take responsibility for "orphan programs" (programs without full-time faculty) for which they neither have the training nor expertise. It is the team's feeling

that Columbia College needed to either increase its budget or re-evaluate its offerings to ensure quality. Simply doing more of the same is neither desirable nor sustainable. The District and Columbia College should review and possibly reduce course offerings and programs to ensure that, despite current budgetary constraints, programs and services maintain quality standards. The college must commit to providing the necessary institutional support to provide integrated planning not only for instruction, but for all college functions. A necessary first step is the hiring of a permanent, full time institutional researcher.

Standard IIB, Student Services

General Comments

The college has presented an exhaustive Self-Study that responds to the requirements of Standard IIB, Student Services. The narrative is generally easy to read and follow, but in several areas, information tends to be repeated to respond to varying aspects of the standard. It recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs in consonance with its mission, and provides evidence (Standards II.B.1, II.B.2, II.B.3, II.B.4) to support this requirement. It is dedicated to student learning as evidenced in the wide array of support services and how it leverages limited resources in collaborative processes to respond to student learning needs. Through surveys and robust dialogue in the Student Services area, the college is making efforts to provide a supportive learning environment for students. The college systematically assesses student support services through faculty and staff dialogue, and surveys. While the institution has made progress in developing and assessing student learning outcomes at the course and program levels, and has instituted program review processes, there is a visible need for establishing methods for using assessment results to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness. The Student Services Division is evolving in the development of program reviews, and is making efforts to establish a uniform format for presenting and documenting program reviews. All units have not integrated SLOs in their program reviews, and where student learning outcomes are documented and assessed, there were no indications as to how the results were used to make improvements. In spite of this, the evidence presented in the self-study and through interviews with faculty and staff demonstrates that faculty and staff are fully engaged in the development of student learning outcomes; there is college wide dialogue in student learning outcome development, and that governance groups are supporting and have accepted responsibility for student learning outcomes implementation (Standard II.B).

Standard IIB. Student Services

Findings and Evidences

The institution recruits and admits diverse students in concert with its mission. The college provides evidence that it utilizes a coherent matriculation process to determine that admitted

students are able to benefit from its programs. Students are provided information about assessment testing in English and mathematics, with provisions for challenging placement levels through a Petitions Review Committee. This process is inherent in the college's Admission Policies and Procedures and supplemented by an enforcement of prerequisites, co-requisites and advisories. Dialogue on campus about student success is evident in the college's Academic Wellness Educators (AWE) Steering Committee. College-wide discussions have also occurred in the Enrollment Management Planning Committee, the Basic Skills Initiative and the College Council. Recruitment and admission are based on the matriculation process, which is supported and implemented by a comprehensive Matriculation Plan. The Plan documents a series of activities that covers admissions, orientation, assessment, counseling, follow up, research and evaluation. These matriculation services are also supplemented by other student support services. The Team confirmed the following such services (Standard II.B):

- Academic Achievement Center
- EOPS/CARE,
- DSPS
- Financial Aid
- CalWORKs
- Health Services
- Math Resources Center
- Veterans Affairs
- Library
- Admissions and Records Office.
- Job Placement Services
- Career/Transfer Center
- Counseling Services
- Child Care Center
- Food Services
- TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) (Standard II.B.1)

There was evident collaboration among the programs in the Student Services Division, which resulted in economies of scale as a result of leveraging staff and other divisional resources. However, the team was concerned about the limited staff available to implement key functions related to student support services.

There is demonstrated assessment of student satisfaction of programs through surveys, and the results show that students are generally satisfied with the accessibility and

appropriateness of the services. The college identifies student learning support needs, and it provides evidence that it is developing a system for program reviews and student learning outcomes to accomplish an assessment of these needs. Student surveys are extensively used by programs to evaluate services, but analyses of the results for next level planning are scarce. An SLO tool is being utilized by the college, and Student Support Service programs have utilized the tool for at least one iteration of assessment to evaluate student support services; but no indication is given as to how these assessment results are used to indicate the extent to which these services support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution. The college is currently implementing several grants, including Title III and National Science Foundation grants, which are providing increased capacity for developing programs and resources to support online services for students in its service areas (Standard II.B.1).

The college provides a catalog documenting general information, major policies affecting students, including academic regulations, nondiscrimination, acceptance of transfer credits, grievance and complaint procedures, sexual harassment and refund of fees. The catalog is current, clear and easy to understand. It is well laid out and structured. The policies are also documented on websites that are easily accessible. The catalog, according to the self-study, is reviewed annually by managers, faculty, staff, and administrators for accuracy and currency. The college makes information in its publications available in easily accessible websites (Standards II.B.2; II.B.2.a; II.B.2.b; II.B.2.c; II.B.2.d).

The college maintains records of student complaints/grievances, and they are available in accessible formats. The records indicate that the college complies with Accreditation Standards, ERs and policies, and they reflect that the college responds to, investigates and resolves student complaints in a timely manner (Standards II.B; II.B.2.c; II.B.3a; II.B.4; ER 20- Public Information; Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions).

The college uses data from multiple sources to determine the support needs of its students. Program reviews and SLOs, as mentioned, are being integrated in the planning process and as bases for determining student support needs. But it is evident that more work needs to be done to fully integrate these into a cohesive exercise in the Student Services Division. Sources of data provided include the Institutional Effectiveness Report, SARS Report and student surveys. These data provide information on the characteristics of students, the local community and enrollment trends of its students. The college participates in a statewide Bridging Research, Information and Cultures (BRIC) Technical Assistance Program (TAP) to build a culture of evidence to enhance student success. Robust dialogue in the Division

and in the AWE Committee also contributes to the student support needs analyses (Standard II.B.3).

The college assures equitable access to all of its students by providing a comprehensive array of student support services regardless of service location or delivery method. The Title III grant has allowed the college to increase the online profile of the curriculum through staff development activities that prepare faculty to become effective online instructors.

The college evaluates on-line services through student surveys. According to the self-study, on-line library services showed 64% of those surveyed were satisfied with those services. On line support services in counseling and advising activities, however, has not been fully developed, and the team believes this area needs to be incorporated in future planning in order for the College to be compliant with ACCJC Distance Education standards (Standard II.B.3.a).

The institution has a series of projects and activities that promote civic responsibility and intellectual development for all its students. These include a study abroad program, music and arts events, special community programs, a health center, a speech and debate team, and library special events. Discussions in the college's AWE Committee establish a platform for dialogues that support a good learning environment. Although the college presented results of a 2010 survey that reflected students' opinion about the positive effects of Columbia college's on student development, no area is identified for improvement, and there is no indication of how the evaluations are used to improve the area of personal and civic responsibility, or intellectual, aesthetic and personal development for all the students (Standard II.B.3.b).

The college has designed and implemented a viable counseling service. Apart from general counseling, counseling services are provided by categorical programs such as TRIO Student Support Services, CalWORKs, EOPS/CARE, and in guidance classes taught by counselors. However, students' wait time for general counseling appointments is three to four weeks, with two full time general counselors and three adjunct counselors. Counselors and staff in the Student Service Division meet regularly to discuss and assess the effectiveness of student support services. Evaluation is accomplished through surveys of counseling and academic advising, but the Division has begun to use the SLO Tool to input and assess identified student learning outcomes for counseling and guidance courses (Standard II.B.3.c).

The Self-Study provides evidence that counselors are trained through workshops and conferences and other specialized training (Standard II.B.3.c).

The college has undertaken a variety of measures to promote students' understanding and appreciation of diversity. It has identified ten goals in its Educational Master Plan, five of which have implications for the students' understanding and appreciation of diversity. It has also identified a core value of Civic Awareness, developed a mission statement that shows a commitment to diversity, and published several Board policies that support diversity. Programs that support these policies and vision statements include EOPS/CARE, CalWORKs, Veterans Programs, ESL and GED programs for disadvantaged communities; educational tours abroad and student clubs. The college uses surveys to determine the effectiveness of these programs. A student survey showed that 84% of the students agreed that the college celebrated diversity (Standards I.A.;II.B.3.d; IV .B.1.b).

The college uses Accuplacer to assess placement levels in Math and English. Validation studies in English and Math have been completed to evaluate their effectiveness and consistency. A disproportionate Impact Study was also completed for the Sentence Skills Test, and the results were used to inform decisions for altering cut scores of placement tests (Standards II.A.1; II.A.2.a; II.B.3.e).

The college uses a document imaging process, MATRIX, to secure student records. Board policies on student records and privacy govern the maintenance of student records. EOPS/CARE also store student information in a document imaging system called Front Desk. The college adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for the release of student records (Standards I.A; II.B.3.f).

The college uses program reviews, student surveys, including a comprehensive student survey, student learning outcomes, advisory committees, and robust dialogues to evaluate student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Although there are indications of results that emanate from these exercises, further analysis will assist the college in determining to what extent these results contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes or how the institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement (Standards II.A.1.a; II.A.2; II.B.4).

Standard II. Student Services

Conclusions

Standard II.B is partially met.

The Student Services program has developed an integrated set of activities designed to meet the learning support needs of students. There is a wide assortment of data and planning

documents to guide the program in the fulfillment of its goal to provide quality student support services. Columbia College provides many support services that effectively address the needs of students, and several surveys document student satisfaction with the quality of these services. The program is challenged with the inadequacy of staff to serve an increasing population of students. The staff works collaboratively to ensure the provision of quality services, despite the obvious challenges they face. Another challenge they face is the development of a research process that includes program review and student learning outcomes. Although the Student Services Division has actively participated in planning efforts to incorporate program reviews and student learning outcomes in an integrated planning fabric of the college, analysis of evidence and use of the analysis in student learning and institutional improvement has not been fully developed. Program reviews, as a basis of planning, is not fully developed in Student Services. There is no evidence to demonstrate that the planning process has been used to make decisions on improving student learning or institutional effectiveness. The college is making concerted efforts, especially through initiatives such as the Bridging Research, Information and Cultures (BRIC) Initiative Technical Assistance Program (TAP) Team and the Student Learning Workgroup to develop a research process that reflects a culture of evidence for planning and decision making.

The Student Services program at Columbia College is commended for its commitment to student learning and success, innovation and collaboration in its delivery of service to students.

Standard: IIC. Library and Learning Support Services

General Comments

The Library has recently undergone a change in leadership and much of the work on the program review and programmatic SLOs was started by the previous librarian. Planning, research and students learning outcomes are still in development for the Library. The Library has less staff because of an unfilled position, while serving greater numbers of students, and taking responsibility for the largest numbers of computers on campus. The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) is also providing more services and shares the same challenges with the Library in terms of planning, research, and student learning outcomes.

Standard: IIC. Library and Learning Support Services

Findings and Evidence

The team has validated that the Library and other learning support services for students are generally sufficient to support the institution's instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. The Library, the Academic Achievement Center, and the Math Resource Center are located in

different buildings on the campus, with the Math Resource Center being conveniently located in the same building where math classes and math faculty offices are located. The Library, the Academic Achievement Center, and the Math Resource Center all offer essential or supplemental online support services (Standard II.C).

The Library has print and online resources that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth and variety to support the quality of its instructional programs. Print books and periodicals are sufficient to support instructional programs. The college is able to provide a limited but adequate selection of online article and research databases. This selection of databases is supplemented by carefully chosen and well maintained subject website links from the library web pages. Remote or distance education students have access off-campus to almost all of the databases and the e-book collection through a simple log-in procedure. Any student may email the librarian with research questions and needs, and these questions are answered promptly. The materials budget for the Library is sufficient and funding is currently stable.

There is evidence that the Library actively solicits requests for books and other instructional materials from faculty. In addition, the librarian selects resources according to her professional judgment, and is responsible for planning and maintaining the quality and balance of the print and online collection. The librarian chooses materials based on guidelines established in the Collection Development Policy, which is available online through the library webpage. Inter-library loan practices make materials held by other libraries available to students. The Library verifies it has sufficient depth and variety of materials to meet the learning needs of its students through student surveys and statistics on electronic and print resource use. Faculty and/or an instructional support specialist are responsible for selecting and maintaining resources for students in the AAC and the Math Resources Center (Standard II.C.1.a).

The Library has 80 computers including computers with disability support software. The library's technology is sufficiently up to date to meet student need. The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) is equipped with computers, subject specific software, textbooks, handouts and supplemental books, as well as a robust web page sufficient to facilitate educational offerings. The Math Resources Center has sufficient tools, textbooks, and supplemental materials.

The Library provides ongoing instruction to teach students the knowledge and skills to construct search strategies, increase awareness of available resources, and critically evaluate the information they retrieve, and appropriately cite and credit sources. The Library acts purposefully to meet these objectives by maintaining a vital relationship with its online and

traditional student population through its library links, research tools, and subject guides on its web pages, through reference services (by phone, by e-mail and in person), and by conducting library orientations and research classes taught by the librarian. The team observed that the faculty librarian spends a large portion of her time teaching orientations and devotes some of her time to administrative tasks in the absence of an administrative secretary, causing a heavy reliance on a library specialist to provide reference services – a service usually provided by a faculty librarian. Locating a large number of computers in the library without providing a lab assistant to help students is also impacting the library staff and drawing them away from their primary services and responsibilities. The Library evaluated its teaching effectiveness by using a 2011 SLO assessment survey in which eight out of ten instructors indicated that students who participated in the orientation performed better than those who did not – this survey has been lost in the change of library leadership. The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) offers subject tutoring and study skills sessions, as well as Supplemental Instruction (weekly review sessions) for various courses. The AAC evaluates its ability to help students improve their academic skills and aid in their academic success through student evaluations and appointment count. The Math Resources Lab has a philosophy of immersion; it provides drop-in help in a small office space located in the center of the math department building where many faculty members circulate and hold office hours. Although it is pressed for space, students benefit from the Math Resources Lab's close proximity to the math faculty offices and classrooms (Standards II.C.1.b; III.A.2; III.C.1.a).

The Library is open 56 hours per week, and provides reliable online access to adequate article and research databases and e-books. An inter-campus courier makes deliveries of library materials between Modesto Junior College and Columbia College, usually with twenty-four hours. Students at off campus locations are provided limited services through an informal arrangement with a local high school or a public library. A library specialist staffs the reference desk when the Library is open. The Academic Achievement Center is open 41 hours per week but has no evening hours. After several years of significant growth in the numbers of students served, the AAC coordinator hours were reduced to half-time in fall 2011. Under the leadership of the AAC coordinator, the AAC has experimented with the provision of online tutoring, however online tutoring services are not provided at the time of the team visit because of limited personnel. The Math Resource Lab is open 32.5 hours a week, and it is staffed by an instructional specialist. Because it closes at 3:00 p.m., no services are available in the late afternoons or evenings. Students taking evening and online classes get significantly reduced services from the AAC and the Math Resources Center either because the centers are closed in the late afternoon or evening, or because students need to be physically present to get services (Standards II.C.1.c; III.A.2; III.C.1.a).

Security and maintenance at campus facilities are provided by the college and the district, respectively. The Library safeguards its collection with security cameras and 3M security gates to help prevent theft and misconduct. Off campus users of subscription databases are authenticated to prevent unauthorized use and violation of vendor agreements. At AAC and the Math Resources Lab materials are secured as appropriate (Standard II.C.1.d).

The college has beneficial collaborations with other institutions including the 49-99 Cooperative Library System and the Community College League Consortium. There is evidence that usage statistics for e-books online databases service are collected. It should be noted that the statistics are generated by the vendor or consortium, and thus they are more accessible because receiving the usage statistics is not dependent on the college's research department. The AAC is certified by the College Reading and Learning Association, and is allowed to certify regular and advanced tutors (Standard II.C.1.e).

The library collects quantitative data in a few areas: circulation statistics, door counts, vendor supplied database usage, a recent student survey, and statistics supplied by various vendors. Qualitative satisfaction data on the library, the AAC, and the Math Resources Center was collected from a recent student survey, and the library administered a small instructor feedback satisfaction survey called the 2011 SLO assessment survey – now lost. Appointment count and tutor comments for the AAC are tallied by hand because of a lack of technology support - this hinders data collection. The data collected is only partially useful for planning and implementing improvements as related to the programs as a whole. Program review for the Library and the AAC was completed in fall 2011. Although the Math Resources Lab is included in the math department unit plan, it is not described or analyzed in the math program review other than statements that additional space, personnel, and computer resources would benefit student learning. The team observed that the Library and Learning Support Services are struggling with formulating meaningful programmatic SLOs. The current evaluation of library and learning support services does not provide evidence that the evaluation contributes to the achievement of student learning outcomes (Standard II.C.2).

Standard: IIC. Library and Learning Support Services

Conclusions

Standard II.C is partially met.

Library and Learning Support Services partially meets Standard IIC. The college should develop and assess student learning outcomes for the library and learning support services

and use the results for improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standard II.C).

Standard: II. Student Learning Programs and Services

Recommendations

Three college recommendations address the team's conclusions for Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services.

College Recommendation: 3

In order to meet accreditation standards for a core of full time faculty, the team recommends that Columbia College take steps to hire more (Eligibility Requirement #13, Standards II.A.1.c; II.A.2.e; II.B.4; II.C.2).

College Recommendation: 4

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the institution expanded counseling and academic advising that takes into account the needs of students enrolled in Distance Learning courses (Standards II.A.1.b.; II.A.2.d; II.B.3.a; II.C.1.c).

Standard III Resources

Standard III.A. Human Resources

General Comments

Since the Focused Midterm Report the college has instituted the program review process as the main vehicle to validate the need for new or replacement staff. The college recently implemented an integrated approach to assessing and prioritizing its human resource needs utilizing the college Strategic Planning Process cycle to make staffing decisions. Both faculty and classified needs are identified through an inclusive process which is finalized with Board approval. In addition, it is evident there is no long term staffing plan that would give the college a clear direction for the next several years.

A recurrent theme in this standard is the need for development of a Staff Development Plan. This plan would act as the primary mechanism used by the college to compile a collective summary of staff development activities and resources for the institution and would communicate to staff the opportunities and unmet professional development needs of the college (Standard IV.5.a,b)

The self study reported cursory information about evaluation processes but evidence from the site visit demonstrated the college needs to review processes, roles and responsibilities at the district and college levels concerning evaluation processes and review contract language regarding frequency and timelines for evaluations of all personnel. Most faculty and staff evaluations are completed but there are lapses in adhering to timelines. Forms to evaluate personnel are comprehensive and assess job performance at all levels.

Standard III.A. Human Resources

Findings and Evidence

The college employs qualified personnel following California Code of Regulation Title 5, Education Code and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's office. Both the Academic and Classified Senates have a hiring prioritization process which results from the unit planning process. Internal and external data sources are validated such as the Institutional Effectiveness Report and Staffing Report.

Board Policy 4204 (Classification Review) requires each classified and leadership team position be reviewed for accuracy at a minimum every five years. According to staff a reclassification study was conducted six years ago and all classified and leadership positions were revised and updated. When there is a job vacancy, prior to recruitment, the job

description undergoes a review for accuracy. The hiring process is outlined in the YCCD Office of Human Resources. This office also provides hiring procedure guidelines and trains all employees serving on hiring committees (Standards III.A.1, III.A.3.a, III.A.4.b, III.A.4.c).

Both faculty and classified staffing reports determine new or replacement positions and are guided by Unit Planning Reports and the program review process, and a Staffing Report is generated from the unit plan database. The Staffing Report forms the basis for the Faculty and Classified Hiring Prioritization Processes which drive hiring priorities. The Faculty Hiring Prioritization Process requires a supportive proposal which includes a unit plan identification number, progress (degree and certificate) that the faculty position will support, and proposed four semester course schedule for the position. All proposals address components identified in the Criteria for Faculty Hiring Proposal. The Faculty Hiring Prioritization Committee uses the criteria to prioritize proposals and sends its recommendation to the college president then to the district for approval. The college is currently developing a mechanism to integrate grant or categorically funded permanent positions into the college planning processes. The process is reviewed and updated as needed annually (Standard III.A.1.a).

Classified staff reports the Classified Hiring Prioritization Process has proven effective in hiring new staff. According to staff the process is reviewed for effectiveness at the end of the annual cycle and recommendations are made to the Classified Senate for improvements to the process. Staff report the current president has discussed facilitating ways in which the Faculty and Classified Hiring Prioritization Proposals can be integrated together to get a complete campus staffing prioritization plan. Human Resources validate candidates to assure minimum qualifications and/or equivalency requirements are met. Screening committees receive training on Equal Opportunity regulations. Faculty hiring includes processes to determine teaching effectiveness of candidates (Standard III.A.1.b).

While there is evidence the college has a system and tracking mechanism to monitor the evaluation of all employees systematically and at stated intervals, it fails to adhere to evaluation timelines. According to Human Resources records as of January 2011 staff evaluations were completed at the following rate: faculty 100% with some delays, management 88% and classified 57.8% The district has recently worked with the classified union to include contractual language which provides for those classified staff who have not received an evaluation within thirty days of the deadline are deemed to have satisfactory performance. For employees whose performance is less than satisfactory, an improvement plan is written as a part of the evaluation and a follow up evaluation is conducted within thirty days. While there is evidence of a tracking mechanism in place to monitor the

evaluation timelines and process, the timelines are not always met. According to staff, the office of the Vice President of Instruction at the college is responsible for tracking the faculty evaluation process and monitoring progress to completion. According to the self-study, faculty evaluations were completed at 100% completion rate with a few delays, but evidence demonstrates that there are faculty who have not had an evaluation completed in years. In addition there is some question of evaluation processes accurately assessing the effectiveness of personnel and including encouragement of improvement.

Management reports each supervisor is responsible for completing full time and adjunct evaluations according to the association contract. In the case of full time tenured faculty evaluations may only take place spring semester. For both full time and adjunct faculty, evaluations must be completed between the tenth and fourteenth week of the semester. This can be a challenging task. For example, in one division there are over 110 adjunct faculty; over half of them need to be evaluated only between the tenth and fourteenth weeks. All aspects of the evaluation process must be coordinated and executed by the area supervisor (Standard III.A.1.b).

The college is moving forward with establishing student learning outcomes as part of the faculty evaluation process. Some faculty have requested student learning outcomes be reviewed as part of his/her evaluation process (Standard III.A.1.c).

For the past five years the District has met the Faculty Obligation Number target: however, the district has not met a ratio of 75/25. The current economic conditions have caused substantial cuts in funding since 2006 and staffing levels have declined for faculty, classified and classified management positions. Academic Senate leadership reports there is recent dialog underway at the Senate level to discuss current full time faculty needs. In addition, due to funding cuts, hiring has focused primarily on replacement positions and there continues to be critical needs in “orphaned” programs (those having no full time faculty) and new faculty positions in programs (Standard III.A.2).

The office of Human Resources maintains security and confidentiality of all personnel files. Personnel files are kept in locked metal cabinets (Standard III.A.3.b). While the team was unable to locate a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel, board policies address respect and civility as well as courtesy and professionalism for all (Standard III.A.1.d).

All personnel are provided with opportunities to participate in professional development. Although the college has not yet created a comprehensive staff development plan, professional development opportunities have been provided on a limited basis. As an

example, in house workshops, trainings, both cohort and individual, and in-services have been offered for faculty and classified staff while management has a professional development reimbursement program to further the goal of strengthening the institution's programs and services (Standard III.4; III.A.4a).

According to the Columbia College Faculty/Staff Survey Basic Results Fall 2010 38.9% of respondents somewhat agree with the following statement "the college provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the college mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs." The organizational chart reflects staff development falling under the purview of the Dean of Student Services; however, duties have been transferred to the newly hired Dean of Vocational Education. The Dean reports he is creating a new staff development committee with plans to establish a calendar and comprehensive plan that will include professional development opportunities for all members of the college community (Standard III.A.5).

The college does not use a systematic evaluation process to review effectiveness of professional development programs as staff has not yet begun to create a plan. An identified body needs to develop and integrate professional development programs across the college and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and use the results as a basis for improvement of programs (Standard III.A.5.b).

Standard III.A. Human Resources

Conclusions

The college partially meets this standard.

The college program review process forms the basis for creating a staffing report. The college demonstrates the unit plan is integrated with the strategic plan and new and replacement staff at all levels is reflected in the unit plan forming the Staffing Report. Results of the Staffing Report are prioritized and considered for approval using a systematic process. The process is currently being assessed at the College Council for review and revision and the College Council is amidst creating a rubric to evaluate effectiveness of the integrated planning process. The college will need to pay particular attention to developing a long term staffing plan to guide future hiring.

Without an active body to review and determine appropriateness of professional development activities based on identified teaching and learning needs it is uncertain the level to which the current professional development activities are effective. The creation of a comprehensive

staff development plan will move the institution forward in its efforts to assure all staff continues to participate in professional development activities to meet needs.

Personnel evaluations forms are complete and comprehensive but timelines are not adhered to and evaluations at all levels are delayed or not done on a regular basis. The current evaluation process should be reviewed for effectiveness and modified as needed.

Responsible parties should be clearly identified, and systems put in place that creates a realistic timeline and coordination of tasks.

Standard III.B Physical Resources

General Comments

The Columbia College was established in 1968 and the campus encompasses 280 acres in the Sierra Nevada Foothills. The college has also purchased land in Angels Camps and is pursuing property in or near the city of Oakdale where it is planning on developing two future educational sites. In November of 2004, voters approved a \$326 million general obligation bond for the Yosemite Community College District, of which Columbia College was allocated \$56 million. The passage of this general obligation bond has provided the majority of the funding for the recent and continuing capital construction and modernization that has occurred on Columbia College's campus. Columbia College facilities' planning is integrated with institutional planning and the college regularly updates the plans. The college is currently working on updating the 2004 Facilities Master Plan to respond to the changing needs of the college community and to better integrate with the recently updated Educational Master Plan. The current Facilities Master Plan is utilized in conjunction with the Campus Master Plan to ensure that physical resources are planned and constructed to support educational programs and maintain the aesthetic charm of their rustic location. With the passage of Measure E, Columbia College began updating the campus with new facilities and renovations to modernize and expand its capacity to meet the educational needs of the community and improve the safety and accessibility of the facilities. The college has undergone an impressive transformation having completed a new Science & Natural Resource Building and Child Development Center, along with the modernization of the Madrone Building, Public Safety Center, and infrastructure improvements. The impacts of these new and modernized facilities on student learning and safety are impressive (Standards III.B.1, III.B.1.a).

Safety is considered and reviewed in the acquisition and maintenance of physical resources and is a goal in the Educational Master Plan (EMP). Construction and renovation projects are planned and constructed to meet or exceed current national, state, and local educational safety standards. Columbia's Safety Committee has duties consistent with Board Policies

3660, and 4001. The college recently completed a Public Safety Center modernization that co-located Fire and Campus Security functions to reduce response time and provide additional equipment storage. The college's Campus Security maintains a constant presence on campus and provides shuttles for students at night.

The college integrates planning through the use of program review; campus committees and unit planning activities provide the vehicle for the campus to prioritize these needs. Ongoing coordination between the YCCCD's Facilities Planning and Operation unit and Campus Facilities Committee ensure that its physical resources are designed and constructed to meet program and instructional needs. Modernization and replacement of facilities and infrastructure have been ongoing since the passage of Measure E. The college has shown a commitment to upgrading and replacing aging facilities and infrastructure to maintain and support the college's programs and services. The college has completed many capital construction and scheduled maintenance projects throughout the campus. The new and renovated buildings and improved infrastructure will provide students with educationally sound facilities and increased access to programs that support student learning.

Standard III.B Physical Resources

Findings and Evidence

Current facilities do support student learning. The recently completed Science and Natural Resources Building is an example of how the college implemented building design and construction processes to meet the learning needs of various programs including Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The building floor plan; technology; furnishings, fixtures and equipment (FFG&E), provide a safe, student centered learning experience that fit within the Campus Master Plan guidelines. Columbia College's facilities' planning is integrated and well defined and includes wide participation from the college and district community including the college Facilities Committee. The college planning and budget development timelines as evidenced by the Strategic Planning document and project completion data allow for facilities and equipment needs to be identified and prioritized prior to the allocation of resources. The Facilities Master Plan is being implemented as evidenced by infrastructure upgrades and capital construction completion. The Facilities Master Plan is currently being revised to incorporate changes in the College's Educational Master Plan and needs identified within the various planning documents and unit planning priorities (Standard III.B).

Regular systematic safety reviews of college facilities are conducted and deficiencies are identified and corrected. Evidence supports that evaluations are completed by internal staff, the campus Safety Committee and outside regulatory agencies such as the fire and insurance safety inspections. Columbia College has a maintenance agreement with Baker Station and

Facility Use Agreements with off campus sites that allow the college to address safety and maintenance issues. Planning for safety and accessibility were some of the first projects undertaken by the college that resulted in the installation of a secondary emergency exit road, and bus service and disabled parking lot construction. The college committee structure forwards recommendations of safety issues and corrections to the Campus Facilities Committee. The college also utilizes an electronic work order system that allows staff to identify and track maintenance and repair items. Both students and staff reported they felt the campus was safe and well maintained as evidenced by the Student and Faculty surveys (Standard III.B.1).

The planning of facilities and equipment is linked to institutional planning and tied to a systematic evaluation of program and service needs. The Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Technology Plan, Distance Education plan and Academic Program Review evidence this. Equipment and facilities needs are collected, prioritized and addressed as funding allows. The college reported using the Program Review process as one way to assure that student learning needs informs all planning, maintenance, and replacement of physical resources. The committee could not find a linkage between program review for Administrative Services and physical resource need identification (Standard III.B.2).

All facilities and equipment decisions are driven by needs identified at the program or service area level to support college goals through the unit planning process. Given the current budget restrictions, decisions are based on the most immediate need at the time. Although there is an institutional process in place, there is concern that many of the plans include items to be funded in the future as funding becomes available. The college and district central services have established total cost of ownership projections, which demonstrate that some of the needs have been left unfunded (Standards III.B.2, III.B.2.a).

The college's long-term needs are incorporated into the college's Facilities Master Plan, Campus Master Plan, Technology Plan, and Distance Education plan. Program and service areas identify their needs for equipment utilizing the unit plans and provide support for their inclusion to meet program and college goals. The college reported using the Program Review process as one way to assure that student learning needs informs all planning, maintenance, and replacement of physical resources. The team could not find a linkage between program review for Administrative Services and physical resource need identification. The process for facilities and equipment assessment is clear. All college constituent groups are represented and included on the main college planning committees that provide for a broad discussion of equipment and facility needs (Standard III.B.2.b).

Standard III.B Physical Resources

Conclusions

The college partially meets this standard

Columbia College has appropriate, well-designed facilities to support its programs and services and meet the needs of its students. The college has been able to make substantial improvements by utilizing bond and grant resources to fund capital construction, modernization and infrastructure improvements. The college planning processes that identify and prioritize current and long-term college physical resource needs. The college continues to implement and improve the planning processes and documents, which provides evidence that improvement is taking place. The team could not find a linkage between program review and the unit planning process for administrative service areas of the campus. Without a fully implemented program review process, the unit planning tool which drives the college integrated planning process, lacks a key component that assures physical resource and equipment replacement decision are based on the evaluation of program and service needs that emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement in all areas of the college.

The college and district are to be commended on the recently completed buildings and campus improvements and for attaining LEED certification on the Science and Natural Resources Building and the Child Development Center. The college and district are also to be commended on the collaborative processes used to ensure the buildings meet programmatic and service needs.

Standard III.C Technology Resources

General Comments

The college has made significant progress in providing and integrating technology into the college classrooms, labs, and workspaces. The college has also created the processes and planning documents to help ensure effective technology decisions are made. To meet the evolving technology needs, Columbia College's technology planning is annually reviewed. Department, division, and college needs are identified and integrated with institutional planning and resource allocation. Significant investment and improvements to the colleges technology infrastructure including primary and secondary data centers, electrical upgrades and investments in classroom technology and equipment have been funded through Measure "E" bond funds, federal Title III grant funds, VTEA, and college allocations (Standards III.C, IIIC.1.a).

The Technology Committee, Distance Education Committee, and College Council review campus wide technology to assure that technology support and equipment is designed to

meet the current and expanding needs of the college. The Technology Plan, Distance Education Plan, Title III Annual Implementation Plan, and the colleges unit planning activities provide evidence that evaluation of the college's current technological environment and needs is occurring. The college uses these plans and input from a dedicated and efficient Technology and Media Services Department and District Information Technology (IT) Department to identify equipment and technology that will best meet the needs of learning, teaching, college wide communication, research, and operational systems. Purchases are approved by the Director, Information Technology and Media Services to assure that all equipment is appropriate for its application, and compatibility with existing and future District technology to meet educational needs (Standard III.C.1).

The distance education technology support services for students are established and growing. The college offers technology training through the Instructional Technology Center (ITC) and provides faculty and staff with regular and drop-in training on the use of technology and associated applications, including distance education. The Unit Planning Process, Technology Committee, Distance Education Committee, the Technology and Media Services Department, and the YCCD IT Department also identify training needs. Assistive technology is available in all computer labs, the ITC, and in the Library to provide support for the college's Disabled Support Programs and Services (DSPS). Alternative media, hardware and software applications are available in these locations to ensure all students have access to technology and instructional materials. The college currently has eleven computer labs and seven smart classrooms with plans to expand the smart classrooms to eighteen. (Standards III.C.1.b, III.C.1.d).

The college Education Master Plan, Technology Plan, and Distance Education Plan identify the goals and institutional needs for technology and equipment. The Technology and Media Services Department, and District IT staff jointly manages technology support and maintenance. The College Technology and Media Services Department provide support of college users and equipment, and software. The District IT department provides administration and maintenance of District wide technology, network infrastructure, and district systems. Technology and infrastructure needs and requirements for construction, scheduled maintenance and modernization projects are specified and implemented. College constituent groups have been able to actively participate in the building design process, and this has resulted in facilities that support program needs and student success. Systems are backed up at regular intervals, and alternate power sources such as generators and uninterruptable power supplies (UPS's) are installed on critical campus technological systems. A disaster data recovery center is planned in the near future to provide additional protection against a catastrophic event (Standard III.C.2).

Standard III.C Technology Resources

Findings and Evidence

Columbia College has a robust and expanding technology infrastructure. Systems are in place to serve the current needs and plan for the future needs of faculty, staff and students both on and off campus. Technology planning is integrated with their institutional planning and is included in the College's Mission which states "Columbia College will use leading edge technologies and showcase facilities to enhance teaching and learning." This theme is carried through the college's goals, evaluation, and funding processes. The college Technology Committee, Distance Education Committee, Technology and Media Services Department and District Information Technology (IT) Departments evaluate and oversee technology integration, application, security and support for the college. The Technology Plan provides evidence that an evaluative analysis of the current technology environment and establishment of campus priorities and future goals for the college including the distance education component is reviewed. Technology needs are identified by departments and programs and forwarded to the Technology Committee through a variety of college committees and processes and identified in the college unit planning process. These Unit Plans, which must tie to college goals, are then prioritized by the departments and divisions, flow through the College Council, and then to the College President and are funded as budget allows. The program review process was identified as a tool used to inform the unit planning process and assure that student learning and department needs informs all planning, maintenance, and replacement of technology resources. The team could not find a linkage between program review for Administrative Services and physical resource need identification. The Columbia College Distance Education Plan includes technical and student services action plans, which provide evidence of college accomplishments and goals in meeting distance education technology, support, and training needs (Standards III.C, III.C.1).

The college's Technology and Media Services and the YCCD IT Departments provide service and support of Columbia College information technology and are able to meet the needs of the college faculty, staff and students. The district Department of Information Technology maintains the core servers and their hosted servers, infrastructure, telecommunications, e-mail, and other software applications. The Technology and Media Services Department manages, maintains, and oversees the local operation and maintenance of technology infrastructure and the purchase and integration of technological equipment. The District Technology Committee, with representatives from both colleges and district services establish district wide technology recommendations, implementation, and evaluation to enhance the operational effectiveness across the district. The college Director of Technology and Media Services also attends regular meetings with District and Modesto

Junior College IT managers to ensure college involvement and participation in district wide technology recommendations and decisions. To maintain reliability and system currency for online offerings, YCCD has entered into a hosted contract with Blackboard that includes nightly backups of all data. The District protects individual users and their information by utilizing password systems and encrypted logins (Standard III.C.1.a).

The college offers technology training through the Instructional Technology Center (ITC) which provides faculty, staff, and students with regular and drop in training on the use of technology and programs, including distance education. The college Library also provides training and support for students in the use of technological resources. The college does not have a professional development committee to assist in overall coordination of faculty and staff technological and professional development training. Training on the use and application of technological resources is accomplished through a variety of activities including self-developed classes, workshops, online trainings, and one-on-one assistance. The Unit Planning Process, Technology Committee, Distance Education Committee, the Technology and Media Services Department, and the YCCD IT Department also identify needed training on existing or newly implemented technology such as the college smart board use training, and training on the use of district wide systems such as Blackboard 9.1, Datatel, and CurricUNet. The college provides distance education technology support for students and various student support services. The college states that it is continuing to develop needed on line student services. The Resources for Students Web Page provides online student orientations, virtual orientation to Blackboard, and online success tutorials and learning modules. The college accomplishments outlined in the Columbia College Distance Education plan and Title III 2010 Annual Performance Report also highlighted trainings provided to the college constituents. According to the spring 2010 Student Survey, 81.5% of Columbia College Students believe the college provides appropriate and accessible support services to off-campus students, and 93% believe the college provided appropriate and accessible support for on-campus students. The fall 2010 Faculty and Staff survey also provides evidence that 80.1% of faculty and staff who answered the survey question believe that training in information access and technology is adequate to meet their needs and the needs of students (Standard III.C.1.b).

The Columbia College Strategic Planning Cycle outlines the process used by the college to systematically identify and address technology and equipment needs. The Technology Committee reviews campus wide technology requests submitted through the unit planning process and a prioritized recommendation is made to the College Council. The college evaluates the current environment and use of technology annually as evidenced by the Columbia College Technology Plan and Distance Education Plans, which establish the

college priorities and goals. Based on the use and regular evaluation of the College Distance Education Plan, Technology Plan, implementation of the Facilities Master Plan, and the implementation of the College's Computer Replacement Tier Plan process, there is evidence that the college has established standards and goals to plan, acquire, maintain, and upgrade technological needs of the college. The self-study states that the college and district utilize periodic surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of technology in meeting the needs of faculty, staff and students. The Faculty and Staff Fall 2010 survey indicates the over 91% of faculty and staff believe that the technology supplied in their workstation or office is adequate for completing their job duties. The college has identified concerns that it will be difficult to implement the technology plans once bond and grant funds have been exhausted (Standard III.C.1.c).

The strategic planning process informed by the Technology Plan and Distance Education Plan provide guidance regarding the use and distribution of technology resources. The College Technology Committee that has broad representation for the college constituent groups makes recommendations regarding the oversight and distribution of technology and technological services to faculty, staff and students. The use of Measure "E" bond funds to provide and enhance technological infrastructure and provide disaster recovery and business continuity are in place with plans for further expansion. Utilizing Title III grant funds the college has its online services and support to students, as evidenced by the Distance Learning Information web page, tutorials and online resources. The Director, Information Technology, approves purchases and Media Services to assure that all equipment is best suited for its application and compatibility with existing and future District technology for on campus and distance education programs (Standard III.C.1.d).

Technology planning at Columbia College has been focused and robust. The Technology Plan focuses on college goals and directly supports the college's Educational Master Plan. The Technology Plan also provides the foundation for academic, support services, and administrative technology development and needs. Through the use of the Technology Plan, the unit planning tool and review and guidance from the Technology Committee there is evidence that technological decisions emanate from the institutional needs of the college. As previously reported in Standard III.C.1, program review is not included in all unit planning requests, which limits the college's ability to systematically assess if the technology needs are effectively met and result in improved effectiveness. The college has also established a computer replacement plan that ties computer updates to the technological currency requirements of the programs and services. Although the college has established the technological guidelines, goals and needs within the Technology Plan, funding to implement the plan has relied on grant funding, Measure "E" bond funds, VTEA funds, state lottery, and one time budget savings (Standard III.C.2).

Standard III.C Technology Resources

Conclusions

The college partially meets this standard.

Through the use of bond, grant, and other internal and external resources the college has been able to build capacity and provide a comprehensive array of technology resources and services to support student learning, college programs and operational needs both on and off campus. As the technology on campus has increased, the staffing levels for the college Technology and Media Services department support staff has remained flat and is often stretched to meet the support needs of faculty, staff and students. The college reported using the Program Review process as one way to assure that student learning needs informs all planning, maintenance, and replacement of technology resources. The team could not find a linkage between program review and the unit planning process for all areas of the campus. Without a fully implemented program review process, the college unit planning tool lacks the ability to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the use and impact of technology resource decisions on the effectiveness of programs and courses use the results to support and improve program practices.

Technology planning is ongoing and continues to be developed and improved. The college technology planning documents are comprehensive. The lack of funding to implement the college technology plans are a concern especially as the college continues to expand its distance education offerings. The college Technology Plan implementation cost is estimated at over \$1,000,000 annually, and, as items are deferred to the next year, this total will increase. When available, the college should identify and establish ongoing resources to appropriately fund technology needs.

Standard III.D Financial Resources

General Comments

The college and district have a shared responsibility regarding allocation of financial resources. According to the funding plan, budget assumptions begin at Chancellors Cabinet and then work through district and college councils. The budget, revenue and expense assumptions appear to be primarily developed by the district. Based on the supporting documents, the projections and assumptions are realistic and take into account the future budget impacts and possible state reductions. Allocations for utilities, insurance, facilities and operations costs, liability (reserves) are district-wide functions and not part of the college's allocation. This results in limited flexibility at the college, as the budget for salaries and benefits is 87.9% of the college's total General Fund Unrestricted budget

allocation in fiscal year 2011-12 (Standards III.D, III.D.1.b).

Columbia College's budget has been declining each of the last three years. The college has been able to live within the reduced budget allocated through enrollment management, expenditure reduction strategies, and competitive grant awards. In 2010-11 the college ended the fiscal year with a \$1,013,747 ending balance in general unrestricted funds. The college and district have prepared for the current state budget as well as possible mid-year budget reductions utilizing ending balance from the previous year. The district has identified \$1.2 million for possible midyear reductions, and has a designated reserve of \$8.6 million. The district also has an undesignated reserve of \$5.9 million as part of a deficit reduction plan to carry forward into the 2012-13 fiscal year (Standard III.D). The college has developed and implemented a strategic planning process that integrates resource allocation with institutional planning in the proper sequence to ensure planning drives budget. The college has developed institutional plans including the Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan and Campus Master Plan that define and support the college's mission, vision, and values. Information from the strategic planning documents detailed above along with college plans such as Program Review, the Technology Master Plan, and Staffing Reports are used to inform the unit planning process. The unit plan requests are prioritized by the departments, divisions, and then referred to the College Council for consideration and recommendation to the college president for approval and funding (Standards III.D.1, III.D.1.a).

The district utilizes a funding formula that has been broadly communicated, reviewed and approved at the college and district levels. The college appears to have an understanding of the budget and budget information is regularly communicated to the college. The understanding of the allocation model and transparency of the budget process is a significant accomplishment and shows tremendous effort on the part of the college and district since the last accreditation visit. There still appears to be dissatisfaction with the allocation model and its ability to support student success and institutional goals at Columbia College since there is not a sufficient economy of scale factor. The college has a shared governance process for budget augmentation requests, when additional college allocations become available. The college utilizes a unit planning process where prioritization and review occurs at the department, division and campus levels. The college has established a Development Office to further develop its financial resources and partnerships to support its educational programs and services. Columbia College was allocated approximately \$52 million from measure "E" to fund prioritized Facilities Master Plan and Campus Master Plan projects. These projects improved instructional facilities to support programs and student services, improved accessibility, and strengthened the college's infrastructure (Standards III.D.1.b, II.D.1.c, III.D.1.d).

Budget information is disseminated broadly through the college and district. YCCD utilizes Datatel Colleague financial information system. The system has been set up to provide the appropriate managers and personnel ready access to real time financial information. The system has appropriate control and reporting mechanisms and includes asset control. The college and district utilize data from the system to develop reports, forecasts and to inform the annual audit process and inventory. The district also employs an internal auditor to monitor, review and recommend internal control changes. Reviews of prior audits for YCCD and the Columbia College Foundation indicate unqualified opinions for Years 2008, 2009, and 2010. Additionally YCCD and Columbia College have implemented recommendations to strengthen and improve financial processes, internal controls and compliance issues (Standards III.D.2, III.D.2a, III.D.2.b, II.D.2.d, III.D.2.e, III.D.2.g).

Cash flow and risk management are district functions. The district has appropriate cash flow to maintain stability. The district has not had to participate in Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANS) or other financial vehicles to meet its cash flow needs. The district is a member of the Alliance of Schools for Cooperative Insurance Programs (ASCIP). The evidence provided document the Certificate of Consent to Self-Insurance (Standard III.D.2.c).

The college has developed a comprehensive planning process that has the institution's mission, vision, values and goals at its core. Program reviews are a required component of the systematic assessment process to assess the effective use of financial resources and the guide to institutional improvement. There is evidence that instructional and student services programs participate in the program review process; but the committee could not find evidence that Administrative Services participates in program review. The unit plans provided evidence that college augmentations were evaluated regarding how they align with college goals that support institutional and student success (Standard III.D.3).

Standard III.D Financial Resources

Findings and Evidence

The District has a well defined and understood budget development process which allocates financial resources to the college primarily based on the Full Time Equivalent Students generated by the colleges with an economy of scale factor. The colleges and central services each have line item allocation control and are responsible to manage within their budget. The college's overall adopted budget has steadily decreased over the past 4 years. Columbia's budget for fiscal year 2011-12 was \$17,679,846 that includes \$13,212,652 of general unrestricted funds and \$4,467,194 of general restricted funds. In fiscal year 2008-09 Columbia's budget was \$18,343,097 that included \$13,785,984 of general unrestricted funds and \$4,557,113 of general restricted funds. The reductions totaled \$663,251 for the past four years. The college ended fiscal year 2010-11 with a small ending balance of \$1,013,746, which is an increase over 2009-10 when the ending balance equaled 636,147. The district met the 50% law requirements with the current expense of education reaching 50.40% in 2010-11, 50.10% in 2009-10 and 50.08% in 2008-09 according to the CCFS 311 reports. The overall YCCD budget includes a significant ending balance. In fiscal year 2010-11 the ending balance equaled \$23,419,302 million. The district has budgeted to end fiscal year 2011-12 with an ending balance of \$18,971,896 million. YCCD has a designated reserve of \$8,600,000 in fiscal year 2011-12, which equates to a 9.8% reserve, well above the 5% minimum balance required by the State Chancellor's Office. The district has also designated a \$1.2 million reserve for anticipated mid-year budget cuts projected by the state. Although expenditures are planned to exceed revenue, there is a considerable ending balance planned into 2012-13 that will carry the college and district in the near term. Evidence shows that YCCD's prudent budgeting and fiscal oversight has positioned Columbia College and the YCCD to withstand the current state fiscal crisis. Budget monitoring and allocation review should be a priority to maintain fiscal integrity and ensure support for educational improvements if state funding does not improve and grant funding is no longer available (Standards III.D, IID.1, III.D.2.c).

The college financial planning is based on its mission and goals as evidenced by the utilization and broad dissemination of the annual planning cycle, strategic planning process, Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan and Campus Master Plan. The correlation between unit plans and how they support college goals is clear and evident. The Unit Plans are informed by program review and college plans which tie to college goals as evidenced in the unit planning document and the college's Strategic Planning Cycle. Instructional program review is clearly at the sustainable continuous quality improvement stage, and Student Services program review is in the process of being updated and refined. There was no evidence of an evaluative process that included program review in the Administrative

Services area. In order to systematically assess the effective use of financial resources in all areas and use the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement, Administrative Services should implement a program review process. Although the college's main budget is essentially rolled each year, the college has used ending balance amounts, grants and other funding sources to augment and support college priorities which center on student learning and achievement. The college, through the efforts of the Development Office, has increased the annual competitive grant awards from \$222, 320 in fiscal year 2007-08 to \$651,387 for fiscal year 2011-12. The college's efforts and success in securing outside sources of funding is commendable. The committee is concerned that the college will not have sufficient resources to support educational improvements currently in progress once grant and other outside funding sources are exhausted. The college was also allocated \$260,000 of one-time funds in fiscal year 2011-12 to spend on college priority needs (Standards III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b).

Unit plan summary reports, Columbia College's Primary and Secondary College Goal Progress Reports establish evidence that past fiscal expenditures have aligned with institutional goals, the college is working on developing evaluative tools and key performance indicators to measure the outcomes of the unit plans and their impact on achieving college goals. There are college committees whose function it is to monitor budgeting and financial operations. College documentation provides evidence that constituencies have the opportunity to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets. The evidence for this includes including collegial consultation group meeting minutes, college forums, and electronic communication. According to the 2010 Fall Faculty and Staff Survey, 28% of faculty and staff survey respondents felt they had "no opportunity to participate in or access the Unit Planning tool or process." This was the largest single response to this survey question. Although the college has made significant progress integrating planning, the college needs to continue to improve communication and engagement of faculty and staff regarding the Unit Planning process (Standards III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.2.g, III.D.3).

The college and district have established a transparent budget and resource allocation process. Financial information is distributed throughout the college and district. Information is available through committee and Governing Board minutes and is posted on the web. Real-time financial information is also made available via the Datatel financial information system (Standard III.D.1.d).

The district received an unqualified opinion with no material weaknesses for 2010, 2009 and 2008 fiscal years. The Audit Reports do not reveal any misuse of funding but did identify

weakness in both the Federal and State Awards compliance. The deficiency in state award compliance was significant enough to result in a qualified opinion. There have been two state compliance deficiencies identified in the last three years audits regarding the provision of instructional materials, one case at each college. In each instance the District responded quickly to correct all findings. There have been no findings or audit exceptions for Measure “E” bond funds or the Columbia College Foundation over the last three fiscal years. Financial information is readily available throughout the institution and has been broadly communicated through forums, senate and committee meetings and via electronic means. The office of the College and Administrative Services provides budget information and updates to the College Council. College staff has access to Datatel’s financial system, which provides real-time financial information and reports (Standards III.D.2, III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b, III.D.2.d, III.D.2.e).

Columbia College and YCCD have sufficient cash flow and reserves as evidenced by their ending balances which exceeded \$18.6 million in 2009-10, and \$23.4 million in 2010-11, and is projected to be above \$18.9 million for 2011-12 fiscal year. Columbia College and the YCCD have implemented strategies to meet long-term commitments, financial emergencies and possible mid-year reductions. The district has not required TRAN’s or any other financial vehicle to support cash flow needs. The evidence supports that actuarial studies and a commitment to fund long-term liabilities are in place. This is evidenced by the districts response to Government Accounting Standards Board Statement (GASB) 45, faculty load banking, accrued vacation liability set allocation, and Measure “E” bond funds. YCCD is a member of ASCIP that provide insurance protection, risk management advice and training. The district has appropriate policies in place regarding contractual agreements including Board Policy 3340. The college did identify a weakness in the enforcement of vacation accrual policies, and has proposed a solution that will be taken to the employee units for bargaining (Standards III.D.2.c; III.D.2.f).

There are significant planning documents that identify and prioritize the college’s needs. Columbia College utilizes their planning processes to systematically assess the effective use of resources and allocates those resources to meet identified college goals. The Enrollment Management Plan, targeted reductions of college FTES, funding of unit plans, and completion of capital construction and scheduled maintenance plans evidence this. Although unit plans are aligned with college goals, there is also little or no evidence that the college uses unit planning outcome assessment as a basis for improvements and progress towards the achievement of college goals and resource allocation (Standard III.D.3).

Standard III.D Financial Resources

Conclusions

Standard III.D is partially met.

The district and colleges have done a commendable job of positioning the district to withstand the current state budget challenges. Since the last accreditation Columbia College and the Yosemite Community College District have made significant improvements in the transparency of the district and college budgets including the allocation model, and resource allocation. It is apparent the college continues to be dissatisfied with the current resource allocation model. There appears to be evidence, district wide, that funds are not being allocated in a manner that will realistically achieve the institution's stated goals for student achievement. This includes "orphan" programs, and a lack of full time faculty and staff to support programs and services. Although the college and district are well positioned to weather the current budget storm, the team is concerned that the college's reliance on outside funding sources to support core student support services in the online modality are not sustainable in the long term given the current economic conditions. The college has implemented an integrated planning model that ensures the involvement of the various constituency groups in budget development and prioritization. There is clear linkage between the planning process and college goals. The team observed no mechanisms in place to assess whether funded unit plans and resource allocation have been effective in enhancing and/or achieving progress towards college goals. The college needs to continue to develop and refine its planning processes so it can systematically assess the effective use of financial resources and use the results of the evaluation as a basis for institutional improvement.

Standard III.D Resources

Recommendations

Two district recommendations and three college recommendations address the team's conclusions for Standard III: Resources.

District Recommendation 1:

In order to fully meet the Standard and improve the effectiveness of its human resources the team recommends the district and the colleges conduct systematic evaluation of all personnel at stated intervals (Standard III.A).

College Recommendation 5:

In order to fully meet the Standard, the team recommends that the institution implement planning and program review processes in administrative services, and use the results to inform technology decisions, physical resource needs and resource allocation (Standards III.A, III.B.2, III.C.1, III.C.2).

College Recommendation 6:

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the institution systematically assess the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for institutional improvement (Standards III.D, III.D.3).

College Recommendation 7:

In order to fully meet the Standard, the team recommends that the institution develop a comprehensive staff development plan designed to meet the needs of its personnel and develop a systematic evaluation process (Standards III.A, III.C.1.b).

Standard IV Leadership and Governance

Standard IV.A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Comments

Columbia College provided a well written, comprehensive, documented report that is data-informed throughout Standard IV. Over the last few years there has been a succession of chief administrators who have continued to carry through on meeting the recommendations of previous accreditation teams and addressing the institution's planning agendas. The statements about institutional goals represent the college's commitment to student success, educational programs and services, their dedication to providing a safe campus climate, updated technology, and reaching out to their communities to develop partnerships, as well as being good stewards of their fiscal and human resources. The college has appropriate representation to provide input to district issues through the District Council, as well as the College Council. It utilizes its participatory strategic planning process to measure the effectiveness of all its programs and services to ensure they are consistent with the college mission, vision, and core values. It is apparent that all administrators are held accountable for providing effective leadership and implementation of their participatory practices in the college governance. The college has established governance structures that support dialogue on ideas amongst all constituencies and acknowledge the Academic Senate's role in curricular and other educational matters (Standards IV.A, IV.A.2.b).

Standard IV.A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

Findings and Evidence

Columbia College and the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) have an established District Council and College Council whose membership is inclusive of all employee groups whose responsibility is to engage in the process of decision-making and participate in the development of processes to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation. The District and College Councils are guided by the Principles of Collegial Governance. There is evidence supporting established processes that support communication and collaboration. Through interviewing many individuals involved in the college's governance process it is clear that all planning documents are linked and integrated with the college goals (Standard IV.A.1).

An integrated plan for resource allocation as part of the Strategic Planning Process Cycle was updated and approved by the College Council in April 2011. Board Policy 7510 defines roles for faculty, students and staff regarding participation in local planning processes. Proposals and items for consideration to the College Council may originate from the

institutions various governance, groups, college-wide committees, and/or by individuals. Roles in governance are clearly defined; for example, Board Policy 4103 (Academic Senates) ensures faculty members have a significant role in the overall policy planning processes at the institution (Standards IV.A.2; IV.A.2a).

The college is found to have established effective communication strategies both formal and informal. As previously mentioned, District Board Policy 7510 (Participation in Local Decision Making) defines constitutional roles in governance. Input is given from all groups on policies and constituents also give reports at YCCD Board of Trustees meetings. The mechanism for college-wide communication is College Council and members are very aware of their responsibilities to report out to their constituencies and to bring back the collective input on selected topics. Other working meetings that provide avenues for communication are Administrative Council meetings which include leadership from all managers and an education administrators meeting between the Vice President of Student Learning and the Deans. Other evidence of effective communication is the President's newsletter and open forums that are held periodically to provide communication opportunities (Standard IV.A.3).

The college demonstrates compliance with all Accrediting Commission Standards policies and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosures, self-study and other reports, team visits prior and approval of substantive changes. A Substantial Change Proposal was submitted to ACCJC in March 2011. The review committee deferred the college's proposal pending additional evidence about budgeting and sustainability. The college submitted additional information and in a letter dated July 7, 2011 the Substantive Change Proposal from Columbia to offer 19 Associate degrees and seven certificated programs at 50 percent or more via mode of distance or electronic delivery was approved. The college's relationship with external agencies demonstrates integrity and honest practices. The college currently has a Title III (Strengthening Institutions) grant as well as other grants. Grant records are maintained at the Columbia College Development Office (for Title III funds) and at the Yosemite Community College District Grants Office, (for all state, federal, local, and privately funded grant projects). The college also has an Oversight Committee to ensure Measure E bond proceeds are expended appropriately. These are examples of the institution being compliant (Standard IV.A.4).

While the college is found to have integrated planning process that links program review and budget allocation to institutional planning, they do not have an effective evaluation process in place at this time. It is noted that they do have a planning agenda addressing this and are in the middle of developing the tool and the processes to measure their progress towards meeting institutional goals (Standard IV.A.5).

Standard IV.A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

Conclusions

Standard IV.A is partially met.

It is clear from the review of the self-study and the site visit that the relationship between the employees of the college and those of the district office has improved tremendously. The effort to increase communication, establish fundamental structures and an environment where participatory governance and institutional effectiveness can flourish, as well as where dialogue can flow has paid off and has created a functioning relationship between the two. The college is to be commended for their professional accomplishments in this area of leadership and governance.

The team finds the missing step to be the established evaluation piece so that the planning processes and established goals can be assessed for effectiveness and completion.

Standard IV.B Board and Administrative Organization

General Comments

The district governing Board of Trustees are found to be engaged in training through the Community College League for California and embrace their responsibilities appropriately. The Yosemite Community College District Strategic Plan provides the vision for establishing policies that support quality and effective student learning programs and services at the institution. The governing Board of Trustees represents the service area that the college serves. They observe policies and procedures, including an established code of ethics policy and the team found them to be well-informed of the college and the accreditation process. Evidence supports that the Board of Trustees has a clear process in selecting and evaluating the Chancellor, however there seems to be a lack of clear selection processes in the selection of the college presidents.

The President of Columbia College is given the authority and responsibility to provide primary leadership for the effective operation of the college. While the Columbia College President has only been in the position for three months, he is aware and is providing the leadership this section calls out.

Standard IV.B Board and Administrative Organization

Findings and Evidence

Standard IV.B focuses on the recognition of well delineated designated responsibilities between the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor; and the Chancellor and the colleges,

where there are clearly defined roles between the district and the colleges. Evidence supports that the YCCD clearly sees their role as being responsible for establishing policies that support student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the district. The YCCD Board of Trustees, Chancellor and Columbia College have revised and implemented their organization and evaluation processes since the last visit and since the Focused Midterm Report. However, they still need to establish processes for the selection of the college presidents (Standards IV.B.1.a –j).

The College Council discusses college-wide issues such as budget, strategic planning and institutional processes. The unit plan process was revised to include staffing requests which lead to a staffing plan and the staffing plan is further analyzed through a prioritization process. The Educational Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Unit Plans and other institutional plans are better coordinated to meet the needs of the institution. The college has filled the institutional researcher vacancy and appears to be utilizing data to make decisions (Standards IV.B.2; IV.B.2a).

Established processes that facilitate integrated institutional planning are in place. The College Council oversees establishing the values, goals, and priorities for the college and the development of the Educational Master Plan. A process has been established, using a newly developed Unit Planning Tool, that links each program's evaluation and future planning to budgetary and staffing needs. This process clearly establishes the educational planning to be integrated into resource planning. The missing piece is the need for procedures to be established to evaluate overall planning and institutional efforts (Standard IV.B.2.b).

The President is found to be fully cognizant of leading the institution to assure that the implementation of statutes, regulations, governing board policies, and institutional practices is consistent with the institutional mission (Standard IV.B.2.c).

The President effectively controls budget and expenditures and is ultimately responsible for the budget of Columbia College. Regular conversations and various venues including College Council, regular reports to the Board, emails and forums have assured current budget information has been disseminated campus-wide. During the current fiscal crisis the district has maintained the state mandated 5% reserve and annual outside auditor's reports support fiscal stability (Standard IV.B.2.d).

The President provides an annual report to the community highlighting the institution's accomplishments and achievements (Standard IV.B.2.e).

Roles and responsibilities of the district colleges, and governance structures are established in YCCD Board Policy 2100 (organizational structure). It was noted in the self-evaluation section (IVB.3; 3a) that “district wide planning efforts require greater emphasis in order to more effectively communicate the Board’s and Chancellor’s expectations for educational excellence and integrity in the college’s programs and services.” Although the chancellor initiated updating the YCCD Vision in October 2010 and it was approved at the District Council in February 2011, based on the statement above in the self-evaluation, there appears to be a need for the District to update the district wide strategic plan (Standard IV B.3.a).

The YCCD Strategic Plan 2007-2015 provides direction for the provision of effective services to Columbia College. However, surveys identified one area of concern regarding district support for staff development. It was reported 47.6% of faculty and staff agreeing that services were either “less than expected” (34.9%) or at a “very low level” (12.7%).” A planning agenda in Standard III addresses this need (Standard IV.B.3.b).

While it may appear that a fair distribution of resources from the district is provided to support operations at the college, the allocation being tied nearly strictly to the FTES generation of the institutions is inadequate and does not take into account economies of scale. The State Chancellor’s Office demonstrated that through their implementation of SB361 years back. There is evidence that, even though Columbia College can stretch a penny further than most, there are examples of doing more with less is reaching the tipping point. Samples of this is the numerous “orphan programs” that have yet to be championed due to no faculty being available in the disciplinary area, reported students not being able to complete their educational goals due to lack of faculty in some disciplines to teach, and vacancies from employees leaving being unfilled in order to prepare for worse financial times to name just a few. While these examples may represent additional reasons for their existence, it would be prudent to review the current practice of how allocations are disbursed to the institutions and implement a more equitable district wide allocation modal (Standard IV.B.3.c).

The Yosemite Community College District is found having a long track record of effective fiscal resource stewardship. The President is given the authority to implement and administer district policy without interference. The President sets goals and is evaluated accordingly on an annual basis by the Chancellor. There is evidence to support that the district acts as a conduit between the college and the Board of Trustees in an appropriate and effective manner. An evaluation of district operational effectiveness is completed periodically at the college level. The 2010 Faculty/Staff Survey directly assessed the college perceptions related to the effectiveness of district operations (Standard IV.B.3.d-g).

Standard IV.B Board and Administrative Organization

Conclusions

The institution does not meet the standard.

The team finds that a review of the district wide allocation model needs to be completed and a more equitable allocation model adopted to meet the needs of the students.

Standard IV.B Board and Administrative Organization

Recommendations

Three district recommendations address the team's conclusions of Standard IV: Leadership and Governance. The recommendations are shared in the team evaluation for Modesto Junior College.

District Recommendation 2:

In order to fully meet the standard, the teams recommend that the district and the colleges review institutional mission and their array of course offerings and program in light of their current budgets (Standard IV.B.3.c)

District Recommendation 3:

The team recommends that the District and Board of Trustees develop policies on the Delegation of Authority to the College President (Standards IV.B.2; IV.B.3; IV.B.3.a). IV.B.3.e).

District Recommendation 4:

The team recommends that the District develops policies that clearly outline the process for hiring and evaluating the College President (Standards IV.B.1; IV.B.1.j).