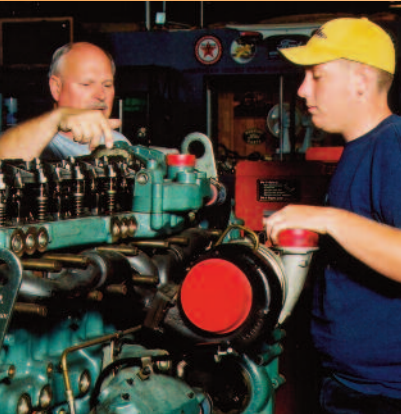


# Response to Recommendations



# Responses to Prior Recommendations

**1. It is recommended that the mission statement be reviewed to ensure that it articulates the educational purposes and programs to be offered by the college and provides guidance for planning and operations. Additionally, the college should implement a review process to ensure the mission statement is current.**

Citrus College recognizes the importance of keeping the mission statement central to everything the college does. The college has initiated a review process to ensure that the mission statement is current. This process is identified in institutional planning agenda 5.

Since the current mission statement was adopted in 2006, it has prefaced the annual goals that the board of trustees establishes for the college. As a result, administrators and staff from key instructional, student services and administrative areas consistently inform the board of their activities, projects and accomplishments, which reflect the goals and standards established by the mission statement and mission objectives.

The mission statement was also the foundation of the college's *Strategic Plan*. The employee survey, one of the driving resources behind the *Strategic Plan*, reported that 93 percent of employee respondents reported they were aware of and supported the college's mission. It provided the framework for the *Strategic Plan* process and established an overarching theme for the four planning goals: student success, student learning outcomes and assessment, fiscal transparency and communication. Staff members play an important role in ensuring the mission statement is current and relevant to the college's planning activities.

As strategic planning has become a mainstay of college operations, the college mission has transitioned into a benchmark of the college's success. Faculty, staff and students are consistently reminded that they are stakeholders in the continued success of the college.

**2. It is recommended that a strategic plan that emanates from the college mission be developed and implemented. All other planning (facilities, technology, staff development, resource allocation, etc.) and program review should link to the mission statement and strategic plan. These then need to have measurable outcomes, with timelines and identified staff responsibility for the implementa-**

**tion, as well as be clearly tied to the budgeting process. Sufficient resources, especially in the area of research need to be allocated.**

After the last accreditation visit in 2003, the college president agreed with the accrediting team's recommendation and identified the evaluation and revision of the college mission statement as a priority. A committee comprised of representatives from all constituency groups was formed and members on the committee engaged in an ongoing, inclusive, and interactive process that developed a new mission statement for Citrus College. After several revision cycles, the final draft was approved by the Steering Committee in May 2006 and by the board of trustees in June 2006.

The director of institutional research was hired in October 2006 after a lengthy position vacancy. The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) was re-established and resumed data analysis and research functions. Since then, the OIR has been instrumental in providing institutional data and analysis to the campus. A campus-wide, all-employee survey was conducted in spring 2007, establishing important baseline data related to employee perception of college governance, communication, budget process, etc. A campus-wide retreat was then organized and open dialogue ensued focusing on the employee survey results and other key institutional data, such as the CCSSE survey and the ARCC report. In fall 2007, four major strategic plan goals were developed: student success, student learning outcomes, fiscal transparency, and communication. An ad hoc committee was formed to address each of the four goals identified.

In the 2008-09 year, with the new superintendent/president coming on board, the strategic planning process continued. An annual implementation plan (AIP) that includes objectives, responsible parties, specific activities, and projected measurable outcomes was developed, and at the end of the year outcomes of the activities were to be reported in a progress report. The outcomes will be used to generate a refined action plan for the subsequent year. As new strategic goals are identified, actions to support goal achievement will be incorporated in future plans. The annual planning process so far has seen the production of the following reports for each of the four strategic planning goals:

- 2007-08 - *Strategic Plan Progress Report*
- 2008-09 - *Strategic Plan: Annual Implementation Plan*

- 2008-09 - *Strategic Plan Progress Report – Fall 09*
- 2009-10 - *Strategic Plan: Annual Implementation Plan – Fall 09*

Since the last accreditation visit, dramatic improvements have been made in both the development of and use of program review data. Formal program reviews have traditionally been completed on a six-year cycle. Now, although the formal program review cycle continues to be six years, the Office of Institutional Research provides each instructional department with updated information on an annual basis. This is a result of a cooperative process between the Academic Senate and the Office of Instruction in defining data and indicators needed for the program review. This provides yearly snapshots of progress and allows corrections to be made as necessary.

The availability of this updated information has made possible a cooperative process involving the Academic Senate, the vice president of instruction and department deans. Program review data are compiled into a prioritized needs document for use in the budget decision-making process. In this way, facilities needs, technology needs, and other instructional requirements are all fairly considered for resource allocation. This document provides a bridge between departmental program reviews and the college budget development process.

**3. It is recommended that the administration and Academic Senate exercise the responsibility with which they are charged under Board Policy on the Curriculum Committee.**

In 2003, significant changes and improvements were made to the Curriculum Committee membership structure. Faculty are the voting members of the full Curriculum Committee, with administrators providing important support. Committee agendas are set by the Curriculum Committee chair, a full-time faculty member. The process now ensures that curriculum is initiated at the faculty level and allows peer faculty the opportunity to review curriculum as it moves through the approval process. Bi-monthly curriculum meetings are well attended, with detailed, and often lengthy agendas provided in advance of meetings. As the process of reviewing and rewriting curriculum to include SLOs has accelerated, Curriculum Committee members have grown more skilled in noting specific areas for improvement and providing curriculum initiators with suggestions for curriculum development and modification.

With the implementation of the CurricUNET curriculum management system in 2006, the Curriculum Committee and curriculum initiators gained a powerful tool to review and track updates to courses, degrees, and certificates. As part of the CurricUNET process, all courses, degrees, and certificates are reviewed by the Technical Review Sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee which is charged with making any recommendations that will strengthen the curriculum prior to full committee review. This structure and review process is working well and has streamlined the submission and approval process.

The *Curriculum Handbook* underwent a major revision during the 2008-2009 academic year to incorporate these improved procedures and to reflect recent changes to Title 5 California Code of Regulations and the California State Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook. In addition, in conjunction with the student learning outcomes and assessment coordinator, the Curriculum Committee has sponsored two "marathon" workshops that provided training opportunities for CurricUNET as well as training in the writing and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program and general education levels. Both instructional and non-instructional faculty and staff have shared their strategies to provide training with others.

**4. It is recommended that the college give careful consideration to increasing resources for counseling services to meet the educational support needs of a diverse student population.**

Since the last accreditation team visit, the college has increased the number of full-time counselors from 12 to 19. As a result of this increase, the college has been able to increase support in EOP&S, non-credit matriculation, nursing, athletics, teacher preparation, basic skills and learning communities. Funding for part-time counseling hours has also increased, including services for veterans, career/technical and continuing education, Science Technologies, Engineering and Math (STEM) and an Umoja program supporting African American students. The college also received grants for three years to assist local high schools with counseling services related to the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

**5. It is recommended that the college carefully review its decisions regarding the appropriate number of full-time faculty to ensure that there are sufficient faculty to support the quality of its programs and services.**

Since the last accreditation visit, the district has met or exceeded its full-time faculty hiring obligation. The number of full-time faculty has grown from 156 in the fall of 2003 to 174 in the fall of 2008. Despite reductions in funding for community colleges for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 fiscal years, the district has continued to hire full-time faculty and for the 2009-10 fiscal year will be hiring three additional full-time faculty. The college's Faculty Needs Identification Committee (FNIC) continues to review the full time faculty hiring needs and recommends to the board of trustees the disciplines in which full-time faculty should be hired.

**6. It is recommended that the governing board, college administration and college constituency groups find ways of defining and clarifying governance decision making and communication so that all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.**

Clarifying governance decision-making and communication is an ongoing process that the college takes seriously. The midterm response to this recommendation mentioned a technical assistance visit which brought Kate Clark, California statewide Academic Senate president, and David Viar, the then executive director of the Community College League of California, to Citrus College for an open forum and luncheon with faculty and staff. Several trustees were also present. The outcome was a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in college governance and a commitment to work toward ensuring a collaborative governance decision-making process.

Board policy clearly defines the Steering Committee as the major institutional governance body at Citrus College, and the numerous committees that report to the Steering Committee have representation from all college constituencies. The Steering Committee makes governance and decision-making recommendations to the superintendent/president for action by the board of trustees. Both the Steering Committee and the Academic Senate have up-to-date constitutions that clearly identify their respective roles in the governance of the college.

In the week prior to a board of trustees bi-monthly meeting, an agenda review meeting is held. All constituent groups are invited to review the proposed agenda. The agenda review session provides an opportunity for all groups to review and question agenda items prior to the agenda being finalized. The agenda review session has recently been expanded by the superintendent/president to allow constituent representatives a voice in campus-wide issues other than working conditions.

Other examples of the college's efforts to clarify governance and foster communication include:

- The Academic Senate president and vice-president meet with the superintendent/president and vice presidents of instruction and student services on a twice-monthly basis to discuss issues of mutual concern and share information. The group, called the "Big Five," maintains an open agenda.

- One of the four 2007-2008 strategic planning goals identified as an institutional priority focused on communication. This work was shared as part of the 2007 strategic planning process, and the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) identifies specific activities with measurable outcomes designed to improve various aspects of campus communication.

- The campus website was redesigned in 2006, incorporating functionality thus allowing individual departments to post and update information more efficiently.

- In fall of 2008, the college began a 15 month project to review and update all board policies and regulations, ensuring a full review by all constituent groups.

- Dr. Geraldine Perri, who came to Citrus in July 2008 as superintendent/president, has begun a series of campus-wide forums on a variety of topics of interest to the college community. These forums have provided an opportunity for dialogue on topics such as budget, emergency preparedness, the state of the college, etc.

- During the 2008-2009 academic year, a committee chaired by the vice president of finance and administrative services was created to bring existing campus governance, organizational charts, goals, board policies, committee structures, and related information together into a central source. The resulting *Organization and Governance Handbook* was published in summer 2009, and a summary document will be shared with all staff at the fall 2009 convocation prior to the beginning of the term. Available in print form and online, the handbook is expected to be a valuable reference guide to college faculty and staff, and a resource included with new faculty and staff mentoring materials.

Meeting this recommendation has been, and continues to be an institutional priority. The 2007 employee satisfaction survey found that 62 percent of respondents were satisfied with their opportunities for participation in governance, and 93 percent indi-

cated awareness of and support for the college mission.

**7. It is recommended that the board of trustees move quickly to adopt a code of ethics statement and approve and implement a process for self-evaluation. Further, the board is encouraged to develop board goals and objectives on an annual basis aligned with the mission and goals of the college.**

Since the last accreditation visit in 2003, the Citrus College board of trustees has been involved in drafting a number of documents that demonstrate and emphasize the importance of self-analysis. In September of 2004, shortly after the accreditation report was received by the district, the board of trustees adopted a code of ethics wherein expectations on behavior, decision-making, work ethic, and commitment to the mission of the college were stated. These statements have helped guide members of the board in their capacity to conduct business and represent the college in the communities they serve. Since adopting this code in 2004, the board has revisited this subject by updating the existing code in the form of a board policy that strives to maintain compliance with current accreditation standards (IV.B.1.e, h). Further, the board has taken the additional step of hiring a consultant from the Community College League of California (CCLC) to assist with drafting new board policies that address a range of guiding principles upon which the board of trustees may rely. Among these policies are those dealing with conflict of interest, political activity, personal use of public resources, and communication among board members. All of these policies are clear indications that the board of trustees realizes the importance of ethical practices in both its relationships within the community it serves and the manner in which it views decision-making.

The board of trustees has undergone a regular self-evaluation process since the accreditation visit in 2003. This process began as informal discussions between the members of the board of trustees and the college superintendent/president at annual board retreats. At the October 17, 2006 board meeting, the board formalized self-evaluation through the adoption of the currently-used board of trustees' self-evaluation document. Each member of the board is expected to complete the self-evaluation annually and the results of the individual evaluations are discussed among the members of the board of trustees during closed session at a scheduled board meeting. The criteria on the evaluation parallel some of the current accreditation standards, where applicable, but also the operations of the board and its re-

lationships with various campus, community, and governmental groups. In addition, the board has adopted a board policy on self-evaluation that has been adjusted to maintain compliance with expectations from current accreditation standards.

The board of trustees at Citrus College acted promptly to address the recommendation from the 2003 accreditation visit to develop annual board goals and objectives. These goals have been designed to specifically address the needs of the college and the communities which it serves, and are adjusted accordingly as variables such as community demographics, fiscal resources, educational mandates, and college mission change.

Earlier versions of these goals consisted of a simple list usually ranging in length from 8-15 statements, but in 2006 the board of trustees modified the structure of these objectives to include the College Mission Statement and has bifurcated its objectives into institutional versus those specific to the community it serves. Achievement toward these goals are discussed with the superintendent/president regularly at the annual board retreat.

The recommendations from the last accreditation cycle in 2003 have been followed and the expectations on the board of trustees have been met. Further, the board has modified its initial intent to meet these recommendations by modifying its support objectives and policies to reflect current standards expected for the accreditation visit in 2009.