



Merritt College



Institutional Self-Study in Support of Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Submitted by
Merritt College
12500 Campus Drive
Oakland, California 94619

to
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Spring 2009

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Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Spring 2009

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President
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Certification of the Institutional Self Study Report

Date: December 9, 2008

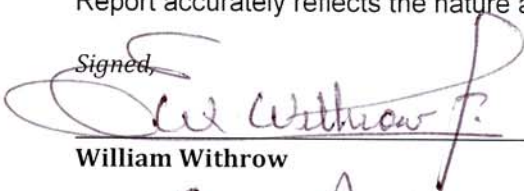
To: Accrediting Commission and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Merritt College
12500 Campus Drive
Oakland, CA 94619

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

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

Signed,



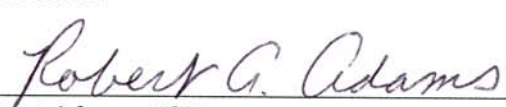
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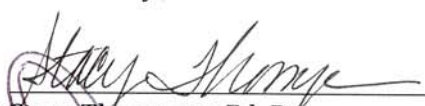
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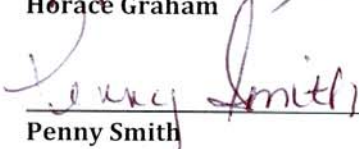
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President, Classified Council



Penny Smith

President, Associated Students of Merritt College

Abstract of the Self Study

Since the last accreditation cycle, Merritt College has institutionalized substantive changes. The college's Mission Statement and related statements of Vision, Values, and Goals have been created, aligned with the district's goals, and institutionalized at the college through a collaborative process. Six Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's) have been established and made central to department, program, and course level planning.

The current strategic planning and budget allocation process has imbedded at its core the above driving statements and has been redesigned to involve faculty and staff input via Unit Plans, more reliable data via standard and alternative data sources (e.g., Equity For All Scorecard Project), and a culminating planning document through the College Educational Master Plan that ultimately drives Human, Physical, Technological, and Fiscal budget allocation at the college and district levels. In addition, the college has engaged in focused research to explore and engage existing and alternative funding sources to improve campus climate through this (above) rigorous institutional planning process that identified buildings, classrooms, and general facilities in greatest need of repair, remodel, or building anew. This new planning process has renewed campus morale through the reality of Building R's remodel completion, and the hope that completed architectural plans for a new Learning Resource Center and other such facilities on campus will continue to provide a welcoming academic environment for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community alike.

Merritt College was selected as a recipient of the Title III grant, which awarded the college \$2.5 million to strengthen the institution in key areas including areas that directly affect student success. The passage of local Measure A funds for equipment, supplies, construction, and remodeling has helped the college implement its goals. The remodeled Student Services building now houses all areas of student registration, counseling, transfer, financial aid, cafeteria, student government offices, clubs, lounge and other services central to the student experience. Classroom renovations, through use of Measure A fund, have also provided new chairs for our classrooms.

The state of the college's classrooms where students spend most of their time is in need of major attention. The college remains at this point distant from its goal of state-of-the art classrooms college-wide; however, the recent infusion of Measure A funds has begun to mitigate this stark physical environment of individual classroom interiors into providing a more welcoming space to teach and learn. Major remodeling plans are underway to move the Learning Resource Center to the Lower L Building and expand its function to include increased areas for tutoring and a college Writing and Reading Center, as well as a specialized Black Panther Archives Room. While Building A (houses the Arts) and Building D (houses all of the Sciences and Allied Health programs) are particularly run down, Merritt College was recently approved and funded for renovations in Building A as well as building a new Science Center to house and expand all science and Allied Health related programs.

Technology improvements have occurred in key areas that improve access and efficiency. These include PASSPORT and Prompt, which affect student administration and financial services respectively.

Challenges for the next accreditation cycle include finalizing the implementation of new software, increasing the transparency of college and district policies and procedures, assuring prompt, consistent, and comprehensive communication, and increasing the stability of college leadership through increased infrastructure support and competitive wages: both of which are critical to attract and keep administrators long enough to benefit from their continuity of leadership and management.

Standard IA: Mission

This Standard explains the process and finalization of Merritt College Mission Statement. Prompted by the 2003 Self Study, the process for developing the college's Mission Statement was collaborative and inclusive of students, staff and administrative members. The college's Mission Statement process from now and into the future will include a six-year cycle of review and updating. The college Mission has positively impacted and driven planning, decision making, and strategic directions.

During the college-wide dialogue that led to the creation of the Mission Statement and related documents, six Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's) were developed to serve as foundation skills and competencies that students will bring to the community through their learning experiences at Merritt College. The process for establishing ILO's was collaborative and included faculty, staff, students and administrators.

The Mission Statement and ILO's have been integrated to inform the strategic planning process, including the College Educational Master Plan and is the foundation from which all Unit, Discipline and Program missions derive.

Standard IB: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

This Standard describes the ways Merritt College employs a shared-governance process to ensure campus-wide input into improving institutional effectiveness and achieving the college mission and student learning outcomes. Various areas of the college have worked collaboratively to successfully acquire funding for improving instruction and student success; using research to inform planning processes at the unit, discipline and college level, and engaging in the process of critical dialogue resulting in writing and integrating Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) into programs and courses.

College faculty, staff, administrators and students have received training on SLOs and Assessment in the context of how mapping programs and indentifying SLOs reveals the student's journey through their college experience; this journey includes critical points of assessment through which a student's progress and success can be demonstrated and measured. The creation of the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) has aided the process of both training and assisting staff with finalizing program and course level SLOs.

Standard IIA: Instructional Programs

The instructional division of the college maintains high quality and varied course offerings that meet the needs of the students in accordance with the mission of the college. Courses are offered in person, online, and in a hybrid format. This Standard details the phases of

the SLO writing process with faculty playing the central role. Nearly all SLO's have been completed for all updated and new courses overseen by the Curriculum Instructional Council. Merritt College has appointed a Student Learning Outcomes coordinator to assist with insuring the completion and integration of SLOs. Program reviews are complete and unit plans are completed and have been integrated into the budget and renovations. The review and planning process assists in assuring the relevance and appropriateness of SLO's and the currency of curriculum.

The means by which the college addresses and incorporates diversity and the educational and lifelong learner goals of students is also addresses in this Standard. The college maintains high integrity in its instruction and curriculum development and the ability students have to access policies on ethics, rights and responsibilities.

Standard IIB: Student Support Services

Merritt College offers an array of Student Support Services throughout the campus to enhance student access, progress, learning and success. The institution takes steps to ensure the quality and continued growth of those services based on the college's Mission and ILO's. Access to critical student information is located in the catalog, handbook and website documents; this allows students to participate in their matriculation process and personal success while at Merritt College. The success and challenges of student activities is described in the Standard detailing the numerous clubs and campus activities that assist the college in fulfilling the stated core values of the institution. Several innovations are discussed in this Standard including Centro Latino, PASSPORT, and recruitment and transfer efforts. Challenges with the integration of newly acquired financial aid software are discussed and currently being addressed at the college and district level.

Program reviews and unit plans in the area of Student Support Services have been completed and inform the overall master planning of the college.

Standard IIC: Library and Learning Resources

The Library currently occupies the second and third floors of the "L" Building. Several departments function within the library, viz. reference/instruction, cataloging, acquisitions, circulation/reserves, periodicals, archives, administration. Efforts to add new resources to the collection are consistent and include online databases and other current forms of accessing information that increase student learning outcomes.

The Learning Center provides learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth and variety to facilitate educational offerings. The center is staffed by teaching faculty, classified staff, and student peer advisors. The mission of the Learning Center is to assist students in becoming more efficient, effective, and independent learners. Services are primarily focused on supplemental instructional support to help students in reinforcing and mastering concepts in courses across the curriculum.

The Library/Learning Center Building design (LRC and LIB) architectural planning committees, which had originally been designated as separate projects, were joined during fall semester 2007. This team has worked with the district architectural consultant and

architect (Fischer-Friedman Associates) to develop a coherent building design that would support all learning resource and library functions within the existing L Building. Upon completion, the L Building will integrate the campus computer laboratories, smart classroom, tutoring, writing center, science/math tutoring, archives, reference, circulation, cataloging, special collections into one building creating more efficient access for Merritt College students.

Library/LRC are integral parts of the Educational Master Plan and discipline level unit plans where the aims of enhancing student access to resources, technological proficiency, and supplemental instruction.

Standard III A-D Resources

This standard discusses the micro and macro integration of the college's planning efforts for Human, Physical, Technology, and Financial resources with those of the district's planning processes. At a macro level, the college has begun to address its institutional needs in these areas in the past several years through missions, goals, and outcomes alignment, strategic planning, and collaborative communication and action. A distinct effort toward improving and implementing college and district-wide transparency of policies and procedures continues to be made via faculty, staff, and administrator represented groups.

This Standard also addresses Human, Physical, Technology, and Financial resources at a micro level including: the college's faculty, staff, and administrator evaluation process and completion; physical plant maintenance, repair work and schedules, and chronic custodial vacancies; clarifying a process for technology requests, and establishing a sustainable funding source; and refining the budget planning process such that all financial allocation decisions are aligned with the college's institutional plans, budgeting proposals and decisions are posted to assure a transparent process, Measure A procurement processes are written and clearly defined, and a procedure is established at the college to track and submit financial reports for grants and contracts.

Faculty and staff-driven Unit Plans that address each college Student Service or academic program's current and future human, physical, technological, and financial needs are foundational to the Merritt College Educational Master Plan (MCEMP). The MCEMP is synthesized document developed through an integrated process for assessing college-wide resource needs and to drive decision-making of resource allocation at the college and district levels. With the new emphasis on research data prepared by the college researcher, and with increased staff participation in integrated planning and budgeting, the college now has a cyclical procedure for reviewing and revising planning objectives designed to improve institutional effectiveness, to enhance teaching strategies, to assure successful student learning outcomes, and to inform resource allocation.

Merritt College's Educational Master Plan and other related planning documents identify the institutional mission, goals, objectives, and outcomes, surveys, interviews, and additional data documented in this and other standards show that faculty and staff want district service centers to increase their commitment to transparency, communication, and training with respect to all policies and procedures. Faculty and staff also note that district-

wide planning groups lack inclusivity and a means for discussion that involves all college constituents. Questions remain as to the college's actual impact on district resource.

Standard IV A: Decision –Making and Processes

The Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees provides oversight for the four Peralta colleges. The Board establishes policy and direction for the colleges, while the college president is responsible for day-to-day operations. The president provides institutional leadership for planning, budgeting and implementation of policy. The district office functions to provide services that all campuses share. This Standard describes these policies and processes, as well as the affect they have on the overall functioning of the college. It describes the impact of policies and communication upon processes including those related to business, instruction and student experience.

Systematic and ongoing evaluation of the PCCD Board of Trustees, the college president, and the districts' board policies is a necessity. All board decisions are made in adherence to federal, state, and local policies and guidelines. The results are communicated to the college through the recently updated Peralta website and the shared governance decision making process.

Standard IV B: Board and Administrative Organization

The Merritt College governance structure has evolved over the past four years into a system that provides opportunities for all college constituencies to participate in the shared governance process for example the Unions, Classified Senate, Academic Senate, and the Associated Students of Merritt College. The faculty, staff, administrators and students are welcome to serve on all college standing committees, ad hoc, and district-wide committees. The need to increase student participation in the shared governance process is discussed in this standard. The importance of increased transparency at the district and board level is felt strongly by faculty and is also noted.

In 2006-2007 "Culture of Communication" was identified as an institutional priority. To this end, Merritt College put forth a proposal to the district for a Digital Messaging System that has yet to come to fruition, and provides informational sessions on flex day and has expanded the college website to include a "Shared Governance" page of the Merritt website.

Organization for the Self Study

Merritt College is pleased to submit this institutional Self Study as part of its application for reaffirmation of accreditation.

Overview

Merritt College completed its last Self Study for Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2003. This was the first time Merritt College and the other three colleges in the Peralta Community College District were simultaneously accredited. We welcome this process that allows us to examine ourselves in the context of standards of excellence and expectations of continuous improvement.

Initial Planning and Organization

Merritt College's planning for the 2009 Self Study for Reaffirmation of Accreditation began in fall 2007. Led by Dr. Linda Berry, Vice President of Instruction and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), faculty member and Department Chair Dr. Stacy Thompson, and Staff Assistant Dera Williams, a planning meeting was convened with the goal of recruiting participants from a cross-section of the campus community, including faculty, staff and administrators. The first Accreditation Steering Committee planning meeting was held in September 2007.

The ACCJC held orientation training at College of the Marin, Indian Valley Campus in February 2007. Several Merritt staff attended including Dr. Linda Berry (Vice President of Instruction), Tom Branca (Faculty Senate President), Dr. Rebecca Kenney (Division II Dean), Anita Black (faculty), Jennifer Yates (faculty), and Dera Williams (Accreditation Co-chair/classified staff). The focus of the training was Evidence/Documentation and themes in the Standards.

The Accreditation Institute under the auspices of the State Academic Senate held Accreditation Institute training in Pasadena at the Pasadena Hilton from January 25- 27, 2008. This training session focused on Institutional Mission and Leadership and the importance of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Merritt College representatives were Dr. Stacy Thompson (Accreditation Steering Committee Chair), Dera Williams (Accreditation co-chair/classified), Anika Toussaint-Jackson (Research and Planning Officer), and Ann Elliott (SLO Coordinator).

Reorganization

In spring 2008, changes in the composition of standard committees temporarily delayed final submissions of standard drafts. However, these standards were able to submit their final drafts to the ALO in preparation for the Self Study editing process. Due to the retirement of Dr. Hector Cordova, Division I Dean, Dr. Stacy Thompson was appointed as Interim Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences. Dr. Siri Brown, African American Studies faculty, assumed the role of chair of the Accreditation Steering Committee.

Communication with the College Community

The Accreditation co-chairs and the ALO, along with the Research and Planning Officer met on a regular basis throughout the academic year 2007-08 to monitor gathering of data, design of surveys, and writing of the Self Study. Additionally, the standard committee members reported on the challenges and successes in gathering of evidence and writing of their respective standards. The majority of the standards were completed by May 2008 with the outstanding drafts completed in July 2008.

In spring 2008, the Accreditation Steering Committee co-chairs and committee members disseminated information about the Accreditation process through interviews, focus groups, and dialogue. A first draft was posted on the college's website in November 2008, and feedback was solicited from the college community. Presentations were made to both the Academic and Classified Senates in December.

Jon Drinnon, English faculty, began the process of reviewing and editing the document for consistency, accuracy, and validity in the summer of 2008. Siri Brown, African American Studies faculty, provided supplemental documentation and final editing in consultation with the ALO. The final document was sent to the Peralta Community College District Board in December 2008 for approval and recommendation to the Accrediting Commission for Colleges and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

MEMBERS OF MERRITT COLLEGE ACCREDITATION SELF STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE

Self-Study Steering Committee co-chairpersons:

Dr. Stacy Thompson (faculty)

Dera Williams (classified)

AnikaToussant-Jackson (Research and Planning Officer)

Accreditation Liaison Officer – Dr. Linda Berry (Vice President of Instruction)

Editors: Jon Drinnon, Dr. Siri Brown (faculty)

Standard One: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Chair: Anthony Powell (Administrator)

Cie-Jae Allen (Faculty); Susana de la Torre (Classified Staff); Dr. Stacy Thompson (Faculty); AnikaToussant-Jackson (Classified Staff); Yawo Tekpa (Classified Staff); Sheng Thao (Student)

Standard Two: Student Learning Programs and Services

Dr. Hector Cordova (Administrator)

Standard II A: Instructional Programs

Chair: Siri Brown (Faculty)

Waaduda Karim (Classified Staff); Isela Gonzalez-Santana (Faculty); Brian Heath (Student)

Standard II B: Student Support Services

Co-Chairs: Dr. Steven Pantell (Faculty); Judy Adams (Classified Staff)
Minh Dao (Classified Staff); Cie-Jae Allen (Faculty); Marty Zielke (Faculty); Susana de la Torre (Classified Staff); LaShawn Brumfield (Classified Staff)

Standard II C: Library and Learning Support Services

Co-Chairs: Timothy Hackett (Faculty); Nghiem Thai (Classified Staff)
Dr. Audrey Trotter (Faculty)

Standard Three: Resources

Jacquelin Bell (Administrator)

Co-Chairs: Dr. Hank Fabian (Faculty); Lorna Pascual (Classified Staff)
Patricia Rom (Classified); Dr. Gisele Giorgi (Faculty); Tom Branca (Faculty); Dr. Arja McCray (Faculty)

Standard Four: Leadership and Governance

Dr. Rebecca Kenney (Administrator)

Co-Chairs: Dr. Hilary Altman (Faculty); Doris Hankins (Classified Staff)
Fereshteh Mofidi (Faculty); Shirley Mack (Faculty); Juana Martinez-Rodriguez (Faculty)

ACCREDITATION TIMELINE

SPRING 2007

- Training begins
- Develop budget

FALL 2007

- Recruited Standard co-chairs and form Accreditation Steering Committee
- Stipends made available for standard co-chairs
- Recruited Standard committee members
- Accreditation Steering Committee co-chairs met weekly
- Accreditation Steering Committee met with ALO and researcher bi-weekly
- Timeline developed
- Training on standards provided by research and planning officer and ALO
- Survey developed and piloted
- On-campus surveys and interviews conducted by committee members

SPRING 2008

- Reorganization of the Self-Study Steering Committee
- Survey completed and summarized
- On-campus and district interviews conducted by committee members
- Progress report on Staff Development Day
- Hosted web cast training
- Initial drafts submitted to ALO

SUMMER 2008

- Initial editing

FALL 2008

- Recruit readers
- Update to campus community on Staff Development Day
- On going communication with campus community
- Website posting of drafts
- Campus approvals with revisions; Academic Senate and College Council
- Final editing
- Organizing of evidence
- Review of the self-study by PCCD board with approval
- Publication of self-study and mailing to ACCJC

SPRING 2009

- Preparation of college for site visit
- Final update of website
- Site visit March 2009

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Merritt College student demographics are described in four sections covering the following areas:

- *Student characteristics*: student area of residence, student enrollment status, feeder schools, gender, race /ethnicity, age, and citizenship status
- *Special populations*: DSPS and EOPS
- *Student outcomes*: graduation and transfer
- *Academic performance*: successful course completion, retention, and term persistence

Below you will find a summary of Merritt College's student body:

PROFILE OF MERRITT COLLEGE STUDENT BODY

Profile of Merritt College Student Body Fall 2007			
Table 1			
Total Head Count	7,409	Matriculating	62% (4,594)
		Exempt	37.8% (2,801)
		Other	0.2% (14)
Total FTES	1,949	Prior Educational Level	Not H.S. graduate: 5% H.S. diploma/GED: 48%
Course Load	Full-Time: 15% Part-Time: 85%	Language	English Speaking: 88% (6,500) Eng. Not Primary 11% (1,051)
Gender	Male: 30% (2,253) Female: 69% (5,104) Unknown: 1% (52)	Citizenship	U.S. Citizen: 83% (6,200) Perm. Resident: 13% (988)
Average Age	33		

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Student Area of Residence

Of students enrolled at Merritt College, 55% reside in the city of Oakland and 45% reside in cities outside of Peralta Community College service area.

Student Enrollment Status

Continuing students comprise the largest share of enrolled students at Merritt College.

The table below delineates the percentage of Merritt College students who are new, new/returning, continuing, returning, transferring, and high school students:

Student Enrollment Average Enrollment Fall 2004-Fall 2006		
Table 2		
	Number	Percentage
New	3941	17%
New/Returning	4370	19%
Continuing	9972	44%
Returning	2722	12%
Return/Transfer	1400	6%
High School	273	1%
Total	22678	100%

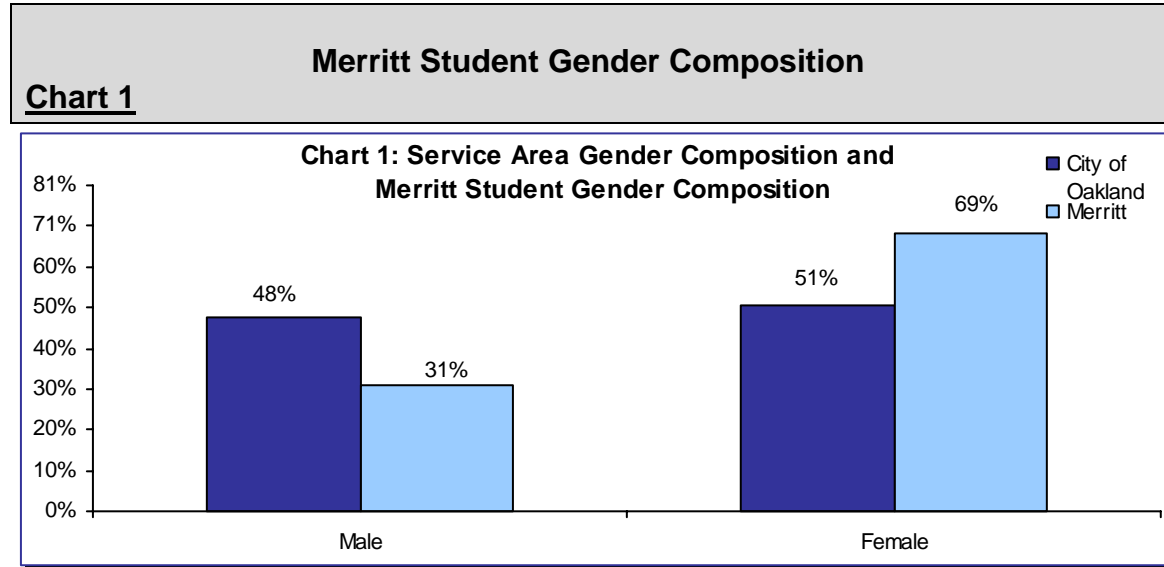
Feeder High Schools

The top six high schools attended by Merritt college students are described in Table 3 below:

Feeder High Schools Top 6 High Schools Served by Merritt College Average F2000-F2005			
Table 3			
	High School (District)	Number of Students	Percentage
1	Skyline (OUSD)	2695	17%
2	Berkeley (BUSD)	1895	12%
3	Oakland (OUSD)	1844	12%
4	Oakland Tech (OUSD)	1665	10%
5	Fremont (OUSD)	1619	10%
6	Castlemont (OUSD)	1449	9%
	Top 6 School	11167	70%

Gender

As is common throughout higher education, there is a higher number of females than male students at Merritt College. Females are 69 % and males are 31% of the schools population. The chart below shows the percentage of Merritt student by gender compared to the City of Oakland's population by gender:



The data described above are for the time period 2000 -2006.

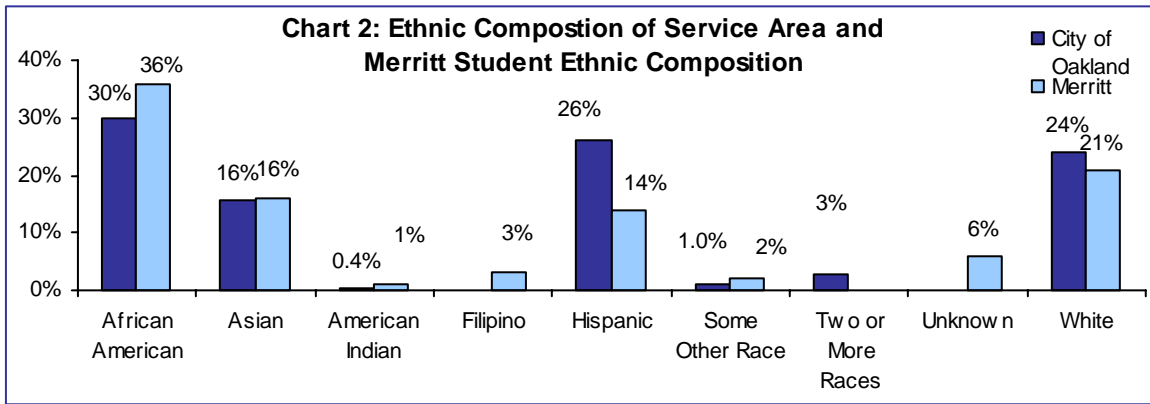
Source: American Community Survey 2006 and Peralta Institutional Research Office.

Race & Ethnicity

Merritt College students are primarily from the following ethnic groups:

- African-American 36%,
- Asian 16%,
- American Indian .4%,
- Filipino 3%,
- Hispanic/ Latino Americans 14%,
- Other 2%,
- Unknown 6%, and
- White 2
-
- The bar graph on the next page shows the Merritt Colleges student ethnic composition as well as the city of Oakland's ethnic composition of persons over 18 years of age. Please note the following disparities:
 - When compared to the city of Oakland population, Hispanic students are underrepresented.
 - Of city of Oakland residents 26% of the population identify as Hispanic, whereas at Merritt approximately 14% of students identify as Hispanic.

**Ethnic Composition of Service Area & Merritt Student Ethnic Composition
Chart 2**



STUDENT AGE CATEGORIES

Merritt College serves students from a variety of age groups. The table below shows that Merritt College's student population is overwhelmingly non traditional in age. A majority (66%) of students are over 25 years of age.

Age Groups	Total	Percentage
Under 16	47	1%
16-18	526	7%
19-24	2079	27%
25-29	1203	16%
30-34	836	11%
35-54	2289	30%
55-64	545	7%
Over 65	184	2%
Unknown	7	0%
Total Students	7716	100%

Citizenship Status

A relatively small percentage of Merritt College students are non US citizens. Table 5 below shows the number of students who identify themselves as immigrant, temporary visa holder, US citizen, refugee, and student visa holders.

Student Citizenship Status Average Fall 2005-2007	
Table 5	
Citizenship Code	Number
US Citizen	12,349
Immigrant	1611
Temporary Visa	54
Refugee/Asylee	132
Student Visas	128
Other (17 codes)	113

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

DSPS/EOPS Students

The DSPS population at Merritt comprises 4% of the total student body. Ninety-six percent of the students do not receive DSPS services. According to the 2000 Census report, 26% of the population from the service area, ages 21 years and older, report having a disability. There is a disproportionately higher percentage of disabled adults in the service area than Merritt serves.

The DSPS program serves students with a variety of disability. The table below shows that the number of students enrolled in DSPS from Fall 04 through Fall 06 has declined:

DSPS Student Enrollment Trend				
Table 6				
	Fall 04	Fall 05	Fall 06	Average
DSPS Students	280	81	52	137
All Student	7504	7458	7716	7559
Percentage DSPS	4%	1%	1%	2%

There are two means test programs at Merritt College: EOPS and Cal Works. Both programs serve low income populations. The table below shows that the number of students in these programs Fall 04-06 has declined:

Students In Means Tested Programs Fall 2004-2006 Trend				
Table 7				
	Fall 04	Fall 05	Fall 06	Average
EOPS Students	849 (11%)	779 (10%)	684 (9%)	770 (10%)
CALWORKS	114 (2%)	135 (2%)	85 (1%)	111 (1%)
All Students	7504	7458	7716	7559

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Graduation/ Transfer

Students who attend Merritt College have a variety of aspirations. Every year many Merritt College students achieve their aspiration by attaining a degree, certificate, or transferring to a university. In the charts and tables below, you will find information on Merritt College student graduation and transfer.

Associate of Arts Degree

Below are the top 10 programs that award Associate of Arts degrees at Merritt College.

Merritt College Degree by Major Top 10 Programs Awarding Associate of Arts Degrees Average for 2004-2007	
Table 8	
Major	Number
1. Soc & Behavioral Sci	73
2. Liberal Arts	48
3. Child Development	34
4. General Curriculum	31
5. Community Social SVS	11
6. Coser/Substance Abuse	11
7. Real Estate	10
8. Bus/Business Admin	8
9. Paralegal Studies	7
10. Adjus/Political Science	7
Total Average AA awards	24

Associate of Science Degree

Below are the top 10 programs that award Associate of Science degrees.

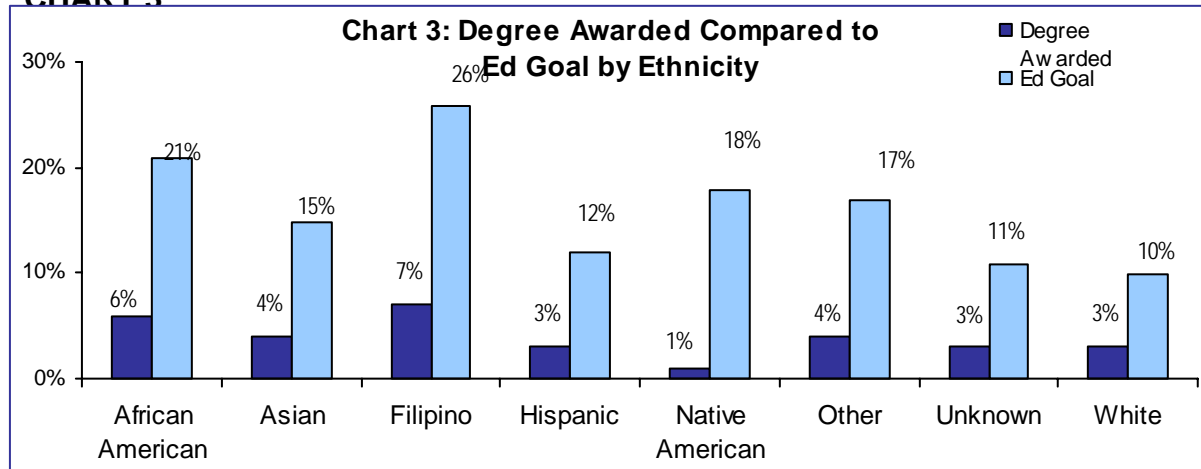
Merritt College Degree by Major Top 10 Programs Awarding Associate of Science Degrees Average for 2004-2007	
Table 9	
Major	Number
1. Health Sciences	48
2. Nursing	29
3. Radiologic Science	15
4. Natural Sciences	7
5. Mathematics	6
6. NUTR/Dietetic Tech	5
7. Vocational Nursing	5
8. CIS/Comp Netwks/Comm	2
9. CIS Software Speclst	2
10. LANHT/LAN Design/CON	2
Total Average AS awards	13

Degree Awarded Compared to Education Goal

The graph below describes the percentage of degrees awarded compared to student educational goals. Please note the following disparities:

- There was inequity for every group shown. Students across the board did not attain the Associate Degree in the same proportion as stated degree attainment as an educational goal, irrespective of ethnicity.
- The group with the largest disparity (21% differential) between educational goal and actual degree awarded were Filipino students. The group with the smallest disparity (8 % differential) was white students.

CHART 3



Certificates Awarded

Table 8 below shows the top 10 programs that award Certificates at Merritt College.

Merritt College Degree by Major Top 10 Programs Awarding Certificates Average for 2004-2007	
Table 10	
Major	Number
1. Assistant Teacher	64
2. Associate Teacher	54
3. Child Dev/ Full Cert.	30
4. Community Social SVS	28
5. Coser/Substance Abuse	27
6. Paralegal Studies	20
7. Real Estate	20
8. Radiologic Science	18
9. Nutr/Dietary Manager	15
10. Human Services	13
Total Average Certificates awarded	29

Transfer

Table 9 and Table 10 delineate transfers to University of California and University of California.

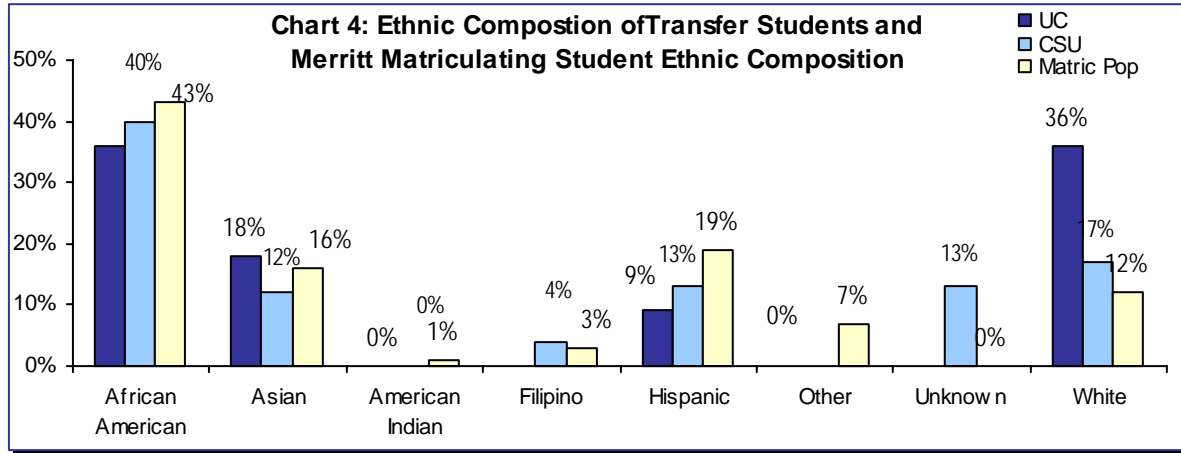
Top Ten Transfer Public Universities University of California Average for Academic Years 2004-2007	
Table 11	
College	Number of Transfers
1. University of California, Berkeley	14
2. University of California, Davis	6
3. University of California, San Diego	2
4. University of California, Santa Cruz	2
5. University of California, Los Angeles	1
Total Average for Top 5 UC's	5
Total Average for all UC's	26

Top Ten Transfer Public Universities California State University Average for Academic Years 2003-2006	
Table 12	
College	Number of Transfers
1. California State University, East Bay	69
2. San Francisco State University	32
3. California State University Sacramento	5
4. San Jose State University	4
5. Humboldt State University	2
Total Average for Top 5 CSU's	23
Total Average for all CSU's	120

Transfers Compared to Educational Goal

The chart below shows that students in some ethnic groups are not attaining their educational goals. African-American, Hispanic/Latino and Filipino students are underrepresented in transfers to UC and CSU relative to the percentage of degree seeking students. Asian students are underrepresented in transfers to CSUs.

CHART 4



Source: UC data-California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), CSU data-CSU Statistical Reports (CSU- does not report an “Other” category)

Student Outcomes

Academic Performance

Below you will find data on student performance in the area of retention, persistence, and successful course completion:

Academic Performance Indicators Fall 2001-Fall 2006	
Table 13	
Performance Indicators	Average
Term Persistence: The percentage of students who continue from semester to semester.	56%
Retention Rate: The percentage of students who withdraw within any given semester.	70%
Successful Course Completion The number of students who receive grades A, B, C, or credit out of the total number of students enrolled in courses who receive any grade. <small>Source: Peralta Community College District Office of Institutional Research</small>	64%

SOURCES

Peralta Institutional Research Office

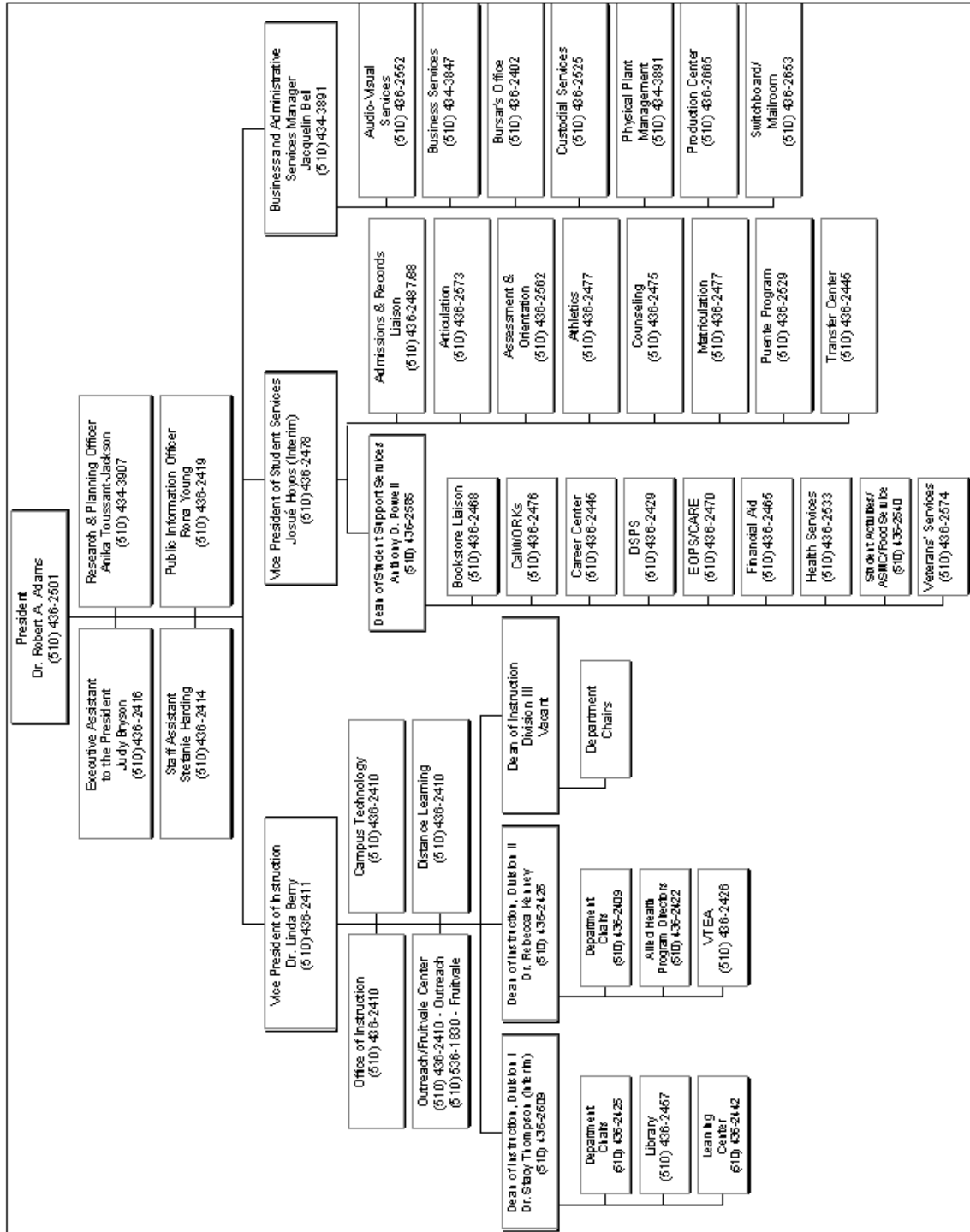
UC data-California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC)

US Census

American Community Survey 2006

MERRITT COLLEGE

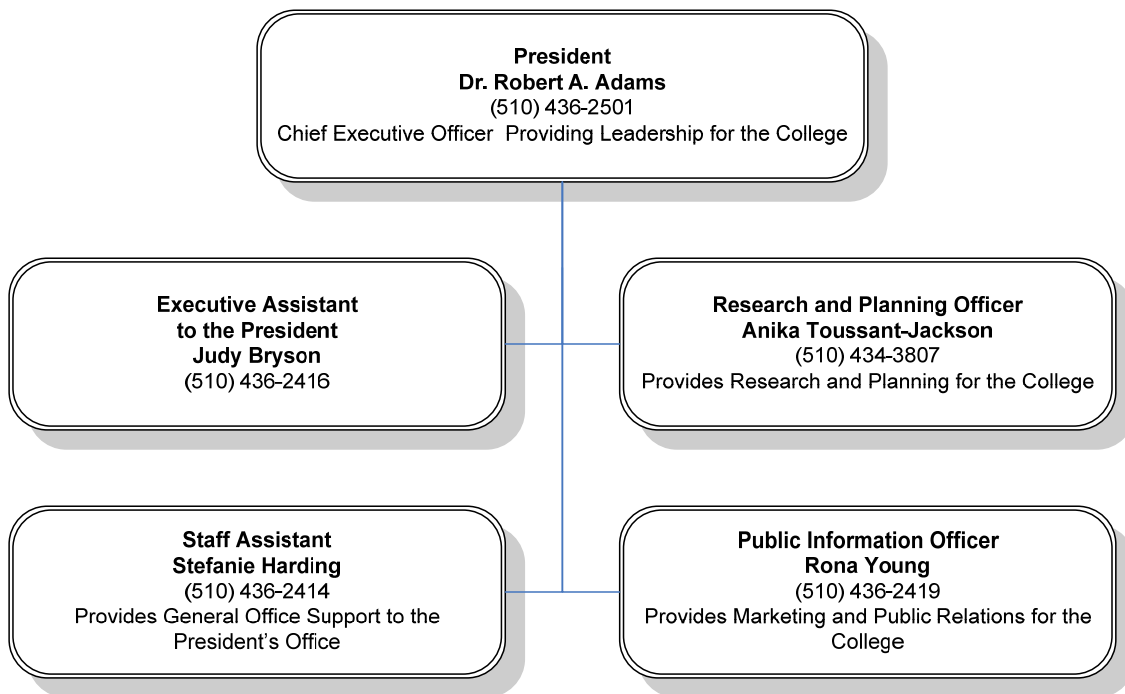
Administrative Organizational Chart 2008-09 (10/17/08)



Merritt College

Organizational Chart for the President's Office

(07/28/08)



**OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2008-2009**

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION

*Dr. Linda Berry, Vice President of Instruction, (510) 436-2411
College Instructional Programs & Accreditation*

*Doris Hankins, Staff Assistant, (510) 436-2410
Dera Williams, Staff Assistant, (510) 436-2413
Jane Fong, Academic Support, (510) 436-2415*

*Curriculum Development, Leave Bank, Faculty Payroll,
Scheduling, Instructional Grant Maintenance, Catalog, etc.*

DEAN OF INSTRUCTION

Dr. Stacy Thompson,
Humanities and Social Science
Interim Dean
(510) 436-2425

Brenda Hampton
Division Secretary
(510) 436-2425

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS*

Dr. Siri Brown, (510) 434-3935
Social & Behavioral Sciences/Ethnic
Studies

Dr. David Morales, (510) 436-2450
Art, Music, Languages, and
Communications

Margaret Dixon, (510) 434-3859
Legal Administration

Ann Elliott, (510) 434-3895
English/Humanities

Newt McDonald, (510) 436-2596
Human Development

Maurice Compton, (510) 436-2520
Physical Education

*Curriculum Development, Scheduling,
Budget Development, Peer Evaluation,
Department Advocates.

LIBRARY

(510) 436-2464

LEARNING RESOURCES

Dr. Audrey Trotter, (510) 436-2443
Learning Resource Coordinator

CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY

Patricia Rom,
College Network Coordinator
(510) 436-2433

Tony Hampton,
Network Technician
(510) 434-3905

Administrative & Student Networks,
Instructional and Student Services
Labs and Computers.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Anita Black,
Distance Education Coordinator
(510) 434-3858
Coordinator of Distance Education
Programs

FRUITVALE CENTER

Vacant,
Program Specialist,
(510) 538-1830
ESL and Outreach

DEAN OF INSTRUCTION

Dr. Rebecca Kenney
Mathematics, Science, & Voc. Programs
Dean
(510) 436-2426

Margaret Howell
Division Secretary
(510) 436-2409

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS*

Dr. Steven Scott, (510) 436-2530
Biology

Suman Shah, (510) 436-2623/
Dr. Tae-Soon Park, (510) 436-2622
Mathematics & Philosophy

Dr. Ray Chamberlain, (510) 436-2409
Physical Sciences

Guy Forkner, (510) 436-2640/
Anita Black, (510) 434-3858
Technology & Business

Tom Branca, (510) 436-2593
Landscape Horticulture

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Dawn Williams, (510) 436-2422
AD Nursing

Kathleen Bauer, (510) 436-2506
LV Nursing and Medical Assistant

Jennifer Yates, (510) 436-2427
Radiologic Science

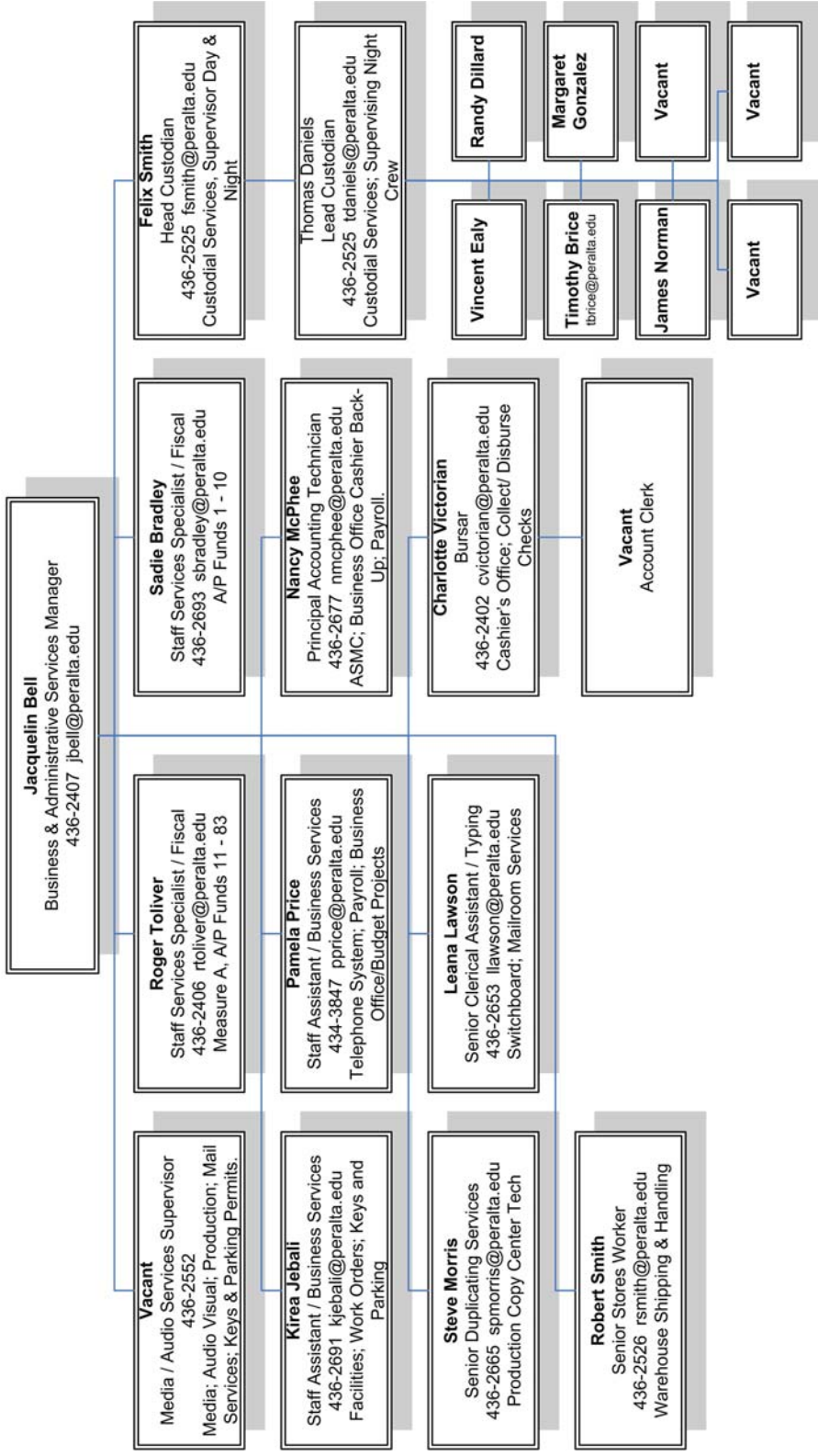
Jean English, EMT

Helenka Livingston, (510) 434-3834
Nutrition & Dietetics

*Curriculum Development, Scheduling,
Budget Development, Peer Evaluation,
Department Advocates.

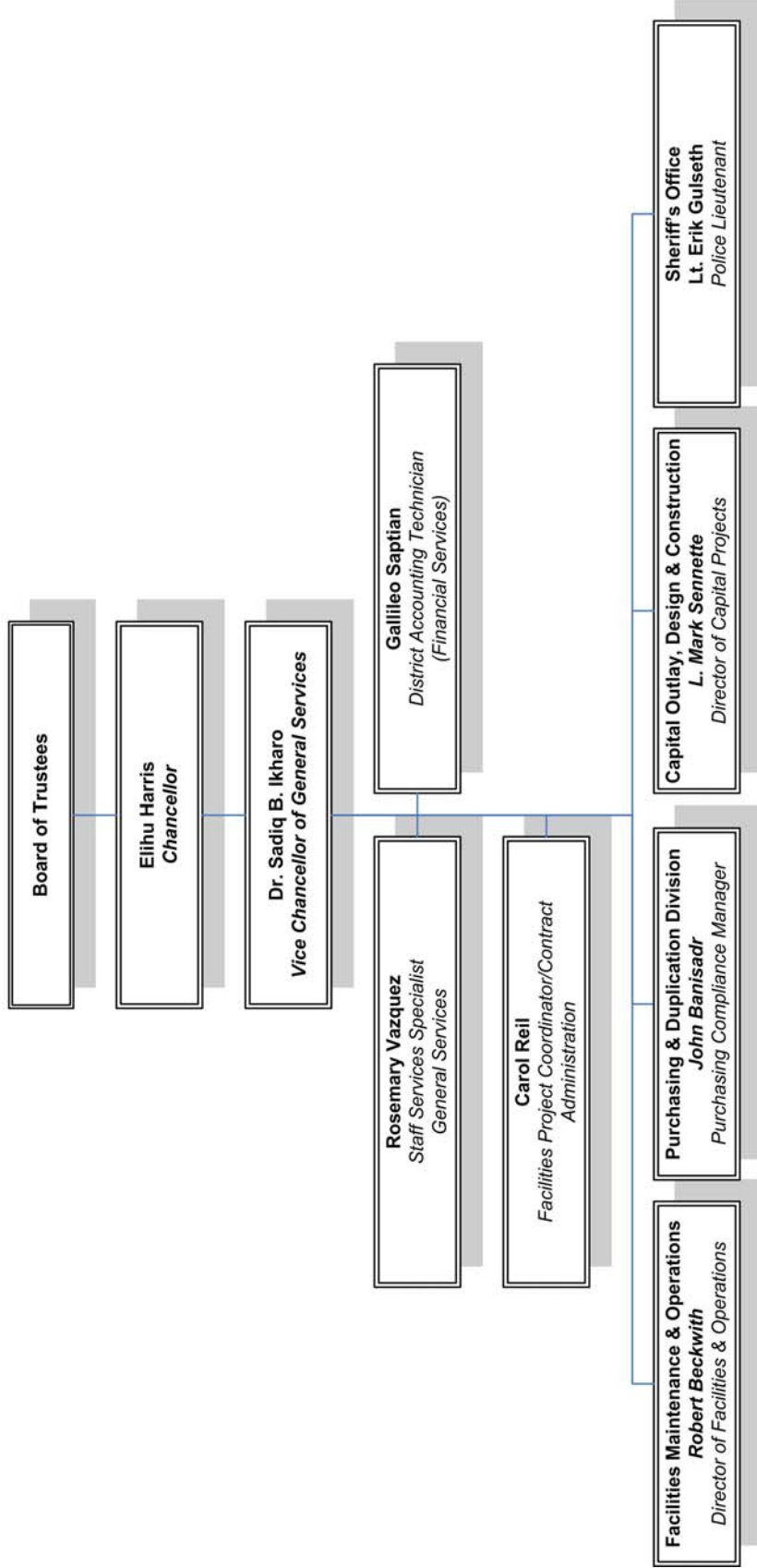
Merritt College Business Services Department

(7/28/08)

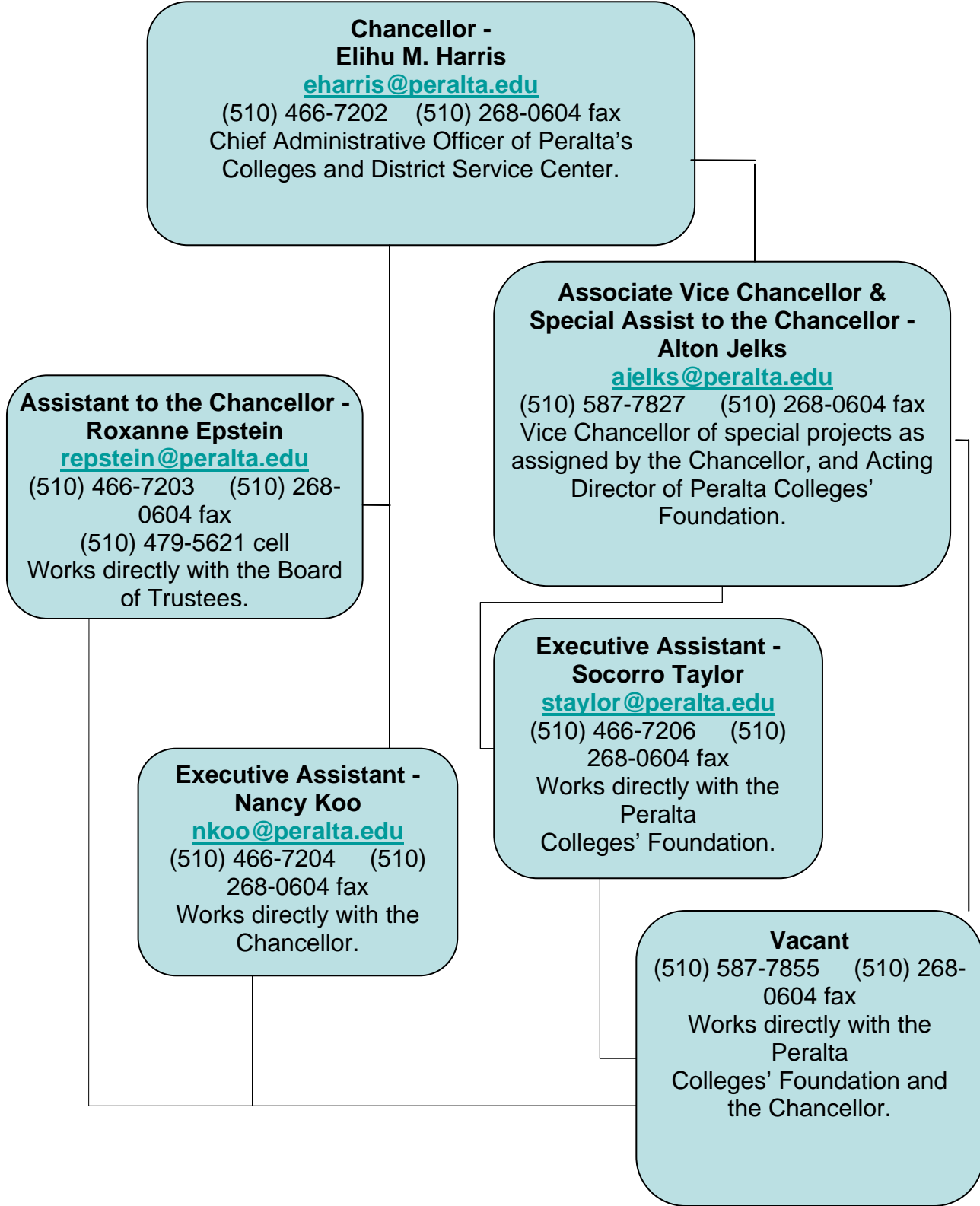


Budget/Financial/Fiscal Services, Bursar's Office, Facilities Management, Parking Services, Mail Services, Emergency Preparedness Planning, Production Services, Media/Audio Services, Custodial Services, Maintenance Services, Telephone System Services, Security Access.

Department of General Services Organizational Chart



PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



District Office and College Functions Related to Accreditation

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A. MISSION The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning.		
	College	District
1. The institution establishes student learning programs and services aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population.	P	S
2. The mission statement is approved by the governing board and published.	SH	SH
3. Using the institution's governance and decision-making processes, the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary.	P	S
4. The institution's mission is central to institutional planning and decision-making.	P	S
B. IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.		
	College	District
1. The institution maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.	P	S
2. The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. The institutional members understand these goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.	P	S
3. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. Evaluation is based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.	P	S
4. The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.	P	S
5. The institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.	P	S
6. The institution assures the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes by systematically reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle, including institutional and other research efforts.	P	S
7. The institution assesses its evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, and library and other learning support services.	P	S

P= primary, S= Secondary, SH=Shared

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services

A. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.		
	College	District
1. The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.	P	S
a. The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with their educational preparation and the diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The institution relies upon research and analysis to identify student learning needs and to assess progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes.	P	S
b. The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.	P	S
c. The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.	P	S
2. The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, and programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.	P	S
a. The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.	P	S
b. The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.	P	S
c. High-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning characterize all programs.	P	S
d. The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students.	P	S
e. The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.	P	S
f. The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.	P	S
g. If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.	P	S
h. The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated	P	S

learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.		
i. The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.	P	S
3. The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course. General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:	P	S
a. An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.	P	S
b. A capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.	P	S
c. A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.	P	S
4. All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.	P	S
5. Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.	P	S
6. The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline.	P	S
a. The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.	P	S
b. When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.	P	S
c. The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.	P	S
7. In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or worldviews. These policies make clear the institution's commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.	P	S
a. Faculty distinguishes between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.	P	S

b. The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty.	P	S
c. Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators, or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and/or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.	P	S
8. Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with standards and applicable Commission policies.	N/A	N/A
B. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES		
The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.		
	College	District
1. The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.	P	S
2. The institution provides a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, and current information concerning the following: a) General Information, b) Requirements, c) Major Policies Affecting Students, d) Locations or publications where other policies may be found.	P	S
3. The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.	P	S
a. The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method.	P	S
b. The institution provides an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.	P	S
c. The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.	P	S
d. The institution designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.	P	S
e. The institution regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases.	SH	SH
f. The institution maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provision for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which those files are maintained. The institution publishes and follows established policies for release of student records.	SH	SH
4. The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.	P	S
C. LIBRARY AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES		
Library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the institution's instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. Such services include library services and collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, and learning technology development and training. The institution provides access and training to students so that		

library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently. The institution systematically assesses these services using student learning outcomes, faculty input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of the services.		
	College	District
1. The institution supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.	P	S
a. Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.	P	S
b. The institution provides ongoing instruction for users of library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency.	P	S
c. The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.	P	S
d. The institution provides effective maintenance and security for its library and other learning support services.	P	S
e. When the institution relies on or collaborates with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible, and utilized. The performance of these services is evaluated on a regular basis. The institution takes responsibility for and assures the reliability of all services provided either directly or through contractual arrangement.	P	S
2. The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.	P	S

Standard III: Resources

A. HUMAN RESOURCES

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

	College	District
1. The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.	SH	SH
a. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non- U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.	SH	SH
b. The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.	SH	SH
c. Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.	P	S
d. The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.	SH	SH
2. The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.	P	S
3. The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.	SH	SH
a. The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.	S	P
b. The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.	S	P
4. The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.	SH	SH
a. The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.	P	S
b. The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.	SH	SH
c. The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the	P	S

treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.		
5. The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.	SH	SH
a. The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.	SH	SH
b. With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.	SH	SH
6. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.	SH	SH
B. PHYSICAL RESOURCES		
Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.		
	College	District
1. The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.	S	P
a. The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.	S	P
b. The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.	P	P
2. To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.	SH	SH
a. Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.	S	P
b. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.	SH	SHH
C. TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES		
Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.		
	College	District
1. The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.	SH	P
a. Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.	P	P
b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.	SH	P
c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.	SH	S
d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.	P	S
2. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results	SH	S

of evaluation as the basis for improvement.		
D. FINANCIAL RESOURCES		
Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.		
	College	District
1. The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.	SH	S
a. Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.	SH	S
b. Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.	SH	S
c. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.	S	S
d. The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development, with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.	P	S
2. To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.	S	S
a. Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.	S	S
b. Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.	SH	SH
c. The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.	S	S
d. The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.	SH	SH
e. All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.	SH	SH
f. Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.	P	S
g. The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.	SH	SH
3. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.	SH	SH

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

A. DECISION-MAKING ROLES AND PROCESSES		
The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.		
	College	District
1. Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.	P	S
2. The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.	P	S
a. Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.	P	S
b. The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.	P	S
3. Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.	P	S
4. The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.	P	S
5. The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.	P	S
B. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION		
In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.		
	College	District
1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.	S	P
a. The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts	S	P

as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.		
b. The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.	S	P
c. The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.	S	P
d. The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.	S	P
e. The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.	S	P
f. The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.	S	P
g. The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.	S	P
h. The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.	S	P
i. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.	S	P
j. The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively. In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.	S	P
2. The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.	P	S
a. The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.	P	S
b. The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities; • ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions; • ensuring that educational planning is integrated with • resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; and • establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts. 	P	S
c. The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.	P	S
d. The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.	P	S
e. The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.	P	S
3. In multi-college districts or systems, the district/system provides primary leadership	S	P

in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity throughout the district/system and assures support for the effective operation of the colleges. It establishes clearly defined roles of authority and responsibility between the colleges and the district/system and acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board.		
a. The district/system clearly delineates and communicates the operational responsibilities and functions of the district/system from those of the colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice.	S	P
b. The district/system provides effective services that support the colleges in their missions and functions.	S	P
c. The district/system provides fair distribution of resources that are adequate to support the effective operations of the colleges.	S	P
d. The district/system effectively controls its expenditures.	S	P
e. The Chancellor gives full responsibility and authority to the presidents of the colleges to implement and administer delegated district/system policies without his/her interference and holds them accountable for the operation of the colleges.	S	P
f. The district/system acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board. The district/system and the colleges use effective methods of communication, and they exchange information in a timely manner.	S	P
g. The district/system regularly evaluates district/system role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the colleges in meeting educational goals. The district/system widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.	S	P

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Authority

Merritt College's authority to operate as a degree-granting institution is granted through continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education. This authority is noted on page 1 of the 2007-2009 Merritt College Catalog.

2. Mission

As part of the college's planning process, the Mission, Values, and Vision statements were subjected to a rigorous process of campus dialogue, and approved by both the Academic Senate and the College Council during 2003-2004. In 2006 the Peralta District Board approved the current version of Merritt College's mission statement. The mission statement is published on page 13 of the 2007-2009 College Catalog.

3. Governing Board

A seven-member board elected by voters governs the Peralta Community College District. Two student trustees are selected through a district-wide student body election. The function of the Board is to establish policies, rules and regulations consistent with the goals and operation of the District and the colleges. Trustees comply annually with the state's Conflict of Interest Code to demonstrate that they have no personal financial interest in the institution.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The college President serves as the Chief Executive Officer responsible for oversight of college programs and for the administration and operation of the college. The Board of Trustees appoints the President. The college's current president assumed his duties on July 1, 2007.

5. Administrative Capacity

Although currently operating with two instructional division deans rather than three, the college has a sufficient number of administrators to provide the programs and services defined by the college's Mission statement. The dean for Division 1 is acting in an interim capacity, and has extensive experience with governance in her prior role as a department chair, staff development chair, and accreditation steering committee chair. All administrators are selected using District guidelines and are qualified by education and experience to perform their assigned duties.

6. Operational Status

The college enrolls approximately 7,000 full and part-time students in a variety of courses leading to two-year degrees and certificates, and to transfer to four-year institutions.

7. Degrees

Merritt College offers approximately 38 degree programs. Students may also earn certificates of achievement, completion and skills. Certificate and degree opportunities and transfer courses are clearly identified in the college catalog.

8. Educational Programs

Merritt College degree and certificate programs are consistent with the college mission and based on recognized higher education fields of study. They are sufficient in content and length, and maintain appropriate levels of rigor. Basic skills programs in reading, writing and math assist students in developing the skills necessary to advance to college-level curricula or to qualify for entry-level employment. Those with limited English proficiency may enroll in ESL courses. The college has 29 academic departments leading to transfer programs; 22 of these departments offer the Associate in Arts degree. The college has 16 departments and programs that offer occupational certificates and degrees. These departments offer 12 Associate in Science degrees, 29 Certificates of Completion, and 17 Certificates of Achievement. A.S degrees generally require at least 60 semester units including 22 units of general education. Certificates of Achievement must be approved by the state and are posted on the student transcript. Certificates of Proficiency require fewer than 18 units of course work, and cannot be posted on the transcript because they are not state approved. Between 2004-2007, Merritt College awarded an average of 265 Associate in Arts degrees, 119 Associate in Science degrees, and 369 Certificates.

9. Academic Credit

The college awards academic credits based on the Carnegie unit, a standard generally accepted in degree-granting institutions of higher education. Institutional policies on transfer and award of credit are described in the college catalog.

10. Educational Objectives

Merritt College defines and publishes program educational objectives in course outlines, in the College Catalog, in occupational brochures, and in instructional planning documents that are regularly reviewed and updated. In addition, student learning outcomes for all programs and courses are under development and will be documented as an addendum to the course outline and presented on course syllabi.

11. General Education

General education courses have the required breadth to promote intellectual inquiry. These courses include demonstrated competence in writing and computational skills and serve as an introduction to major areas of knowledge (Title 5: 55806). The quality and rigor of these courses is consistent with academic standards appropriate to higher education. The general education component of programs is consistent with statewide standards and meets the California State University General Education breadth requirements and the University of California Intersegmental General Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) requirements. Degree credit for general education programs is consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

12. Faculty

The college has a substantial core of qualified and experienced full and part-time faculty to support all of its educational programs. A statement of faculty professional responsibility is described in the Faculty Handbook.

13. Student Services

Merritt College provides appropriate student services and programs that address the needs of a diverse student population. These services include Counseling, Orientation, Assessment, and Financial Aid, Transfer services, Matriculation, Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS), Programs and Services for Students with Disabilities (DSP&S), One-Stop Career Center, CalWorks, Course Articulation, Child Care Services, Outreach, Student Activities Office, Veteran's Services, and Student Health Services.

14. Admissions

Admissions requirements are published in the college catalog on page 19, and the qualifications for admission to the college are clearly stated.

15. Information and Learning Resources

Merritt College provides access to information and learning resources as well as instruction programs and services to support its educational mission. The library provides a wide range of print material, books, periodicals, newspapers, and access to a comprehensive array of electronic databases. Other learning resources include the Learning Resource Center (included Writing, Math, ESL, Biology and Open Labs) on the first floor of the D Building.

16. Financial Resources

The Peralta Community College District is funded by local property taxes and state apportionment. The District develops a Board approved budget, of which a portion is allocated to Merritt College. The college independently develops an operating budget from that allocation. Grants from a variety of sources enhance the ability to provide programs and services for students, faculty and staff.

17. Financial Accountability

The District undergoes regular external audits by a firm of Certified Public Accountants. The Board of Trustees reviews the audit findings.

18. Institutional Planning and Development

The college's Educational Master Plan guides overall institutional planning and development. Other critical planning documents include the annual Unit Plans, the Basic Skills Plan, Title III Plan, Technology Plan, Matriculation Plan, Emergency Preparedness Plan, Student Equity Plan, and Facilities Plan.

19. Public Information

The mission statement of the college is published in the college catalog. Other catalog information includes degrees and curricular offerings, student fees, financial

aid, refund policies, student grievance procedures, non-discrimination policy, admissions policies, information about transfer requirements, and academic credentials of faculty, staff, and administration. The college also produces numerous program pamphlets and the campus newsletter, *Merritt College Making News*. College information as well as the names of the members of the Board of Trustees are published on the campus website.

20. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The Board of Trustees provides assurance in its policies and actions, and in its validation of this self-study, that the college adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the Commission (ACCJC-WASC).

Responses to the 2003 ACCJC Recommendations

The 2003 ACCJC/WASC evaluation team made ten college-level recommendations for Merritt College. All recommendations were addressed in the 2006 Focused Midterm Report, and College Recommendation 1 was addressed in the following Progress Reports: October 15, 2003; March 15, 2004; October 15, 2004; October 15, 2005; March 15, 2007. The current status for each recommendation is delineated below.

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 1

Merritt College should engage in a deliberate, focused, concerted effort to identify the most effective way to insure that institutional research and evaluation processes, policies and practices are developed and implemented within a timely and efficient manner. (Standards 3.A.1, 3.A.2, 3.A.3, 3.A.4)

Merritt College uses a wide variety of data to inform its decision-making: student demographic data generated by the Peralta District Office of Research, data collected as part of the Integrated Planning Process, and data collected and compiled through participation in the following planning and research efforts: the Title III Planning Grant [1], the Equity for All-Scorecard Project [2], the Dale Tillery Institute [3], the Title III Strengthening Institutions grant, the Maximum Achievement Project [4], and the Emergent Teacher Program [5]. The college's integrated planning and budgeting process includes a focus on student learning outcomes and an overarching goal of increasing institutional effectiveness.

In June 2005, Merritt College hired a full-time Research and Planning Officer (RPO) whose responsibility has been to gather, analyze, and interpret data for various college constituencies for program planning and grant planning purposes. Using data provided by the RPO, the college has engaged in unit planning since 2005-06 [6]. By the time of the 2007 unit planning cycle, the district was spearheading unit planning across the four colleges in preparation for creating a District Wide Educational Master Plan, and adapted the template that Merritt was using for its unit planning [7].

As reported in the March 2007 Progress Report [8], the district academic senate, district office educational administrators, and college educational administrators adopted a new instructional program review format with a strategic objective of conducting instructional program reviews at all four colleges in all instructional disciplines/ departments during spring semester 2007 [9]. At the January 10, 2007, Professional Development Day, training was provided for all instructional faculty members to review the new format and the various planning templates. The goal of the program review was to have all instructional departments collect up-to-date information that would be incorporated into updated college educational master plans and a district-wide educational master plan in order to inform master planning for facilities, technology, human resources, and finances. Since Merritt College was already engaged in program review and analysis through its unit planning process, it continued its cycle of unit planning rather than derailing its established process by using a different template for program review.

In spring 2007, the office of the vice chancellor of educational services recommended a district-wide educational master planning process that integrates the district-wide strategic plan with a consistent and comprehensive review of all instructional disciplines and/or departments. This review has been essential to updating the college educational master plans. Further, the district office of institutional research and development, with the assistance of the college researchers, provided all needed internal scan information.

Merritt's unit planning process, now formalized across the colleges, requires faculty and staff to formulate a mission statement and document department history; review and analyze department data such as enrollment, number of sections, average class size, productivity, retention, student success, and program cost. Department chairs are also expected to provide qualitative assessments of their programs, and to design action steps that will address CSEP results [10].

A committee was formed of the four vice presidents of instruction, the vice chancellor of educational services, and the four college academic senate presidents. The committee was time limited to spring semester 2007 and was initially called the Strategic Curriculum Review Committee (SCRC), but later the name was changed to the Committee for Strategic Educational Planning (CSEP). Ultimately, the review process was called the "CSEP program evaluation process" [11].

The CSEP process is one of the core elements of integrated strategic planning engaged in by all four Peralta colleges. The CSEP process is meant to ensure that the colleges use a continuous program improvement process to support all programs in achieving quality, relevance, and productivity. The process involves using a common set of "horizontal" criteria to assess program offerings across the four colleges. Those criteria are data elements included in program review, such as enrollment trends; FTES/FTEF ratios; cost and community need (vocational programs); trends in retention, persistence, student learning outcome achievement, and program completion; labor market trends; and relevance to the college's strategic plan. Upon review of the criteria a determination is made to either "grow", "maintain," or "watch/ revitalize" the program [11]. This process was formulated using examples from other California community college districts.

The CSEP program evaluation process was presented at the August 21, 2007, district-wide professional development day as a supplement to instructional program review. Training on the process was provided in the morning, and the afternoon involved discipline meetings to begin a first review of the process using data supplied to the various disciplines. This process continued through fall semester 2007 and will be ongoing. Because the process is new and has raised fears of program discontinuance, which is not the primary purpose of the program evaluation process, the decision was made to allow adequate time to fully implement the process.

In fall semester 2007 and 2008, each instructional and non-instructional program completed a unit plan in preparation for formulating a college educational master plan. The unit/ program plan templates provide standard planning information and provide a

basis for the college educational master plan. Data from the unit plans are being used in the prioritization and justification of faculty and classified positions that are requested for hire; for prioritizing equipment, material, and supply needs; and prioritizing facilities needs, particularly as the district creates a new facilities master plan which will guide the ongoing expenditures of Measure A bond funds. These activities demonstrate that planning is ongoing and not a one-time activity.

As the College implements its annual unit planning process through creation of action plans that address institutional priorities and strategic directions, the College Research and Planning Officer's expertise guides the college in measuring progress toward achievement of college goals.

Documents

1. 2003 Accreditation Self-Study and Evaluation Team Report
2. Equity for All - Scoreboard Project report
3. Annual Program Plans from Categorical Programs
4. Maximum Achievement Project, 2008
5. Emergent Teacher Program
6. Annual Progress Report & Action Plan template
7. District Wide Unit Planning Template
8. Merritt College Progress Report, March 2007
9. Accelerated Program Review format
10. CSEP Evaluation 2007-08
11. CSESP Program Evaluation Process

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 2

Merritt College should evaluate its current policies, processes and practices for all levels of the institutional planning to streamline planning processes and assure broad-based understanding and participation in those processes. (Standards 3B.1, 3B.2, 3B.3 and 10B.1, 10B.5, 10B.6, 10B.9)

Since being apprised of its Accreditation Warning status in June of 2003, the College has been engaged in addressing its deficiencies. In Progress Reports dated October 15, 2003 and March 15, 2004 [1], the College identified the issues that needed to be addressed and articulated initial actions that could be taken, such as designating a central repository for all College planning documents and committing to streamline the College planning processes. Progress on Recommendation #2 has been divided into progress on Governance and progress on Planning.

A. Governance

The college completed development of its new shared governance system in 2004. The Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and Associated Students of Merritt College endorsed by-laws for the following governance bodies: College Council, College Budget Committee, College Facilities Committee, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors, Curriculum and Instructional Council, and the College Technology Committee. All by-laws were approved by the College Council.

In addition, the College identified the 11 standing committees that are part of the new governance system. The charge and membership of each of the following standing committees were endorsed by the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and Associated Students of Merritt College and approved by the College Council: Accreditation Committee, Financial Aid Petition Committee, Graduation Committee, Health and Safety Committee, Matriculation Committee, Scholarships and Awards Committee, Shared Governance Committee, Staff Development Committee, Student Due Process Committee, Student Grievance Committee, and Student Outreach Committee [2]. As part of the Fall 2004 Professional Day activities, the new College governance system was presented to the campus community with accompanying sign-up sheets for faculty and staff to indicate on which committees they would like to serve. This information was used by the Academic and Classified Senate Presidents to select faculty and staff for governance bodies and standing committees. This governance structure has served the college well for the last four years.

B. Planning

The College Budget Committee (CBC) underwent a major change in 2004 in its composition, role, and procedures. It is now fully engaged in the process of reviewing the college's allocations and expenditures for discretionary funds, supply and equipment funds, VTEA funds, and all other funds that come under the purview of the CBC [3]. The CBC has representation on the Peralta Community College District Budget

Advisory Committee, and participates in ways that not only represent the interests of the college, but that support improved budgetary/financial communications between the district and the colleges [4].

Since 2004, the college has implemented an integrated planning and budgeting process under the auspices of the College Council. The first Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model was approved by the College Council on April 20, 2005 [5].

The College Council created the Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) as a subcommittee of the College Council, with a charge to 1) conduct a situational analysis; 2) recommend 3-5 Strategic Directions to shared governance groups; 3) recommend Annual Institutional Priorities; and 4) review, analyze and comment on annual Unit Action Plans. The IPC drafted four strategic directions for the college, recommended institutional priorities, and reviewed annual unit plans [6]. The IPC completed two planning cycles, and then unit planning became a focus of and led by the district Office of Educational Services. Merritt's unit plan template was adapted for use district wide [7].

Prompted by the Peralta District's strategic planning process and educational master planning process, Merritt College has engaged in an educational planning process for the college during the last two academic years. This process has given rise to questions concerning how the various governance committees align with one another as well as with district committees such as the district Strategic Planning Committee and the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee. The college's Integrated Planning Committee appears to have been subsumed by the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). Discussions have begun in College Council concerning the need to have formal bylaws and charge for CEMPC, and to evaluate the continued usefulness of the IPC [8].

Documents

1. Merritt College Progress Reports: October 15, 2003; March 15, 2004
2. Shared Governance Manual, 2005
3. College Budget Committee bylaws
4. District Advisory Budget Committee minutes
5. Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model, April 20, 2005
6. Integrated Planning Committee report
7. Unit Action Plan template
8. College Council minutes

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 3

Merritt College should take the necessary steps to insure that all plans, program services and courses contain clear outcome measures that will be used to effectively evaluate the achievement of the institutional mission, goals and objectives and communicate those achievements to your public. (Standards 3C.1, 3C.2, 3C.3)

Merritt College has responded to Recommendation #3 in two Progress Reports (October 15, 2003; March 15, 2004) and in the Focused Midterm Report (March 15, 2006). Since September of 2004, the College has actively engaged in designing an integrated planning and budgeting process that includes a focus on student learning outcomes and an overarching goal of increasing institutional effectiveness.

In Fall of 2005, the college Integrated Planning Committee drafted four Strategic Directions for the College which were endorsed by the College Council. One of those Strategic Directions, detailed below, is a focus on student learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes. Each College unit was charged to respond to this strategic direction in its annual Unit Action Plan with activities, resource needs, and performance indicators [1].

*STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2005-2010 and
INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES 2005/06 & 2006/07*

STRATEGIC DIRECTION I: STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning at Merritt College through the development and implementation of student learning outcomes for both instruction and support services.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

As reflected in our mission statement, Merritt College is committed to helping students attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society. Towards this end, the College will:

- a) identify expected outcomes as to what students should know and/or be able to do as a consequence of completing a course program or utilizing a support service;*
- b) systematically and routinely measure the attainment of those outcomes;*
- c) effectively communicate the results of this assessment; and*
- d) utilize the measurement /assessment data to revamp /refine courses and support services and to inform allocation of human, fiscal and physical resources.*

2005-06 INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITY

*Develop agreed-upon **institutional** Student Learning Outcomes.*

2006-07 INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITY

Each unit will identify expected outcomes as to what students should know and/or be able to do as a consequence of completing a course program or utilizing a support service AND develop related tools and processes for assessment of same.

A. Student Learning Outcomes in Instruction

With the integration of learning outcomes into the new accreditation standards in 2002, it became clear that all college programs, services, and the institution itself were required to reflectively identify and articulate the benefits students were expected to receive at completion of their journey through a course, program, certificate, degree and student services at the institution. In 2003, the Vice President of Instruction began working on student learning outcomes as a pilot project with faculty in Landscape Horticulture and Child Development [3].

In 2004-05, the Vice Presidents of Instruction and Student Services worked with programs in their areas to facilitate the identification and articulation of student learning outcomes for courses and services. During Fall 2004, the Vice President of Instruction convened faculty in Biology, Geology, Chemistry, and Environmental Sciences to move forward with identifying outcomes for one course and drafting assessments to measure students' ability to demonstrate those outcomes [4].

A district-wide workshop on student learning outcomes was presented on the April 7, 2005, Professional Day by Vice Presidents Linda Berry (Merritt College) and Jannett Jackson (College of Alameda) [5]. The objective of the workshop was to present the concept of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) to a wider audience district-wide, and to prepare instructional faculty for a Ruth Stiehl workshop during the August 2005 professional days. The April workshop was well-attended by over 40 faculty from all 4 Peralta Colleges. Dr. Stiehl was invited as the Keynote Speaker for the district-wide convocation on August 15, 2005, and then as the workshop presenter on SLO's in partnership with Merritt's Vice President of Instruction [6]. The objective for these workshops is to assist faculty in identifying learning outcomes, mapping their programs according to Ruth Stiehl's model, and drafting assessment tools to measure *inside* the classroom the ability to demonstrate those outcomes *outside* the classroom [7].

To date, the majority of programs at Merritt College have drafted student learning outcomes and have mapped the students' journey through these programs. Additionally, the instructional programs are engaged in identifying course outcomes and designing assessment tools for measuring course outcomes [8]. Finally, the college has created and approved six institutional outcomes [9].

B. Student Learning Outcomes in Student Services

In Fall 2004, the Vice President of Student Services initiated a process to address student learning outcomes within the Student Services Division. Student Services Departments were divided into four clusters.

- Cluster I: DSPS, EOPS, Financial Aid and Student Activities.
- Cluster II: Counseling, Health Services, and the Transfer Center.
- Cluster III: Puente, Assessment, Orientation, and CalWORKS.
- Cluster IV: Athletics, Job Placement, and Veterans' Services.

Nearly all of the Student Services departments and programs have developed mission statements and identified some learning outcomes. Progress on student learning outcomes in Student Services is reported in IB of the current Self Study.

Documents

1. Merritt College Strategic Directions and Institutional Priorities
2. Landscape Horticulture and Child Development program outcomes
3. College Budget Committee bylaws
4. 2004-05 Report on SLO's in Instructional Programs
5. 2005 PowerPoint Presentation on SLO's
6. August 15, 2005, Presentation by Dr. Ruth Stiehl
7. *The Mapping Primer*, Dr. Ruth Stiehl & Les Lewchuk
8. College Progress Report on Student Learning Outcomes
9. Institutional Learning Outcomes, 2008

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 5

The College should develop and implement a plan for Student Services that focuses on broad participation of Student Services faculty, staff, and students; utilizing the Program Review Process; and ensuring that the plan is integrated into the college's Educational Plan. (Standards 5.4, 5.10)

Merritt College thoroughly addressed this Recommendation in the Progress Report of March 15, 2007 [1]. Student Services used a four-pronged approach to address this recommendation: 1) development of Student Learning Outcomes; 2) development of a framework for the redesign of college-wide student support services; 3) reconfiguration of the physical layout of Students Services, and 4) updating the Educational Master Plan.

Student Learning Outcomes: In Fall 2004, the Vice President of Student Services initiated a process to address student learning outcomes within the Student Services Division. Student Services Departments were divided into four clusters to develop mission statements and student learning outcomes. Nearly all of the Student Services

departments and programs have developed mission statements and student learning outcomes.

Redesign of Student Support Services: Student Services has been consolidated in a totally remodeled Student Services Building (R Building) that now facilitates collaboration and integration of services. There was wide college participation in the planning and design of the R Building.

Updating of Educational Plans: Student Services Educational Plans were revised in February of 2006 by program/department heads. In 2005-06, the college established an annual unit planning process that provides input for the College Educational Master Plan [2, 3].

Documents

1. Merritt College Progress Report, March 15, 2007
2. Unit Plan Template
3. College Educational Master Plan

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 6

The College should implement a plan to ensure that current information is available to students and faculty by providing consistent, stable funding from the beginning of each fiscal year for library materials, both periodicals and books. Outdated print materials need replacing to properly serve the instructional programs. (Standards 4A.4, 4B.1, and 6.5)

Allocations for the new book collection have varied over the years depending on budget constraints. Allocations of general fund monies have ranged from a low of \$12,000 to a high of \$100,000, depending on various funding requests. While there is not yet a defined budget line in the College budget for Library books, it has been a College priority to ensure that instructional equipment funds, bookstore commission funds, and salary savings are awarded every year to the Library to improve the new book collection.

In academic year 2004-05, the Library was allocated over \$42,000 for new books and subscriptions in general fund monies by the College.

In 2005-06, the College allocated \$25,000 for new Library books, and the District Chancellor allocated an additional \$22,500 to every campus for collection development.

In 2007-08, the District Chancellor allocated \$100,000 to the Merritt Library for collection development.

The College's integrated planning and budgeting process provides an opportunity for the Collection Librarian to place a line item in the budget to replace and enhance the collection. Requests for additional funds are to be submitted by the division dean for review by the College Budget Committee [1], and funding priorities recommended to the College President. The new Interim Dean of Division I plans to assume a proactive role regarding on-going funding for the Library, and has begun advocating for a stable line-item in the college budget for Library materials and supplies. The Associated Students of Merritt College are active participants on governance committees, and they are strong advocates for enhanced Library services.

Documents

1. Minutes of College Budget Committee

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 7

The College must comply with the District's policies and procedures by implementing timely and systematic evaluation of all administrators, faculty and staff. (Standards 7B.1, 7B.2, 7B.3)

Merritt College follows district policies and procedures when evaluating administrators, faculty, and staff. Procedures for evaluation of administrators are found in Board Policy 3.65 [1]. The *Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Handbook* (revised August 2005) presents the policies and procedures for evaluation of all faculty in the Peralta Community College District: tenure track, tenured, part-time, and long-term substitutes [2]. For classified staff, employee evaluation procedures are delineated in the union contracts [3].

All newly-hired faculty must have a Tenure Review Committee in place before the hiring process is considered complete. The college performs tenure review following district guidelines, using tenured faculty and administrators to serve on committees. Merritt's activities are facilitated by an on-site tenure review facilitator, and files are kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the vice president of instruction. Recommendations by the individual committees are made to the vice president of instruction who, along with the faculty senate president, either certifies or dissents from the committee recommendations. The president makes recommendations to the vice chancellor of educational services, who then submits a recommendation report to the chancellor on all tenure review decisions. The chancellor makes final recommendations to the Board of Trustees prior to March 15th in accordance with provisions of Education Code Section 87610.

The *Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Handbook* (revised August 2005) also contains policies and procedures for evaluation of tenured and adjunct faculty. The procedure for tenured faculty mandates that every tenured faculty member shall be

evaluated once every three years. The College Academic Senate President, a union representative, and the Vice President of Instruction must meet within the first five weeks of the fall term to establish Instructional Improvement Clusters (IIC) of 10-15 faculty. Evaluation teams can choose among four models within which to conduct the evaluation: 1) Standard Classroom Observation Model; 2) Partnership Model; 3) Videotape Model; 4) Custom Model.

Evaluation of adjunct (part-time) faculty is a four-part process that includes self-evaluation, peer evaluation, administrative evaluation, and student evaluation. Department Chairs and Division Deans make a valiant effort to evaluate newly-hired part-time faculty. Due to the extraordinary number of part-time faculty and the fact that there are only two instructional deans and one student services dean, it has been a serious challenge to complete part-time faculty evaluations.

The College is currently engaged in conducting the evaluation process for administrators and managers per Board Policy 3.65 [1]. The College community is invited to participate in evaluation processes for administrators.

Documents

1. Board Policy 3.65
2. The Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Handbook
3. Union contracts: PFT, SEIU 1020, Local 39

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 8

The College should establish selection, evaluation and retention practices that reduce the level of administrative turnover in order to ensure the College's stability, to preserve the College's collective memory, and to promote continuity of programs and initiatives. (Standard 7A.1)

Recommendation #8 was addressed in the Merritt College Progress Report of March 15, 2007. The College requested Human Resources to review and revise Board Policy 3.65 [1] governing the evaluation process for administrators and managers to ensure consistency between practice and policy. The administrative team consults to ensure that implementation procedures are consistent in each evaluation process.

The College annually engages in conducting the evaluation process for administrators and managers per Board Policy 3.65. The College community is invited to participate in evaluation processes for administrators.

The Vice President of Instruction meets weekly with instructional deans on matters of enrollment management, schedule development, and budget development. These sessions are training sessions in that the deans are kept apprised of college procedures and district policies.

To increase administrative retention, the President encourages administrators to participate in training workshops on topics such as enrollment management and budget management that will contribute to their effectiveness in managing their units. The District Office schedules ongoing training for administrative staff district-wide, and has implemented a Leadership Training series that offers training and encouragement to those employees who are considering leadership roles within the district. There has been, however, additional administrative turnover since the submission of the Focused Midterm Report [2]. The college president, Dr. Evelyn Wesley, retired and was replaced by Dr. Robert Adams, who has been in the position since July 1, 2007. The vice president of student services, Dr. Carmen Jordan-Cox, accepted another position and left Merritt College in June 2007. That position is currently filled by an interim vice president as the college diligently searches for a qualified and experienced vice president of student services. Lastly, the college has been successful in its search for a qualified and experienced manager of administrative services, and the manager hired has been in the position since summer of 2006.

Documents

1. Board Policy 3.65 regarding evaluation process
2. Merritt College Focused Midterm Report, March 15, 2006

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 10

The team recommends that the College develop, publish, and institute clearly-defined institutional guidelines and processes for financial planning, budget development, and facilities priorities that are driven by inclusive planning processes in support of the educational objectives of the College and are linked to other institutional planning efforts and include realistic assessments of resource availability and expenditure requirements. (Standards 3B.1, 8.5, 9A.2, 9A.3, 9A.4, 9A.5)

Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process

The Task Force on Integrated Planning & Budgeting, under the auspices of the College Council, was created in September of 2004 to serve as the initial planning body to recommend strategies for the college to use to integrate its planning and budgeting processes. The role of the Task Force included participation in facilitated work sessions to develop a shared understanding of planning processes, create a planning agenda, and clearly define the relationship between planning and budgeting. The Task Force membership included the College President, Vice Presidents of Instruction and Student Services, Deans of Instruction and Student Services, the Business Manager, three faculty representatives, three classified representatives, and one student representative.

The Task Force on Integrated Planning and Budgeting developed the first Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model. The model was approved by the College Council on April 20, 2005 [1].

Upon approval of the new model, the Task Force was disbanded and the Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) was created. As a subcommittee of the College Council, the charge of the IPC is to 1) conduct a situational analysis; 2) recommend 3-5 Strategic Directions to shared governance groups; 3) recommend Annual Institutional Priorities; and 4) review, analyze and comment on unit Annual Action Plans. The IPC composition is as follows: two administrators (one from instruction, one from student services), three faculty, two classified staff, one of whom is the College Research and Planning Officer, and one student.

June and July, 2005

The IPC held a two-day retreat (June 28-29) to review documents and identify critical issues and future directions related to the following: teaching and learning; access, success, growth and diversity; workforce and economic development; facilities; technology; budget and budget process; and community engagement. The Title III/Scorecard Project Director was invited to participate in the IPC retreats as well. Documents reviewed included the Accreditation Self Study and ACCJC Responses; College Mission, Values, and Vision; Program Reviews; College Educational Plan; College Facilities Plan; Matriculation Plan; Title III documents; and Annual Program Plans from Categorical Programs. Four Strategic Directions for the next five years were drafted: 1. Student Learning Outcomes; 2. Culture of Communication; 3. Technology and Media Resources; 4. Human, Fiscal, and Physical Resources.

On July 15, 2005, the IPC held a half-day retreat, during which it drafted 2006-07 Institutional Priorities and refined the draft institutional effectiveness statement, which follows:

As an effective institution committed to its mission, Merritt College galvanizes and organizes its human, fiscal and physical resources to ensure that students attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society. In this spirit, College constituents remain committed to continually examining and utilizing data as the basis for collegial dialogue and institutional decision-making.

The week of July 18, the IPC endorsed the draft 2005-06 Institutional Priorities as necessary precursors to the 2006-07 Institutional Priorities [2].

In the October 15, 2005, Progress Report, Merritt College's response to College Recommendation clearly delineates the path embarked upon by the college to establish processes and procedures that integrate planning and budgeting, and that are driven by the educational purpose of the college. Since that time, the college and district educational master planning processes have been implemented, and those processes reflect the district wide Strategic Plan developed in concert with all district constituencies at the colleges and district office [3].

Documents

1. Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model, 2005
2. Merritt College Institutional Priorities
3. District Strategic Plan

I

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 11

The College must further define its governance structures by incorporating agreed upon decision-making processes, including budgetary ones, and publish the results to ensure that the structures and processes are understood by all constituent groups. (Standards 10B.5, 10B.6, 10B.9, 10B.10)

The College's engagement in revising its governance structures and decision-making processes has been transformative. Faculty and staff are fully engaged in the College's restructured governance and standing committees, and have worked to create a planning and budgeting process that is structured and timely.

In December 2003, a revised Mission, Vision, and Values statement was drafted and endorsed by the College community, College Council, and adopted by the Board of Trustees on February 10, 2004 [1]. A subcommittee of the College Council was commissioned to draft by-laws for all governance and functional committees in order to achieve a standard format and consistent operating principles across all committees.

The college completed development of its new shared governance system in 2005, and published two versions of its Shared Governance Manual, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 [2]. The Academic Senate, Classified Senate and Associated Students of Merritt College endorsed by-laws for all governance bodies: College Council, College Budget Committee, College Facilities Committee, Council of Department Chairs, Curriculum and Instructional Council, and Merritt Technology Committee. All by-laws were approved by the College Council. In addition, governance committees adopted the use of a uniform template for committee minutes [3], which are distributed via email to committee members and archived in the College Library.

The college identified the 11 standing committees that are part of the new governance system. The charge and membership of each of the following standing committees were endorsed by the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and Associated Students of Merritt College and approved by the College Council: Accreditation Committee, Financial Aid Petition Committee, Graduation Committee, Health and Safety Committee, Matriculation Committee, Scholarships and Awards Committee, Shared Governance Committee, Staff Development Committee, Student Due Process Committee, Student Grievance Committee, and Student Outreach Committee. The college has developed a consolidated committee meeting calendar for all governance bodies and standing committees.

The College Budget Committee (CBC) underwent a major change in its composition, role and function. It is fully engaged in the process of reviewing the college's departmental allocations and expenditures for discretionary funds. The CBC now has representation on the Peralta Community College District Budget Advisory Committee. The CBC is actively developing recommendations that reflect the interests of the college, and that better integrate the college budget processes with the district processes in ways that will improve budgetary/financial communications between the district and the colleges.

Documents

1. Mission, Vision, Values Statement, 2004
2. Shared Governance Manual: 2004-2005, 2005-2006
3. Template for committee minutes

COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION 12

The College must ensure adequate and stable administrative support in all areas of the college operations and functions and adhere to district policy in the hiring, evaluation, and termination of administrative officers. (Standards 10B.3, 10B.4)

Merritt College's administrative team is committed to providing strong administrative support for college operations and functions. The governance structure provides a venue for faculty and staff to request needed resources.

Merritt College's March 15, 2004, progress report addressed the second portion of the recommendation regarding hiring, evaluation, and termination of administrative officers. Since the last Self Study (2003), one college administrator's contract was not renewed based on her performance in her position. The administrative evaluation process was followed to the letter.

The vice president of instruction has served in her position since July 2000, and has undergone annual evaluations. One division dean was hired permanently in February 2007, and the other division dean is interim this year only due to the retirement of the previous division dean. The dean of student support services was hired as interim dean in January 2004, and was hired permanently into the position in September 2004. Currently, the vice president of student services is a veteran administrator serving in an interim position until the college fills the position permanently.

College administrators are evaluated per the district policies and procedures.

STANDARD I INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

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

A. Mission

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College's mission, vision, and values statements articulate the commitment of the college to helping students attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society [1]. In recognition of the changing climates in which community colleges operate, the college's strategic documents as they relate to its mission undergo a cycle of quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to verify that the institution's mission maintains its relevance and responds to changes in the learning needs of the community [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8].

Since the last accreditation cycle in 2002-03, the college has reviewed and revised its mission statement, and engaged in a multiple year process of identifying strategic goals for the college as well as institutional outcomes. Merritt College is committed to providing students with outstanding instructional programs and comprehensive support services in a culturally-rich, caring and supportive learning environment. This commitment is demonstrated in the college's mission, values and vision statements that follow.

Mission

The mission of Merritt College is to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve by helping students to attain knowledge, master skills, develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society.

To accomplish its mission the College provides open access to excellent instructional programs and comprehensive support services in a culturally rich, caring and supportive learning environment.

Our purpose is to provide opportunities for lifelong learning, contribute to the economic growth of our communities while assisting to attain degrees and certificates, earn credits to transfer and develop the skills necessary to complete their educational goals.

Values

Student Success: *We provide challenging and rigorous learning experiences that support the academic and personal success of our students.*

Caring Spirit: *We genuinely care about every member of our campus community.*

Teamwork and Inclusion: *We encourage everyone to participate in college governance and assume responsibility for acting on our shared commitment to provide exceptional learning experiences.*

Campus Climate: *We strive to create a student-centered learning environment that leads to student retention, persistence and success.*

Diversity: *We honor and respect the different backgrounds, experiences, languages, values and cultures of everyone at the college.*

Vision

Merritt College will

- *Create learning experiences that stimulate intellectual curiosity and empower students to communicate effectively and think creatively and critically to embrace their potential.*
- *Prepare students to become the future leaders of our interconnected global society.*
- *Engage the community as an active participant and resource to learning through creative partnerships.*

The mission statement is included on page 13 of the Merritt College catalog. In addition, it is posted in the student services R-Building, appears on the college website and in the student handbook, and is included in all appropriate publications and publicity of the college [9, 10, & 11].

Self Evaluation

The present mission statement was approved by college governance groups and the Board of Trustees in 2004.

The College Council represents the main governance group which serves as a planning body to identify strategies and processes the college will use to fulfill its mission. The mission statement is re-evaluated as needed by the College Council. Proposed revisions of the college mission statement can be initiated in a governance group and

sent to the College Council for consideration. The Council may then forward its recommendation to the college president for approval or further discussion.

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

Descriptive Summary

In 2005, the Peralta District developed a steering committee which met twice a month to address issues important to the long-term success of the district wide planning process. Key among those issues was the review of the Merritt College mission, vision, and values statement in order to develop a common mission, vision, and values of the entire district.

Presently the Merritt College mission reflects the Peralta Community College District mission "...to provide accessible, high-quality adult learning opportunities to meet the educational needs of the multicultural East Bay community" [12].

Merritt College continues to successfully build upon the district-wide mission statement, which serves as a foundation for the college's mission, core values and vision. To successfully meet the educational needs of the multicultural East Bay community, Merritt offers a comprehensive two-year curriculum, as well as day and evening programs of transfer, technical, occupational and basic skills education [9]. It provides a wide range of support services to enable students to meet their educational and personal goals.

The college recognizes the diversity of student needs, the changing climates in which community colleges operate, and makes every effort to be responsive. This responsiveness to changing educational needs in the community can be evidenced through the introduction of the Merritt Microscopy Program (MMP). This program was developed by biology faculty at Merritt College and an advisory board of local scientists and microscopy experts to meet the strong demand for microscopists in biotech companies and academic research labs [13]. This program represents one of a wide range of educational programs that speak to our mission statement by helping students to attain knowledge and master skills needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society. Some of the educational programs and services at Merritt College include the following.

- AA degree programs
- Transfer opportunities to four year colleges and universities
- Career explorations and workforce training
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Athletics
- Health Center
- Transfer Center

- Disabled Students Programs and Services
- Veterans Programs
- Extended Opportunities Program and Services (EOPS)
- Assessment

Self Evaluation

This standard has been met. Merritt College programs reflect the needs of students and the community and undergo regular review through college and district processes to assess program viability.

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

Descriptive Summary

The Merritt College mission statement is endorsed by college governance groups and approved by the Peralta Board of Trustees. Recommendations for changes to the Merritt College mission statement are discussed by representatives from all campus constituent groups and reviewed by the College Council. Any recommended changes are forwarded to the president of the college. The revised mission statement is widely distributed to the campus and local community through a variety of communication strategies which include the Merritt College website, marketing materials, the Student Handbook, class schedules, college catalog, and other college publications.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The latest revision of the Merritt College mission statement was recommended to the president through the College Council and approved by the Peralta Community College District Board in the fall of 2004 [14].

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

Descriptive Summary

The review of Merritt's mission statement includes a college wide dialogue involving all constituencies who are represented in College Council, and the process is aligned with the accreditation self-study cycle. As a result of the accreditation team visit in spring of 2003, the college established a committee to review and revise the college mission statement.

The process used to initiate a review and possible revision of the mission statement is as follows:

- A committee approved by College Council reviews the mission statement and makes recommendations of any possible changes to the College Council.
- The revision recommendations are reviewed by all Merritt College governance groups, and feedback is provided to the College Council.
- Upon final review, the College Council makes a recommendation to the Merritt College president.
- The President submits the revised mission statement to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The process for evaluating the Merritt College mission statement, and the procedure for recommending changes and gaining Council and Board approval, reflect the intent of this standard that there be ongoing review with college-wide participation.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College re-invented its strategic planning process in 2004-05 as a result of a Commission recommendation that Merritt College

...evaluate its current policies, procedures and practices for all levels of institutional planning in order to streamline its planning processes and assure a broad-based understanding of and participation in those processes. [15]

The college's revised mission statement, approved by the Board in 2004, has been central to the institutional decision making process and has figured prominently in the strategic planning process. Using the mission statement as a guiding force, the college's Integrated Planning Committee met in 2005 to draft five-year Strategic Directions for review and approval by the college Governance Committees. The agreed-upon Strategic Directions are as follows [16].

STRATEGIC DIRECTION I: STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning at Merritt College through the development and implementation of student learning outcomes for both instruction and support services.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION II: CULTURE OF COMMUNICATION

To have clear communication and listening be a way of life at Merritt College in order to arrive at true shared values, and develop an appreciation of the diverse perspectives in the College community.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION III: TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA RESOURCES

Develop and maintain technological, information and media resources that support the needs of students, faculty, and staff and that are consistent with the College's mission.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION IV: RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Develop an institutional approach to optimize the utilization of existing resources and develop adequate future resources to support Merritt's mission.

In addition, the college used its mission statement as a reference when drafting Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) through campus forums and professional development workshops. The college ILOs were drafted late in 2005 and presented to the college community in 2006 [17]. These ILOs were reviewed, revised, and adopted in spring of 2008 [18] ILO's are defined as "*What students will be able to do out in the world as a result of their experiences at Merritt College,*" and of necessity should reflect the mission of the college. The following are Merritt College's approved Institutional Learning Outcomes.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate with clarity and precision using oral, nonverbal, and/or written language, expressing an awareness of audience, situation, and purpose.

CRITICAL THINKING

Think critically using appropriate methods of reasoning to evaluate ideas and identify and investigate problems and to develop creative and practical solutions to issues that arise in workplaces, institutions, and local and global communities.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

Apply college-level mathematical reasoning to analyze and explain real world issues and to interpret and construct graphs, charts, and tables.

INFORMATION AND COMPUTER LITERACY

Use appropriate technology to identify, locate, evaluate and present information for personal, educational and workplace goals.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

Through knowledge of history and cultural diversity, recognize and value perspectives and contributions that persons of diverse backgrounds bring to multicultural settings and respond constructively to issues that arise out of human diversity on both the local and the global level.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND ETHICS

Internalize and exhibit ethical values and behaviors that address self respect and respect for others with integrity and honesty that will enable success and participation in the larger society.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The Merritt College mission statement profoundly informs the college's strategic planning process, including the development of the College Educational Master Plan, and forms the foundation from which all unit, discipline, and program missions derive. Each decision at the unit, discipline and program level in turn validates the college's commitment to its mission.

The Educational Master Plan is the primary planning document that serves to make staff and faculty aware of program goals, action plans, and resource needs [19]. It provides an ongoing opportunity for all units at the college to reflect on unit missions and roles in the campus community.

Planning Agenda

The college will review and revise the mission statement at least every six years, or as necessary to reflect a new direction of the college agreed upon by the governance groups and approved by the Board of Trustees.

References

1. College Mission, Values, Vision
2. Committee for Strategic Educational Planning Overview
3. PCCD Program Evaluation Process
4. Program Adjustment Decision Points – SCRC
5. Research Questions for SCRC Consideration
6. PCCD District-Wide Strategic Plan, 2006
7. "Merritt College's Three Initiatives," Letter to Merritt College from President Adams, September 19, 2007
8. Outlines for Educational Master Planning Document
9. Merritt College Catalog
10. Merritt College website: www.merritt.peralta.edu
11. Merritt College Student Handbook
12. Peralta CCD Mission Statement (www.peralta.edu – Board of Trustees)
13. Merritt College Microscopy program brochure
14. PCCD Board Minutes, October 2004
15. Evaluation Report, Merritt College, March 18-20, 2003
16. Merritt College Strategic Planning Process 2005
17. Professional Day Agenda 2006
18. Professional Day Agenda January 2008
19. Merritt College Educational Master Plan 2008

Standard IB. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

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

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

Descriptive Summary

At Merritt College, there exist numerous governance committees which address student learning and institutional planning and processes. These include the following: College Council, the Budget Committee, the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors, the Technology Committee, the Academic Senate, the Classified Senate, the President's Administrative Council, the President's Cabinet, and the President's Executive Committee. By Laws for all governance committees were drafted and approved in 2004-05 through the strategic planning process, and the membership of the various committees conforms to AB 1725 guidelines regarding faculty, staff, and student representation in the governance process [1]. Faculty appointments are made by the Academic Senate president, classified staff appointments are made by the president of the Classified Senate, and student appointments are made by the president of the Associated Students of Merritt College.

In 2007, the college president created three task forces under the leadership of executive administrators to address the issues of student access, retention, and resource development. The task forces meet monthly, and are known as Recruitment & Outreach (led by the vice president of student services), Retention & Student Success (led by the vice president of instruction), and Entrepreneurial Leadership, later designated as Resource Development (led by the college business manager). The various college groups were invited to join any or all of the task forces [2].

Over the last several years, a variety of activities have served as catalysts for ongoing dialogue about student learning and the need to improve student outcomes at Merritt College. These activities, many of them grant-funded, are intended to enhance student learning and provide additional career pathways and opportunities for success.

- TITLE III PLANNING GRANT (2004-05): The college was awarded a Title III planning grant to assist in the development of a full grant application for the five-year Strengthening Institutions federal grant. The objective was to design a project that

would improve Merritt College student outcomes, particularly the transition from basic skills courses to college-level courses, and to engage faculty in new ways of providing instruction that have been shown to maximize student success [3].

- EQUITY FOR ALL/SCORECARD PROJECT (2004-06): Merritt College was chosen as one of several colleges participating with USC and its Center for Equity in a grant project funded by the Lumina Foundation. The objective of the grant was to establish the college's "scorecard" on several measures disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and disability. The college data revealed through this project formed the baseline data on which the Title III grant application, the Basic Skills Initiative, and the PBI grant application were all based [4].
- BASIC SKILLS INITIATIVE (from 2005 on): Funds to improve the outcomes of basic skills students were allocated through the Governor's budget to all California Community Colleges. Merritt established a Basic Skills Committee, selected a coordinator, and solicited proposals for funding from the college community, using data from the college's Scorecard Project [5]
- KAISER PERMANENTE BRIDGE TO SUCCESS GRANT (2007-08): Funds were awarded from Kaiser Permanente to Merritt's Associate Degree Nursing program to establish a summer bridge program for students admitted to the next fall class. The six-week program was intended to improve retention in the first 9-week segment of the Nursing program, which focuses on nursing fundamentals, dosage calculation and critical thinking [6].
- TITLE III STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS GRANT (awarded October 2008): Merritt College was awarded a five-year, federal Title III Strengthening Institutions grant to address the needs of basic skills students as well as the professional development needs of faculty working with basic skills students. The in-depth planning for this grant has occurred over four years through meetings, presentations, and extensive input from all college constituencies [7].
- PREDOMINATELY BLACK INSTITUTIONS GRANT – PBI - (awarded October 2008): Merritt College was awarded a two-year grant to improve the academic outcomes of African American males at Merritt College [8]. Called the "Maximum Achievement Project," this grant is designed to provide a comprehensive program of instruction and services for African American males and other low-income students to increase retention and graduation rates compared to the general student body.
- STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (SLOAC): In 2007, Merritt formalized the work being done on student learning outcomes by establishing a committee and choosing a faculty coordinator to lead the work. Committee members and other faculty have been sent to training on learning outcomes, and committee members are given stipends to work with college programs to establish learning outcomes at the program or course level, depending on which phase they have completed in assessment of student learning [9].

In November 2008, a group consisting of key staff representing each grant was convened due to concern about possible duplication of efforts. The group will be maintained as a grant advisory body for the Title III, PBI, and Basic Skills projects. The group has met twice and continues to explore its role and function vis a vis the college's funded grants.

Educational Master Plan

The updated Merritt College Educational Master Plan, completed in December 2008, captures the ongoing unit planning at the college. Merritt College began its unit planning process in 2005-06 as part of its integrated planning process. The template used by Merritt for its 2006-07 planning process was adapted by the district for a district-wide unit planning process to develop college educational plans that inform the district-wide educational master plan [10].

Development of the educational master plan in collaboration with district educational planning presents a shared educational "road map" for the colleges and district service centers for the next several years. This shared district-wide road map is made up of the agreed-upon educational principles, goals, and integrated planning and budgeting processes that provide both a clear future direction and a set of adaptive mechanisms to ensure the plan is a living document. The district and the college have used data in the 2008 McIntyre Environmental Scan [11] and the 2007 and 2008 Accountability Reports for Community Colleges (ARCC) [12] for program analysis and program planning.

The district educational master planning process provides direction for the four college educational master plans, and documents the common planning criteria, methodologies, and agreements that bring consistency to and provide a context for the Merritt College Educational Master Plan. The district-wide plan's road map is composed of several specific elements:

1. **Educational Program Framework:** The set of overarching program themes provide a shared focus for the colleges, and the unique areas of career-technical focus for each college [13].
2. **Integrated Instructional and Student Service Strategies:** The educational strategies for instruction and student services enable the college to meet current and anticipated needs of students [13].
3. **Shared Decision-Making Criteria and Processes:** The intent is to document the processes shared across the colleges on a district-wide basis that will enable the colleges and district as a whole to remain flexible and adaptive to change [13].

One of the strategies for college input has been to organize town hall meetings at each college for the purpose of soliciting short and long-term visions for facility use and renewal. These sessions have been led by WLC Architects who are tasked with developing a district-wide facilities plan by reviewing college educational master plans and meeting with various college constituencies about programmatic challenges. WLC Architects met with Merritt College staff on December 17th for a two-hour work session and presentation of group ideas for renewal and renovation of Merritt's physical plant that will lead to enhanced student learning [14].

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): 2005-2010

College faculty, staff, administrators and students have received training on Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment in the context of how SLOs reveal the student's journey through the institution, and the many ways in which a student's progress and success can be measured and demonstrated [15].

In 2003, the Landscape Horticulture and Child Development departments were led by the Vice President of Instruction in a pilot project to identify program SLOs and to create program maps that elucidate a student's progress through these programs [16]. In succeeding years, Dr. Ruth Stiehl, consultant on student learning outcomes, presented Professional Day workshops on identification and assessment of learning outcomes as measurements of student learning and success in the institution [17]. In Fall 2007, a Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) was created, and a SLOAC Coordinator is identified each year and given .5 release time to work with faculty and staff on developing program outcomes and drafting program maps. Faculty and staff have been sent to the summer White Water Institute in Oregon to receive training on development and assessment of learning outcomes. To date, two administrators and four faculty have attended this Institute and assumed the role of trainer in order to assist faculty and staff with this work.

Currently, most of Merritt College's instructional programs have identified program outcomes and created program maps that illustrate the students' journey through the program [see Phases of Assessment below]. In 2008-09, instructional and student services faculty and staff will create rubrics as assessment tools, and will continue to articulate outcomes at the course level, communicate those outcomes through course syllabi, and begin the work of aligning course outcomes with program outcomes and institutional outcomes.

Document 1 below describes the phases of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, and identifies the phases for the various Merritt instructional programs. Document 2 is a progress report on Student Learning Outcomes in Student Support Services.

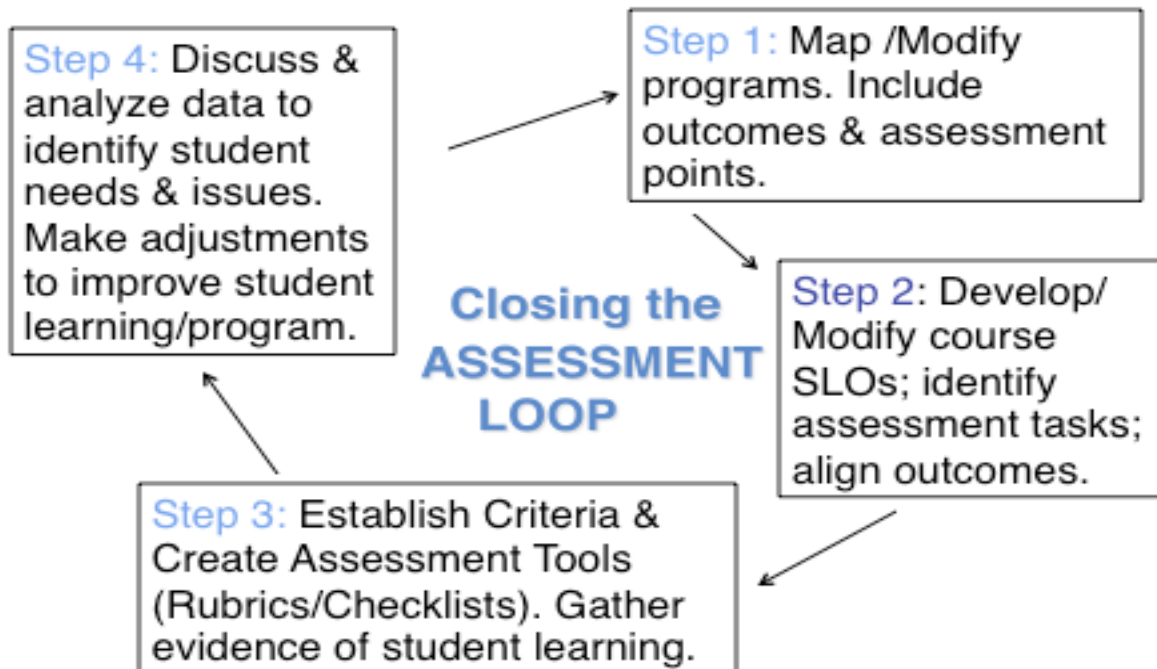
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Where the Accrediting Commission (ACCJC) expects all colleges to be in 2012

Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student learning outcomes and authentic assessment are in place for courses, programs and degrees.• Results of assessment are being used for improvement and further alignment of institution-wide practices.• There is widespread institutional dialogue about the results.• Decision-making includes dialogue on the results of assessment and is purposefully directed toward improving student learning.• Appropriate resources continue to be allocated and fine-tuned.• Comprehensive assessment reports exist and are completed on a regular basis.• Course student learning outcomes are aligned with degree student learning outcomes.• Students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled.
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Phases of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Instructional Programs

Most instructional departments and programs at Merritt have been assessed as being in one of four phases of the Assessment Process, corresponding to the steps outlined in the “Assessment Loop” below.



INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

PHASE ONE: STEP ONE

PHASE ONE/Step One:

- **Develop program learning outcomes**
- **Create program maps**
- **Write course outcomes for stand-alone courses**

Disciplines/Departments/Programs In Phase One:

ESL	Basic Landscape Horticulture
Geology	Medical Assistant
Fire Science	Natural science
Humanities	Real Estate
Human Services	Recreation
Spanish	

Description of Phase One

In this phase the program or discipline identifies the program learning outcomes and maps the courses that comprise the program's degrees and certificates.

- Develop program outcomes in dialogue with others in the department, in the college or in the community.
- Align program outcomes with Institutional Learning Outcomes.
- Learn mapping conventions.
- Dialogue with members of the program or discipline (and with other faculty and community or industry partners) to write or modify program learning outcomes and program map.
- Work with mapping assistant to create a PPT map of the program or complete SLO addendum for course outcomes and assessment tasks.

DESIRED PARTICIPATION: 75% of the faculty in the program and at least one student. It is highly recommended that other faculty or community partners participate in the drafting of outcomes for programs that offer degrees and certificates.

PHASE TWO: STEP TWO

PHASE TWO/Step Two:

- **Align program outcomes with courses.**
- **Write course outcomes.**

Disciplines/Departments/Programs In Phase Two:

Administration of Justice	Community Social Services
Police Science	CIS
African American Studies	English
Anthropology	Environmental Studies
Business	LNHT: Nursery Management
Child Development	Nutrition
• Full Certificate	+Dietary Manager
• Assistant Teacher	+Dietary Assistant (1)
• Associate Teacher	+Dietetic Technology
• Early Intervention	Paralegal Studies
• Violence intervention	Vocational Nursing
Communications	

Description of Phase Two

- Learn about course outcomes versus exit skills/objectives.
- In dialogue with the faculty in the program or discipline (and other faculty and community and industry partners as appropriate), write outcomes for the **five** most frequently offered courses.

Step Two in the Assessment Loop: Identifying assessment tasks

When we write student learning outcomes, we always need to think about the assessment tasks or assignments we envision our students completing in order to demonstrate their learning. This helps ground our aspirations for student learning in reality.

NOTE: Create outcomes with assessment in mind.
How do you plan to gather evidence of student learning?

PHASE THREE: STEP THREE

PHASE THREE/Step Three:

- **Develop plans and tools for assessment**
- **Gather evidence of student learning**

Disciplines/Departments/Programs In Phase Three:

Chemistry
Associate Degree Nursing
Radiologic Science

Description of Phase Three

- Decide when assessments will occur in the program and course.
- Map key assessment points in the program map (if not completed in phase one.)
- Identify which assignments allow students to demonstrate achievement of outcomes or develop assessment tasks (talk with others about these).
- Develop criteria for these tasks: *scoring guides or rubrics*. Attend rubric workshops. Meet with others to decide “what is good.”
- Administer the assessment and gather evidence of student learning.

PHASE FOUR: STEP FOUR

PHASE FOUR/Step Four:

- **Analyze data**
- **Make adjustments**

Description of Phase Four:

- Analyze evidence of student learning. Dialogue within department to gain better understanding of student learning issues and to decide what actions to take to improve learning.
- Decide what improvements to make to courses and program.
- Write a department report.
- Include this report with the changes/adjustments/improvements and *any resources* needed to implement them in Unit Plan and Program Review.

DOCUMENT 2

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN STUDENT SERVICES

As an institution, we must continually evaluate our own effectiveness in our primary mission: to educate students who have entrusted their future to us. By establishing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at the Student Support Services level, we aspire to assess student achievement of those outcomes and use the results to make improvements in our student support programs and services.

Merritt College Student Services has engaged each unit within its area to identify Student Learning Outcomes pertinent to their individual service units. This process began in September of 2004 by selection of the first cluster group to be tasked with addressing how their individual program, policy, or practice can improve or expand student learning, and how that learning can be assessed.

The Student Services Departments have been divided into five SLO clusters:

1. EOPS, Financial Aid, Student Activities, DSPS.
2. Health Services, Transfer, Counseling, Puente.
3. Assessment, Orientation, CalWORKs.
4. Athletics, Job Placement, Veteran's Services.
5. Dean's office, Merritt College Bookstore, Care Program.

SLO CUSTER ONE

Progress to Date

All of the participants of cluster one (*EOPS, Financial Aid, Student Activities and DSPS*) identified three initial student learning outcomes and are at the stage of collecting and analyzing data or reviewing and refining assessment tools for continuous program improvement with reference to those three student learning outcomes.

EOPS preliminary findings focusing on **SLO# 1** (*Students will be able to understand, be a responsible party in and follow the required stipulations of a **written and signed EOPS contract***) point to a higher grade point average held by students who complete their mandated 3 counselor appointments as opposed to those who did not keep their appointments. Preliminary findings also indicate the existence of a possible link between student persistence and counselor contacts.

The **Financial Aid program** is in the process of collecting and analyzing all data from their presently identified four learning outcomes.

STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAMS

The final Pre & Post testing for the three identified **Student Activities** program learning outcomes were completed in fall 2006. Presently the Student Activities unit is in the process of collecting and analyzing data to be finalized in spring 2007.

The **DSPS** program has presently begun collecting student surveys pertinent to **SLO#1** (*Students will be able to use resources to self advocate*). Data analysis has begun and will be concluded by spring 2007. The DSPS program coordinator and staff will continue meeting with the Dean of Student Services throughout spring 2007 to re-define four additional SLO's.

Next Steps

1. All units in the first cluster will have completed data collection and analysis by spring of 2007.
2. By spring 2007, EOPS will have completed development of SLO #2&3 pre-post testing tools, and will have administered all pre & post testing as well as compiled and analyzed all results. EOPS will have designed assessment instruments for new SLO # 4&5.
3. DSPS will continue to compile and analyze findings from SLO #1, conclude revision of SLO # 2 & SLO# 3 and will have identified two additional SLO's in 2007.
4. Financial Aid will continue to analyze and apply data and will have identified 1 additional SLO's in 2007
5. Student activities will continue to compile and analyze data for the first 3 SLO's and will have identified 2 additional SLO's in 2007.

SLO CUSTER TWO

Progress to Date

All the participants of cluster two (*Health Services, Transfer, Counseling and Puente*) are in the process of fine tuning assessment tools for their respective SLO's. The Health Services unit has presently completed preliminary pre & post testing of 19 students for their SLO#1. The compiled data indicated a 75% increase in the knowledge of students (from pre to post test) with regard to how TB is transmitted and how TB skin tests indicate exposure.

Next Steps

By spring 2007 each unit in cluster two will have completely developed their assessment tools and defined a clear strategy and timeline for administering the assessment tool. Health Services will have identified a fifth SLO.

STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAMS

SLO CUSTER THREE

Progress to Date

All units participating in cluster three (*Assessment, Orientation, and CalWORKs*) have identified Mission statements, are refining learning outcomes, and are presently identifying measurement strategies.

Next Steps

Each unit in cluster three will have clearly identified learning outcomes and assessment tools by spring 2007.

SLO CUSTER FOUR

Progress to Date

All units participating in cluster four (*Athletics, Job Placement and Veterans*) have defined a mission statement. The Athletic Department and Job Placement have identified student learning outcomes and are in the process of identifying an assessment process. The Veterans Program has not yet identified Student Learning Outcomes; they are to be completed by spring 2007.

Next Steps

Each unit in cluster four will have clearly identified learning outcomes and assessment tools by spring 2007.

SLO CUSTER FIVE

Progress to Date

Cluster five has been identified (Dean's office; the Merritt College Bookstore and the Care Program); each unit has identified a mission statement and is presently in the process of refining learning outcomes.

Next Steps

Each unit in cluster five will have clearly identified learning outcomes and assessment tools by spring 2007.

Draft submitted 2/13/2007

Self Evaluation

This standard has been met. The on-going dialogue, e-mails, workshops and presentations have helped to develop and maintain an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.

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

Descriptive Summary

Using the Merritt College Mission statement as a foundation, the Educational Master Plan reflect the contributions and agreements of faculty, staff, students and administrators who participated in several planning processes from September 2006 to December 2008.

The College Educational Master Plan includes the college-wide vision, mission, and goals and engages the entire Merritt College community through the following groups:

- The Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors. The Council is responsible for making recommendations on budget allocations and faculty hires. Department chairs and program directors participate in schedule development, peer evaluations, unit planning, program review, accreditation self study, and facility planning.
- Basic Skills Task Force. The Basic Skills Task Force works with faculty and staff on planning for enhanced academic success of basic skills students. Several projects have been selected for funding for 2008-09 with the expressed intent to increase retention, persistence, and success of basic skills students.
- College Facilities and Budget Committees. The college's facilities and budget committees play an integral role in planning and implementation of the college's ongoing Educational Master Plan. The college has completed a major renovation of its Student Center, and next plans to relocate the Learning Center programs and to design a new Allied Health/Sciences building.
- College Council. The Council provides input and insight into college issues, and ultimately sends a recommendation to the college president.

- President's Three Task Forces. The Task Forces are an integral part of planning at the college. Led by his senior administrative staff, they focus on Recruitment, Retention, and Resource Development (the college's 3 R's) [18].

Other tools used by Merritt College to measure how well the college is doing at meeting its goals and objectives are annual Student Needs Surveys, the Student Drop Survey, the Equity for All/Scorecard Report, Transfer Report, Certificate and Degree Completion Analysis, Annual Student Equity Report, Annual Review of District Wide EMP Milestones, and the Annual Community College Student Engagement Survey (CCSSE).

Self Evaluation

This standard has been partially met. Merritt College's integrated planning process resulted in the development of four Strategic Directions with annual, measurable priorities through 2006-07 [19]. The college's planning process was superseded by the district's strategic planning process that engaged all the colleges in a planning cycle. The Merritt College Educational Master Plan and the District Wide Educational Master Plan were developed collaboratively to create an integrated planning framework linking program review, educational planning, facilities improvement and resource allocation. This integrated planning approach achieves one of the major goals of the District Wide Strategic Plan and fulfills a major district-level accreditation recommendation [13].

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has established an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation and planning that assists the college in using its limited resources effectively and efficiently. The Educational Master Plan represents a key planning tool used by the college which is updated every five years, in the year preceding the accreditation self-study.

The cycle of evaluation involved in the development of the Educational Master Plan includes and is derived from an iterative process of district-wide planning discussions integrated with college-based discussions. The district-wide foundational planning began with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. It was guided in the process by the Strategic Management Team and District-Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC), and received input from faculty and deans via program review, CSEP (Committee for Strategic Education Planning), Academic Senate Presidents and Vice Presidents of Instruction, student services planning staff, faculty input at the District August 2007 and College spring 2008 Flex Days, unit and college planning 2007-2008, the college educational master planning committee, department chair planning sessions, and district-wide plan integration in spring 2008.

In addition to the Educational Master Plan, the college unit plans are updated annually, program review is conducted every three years, and an Environmental Scan is conducted every two years. The table below was presented in a draft of the district educational master plan [13].

Annual EMP Milestone Progress Reviews

Cycle	Process
Annual	Update Unit Plans Review District Wide EMP Milestones
Two Years	Environmental Scanning
Three Years	All Programs Reviewed
Five Years	Master Plan Updates
Six Years	Accreditation Self Study

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. .

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

Descriptive Summary

At Merritt College, planning begins at the unit level with unit reviews which document unit effectiveness, attainment of goals, progress on learning outcomes, trends and plans to address the trends, and resource needs [20]. Unit plans are submitted to division deans, vice president of instruction, and forwarded to the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). CEMPC is charged with assessing the success of all units on campus, and is representative of college constituencies. Prior to the inception of CEMPC in 2007, the college relied on its Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) to lead the college through a planning process that resulted in identifying strategic directions for 2005-10. Both IPC and CEMPC have been charged with making recommendations to the college president [21]. Unit planning is documented in the College Educational Master Plan, compiled by the vice president of instruction from the various college unit plans [22]. The draft document is sent to the various units for review and revision.

Anyone wishing to make a facilities recommendation or request is required to submit the request to the Facilities Committee, and requests for budget allocations are submitted to the College Budget Committee. These committees then make recommendations either to the College Council or directly to the college president, depending on their charge and by-laws [1].

The following governance committees may make recommendations to the College Council per the committee by-laws: Associated Students of Merritt College, Classified Senate, College Budget Committee, Council on Department Chairs and Program Directors, Facilities Committee, Faculty Senate, and the Technology Committee [1].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College maintains its governance and decision-making processes through adherence to governance committee by-laws, and engages in regular planning through annual unit plans.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College relies heavily on research for information related to quality assurance. Some of the institutional reports used to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies are as follows:

- Equity for All - Scorecard Report [23]
- Student Satisfaction Surveys [24]
- Unit Plans [20]
- Student Equity Plan [25]
- Transfer Report [26]
- Program Review [27]
- Student Needs Survey [28]

The college researcher/planner provides data for use in grant applications and institutional reports.

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Merritt College assesses the quality of its programs through a variety of methods, but does not communicate the results of those assessments as effectively as possible. The college website needs upgrading in order to more effectively and efficiently communicate with students, potential students, and the community at large.

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

Descriptive Summary

The college's Educational Master Plan will be updated every five years, in the year preceding the accreditation self study. This will allow the college to comprehensively review its programs and services, and to address many of the issues required for the self study.

The College Educational Master Plan is a living document, reviewed and modified as appropriate. Input from the college on attainment of its planning goals will be used as a basis for assessing the college's progress in implementing each of the strategies of the District Wide EMP. This information will be presented to SMT and college and district wide educational master planning committees at the start of the fall term to inform development of annual planning priorities. Through this process, the ongoing planning and resource allocation model can be systematically reviewed and modified as appropriate.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The College engages in constructive, inclusive, and ongoing discussions related to the college needs, planning and resource allocation.

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

Descriptive Summary

The Educational Master Plan assists Merritt College in identifying student support services and educational offerings at Merritt College that need assistance or additional support. Below are just a few of the processes that Merritt uses to assess its evaluation mechanisms:

Five-Year Educational Master Plan Cycle & Milestone Progress Review

The district wide and college master plans will be updated every five years, in the year preceding the accreditation self-study. This will allow the district to comprehensively review its programs and services and to address many of the issues required for the accreditation self study.

Three-Year Program Review Cycle

The program review process will proceed on a three-year cycle. Program reviews will use many of the same data elements and topics as unit review but also include a more comprehensive set of data items, such as an in-depth curricula review, and have a longer-time horizon.

Annual Unit Plan Updates

Each year, all instructional and student service unit plans will be updated based on an assessment of issues and completion of prior year initiatives. This will form the foundation of an integrated planning and budgeting process. Annual updates are also needed to provide continuity to multi-year improvement efforts, especially where emerging programs are being piloted or watch programs are being revitalized.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The process associated with the Educational Master Plan provides an efficient system for college constituent groups to annually survey their respective vision, mission, goals and evaluate their respective success in meeting those objectives.

Planning Agenda

Upgrade the Merritt College website for better communication with the community.

References

1. Merritt College Governance Committee By-Laws 2004-05
2. Letter from the President [September 19, 2007]
3. Title III Planning Grant Application 2004
4. Lumina Foundation Grant 2004-06
5. Basic Skills Initiative 2006-present
6. Kaiser Permanente Bridge to Success Grant 2007-08
7. Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant Application 2008
8. Predominately Black Institutions Grant Application 2008
9. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee minutes
10. Merritt College Unit Planning Template 2006
11. Internal Scan Evaluation of Conditions at PCCD Colleges, January 2008
12. Accountability Report for Community Colleges (ARCC) 2008
13. Peralta CCD District-Wide Strategic Plan 2004-08
14. Notes on Town Hall meeting, December 17, 2008
15. Professional Day Workshop materials
16. Program maps for Landscape Horticulture and Child Development
17. Dr. Ruth Stiehl workshop materials
18. Agendas for Task Forces
19. Merritt College's Strategic Planning process
20. Merritt College Unit Planning Template 2008

21. Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model 2005
22. Merritt College Educational Master Plan 2008-2015
23. Equity for All - Scorecard Report
24. Student Satisfaction Surveys
25. Student Equity Plan
26. Transfer Report
27. Program Review
28. Student Needs Survey

STANDARD II STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated learning outcomes. The institution provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.

A. Instructional Programs

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

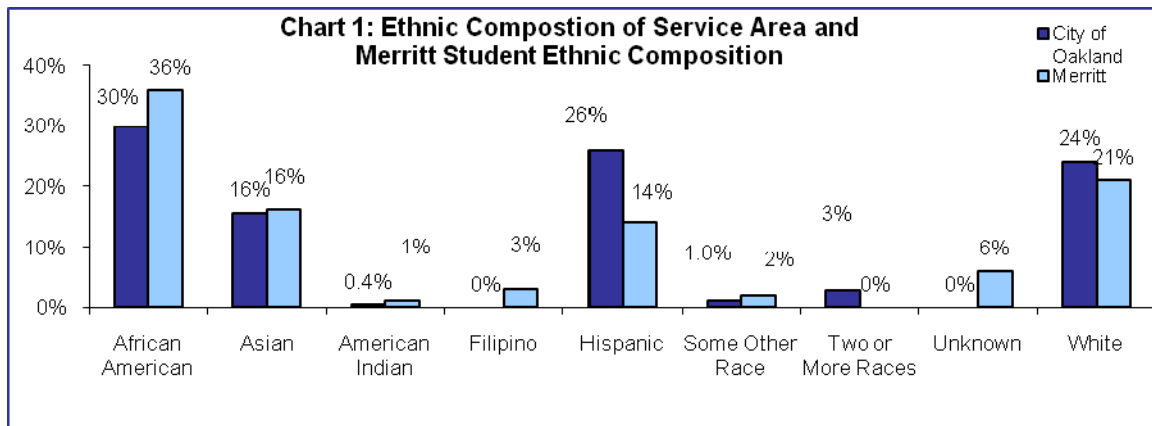
1. The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College is a diverse campus community that reflects the larger surrounding community. Although Merritt's location is outside of the most diverse pockets of the city the college actively outreaches to communities of color and include diversity into our planning process. For example, currently the white, African American, Native American and Asian American student percentages are equal to or exceed community numbers but the Hispanic student population at Merritt is 12% below the community numbers [1]. As a result, Merritt has increased outreach efforts at the Fruitvale center to partner with Chicano/Latino organizations and centers to offer additional courses to that community. Merritt has also started a Latino/Hispanic Center on campus that works in conjunction with the Puente program on campus but also extends outreach and specialized counseling to the Latino community [1]. As a result of the Student Equity Plan, the College Researcher and Planner and VP of Student Services have stated that, "Latino/

Hispanic under-representation may reflect some barriers to access. Latino/ Hispanic under enrollment must be explored through community surveys and focus groups to determine the reason/s for under enrollment.”

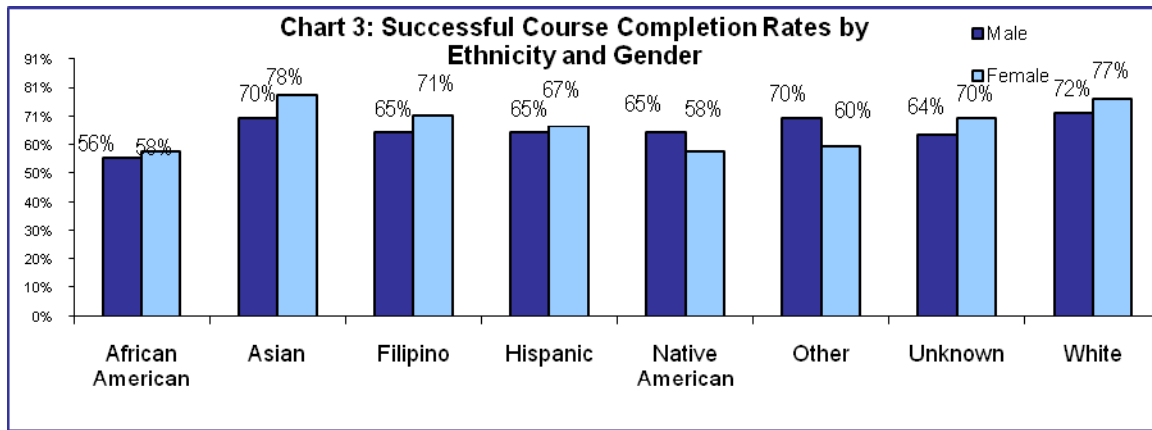


Source: American Community Survey 2006 and Peralta Institutional Research Office

Merritt College’s mission statement states that the institution seeks “to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve by helping students attain the knowledge, master skills, develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society” [2]. To accomplish its mission, the college provides equitable access for all students to instructional programs that further those objectives. In addition, student success is a core value in which students are provided “challenging and rigorous learning experiences that support the academic and personal success of our students.” The institution’s mission statement continues, “To accomplish its mission, the College provides open access to excellent instructional programs and comprehensive support services in a culturally-rich, caring and supportive learning environment” [2].

To achieve these aims Merritt College offers comprehensive liberal arts and career technical degree and certificate programs. Courses are offered in a variety of delivery methods to offer the additional options that the institution’s diverse student body need to access higher education. These options include online courses, concurrent enrollment courses, accelerated courses, intersession basic skills preparation courses, non-credit courses, and courses offered at high school and community establishments and on evenings and weekends [2].

The success of our students is most readily noted in our successful course completion, graduation (AA/AS), transfer and certification completion rates described below [1].

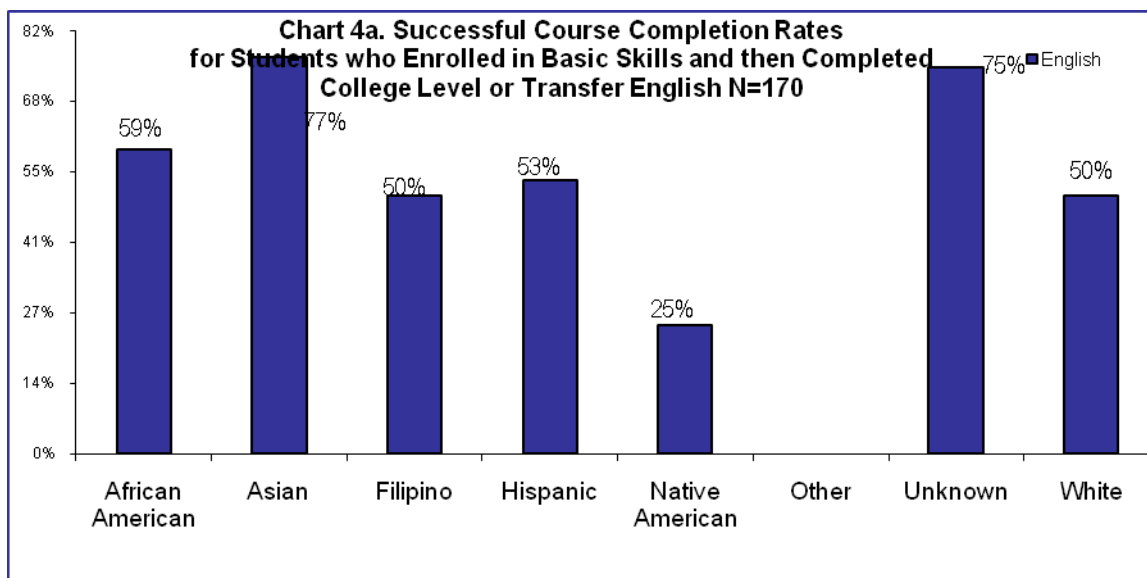


Source: Peralta Institutional Research Office

How to read this chart: The successful course completion rate for Asian men was 70% while the successful course completion rate for Asian women was 78%.

Data Description

- The successful course completion rate for all groups was 65%. African American students were the only group where males (56%) and females (58%) were below the college average.
- Other groups including Native American women (58%). “Other” women (60%), and “Unknown” men (64%) performed below the college average.



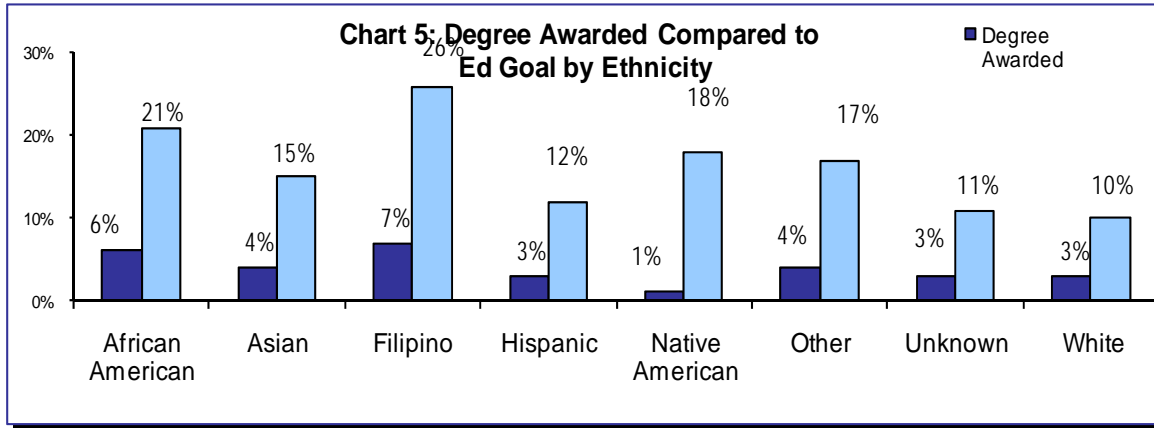
Source: Peralta Institutional Research Office

Note: the following groups consisted of populations of less than 14 students: Asian, Filipino, Native American, White and Unknown.

Data Description

- Approximately 65% of students successfully completed college level or transfer level English after having enrolled in Basic Skills. Note in this analysis students are defined as unsuccessful if they choose not enroll in the subsequent year.

- The following students performed beneath the college average for students: Filipino, Hispanic, Native American and White students.

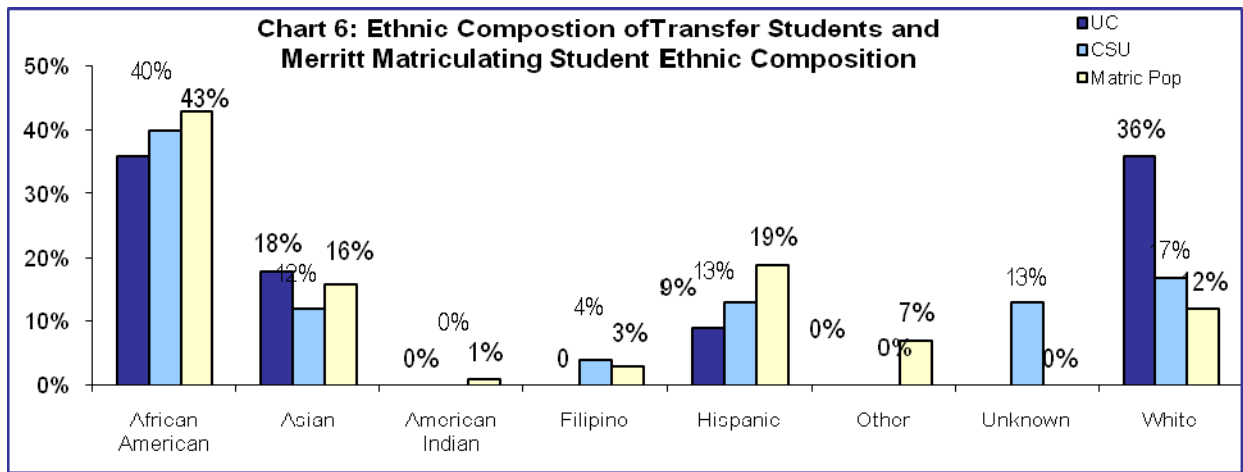


Source: Peralta Institutional Research Office

How to read this chart: 21% of African Americans had an ed goal of Associates Degree and 6% received a degree.

Data Description

- There was inequity for every group shown. Students across the board did not attain the Associate Degree in the same proportion as stated degree attainment as an educational goal, irrespective of ethnicity. The group with the largest disparity (21% differential) between educational goal and actual degree awarded were Filipino students.
- The group with the smallest disparity (8 % differential) was white students.



Source: UC data-California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), CSU¹ data-CSU Statistical Reports

¹ CSU- does not report an "Other" category.

Data Description

- In the academic year 2006-2007 there were 148 transfers to California Public Universities.
- A majority of these transfers attend CSUs (126) and a minority transfer to UCs (22) African-American, Hispanic/Latino and Filipino students are underrepresented in transfers to UC and CSU relative to the percentage of degree seeking students.
- Asian students are underrepresented in transfers to CSU.

Merritt College faculty, staff, and administration employ a systematic approach to ensure that the quality of instruction and services are maintained in order to meet students' needs. The institution utilizes a wide range of processes and procedures to ensure that disciplines, programs, courses, and services are periodically assessed for quality, effectiveness, teaching and learning strategies, currency, and student learning outcomes.

These processes and procedures include:

- Program Reviews
- Faculty Evaluations (tenure track, full- and part-time)
- Surveys of Staff and Students
- Staff Development and Training
- Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Training
- The Equity for all Scorecard Project

Since the last accreditation visit the district and the college have engaged in a committed process of master planning and program reviews [3]. Each department submitted mission statements, review of productivity, program goals and future needs in their respective areas. This information was then incorporated into college-wide planning [4]. Planning on the unit level has ensured that faculty are able to evaluate the productivity of their programs/departments and articulate hiring and equipment needs. The result has been a systematic review of our academic programs at each level. This holistic approach has enabled Merritt College to more clearly understand patterns of enrollment, program effectiveness and viability and project goals into the future.

Since the last accreditation visit all academic departments have initiated faculty evaluations for tenure track, full-, and part-time instructors. A total of 50 plus part-time evaluations have been completed and/or are currently in process [5]. Working with the union, the district implemented a new set of evaluation procedures for part-time faculty to ensure that instructional quality is maintained, and that faculty and administration engage in a systematic, fair review of the significant number of part-time instructors that teach at Merritt College. The union negotiations about the part-time evaluation procedures have resulted in a slower process of completion because all evaluations were put on hold twice (spring 2007 and fall 2008) as details were being determined.

Through the hiring of an institutional researcher, Merritt College has been able to gather and utilize research data to inform our planning processes. This includes the Student

Equity Plan, Student Needs Survey, Scorecard Report, all unit and master plans and grants including the MAP grant and Title III.

This is especially in the area of student experiences at Merritt College and staff evaluation of programs, services and processes. The results of this data collection have been useful in assisting us in self-evaluation and utilizing the perspectives of those closest to Merritt College to assist us in ensuring our adherence to our mission and in planning or future objectives. For example when surveyed, students reported high evaluations in the areas of instruction at Merritt College. Approximately 80% of student respondents agreed that their instructors were helpful, cared about them, and felt comfortable asking them questions. "Student Needs Survey Findings" [6].

Student Service units are also conducting surveys to elicit information on student perceptions to inform planning and programming. These surveys include the following: EOPS Exit Survey, CalWorks Survey, Student Activities Surveys, and the Financial Aid survey [7].

On the institutional level, Merritt College plans on conducting the Community College Survey of Student Engagement's (CCSSE) in spring 2009 and the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory in 2009. Data from both surveys will be used to inform decision making and planning [7].

Staff Development (SD) training and individualized support for faculty have been very effective in providing guidance on new educational models such as Student Learning Outcomes and their applicability to our mission. Merritt College has made SLO and assessment training and implementation a very high priority to ensure that our academic mission is in line with what occurs in the classroom. The majority of campus-wide SD training for the past two academic years has focused on development and assessment of student learning outcomes. These trainings included faculty, administrators, and staff from a cross-section of the campus and were held on training days when faculty are required to attend, thus giving the college a wide audience and a broad perspective [8]. Within this context, faculty and staff developed SLO's for instructional and student support service programs. SD funds were also used to encourage faculty to attend various conferences on SLO development and assessment [9]. Over the course of two years, institutional student learning outcomes were drafted, discussed, and adopted.

An SLO committee was created in 2007 with .5 release time provided to the Chair to ensure that progress was made. The SLO committee currently meets twice per month and has taken the lead in working with individual faculty and whole departments to develop their program maps and SLO's [9]. For two successive summers the college sent teams of faculty, staff, and administrators to Oregon to Ruth Stiehl's White Water Institute to study program mapping and assessment of student learning outcomes through development of assessment tools. Dr. Stiehl also came to the college for a two day intensive workshop in October, 2007 on the same topic. To date, 31 programs have completed this goal, and 4 are currently in the process of doing so [10, 12]. In

addition, the campus participated in the development of college wide SLO's during the spring, 2008 SD training. This continuous training has been extremely beneficial to faculty and department chairs to assess student and program outcomes and delineate and evaluate the paths students take within the various disciplines and the campus generally.

Self Evaluation

The college meets the standard. Merritt College has made extensive use of research and analysis to identify student and campus wide needs for the purpose of identifying funds and writing grants to better meet student needs. This research has been invaluable in assessing strengths and weaknesses of Merritt College students. In addition, the use of research and analysis has enabled the college to effectively seek funds for the Basic Skills Initiatives, MAP grant (PBI) and the Federal Title III grant.

Merritt College is particularly effective in addressing the college's commitment to diversity. The college's community and student body is very diverse, and its curriculum and efforts to increase awareness and consideration of diversity are consistent and effective. Merritt College is effectively engaged in developing SLOs in all areas of the institution and also in developing strategies to assess those outcomes and make adjustments to enhance instructional delivery methods.

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

Merritt College offers curriculum, certificates and degrees that make learning accessible and completion valuable to student educational and career goals. The college curricula and programs are offered in a variety of means including traditional and innovative manners. These include the following.

Evening, Weekend & Short Term Courses: To address the needs of our working adult student population, Merritt College offers numerous courses in the evenings, weekends, and in 3 week-end sessions. Evening and weekend classes allow students who work to attend college and attain degrees while 3-6 week sessions during the summer, intercession and during the regular terms open up the availability to complete rigorous course work in shorter amount so time allowing a faster means of completion. Faculty and instruction administration worked together to select classes that were appropriate to teach during intercession (3 weeks) to ensure student success in these courses [13].

Distance Education: Our on-line course offerings are growing and include varying degrees of time spent face-to-face in combination with on-line instruction. The Distance Education Committee and the Curriculum Instruction Committee have worked during the 2007-2008 academic year to create policy, training and approval process to create a model for high standards and effective delivery for students. The courses offered are of

the same quality as face-to-face instruction but offer more flexibility to student who are balancing the demands of family and work with school [14, 15].

Study Abroad Program: Merritt College currently offers 8 abroad programs from several departments on campus. These programs occur during summer, spring and winter breaks and have increased in popularity with students. The program allows students to study the sciences, culture and politics and assist in addressing our goal of globalizing the experience and perspective of our student [16].

Classes in the Community: Merritt College offers courses in the surrounding community in numerous areas including the Fruitvale Center for ESL and other courses, and local high schools where students can earn college credit and become incorporated into college life. In addition, this includes area churches and community centers to reach student populations that might not otherwise consider attending college and to make attending college more accessible [17, 18].

Individualized Instruction: Students are able to receive free individualized instruction and tutoring at the Learning Center (LC). The LC offers tutoring and individualized instruction for English composition and term paper processes, math and science. Student needing assistance with general study skills, test preparation and/or specific courses can also get assistance in the LC. In addition numerous computer labs are accessible to students for assistance with any area of computer literacy. Both areas are staffed with highly qualified full-time staff and faculty who work alongside successful and qualified students/tutors [19].

Community Interest: Merritt College offers several not-for-credit, fee based classes to meet the various interests of the community. This includes landscape/horticulture, child development, ESL and other areas [2].

Technical/Skilled Education: Merritt College offers certificates and degrees that seek to serve the career goals of students and the demands of the employment sector. The college's nursing program is highly successful and has recently expanded offerings to various local hospitals. The Administration of Justice program trains all new recruits for the Oakland Police department, and the Fire Science program trains students interested in careers with the fire department. Child Development offers degrees and certificates for the growing demand for licensed childcare, and the COSER Program (Community and Social Services) offers Drug and Alcohol counseling certification to prepare numerous students for this growing field. Currently, the college is developing Genomics and Microscopy programs to train students in high paying careers as research technicians [2].

Service Learning: Several programs on campus offer service learning. For example, our Radiology program requires students to participate in 4 hours of service learning for each of the two years. Students write a reflection paper following the activity. They work at the Alameda County Food Bank, volunteer at Nursing homes, help with charity runs, health fairs, etc. to create a very positive and worthwhile learning experience.

Self Evaluation

Merritt College meets the standard. The variety of modes of delivery and the connections Merritt College makes with the employment sector are all areas that have been enhanced or developed in recent years. The success of these programs has encouraged our future planning of offering more courses in these and other areas. On-going reviews of the courses and programs discussed occurs where we are able to evaluate the effectiveness and of these areas.

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

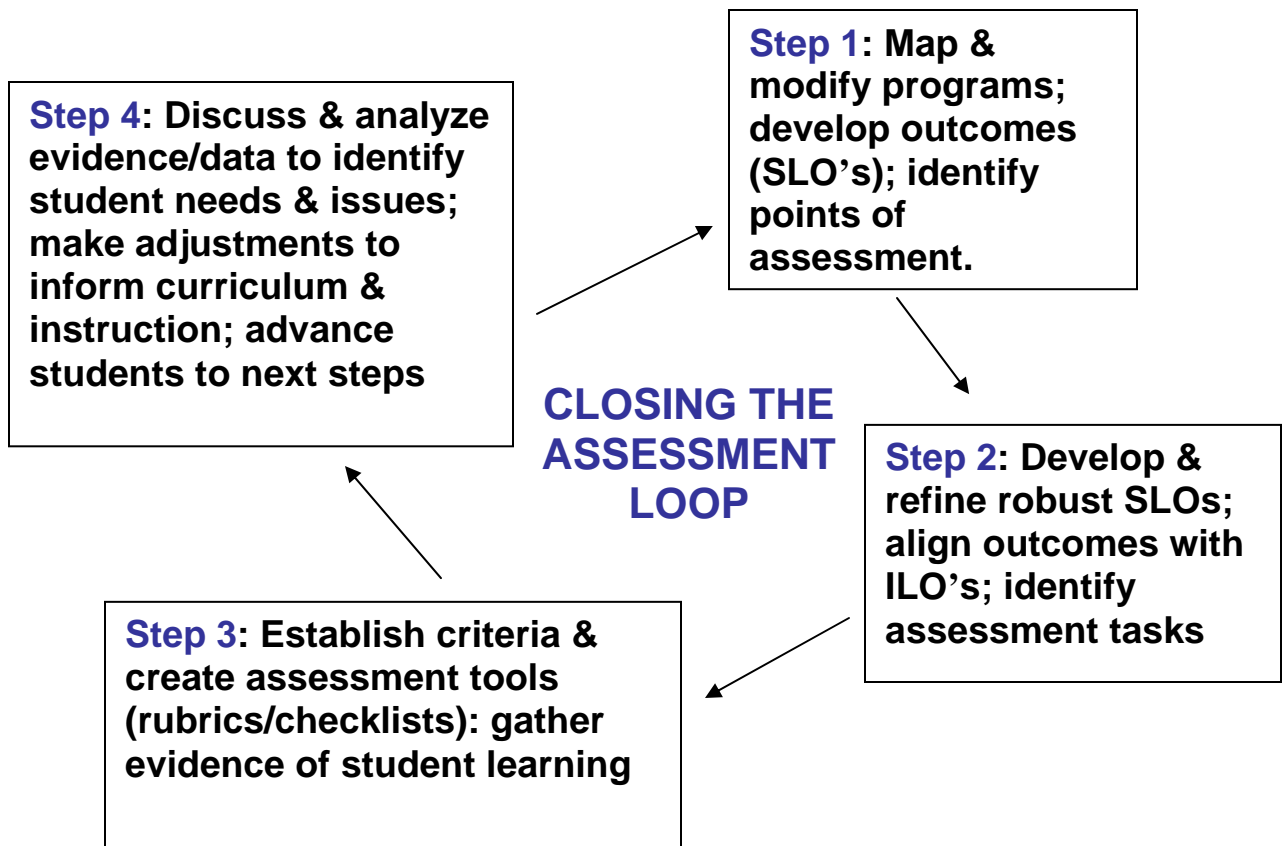
During the 2006-7 and 2007-8 academic years Merritt College has placed creating SLO's for courses, programs, certificated and degrees as a top institutional priority. Faculty have received training as a whole and individually by department on what SLO's are, their importance to student success and to the integration of SLO's into our overall thinking about how Merritt College ensures effective instruction. During those same academic years every staff development training that occurred before each semester and during the spring semester was dedicated to SLO training and cooperative activities. Experts in the field were brought to campus to assist Merritt College in the understanding and development of institutional and program level SLO's. Each of these trainings was coupled with trainings and updates to department chairs and members of the academic senate [8]. The effectiveness and commitment of these efforts has culminated in the formation of the fall 2007 SLO committee in which an SLO-trained faculty member was given release time to form a committee that would assist in the ongoing process of SLO formation [20,21,22].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College has actively worked to incorporate SLOs for courses, programs, certificated and degree levels. Significant progress has been made towards ensuring that SLO's have been written at the degree, program, and course level. Fifty percent of all college programs have completed program level mapping and identification of SLOs. One exception is the Nursing Department, which has completed all phases of the SLO process due to the requirements of state certification [21].

The next three pages present the process used by Merritt College to address and measure student success. A document titled *Phases of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment* describes Merritt College's progress in identifying and assessing program and course outcomes. Most departments and programs at Merritt have been assessed as being in one of four phases of the Assessment Process, corresponding to the steps outlined in the "Assessment Loop" below.

MERRITT COLLEGE MAPPING, OUTCOMES, and ASSESSMENT LOOP



PHASES OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

PHASES OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Most departments and programs at Merritt have been assessed as being in one of four phases of the Assessment Process, corresponding to the steps outlined in the "Assessment Loop."

PHASE ONE

- Develop program learning outcomes
- Create program maps
- Write course outcomes for stand-alone courses

DESCRIPTION OF PHASE ONE

In this phase the program or discipline identifies the program learning outcomes and maps the courses that comprise the program's degrees and certificates.

- Develop program outcomes in dialog with others in the department, in the college or in the community.
- Align program outcomes with Institutional Learning Outcomes.
- Learn mapping conventions.
- Dialogue with members of the program or discipline (and with other faculty and community or industry partners) to write or modify program learning outcomes and program map.
- Work with mapping assistant to create a PowerPoint map of the program or complete SLO addendum for course outcomes and assessment tasks.

DISCIPLINES/DEPARTMENTS/PROGRAMS IN PHASE ONE

ESL	Medical Assistant
Geology	Natural Science
Fire Science	Real Estate
Humanities	Recreation
Human Services	Spanish
Basic Landscape Horticulture	

DESIRED PARTICIPATION: 75% of the faculty in the program and at least one student. It is highly recommended that other faculty or community partners participate in the drafting of outcomes for programs that offer degrees and certificates, particularly CTE programs.

PHASE TWO

- Align program outcomes with courses.
- Write course outcomes.

DESCRIPTION OF PHASE TWO

- Learn about course outcomes versus exit skills/objectives

In dialog with the faculty in the program or discipline (and other faculty and community and industry partners as appropriate), write outcomes for the five most frequently offered courses.

PHASES OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

STEP TWO IN THE ASSESSMENT LOOP: IDENTIFYING ASSESSMENT TASKS

When we write student learning outcomes, we always need to think about the assessment tasks or assignments we envision our students completing in order to demonstrate their learning. This helps ground our aspirations for student learning in reality.

DISCIPLINES/DEPARTMENTS/PROGRAMS IN PHASE TWO

Administration of Justice (Police Science)	Communications
African American Studies	Community Social Services
Anthropology	Environmental Studies
Business	LNHT: Nursery Management
CIS	Nutrition
English	Dietary Manager
Child Development	Dietary Assistant
• Full Certificate	Dietetic Technology
• Assistant Teacher (1)	Paralegal Studies
• Associate Teacher (1)	Vocational Nursing
• Early Intervention (1)	
• Violence intervention	

NOTE: Create outcomes with assessment in mind.
How do you plan to gather evidence of student learning?

PHASE THREE

- Develop plans and tools for assessment
- Gather evidence of student learning

DESCRIPTION OF PHASE THREE

- Decide when assessments will occur in the program and course.
- Map key assessment points in the program map (if not already completed in phase one.)
- Identify which assignments you are already giving that allow students to demonstrate achievement of outcomes or develop assessment tasks (talk with others about these).
- Develop criteria for these tasks: *scoring guides or rubrics*. Attend rubric workshops. Meet with others to decide “what is good.”
- Administer the assessment and gather evidence of student learning.

DISCIPLINES/DEPARTMENTS/PROGRAMS IN PHASE THREE:

Chemistry
Associate Degree Nursing
Radiologic Science

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

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

Merritt College uses established and collaborative procedures that are faculty centered to develop, approve, improve, deliver and evaluate courses and programs. This process occurs individually by faculty initiative in areas of courses and programs they wish to enhance and collectively by departments seeking the same goal. Whether individual or collective, faculty work with Chairs, Deans and the VP of Instruction to ensure the highest quality product.

- Faculty are self motivated and encouraged by administration to design new courses and update existing ones. They initiate new ideas by working with other faculty in their areas and at times in other departments to create learning communities and/or cross listed courses [23].
- Department Chairs assist faculty when needed on ideas and procedures for approval. Additionally all Chairs meet monthly and are given data by the office of the VP of instruction and/or the Peralta District office regarding course enrollment patterns, student retention and success for individual courses and programs. This information is discussed with faculty and Deans to determine viability of new ideas and areas that are in need of improvement [13].
- Curriculum Committee (CIC) assists in all areas of developing and updating courses. Faculty have easy access to CIC members to get input on draft course proposals and are given suggestions and procedural information. Of particular importance on the committee is the Articulation Officer who provides faculty with advice on submitting courses for degree and transferability and contacting faculty/chairs to inform them that courses are in need of review by the CSU and UC systems. [14]
- Administration particularly Deans and the VP of instruction assist faculty by administering evaluations of instruction that are done with other faculty to provide suggestions for improving teaching techniques and syllabi formation. New evaluation procedures have been approved by the District and Union (2007-8) and ongoing efforts occur to evaluate all adjunct and full-time faculty. The tenure process particularly gives consistent feedback to newly hired faculty [24].

The above entities work collaboratively to encourage new ideas and quality by utilizing a clearly defined procedural process. Evidence of the effectiveness of the procedures is

demonstrated in the high number of CIC new course approvals and updates during the past 2 academic years [14].

In addition, to ensure that the establishment of quality educational programs, Merritt College relies upon faculty in conjunction with Chairs to engage in:

- Annual Program reviews
- Syllabi review in collaboration of SLO formation
- Departmental meetings
- Monthly Chair meetings that include curriculum issues
- New and updated curriculum development
- Annual assessment of program needs for instructional supplies
- Educational Master Planning
- Flex activities on curriculum issues, especially SLOs

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Merritt College recognizes and encourages the central role of faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs and has worked to improve shared governance and participation in all areas. The areas needing improvement are faculty evaluations especially adjunct and tenured faculty, consistent departmental meetings and division meetings in all areas of instruction and completion of the SLO process to include all areas of instruction.

During the fall 2008 semester, CurricUNET has been implemented by the Office of Instruction and Curriculum Committee to utilize the most current methods of evaluating curriculum across the state. Merritt College has included each of the areas of concern and those that are functioning well into the Master Planning process. Reviews and formation of new programs and initiatives is ongoing.

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

Merritt College meets this standard by consistently upholding academic review standards that are already in place and by developing and supporting the growth of this area. The following means are used to meet this standard:

- An active faculty participation in the completion of program reviews and formation of program SLO's.
- Administrative support of revisiting program reviews to facilitate clarity about the needs or various areas.
- Adherence to all state mandated career technical licensing and community organization relationships. Faculty serve on career technical discipline area boards and committees

- Curriculum that is competency based and updated to include new paradigms. Curriculum review that includes ensuring transferability to CSU/UC's.
- Certification and licensing that complies with the rigors of state mandates.
- An SLO committee that is chaired by a faculty member and works in concert with programs, curriculum committee and administration.
- Assessment of student progress towards achieving outcomes for the nursing and Administration of Justice departments.

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Merritt College utilizes shared governance in all areas of campus planning which helps to ensure faculty input especially in the areas of program reviews and SLO formation. Career technical areas are growing and their growth is encouraging the implementation of advisory committees. Progress needs to continue to ensure that SLO's are completed in all areas. Program SLO's need to be established and assessed for all areas upon student completion of the program. Advisory committees need to be established for all career technical areas.

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

Merritt College offers high-quality instruction that is validated by both internal and external sources. Internally, Merritt College utilizes the articulation officer, curriculum committee, department chair input, Merritt College faculty senate and faculty and program reviews [3]. Externally, Merritt College complies with standards established by the State Chancellors' office and the standards set by the CSU/UC system for articulation agreements [25,26].

Internally:

- The Merritt College articulation ensures that teaching faculty are aware of updates and/or additions and removals of courses from four year transfer colleges.
- The curriculum committee assists faculty in the process of updating courses, major requirements and creating policy for new modes of instruction.
- Department Chairs are faculty members who collectively discuss and submit resolutions about matters directly related to the quality of teaching. For example what courses are appropriate as short-term offerings, and what new teaching technology should be purchased for classroom use.
- Merritt College Faculty Senate discusses and resolves on matters related to the quality of instruction including policies for on-line instruction and hiring priorities.
- Faculty reviews administered by colleagues and the administration provide input to instructors on areas in need of improvement to ensure high standards.
- State requirements are adhered to for all mandates.
- Program reviews are utilized to enhance the experience students have in the process of completing degrees.

Self Evaluation

This Standard is met. Faculty work to ensure high-quality instruction that assures breadth, depth, and rigor in all areas. Many internal and external processes work collaboratively to ensure that high standards are met and/or are enhanced by review processes. The completion of SLO's and faculty reviews will assist in ensuring Merritt College's continued success and growth in this area.

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

Merritt College recognizes that diversity is a critical faculty to consider in the delivery modes and teaching methodologies offered to students. Fifty percent of Merritt College students are first generation college students, the majority come from communities of color, many balance the demands of school with work and family, and many enter basic skill level classes and the tutoring program at Merritt College in order to achieve their academic goals [1]. Importantly, Merritt College recognizes that students learn in different ways and are in need of modes of delivery that allow them to express their ability to perform.

To address diverse experiences Merritt College supports the existence of the Ethnic Studies program which offers a variety of courses related to the history and culture of people of color. Merritt College also offers courses outside of the Ethnic studies department which address the same cultural issues [2]. Initiatives in Basic Skills enhancement are underway to address the academic needs of students whose academic levels need improvement [27]. The Disabled Student Services office works with faculty to ensure that alternative methods of examination and knowledge attainment occur [28]. Instructors utilize access to flex trainings on new teaching methodologies and Staff Development funds to attend conferences and training on various aspects of teaching [9]. In the classroom, faculty utilize the following methods of instruction to ensure varying modes of delivery [2]:

- On-line courses
- Hybrid on line/face-to-face instruction
- Visual enhancement of lectures through on-line activity in class and power point
- Hands on learning in science/technology laboratories and observation laboratories
- Scheduling flexibility including short-term, intercession and evening offerings
- Peer instruction through group activities
- Testing variety including oral, take-home, essay and multiple choice formats
- Integration of the Learning Center offerings to provide access to individual instruction

Self Evaluation

Merritt College meets this standard. The institution has long-established methods of ensuring that diversity, in its many forms, is addressed in the curriculum and classroom. On-line instruction offerings are growing, as is the standardization and quality of this mode of instruction. The passage of Measure A has allowed faculty to purchase the latest modes of delivery in the classroom, and the Office of Instruction has created a means to ensure that all faculty (full-time and part-time) have access to these methods. Training and workshops on diversity issues are offered regularly and have high participation rates by faculty.

- e. The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.***

Merritt College evaluates courses and departments through an on-going systematic review as an important part of ensuring quality programs. All programs and courses regardless of the mode of delivery or location receive review in the following forms [3, 4, 6]:

- Program Review
- Unit Plans
- Master Planning
- Evaluations of faculty by students
- Student Survey
- CIC for updating courses

The review and planning process occur with the input and direction of faculty in conjunction with administration. Faculty review their programs and courses to ensure that text and teaching methods are the most current and effective. Within the last two academic years, every program on campus has undergone review and planning.

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Although program review has been completed and integrated into the master plan, course review needs to occur in most areas. This is particularly to integrate SLO formation on the course level in relation to the program and college SLO's. Identification and assessment of SLOs for courses are currently underway, but few courses have completed SLOs since the college chose to begin this work with program SLOs. The SLOA committee, however, is in the process of assisting faculty and chairs with this task.

- f. The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and career technical education, and degrees. The institution systematically***

strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.

As previously described, Merritt College is actively engaged in the process of formulating SLOs for all areas of instruction. Program reviews and unit planning have occurred during the past two academic years and have been placed into the college master plan. The following processes add to the systematic evaluation and planning process [14, 24, 29, 23, 25]:

- CIC updates that ensure current language and text
- Faculty evaluation
- Department advisory committees
- Department meetings
- Articulation agreements

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Each of the processes are in place but SLO formation needs to continue in order to ensure that the standard is met. Measuring achievement and student success in relation to SLO's needs to occur, and the results need to be disseminated to the campus and surrounding community.

g. If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.

The nursing department uses standardized examination that complies with state regulations [30]. The department adheres to rigorous standards to ensure student competency in the area. Department chairs in all areas are given data on grade distribution for all courses in their area regardless of who the instructor is so that discussion and evaluation can occur if serious grading differences occur.

Self Evaluation

At this time the nursing department is the only area using department standardized exams.

h. The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated learning outcomes.

At Merritt College awarding of course credit is based on State requirements, articulation agreements and standards that are generally accepted for higher education. Course achievement is based on college-level examination, writing and other established learning processes. These processes are ensured to be high quality by program review, evaluation and CIC involvement. Official course outlines are reviewed and approved and updated to meet district and state requirements [14, 25].

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Merritt College's internal processes of review and updating consistently work to ensure high standards. Student learning outcomes need to be completed at the course and program level to fully meet this standard.

i. The Institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.

Merritt College understands the purpose of institution SLO's and their impact on program effectiveness towards student success. The on-going process to write program SLO's has assisted faculty in reviewing and re-thinking their degree and certificate requirements and ways to enhance the outcomes desired. Only one area Nursing awards degrees and certificates based on SLO's because it is a state mandate that they do. Every other area on instruction is in process of completing program SLO's assessment and measuring so that degrees and certificates can be awarded based on SLO's.

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

General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:

a. An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

Descriptive Summary

The mission of Merritt College is to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve by helping students to attain knowledge, master skills, develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society. To accomplish this mission, the College provides open access to excellent instructional programs and comprehensive support services in a culturally-rich, caring and supportive learning environment [31,32].

The college's vision is to:

- Create learning experiences that stimulate intellectual curiosity and empower students to communicate effectively, and think creatively and critically to embrace their potential.
- Prepare students to become the future leaders of our inter-connected global society.
- Engage the community as an active participant and resource to learning through creative partnerships.

As a means of accomplishing the mission and vision of our College, courses and degree programs are offered in five areas; the natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, language and rationality, and ethnic studies. The variety of courses within each area cover basic academic content and methodology by discipline trained faculty. All courses included in the general education requirements are approved by the college's Curriculum and Instruction Committee. In the general education requirements course offerings there are 42+ classes in the natural sciences, 93+ classes in the social and behavioral sciences, 72+ offerings in the humanities, 36+ course offerings in the Language and rationality area, and 46+ offerings in ethnic studies. Thus, Merritt offers students a variety of options in a high quality general education curriculum [2].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College has substantial course offerings in the major areas of knowledge. All of the courses are regularly reviewed by the CIC, and SLO formation has been fully integrated into the course updating process. In addition, new courses are regularly proposed and scrutinized so that each area of knowledge is able to be expanded through course offerings that include new concepts and methodologies in the appropriate fields of study.

b. A capability to be a productive individual and life long learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

The stated purpose and Institutional Learning Outcomes of Merritt College are to provide opportunities for lifelong learning, contribute to the economic growth of our communities while assisting students to attain degrees and certificates, earn credits to transfer, and develop the skills necessary to complete educational goals.

Merritt College's associate degree requirements require successful attainment of courses in English composition, natural sciences and mathematics as well as completion of oral communications and computer literacy. In addition numerous courses in the humanities, ethnic studies and social and behavioral sciences foster critical analysis skills [2].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

- c. A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.***

General course offerings along with aspects of student services enhance Institutional Learning Outcomes in effective ways.

Ethnic studies courses foster cross-cultural understanding and personal awareness about history and civic responsibility. Environmental studies courses offer hands on training in community gardens and environmental advocacy. Political science and student government/club encourage and develop student/collective responsibility in local and national participation in governance and community building. Study abroad programs increase global awareness, global connection and responsibility. Communication and psychology courses develop effective interpersonal communication [2]. Ethical principles and standards are modeled by faculty, staff and administration and developed inside the classroom with policies about behavior and professionalism, and outside the classroom with workshops and trainings offered through the transfer and job placement center.

Merritt College course offerings and on-campus activities described are supported by the college's stated Core Values [2]:

Student Success: We provide challenging and rigorous learning experiences that support the academic and personal success of our students.

Caring Spirit: We genuinely care about every member of our campus community.

Teamwork and Inclusion: We encourage everyone to participate in college governance and assume responsibility for acting on our shared commitment to provide exceptional learning experiences.

Campus Climate: We strive to create a student-centered learning environment that leads to student retention, persistence and success.

Diversity: We honor and respect the different backgrounds, experiences, languages, values and cultures of everyone at the college.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College has a dynamic campus environment where leadership and ethical citizenry are fostered in students. These are areas of development that are taken seriously and have been the focus of improved services in student governments, student club activity, campus events and trainings.

4. All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College offers 28 degrees in General Education fields and 20 degrees in Vocational/Technical programs. All of the VT programs offer one or more areas of inquiry. For example Child Development offers three pathways; Assistant teacher, Associate teacher and Teacher and certificates in early Intervention or Violence Intervention and Counseling. Of the 28 degrees in General education fields all but one (Anthropology) offer areas of concentration or established interdisciplinary cores. For example, Administration of Justice offers two areas of focus; Police Science and Corrections both for degree and/or certificate of completion. African American studies offers one degree path but with four established areas of focus; Family/Society, History/Economics. Africa and the Diaspora, Culture/Creativity. AA degrees in general areas of study such as Social and Behavioral Sciences require students to select from an established core of interdisciplinary courses such as Business, Political Science and Psychology [2].

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. The majority of degrees offered at Merritt have areas of concentration and/or interdisciplinary course offerings for students to select from that ultimately result in focused learning outcomes.

5. Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has 20 vocational and occupational certificates and degrees. The largest of which include; Administration of Justice, Child Development, Environmental

Management and Technology, Landscape Horticulture, Community Social Services, and Nursing. Each of the programs requires rigorous standards established by state guidelines and or outside Boards. Coursework is centered in the training of students to meet the levels of knowledge competency and skill level required for certification/degree [2]. Some of the programs such as Nursing are audited by the California Board of Registered Nursing to ensure that standards are being met. Merritt's Nursing program is considered one of the best in the area, and the demand for training is always increasing. To meet the employment demand, the program has expanded into area hospitals to offer additional access and has hired additional instructors for the same purpose [3].

The Child Development program conforms to regulatory agency guidelines and has expanded course offerings to include topics covering diversity, infants/toddlers, and home based care to add to the body of knowledge required by the state. The Program is committed to quality training. Classes prepare students to function in a variety of early childhood programs. Perspectives on maturation, developmentally appropriate practices, and professional advancement within the childcare field receive primary concentration. Current theory and research, cultural influences, practical applications and a supervised laboratory preschool experience are connected so students will discover their most effective and unique role with children. The program enjoys the reputation of graduating sensitive, knowledgeable, caring individuals who are assets to their community make positive contributions to the well being of children and families [3]. The purpose of the Merritt College Radiologic Science Program is to prepare qualified practitioners who are competent in the art and science of medical imaging. Radiologic Technologists manipulate sophisticated technical equipment and computers to obtain detailed images of the human body. These images assist physicians in the diagnosis of injury and disease in the clinical environment. Radiologic Technologists work in hospitals, clinics, imaging centers, and physician's offices. A successful and competent Technologist is one who thinks critically, solves problems creatively, possesses strong technical skills, and cares for patients with sensitivity and compassion. The technologist must be flexible and able to work with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds with various needs, abilities, injuries, and disease processes. The program's mission focuses on developing these important characteristics in program graduates [3].

The program seeks to:

1. Prepare students for competency in the essential aspects of medical imaging while meeting the needs of the health care workforce.
2. Develop skills in team building, critical thinking and effective communication.
3. Instill appropriate attitudes and foster affective growth in providing care and responding to patients' needs during imaging procedures.
4. Promote professional growth and life-long learning.

The AS degree and the Certificate in Radiologic Science will be awarded upon satisfactory completion of the Prerequisite requirements, the General Education

requirements, and the Major course requirements. The certificate-only option is available only to those who have already earned an Associate degree or higher [2].

The curriculum includes a clinical practicum at various East Bay hospitals. This is a continuous program of 24 months duration. Students applying to the program must be prepared to make a full-time commitment (approximately 36 hours per week during daytime hours) for two full years, including summers. Upon successful completion of the required courses in Radiologic Science and the Merritt College Associate Degree requirements (or equivalent), the student is eligible to take the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists examination required for licensure and practice in the state of California. Upon successful completion of the program and obtaining the California certificate, graduates will qualify for employment as Radiologic Technologists performing a wide variety of patient radiographic procedures in hospitals, clinics, and medical offices and imaging centers [2].

Self Evaluation

The standard is met through Merritt College's numerous and highly enrolled vocational and technical programs that respond to employment demand and ensure competency for student success.

6. The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline.

- a. The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.***

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College clearly states its transfer credit policies in three accessible locations for students: the 2007-2009 College Catalog; the yearly student handbook; and the college website [2,31,32]. In all three areas the following transfer topics are explained:

- Preparing to Transfer
- Information on Concurrent Enrollment
- Transfer Center

- California Articulation Number System (CAN)
- Intersegmental General Education transfer Curriculum (IGETC)
- University of California System
- Berkeley Cooperative Admission Program (CAP)
- Impacted Programs
- Transfer Admissions Requirements
- High School Proficiency Examination
- General Requirements
- Requirements for Nonresidents
- General Education/Breadth Requirements
- University Requirements for the Baccalaureate Degree
- California State University System
- Transfer Admissions Requirements
- Making up Missing College Preparatory Subject Requirements
- U.S. History, Constitution, and American Ideals
- General Education and Course Requirements
- General Education Breadth Requirements
- Certification or General Education

Each of the above areas contains descriptions and encourages students to seek advice from academic counselors. A fulltime transfer counselor offers one-on-one assistance for students, along with numerous workshops, campus visits and college transfer fairs. Transfer policies are reviewed annually by the articulation officer and the curriculum committee in concert with the Office of Instruction.

Articulation agreements are maintained with the CSU, UC, area high school and several locally based private and out of state colleges and universities.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The necessary information is available to students in written form, on the web site, and through all academic counselors, with one counselor's duties specialized in transfer.

- b. When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.***

Descriptive Summary

When programs are eliminated or changed they are addressed by the articulation officer, curriculum committee and the office of the Vice President of Instruction [13,14]. Changes that come from the state, for example course outlines that need to be updated, are communicated by the articulation officer at appropriate meetings such as chairs meetings, through email and communicated through deans. Courses to be eliminated

are discussed with chairs, deans and the office of the Vice President. The curriculum committee chair communicates new requirements through email and on the website for the committee. For example the new requirements to include SLO's with all course updates and new course proposals was communicated via email, reported at chairs meeting and the academic senate and the new form was made available on the CIC website. Importantly, changes that impact course or degree options for students are communicated by academic counselors and also in writing on the color coded sheets that detail degree, CSU and UC transfer requirements. These forms are updated yearly by the articulation officer to ensure that new information is reflected and correctly listed in accessible form. These forms are used by all students and counselors to ensure that everyone is addressing the appropriate and up to date information. [33] They also serve as the basis for the degree and transfer section in the Merritt College catalog which is updated every two years [2].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Systematic processes occur whereby changes or elimination of programs or courses are effectively communicated to the entire campus community, especially students. Processes are in place to ensure that students are able to complete their education in a timely manner with minimal disruption.

- c. The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.***

Description

Merritt College represents itself to the public and prospective and current students through the course catalog, student hand book, high school visitation day/outreach, public information officer (PIO) and the college website. The course catalog communicates degree and transfer information, college mission, vision and values, student service programs, safety, student rights and complaint processes and course descriptions and degree requirements. The catalog is updated every two years to ensure that any changes that have occurred are reflected in the catalog [2]. The student handbook is an academic calendar with important dates for students, includes degree and transfer information and college policies, mission, vision and values. The student hand book is given to student at no cost as a means of increasing use [31]. High school visitation day occurs every year where area high schools are invited to come to Merritt for a day to encourage their attendance at Merritt College.

In addition, Merritt College Office of the President, Vice President, Division Deans and individual instructors develop relationships with area high schools and teach college

courses on site at the high schools [18]. The PIO regularly communicates college initiatives, awards and informational programs to the media to encourage attendance to events and communicate the many innovative programs happening at Merritt College to the public [34]. The college website details many aspects of the institution including course offerings, calendars, athletic events, degree/transfer information, departments particularities, governance, contact information and Passport registration for students. The newly implemented Passport system makes accessing grades, transcripts, fees and other relevant areas easier for students [32]. The system is new and being introduced in stages but one critical aspect of Passport is the creation of merritt.edu email address for all students upon registration. This will allow students to receive constant information about events, deadlines and programs on campus and increase the way that Merritt is able to represent its mission, programs and services. Both the Merritt website and Passport are under construction/in process which has caused delays. The new website has not completely been installed due to technical problems. Once completed the website and Passport will more effectively communicate to the public and students.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College utilizes multiple means to communicate effectively to the public and students.

7. In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board-adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or worldviews. These policies make clear the institutions commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

a. Faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.

The Code of Ethics identifies and protects faculty rights and responsibilities with regard to academic freedom. The Merritt College agrees with the following concept, outlined by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (April 1994): Faculty are reminded that, "...the intellectual virtues of being open-minded, fair, honest and objective in the consideration of differing views, being thorough in research, avoiding the manipulation of data, researching a well-reasoned point of view, and the like should be fostered within the intellectual character of the faculty member."

The Faculty Handbook contains the Student Grievance Policy and Student Academic Grievance Hearing [35]. This is also delineated in the college catalog where it is intended to provide recourse to students for perceived violations of their academic and civil rights.

Objectivity in the presentation of classroom information is assessed through regular peer review as well as tenure review agreed by the contract between the District and the Peralta Federation of Teachers. This contract is consistent with the requirement that the College Mission be in agreement with the California Educational Code (Section 87663). The basis for peer review of tenured and non-tenured faculty involves four categories containing a total of 24 criteria. Among the criteria are four that address academic freedom and the unbiased presentation of information: Faculty members are required to 1. provide perspectives that influence a respect for diverse views; 2. continually assess the teaching-learning process and modify as necessary to retain student interest, stimulate independent thinking, and encourage students to be analytical in their thinking; 3. create a climate conducive to learning; and 4. display behavior consistent with professional ethics listed in the Code of Ethics. Part time faculty are evaluated in a similar four-part process.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

b. The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty.

Standards that apply to students regarding academic honesty as well as related violations and sanctions are clearly described in the college catalog in the section entitled Students Code of Conduct [2]. Included are:

- a philosophical statement of appropriate behavior for Merritt College students;
- a brief description of academic dishonesty;
- possible disciplinary action for violations;
- appeal procedures, and
- guaranteed privacy rights.

In addition, instructors are requested by college administrators and department chairs. to repeat this information in their course syllabi.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. However, a detailed and separate policy on plagiarism is needed to ensure the campus community agrees on what constitutes plagiarism. This policy should be separated from the other areas of the Student Code of Conduct to increase the emphasis needed.

c. Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators, or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and/or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.

Description

Merritt College is a public institution and therefore does not attempt to instill specific beliefs or world views. As discussed previously, the college has codes of conduct for its employees and for students which include the following [2].

Academic Freedom
Student Code of Conduct
Unlawful Discrimination
Sexual Harassment

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Current Board policies ensure that Merritt College imposes no specific beliefs or worldviews in either its publications or instructional settings. Policies define codes of conduct and anti-discrimination for the entire campus community.

8. Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with standards and applicable Commission policies.

Descriptive Summary

This standard does not apply to Merritt College because there is no curriculum offered in foreign locations to non U.S. nationals.

Planning Agenda

During the 2008-9 academic year, faculty plan to update, create and hire part-time faculty in areas related to women, GLBT communities, and Latino Americans to offer more courses that teach to the experiences of diverse groups. On-line instruction and purchasing more classroom technology are in process and are included in the college master plan [4].

To facilitate student access and success, Merritt wants to ensure that its new website is easy to navigate and that all critical information is timely posted. In addition, Peralta students should be given access to Peralta.org email so that instructors can expand their communication with students.

Planning Agenda

During the 2008-9 academic year the aim is to complete all mapping and SLO formation for all degree and certificate programs. In addition, those who have already completed this phase of the process will complete the assessment of student achievement so that

they are able to begin making improvements in curriculum and instruction. Funds were allocated by the district during the summer of 2008 to support SLO formation by adjunct faculty members. Again, these efforts demonstrate the commitment by Merritt College to fully integrate SLO formation and processes into all areas of instruction.

Planning Agenda

Evaluate and rewrite the Anthropology degree (spring, 2009) Write degree requirements for subjects that do not currently offer degrees such as Ethnic Studies and Psychology (academic year 2009-10).

Planning Agenda

A Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty policy is to be initiated by the Office of the Vice President and addressed by the Academic Senate.

References

1. Student Equity Plan, 2008
2. Merritt Catalog, 2007-2009
3. Department Program Reviews
4. College Educational Master Plan 2009
5. Completed Part-Time Faculty Evaluation Survey to Chairs, 2008
6. Student Needs Survey
7. Additional Student Surveys
8. Staff Development Trainings, SD Schedule
9. Staff Development Funds Allocated, SD Report, Spring 2008
10. SLOAC Minutes, 2007-08
11. Student Learning Outcome Assessment (Ed. Plan), 2008
12. SLOAC Planning Agenda, 2008
13. Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD) Minutes, 2007-08
14. Curriculum and Instruction Committee (CIC) Minutes, 2007-08
15. Distance Education Resolution, 2007
16. Study Abroad Program Descriptions
17. Fruitvale Center Assessment, 2008
18. High School Instructional Partners, 2007-08
19. Learning Resource Center, Description of Services
20. SLO Maps
21. SLO Program Outcomes
22. SLO Course Outcomes
23. Department Meeting Minutes, 2007-08
24. Board Policy on Tenure and Evaluation Procedures (BP 3.30)
25. Articulation Agreements
26. Articulation Notices from CSU/UC
27. Basic Skills Proposals, 2007-08
28. DSP&S Description of Services

29. Advisory Committee Descriptions for Programs
30. Allied Health Programs- License Requirements
31. Merritt College Student Handbook, 2007-08 and 2008-09
32. Merritt College Website: www.merritt.edu
33. Transfer and Degree Requirement Handouts
34. Report from Public Information Officer
35. Board Policy 4.43

Standard IIB

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.

1. The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning, and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College provides an array of student support services throughout the campus to enhance student access, progress, learning and success, and the institution takes steps to ensure the quality of those services. From application for admission to entry into a course of study students are encouraged to participate in their own matriculation. Among the many services provided to students are the following [1].

Admissions and Records	Financial Aid
CalWORKs/MerrittWORKs	Assessment Center
Children's Center	Learning Center (see Standard IIC)
Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE)	• Tutoring
Counseling Services	• Computer Lab
Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS)	Library (see Standard IIC)
• Accommodations Center	"One-Stop Shop" CalWORKs (MerrittWORKs) Career Center
• High Tech Computer Lab	Transfer Center
• Alternate Media Services	Fruitvale Learning and Support Center
• Learning Opportunity Program	Student Health Services
Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)	Student Activities
Bookstore	Associated Students of Merritt College — ASMC
Latino Student Center	Veteran's Affairs

Self Evaluation

The following documents provide evidence of the extent to which the institution ensures the quality of these services and supports of student learning.

Quality Assurance Plans, Surveys and Program Reviews

- Matriculation Plan [2]
- Transfer Center Plan [3]
- Student Services Educational Plan - 2001 to 2017 [4]
- CalWORKs Career Center/One-Stop Shop Client Satisfaction Survey [4]
- Student Needs Survey Findings: Follow Up to the Equity for All Report to the President [5]

Categorical Program Plans

- CARE Year End Report [6]
- CalWORKs (MerrittWORKs) Program Plan [7]
- EOPS Plan and Year End Report [8]
- DSPS Plan [9]

Program Reviews

- Financial Aid [10]
- Transfer Center [11]
- Articulation [12]
- Matriculation [13]
- Health Services (College Nurse) [14]

In addition to these plans, reviews, and other assessment measures, Merritt College has also assessed the quality of the services it provides as part of grant proposals and campus initiatives, including the Equity for All Scorecard Project Report. [15] This report enabled us to target our efforts on areas of special need for our diverse student population especially in our basic skills plan.

The lists above provide evidence of the scope and depth of student support services which Merritt College provides. Efforts to ensure quality in those services appear in reports and program review summaries and in campus-wide surveys, including the following:

- Matriculation Plan
When last updated October 31, 2005, the Matriculation Plan noted activities and goals for the standards that make up the eight components of the Matriculation Program: Admissions, Orientation, Counseling/Advisement, Student Follow-up, Coordination and Training, Research and Evaluation, and Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation. The Matriculation Plan will be reviewed spring 2009. [2]
- CalWORKs/MerrittWORKs Career Center/One-Stop Shop Client Satisfaction Survey

In Spring 2007, the umbrella organization EASTBAY Works conducted a client satisfaction survey of all their regional centers, including the one located at Merritt College. Using a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest degree of satisfaction, the survey results showed that clients reported satisfaction rates of between 8.7 and 9.5 on the satisfaction indicators of overall satisfaction, meeting expectations, comparison with ideal service, likelihood of recommending services, willingness to reuse services, accessibility, knowledge and helpfulness of staff, timeliness of services. [16]

- Equity for All Scorecard Project Report

In October 2006, a report documenting the findings of the Equity Scorecard was published, noting that African-American and Hispanic/Latino students were overrepresented in basic skills courses and underrepresented in higher level courses, especially those related to transfer. [15]

- Transfer Center Program Review

In Spring 2007, the Transfer Center was relocated to the renovated R Building, creating a more seamless flow of students and services between programs. This new space is considerably larger and will better serve the needs of the students because of its close proximity to the counseling department. [11]

- Matriculation Program Review

The program review validated that Merritt College ensures the quality and quantity of the counseling services it provides to students by hiring as many counselors as needed, offering counseling and advising in both group and individual sessions through appointments, drop-in sessions, telephone and e-mail advising. In addition Merritt College provides off-site counseling at local high schools and community agencies. [13]

- Health Services Program Review

In its most recent program review, dated May 22, 2007, the Health Services Program documented its emphasis of service quality by stating the following goals:

1. Provide access to health services which promote the physical, emotional, and social well-being of its students, supporting student success and retention
2. Contribute to the health and safety of the college and district by providing expertise in these matters
3. Create a health services program that is in compliance with local, state, and federal health and safety laws.

To assess the quality of the services it provides, the Health Services Program conducted two student health surveys to assess student needs. As a result of those surveys, the Health Services Program began or continued providing the following services: assessment of illnesses, TB skin tests, pregnancy tests, blood pressure checks, crisis counseling and brief therapy, and minor first aid. [14]

Student Services Educational Plan – 2001 to 2017

The Student Services Educational Plan outlines the status and needs of the different units within Student Services for the years 2001 to 2017. The report covered the present and future staffing, equipment, and facilities needs of each unit. The campus made a major commitment to address these needs by undertaking and completing the renovation of the R Building in 2006-2007. Although some needs have not yet been addressed, the majority have been resolved. [4]

2. The institution provides a catalog for its constituents with precise, accurate and current information concerning the following:

a. General Information

	<u>Page #</u>
Accreditation Statement	1
Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Website Address of the Institution	1
Educational Mission	13
Curriculum Patterns and Courses	95-248
Academic Calendar	9
Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Statements	54
Available Student Financial Aid	25-27
Learning Resources	44-45
Names & Degrees of College Staff (Administration, Faculty, Classified)	249-56
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b. Requirements

Admissions Requirements and Procedures	19-25
Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations	23-25
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Degree, Certificate, and Major Requirements	75-81

c. Major Policies Affecting Students

Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty	65
Discrimination Complaint Procedure (including Sexual and Racial Harassment and Discrimination Toward Students)	51-59
Student Grievance Procedures	60-63
Student Conduct, Discipline, and Due Process Rights	64-70
Academic Accommodations Policy and Procedures	70-73

The Merritt College catalog is available for purchase in the book store or accessed by students in the Library, Admissions and Records Office, the Counseling Center or the

Career and Transfer Center free of charge [1]. The catalog can also be accessed by students online at the Merritt College website <http://merritt.peralta.edu>.

d. Locations or publications where other policies may be found.

Descriptive Summary

Students may access policies and additional school-related information in our Student Handbook. [17] The Handbook is made available at no charge at the beginning of each academic year and throughout the year at various locations on campus. The Handbooks are distributed in Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Counseling and the President's office. Handbooks are also distributed at all new student orientations and through some categorical programs (EOPS, CARE). Additionally, the Handbooks are given out at events at our feeder (high) schools, as well as at community events and through some community based organizations. Merritt College produces a two-year catalog that is normally published in late August of publication years. During non-publication years, the college produces a catalog supplement, normally in July, that primarily contains curricular changes. The catalog contains a comprehensive listing of policies and procedures relating to admissions, academics, and student life, as well as curricular information about degrees, certificates, programs, and courses. The library archives all historical pertinent college documents which are made available to all.

Self-Evaluation

Merritt College meets this standard. The institution's catalog is a comprehensive document, providing clear and well-organized information to students, faculty and staff, administration and the interested public.

3. *The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.*

a. *The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method.*

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College makes services accessible to all its students. Several Student Services programs reach out to underserved populations to encourage them to attend community college. These programs also provide peer tutoring and peer advising to first generation college students on campus, hire bilingual staff, provide financial aid and other information in various languages, provide book vouchers for EOPS students, and

arrange individual tutoring and disability accommodations to students served by DSP&S.

Student support services utilizes the following activities and documents to evaluate student access issues:

Assessment

Merritt College makes assessment services available to all students during the year and provides bi-lingual staff for students who speak languages other than English. [18, 19] DSP&S coordinators provide testing accommodations to persons with disabilities. [20] The college has its own web page where the assessment schedule is kept up to date. The web page also contains a direct link to sample questions from the assessment publishers. [21]

Basic Skills Initiative

With State funding for the Basic Skills Initiative at community college campuses, Merritt College is able to address the academic and support needs of its basic skills students. The college's long-term goals are as follows [22]:

1. Increase successful course completion rate for credit Basic skills and ESL courses by 2% per year.
2. Increase the persistence of Basic Skills and ESL students by 2% per year.
3. Increase by 2% per year the percent of students who enroll in Basic skills courses after assessing into these courses.
4. Develop formal processes that facilitate and promote the exchange of effective instructional strategies between faculty in general and developmental education programs.

The Basic Skills Task Force has reviewed and approved for funding several proposals intended to improve success in Basic Skills courses.

CalWorks/MerrittWORKs

Merritt's CalWorks program serves an at-risk population by providing multiple support services to address equity of access: academic, personal and career counseling; financial assistance/work study opportunities; child care assistance and referrals; supervised study time; tutoring and computer learning assistance for TANF students. MerrittWORKs has a part-time bilingual counselor in Spanish and works with CARE for additional child care, transportation, and book assistance. [7]

CARE

In addition to its regular services, this program addresses physical access to the campus by providing 48 CARE students with 31-day bus passes throughout the year. It addressed financial barriers by providing grants of \$289.00 to 17 students during the summers of 2007 and 2008, assisting them with book and tuition expenses not covered by Financial Aid. [6]

Counseling - Matriculation

In an effort to increase access to services and resources, the Matriculation Program assists with counseling services to the maximum extent possible through additional funding to provide counseling and advising in both group and individual sessions, including an online orientation. Bilingual and trilingual staff have been hired whenever possible. In addition, the Matriculation Plan established these goals: provide additional opportunities for student career assessment; respond to student complaints; and conduct a survey of faculty satisfaction with assessment placement. Regardless of program (General Counseling, DSP&S, or EOPS), all counselors skillfully provide academic, career, transfer, and personal counseling. [2]

DSP&S

The DSP&S program addresses physical, psychological and learning barriers by providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. In addition, the program overcomes language and cultural barriers of its students by hiring staff that speak multiple languages: Cantonese, Tagalog, Spanish, Italian and French. [20]

EOPS

The program serves low income, first generation college students. Its services inherently address equity of access for the at-risk student population by providing the means to overcome financial barriers, physical access, and cultural and psychological barriers. The services address direct and some indirect college costs for low income students, as well as academic barriers encountered by first generation college students from inner city high school districts. [23]

Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid at Merritt College provides equity of access through the following: hiring bilingual staff and student assistants; translating fliers about services into at least two languages; attending College Nights at local high schools; participating in on-campus student activities; and visiting classrooms to explain services. In fall 2008, due to the migration to PeopleSoft of the electronic student administration system, there was a serious delay in awarding financial aid monies to qualified students due to several factors, one of which was a failure of the Regent interface with the PeopleSoft system. For spring 2009, a backup system will be put in place so that students can be given their financial aid awards in a timely fashion. [24]

Fruitvale Education Center

Merritt College operates an outreach site, the Fruitvale Education Center, which serves a predominantly Latino community and is located at 1900 Fruitvale Avenue in Oakland. The Center forms a vital link with other community groups, such as the Unity Council, to coordinate and plan services for the community. The Fruitvale Education Center has a special emphasis on English as a Second Language courses, and through grant funds and community collaboration directed by the Unity Council, assisted in the development of Merritt's Medical Assistant and Healthcare Interpreter programs. One of the goals for the center is to ease the transition of students to the main campus for first-time or

nontraditional students by encouraging students to take classes at the center and at the main campus. [25]

High Tech Center (HTC)

The HTC offers computer training, tutoring, and accommodations for students with disabilities. The Center offers classes that meet the computer literacy requirement for the AA degree, teaches students with both cognitive and physical challenges, and provides keyboard modification, screen enlargement and voice input for hands-free computer operation. The HTC offers computer-assisted reading programs and other adaptive computer technology for students with disabilities. [26]

Learning Opportunity Program (LOP)

The Learning Opportunity Program provides individual assessment and instructional assistance in study skills to students who have learning disabilities and who have completed testing and evaluation by the Learning Disabilities Specialist, another qualified professional, or an agency. [27]

Latino Center

The Basic Skills Task Force has committed funds to establish a Latino Center on campus that will function as 1) a bridge to Merritt College from the Fruitvale Education Center; 2) a center where students can access information about the college, including transfer information; and 3) a place where students can learn about support programs such as PBI, Title III, and Puente that are intended to enhance student success. [19]

Equity for All Scorecard Project Report

Scorecard Project reported the following:

The goal for access is to identify and remove access barriers for underrepresented groups (with a special emphasis on Hispanic/Latinos) in an effort to have the college population reflect the service area population. This Project established as a goal related to access to continue to identify and remove access barriers for underrepresented groups and continue to outreach to the service area population so that the college population may be reflective of it. [15]

Transfer Center

The Transfer Center is the college's clearing house for transfer activities and programs, serving as the link between Merritt and California's four-year colleges and universities. A major focus of the Center is to facilitate the transfer of underrepresented groups to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's office has determined that the following groups are underrepresented: Native Americans, African-Americans, Chicano/Latinos, and the physically disabled. Although the Transfer Center focuses on underrepresented students, it also maintains a strong commitment to serving all Merritt College students. [11]

Puente Program

The goal of the Puente Program is to increase the number of educationally under-served students who transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Program employs a three pronged approach: accelerated English writing instruction, sustained academic counseling, and mentoring from the professional community. Through the combination of guided instruction, counseling and mentor advising, a connection to culture and a "work-first" mentality is advanced, teaching students the value of higher education. [28]

Class Room Technology

Merritt College is somewhat lacking in terms of technology available to classroom faculty. There are no "smart" classrooms on campus. There is a need for staff to deliver AV equipment and provide technology support services for faculty and staff. Currently, there is no one on campus whose job description designates him/her as an AV technician.

Veterans Services

Merritt College offers educational assistance to eligible active-duty military, retired, and reserve personnel and their dependents. The Veterans program, in place since 1969, is responsible for certifying students who are entitled to benefits from the Veterans Affairs Department. A staff person assists with students' paperwork and communication between the VA Department and the college, and a veteran's counselor was hired in fall 2008 in anticipation of a greater number of veterans attending the college. [29]

Welcome Center

Merritt College has recently implemented a Welcome Center to attract students and provide assistance for them as they enter the college. Welcome Center staff, including trained Student Ambassadors, guide students through the Matriculation process, refer them to services on campus, increase student retention and persistence through expanded services, and enhance student success at the college. [30]

Self Evaluation

Merritt College is performing well in this area primarily because the institution is committed to equal access and addressing the needs of its under-served student population. There is always room for improvement and Merritt College plans to improve our record on retention and persistence for groups who have been targeted by our Scorecard Project as underperforming in these areas.

- b. The institution provides an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.***

Descriptive Summary

In alignment with the mission of Merritt College, the administration, faculty, staff and students provide numerous opportunities for the college to be involved with the overall development of our students in settings both on and off of the college campus. During the end of the spring 2007, a completely renovated Student Services Building was opened to the students and the public. Of greatest benefit is the location of all Student Services within one building. It should be noted that there was continuous input from students as well as administrators, faculty and staff in the design of the building. [31] Students can move freely from one office to another to gather information and receive services without having to leave the building or change floors to get all of their needs met. The cafeteria and bookstore are located in this building as well. As a result, there is an increase in campus life, including the provision of an environment that encourages study in a place other than the library or the Learning Center.

Self Evaluation

The Associated Students of Merritt College (ASMC) continue the legacy of being an active body within Merritt College. Each year, they continue to spearhead numerous activities that allow the college to become involved both on and off of the campus. [32] Students have the opportunity to participate in volunteer activities, cultural events and enrichment activities that have led to future leaders being cultivated, while at the same time, providing an avenue for the college to continue to be active in the surrounding community. [33]

At the present time, there is a full complement of officers that make up the leadership of the ASMC with 23 active clubs; elections are publicized each year for a new group of student leaders to emerge. [34] Through the leadership of the ASMC in collaboration with the administration, a very active voter registration drive is conducted that brings voter registration personnel to the campus. Announcements are made in classes and bulletins are posted throughout the campus to encourage students and others to take advantage of legal right to vote in all elections. [35]

Additionally, during the spring 2008 semester, the League of Women Voters was invited to provide a forum at the college. During the past few years, students have been sponsored to attend and participate in the annual conference of the Congressional Black Caucus that is held in Washington, D.C. [36] After attending, presentations are made on campus and at Board of Trustee meetings for students and others to be aware of some of the issues that are being addressed at the national level. The ASMC has taken an active lead in being one of the sponsors of the annual statewide Black Caucus Conference (involving students from community colleges from across the state of California). Each year, the leaders of the associated student bodies from all of the Peralta Colleges come together to sponsor a district-wide event to promote leadership among the students from all of the colleges. [36] Scholarships that are sponsored by the ASMC are offered at the end of each year and are awarded at a year-end banquet to acknowledge the winners. [37] Of importance with respect to the scholarships is the

need for students to be involved in volunteer activities in the greater surrounding community. It should be noted that this is a very large event that involves the entire campus community.

With respect to students being involved in volunteer activities, involvements have included the following: early outreach activities in the elementary and middle schools of the Oakland Unified School District; feeding homeless in conjunction with the City of Oakland on Thanksgiving; participating in the Adopt-A-Family program for children in the Merritt Child Development Center and for children of CARE students, providing food baskets and gifts during the holiday season (Thanksgiving and Christmas); additionally the ASMC continues to help sponsor families who are victims of Hurricane Katrina and are enrolled at Merritt College. [38]

On campus, there are numerous activities for students to participate in throughout the school year that include, but are not limited to the following: Unity Day (a celebration of various cultures that make up the student body), Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month, Women's History Month, and the regional Tae-Kwon-Do championship. At various times throughout the year, guest speakers are invited to present on varying subjects. [32] Students have taken a lead in promoting the conversion to the new computer system, Passport, prior to and during the transition period. Last but not least, students are afforded the opportunity to participate on various hiring committees and have an equal vote when decisions/recommendations are made. [38]

c. The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.

Descriptive Summary

All counselors meet the minimum qualifications for community college counselors as stipulated in the state's education code. [39]

The evaluation policies and procedures for tenure-track, tenured and part-time counselors are described in the Peralta Community College District Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Handbook, 2007. [40] One of the primary objectives of the tenure track evaluation policy is the evaluation of the faculty (counselor) member's effectiveness in terms of providing effective services to students. Part-time counselors are also evaluated out of a concern for improving and maintaining excellence in performance and professionalism. According to board policy 3.30B, tenured counselors are evaluated once every three years. Part-time staff is evaluated within the first year of employment. Subsequent evaluations for part-time counselors are once every six semesters. The evaluation process consists of student, peer, and administrative evaluations. [41]

A wide variety of professional training and development opportunities are available and provided to all counseling faculty. There are weekly counseling department meetings, the opportunity to attend the Ensuring Transfer Success Conference, UC and CSU counselor conferences, technology training (SARS, Eureka), and counselor specific district-wide workshops held during professional days. Additional training is also available to individual counselors through staff development funds. Counselors are also eligible for sabbatical leave in order to perform research and develop courses leading to increased student success. [42. 43]

To encourage participation and if funds are available, part-time counselors are paid to attend training offered during professional day or when the training occurs on days the part-time counselor is not scheduled to work.

New counselors receive ongoing one-on-one training from experienced counselors. The opportunity to shadow other counselors is also provided.

Recent training:

- *NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) Community College Student Services Institute – Professional development for Student Affairs Professionals – 40 hours of training customized to the college's needs which were developed through an on-line survey of student services staff. The institute's facilitators conducted training on the college campus in February and March of 2007.

- *Part-time Counselor district-wide training during spring 2007 facilitated by full-time counselors. This was a full-day of interactive training to increase the knowledge base of and provide updates of academic policies for part-time counselors.

- *Counselors were part of the Student Services retreat at Mills College in spring 2008.

In August, 2007 SARS counseling software was installed and implemented allowing electronic scheduling of counseling appointments with general, DSPS and EOPS counselors. [44]

The Peralta College District implemented a new student service software system called PASSPORT in April 2008 which replaced the old mainframe system. PASSPORT is a web-based integrated system accessible through the internet by faculty, students and staff. It is a database which will house all student records, student admission documents, student financial aid status, class schedule, and college catalog. Training for counseling faculty is scheduled to begin in March, 2008. [45]

The counseling department co-chairs publish minutes of the weekly departmental meetings. The minutes are accessible through the Merritt Counselor Site which contains comprehensive information needed by counselors to serve students. There is also a listserv specifically for counselors to discuss counseling issues and share information. [46]

Self Evaluation

In April, 2007, student services moved into the newly remodeled and reconfigured “R” building, renamed the Student Center which provides increased space for student services in three defined clusters. The Transfer Center, Job Placement, CalWORKs/MerrittWorks, Latino Student Center, and Puente are located in one cluster. Counseling, Matriculation DSPS, EOPS/CARE and Assessment are in an adjoining cluster. Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, Veterans Affairs, Research and Planning Officer, and Student Service administration are located in the same building. Also located in the Student Center are the AMSC offices, Health Services, bookstore, and cafeteria.

In 2004, a research and planning officer was hired, adding to the college’s ability to plan strategically. The college research officer designed survey instruments to capture student views and analyzed the resulting data in order to evaluate the student service programs at Merritt College.

According to the findings of the Student Needs’ Survey, June 2007, 56% of students surveyed were satisfied/very satisfied with counseling services at Merritt College. Students also indicate that increased levels of counseling services are needed in the areas of transfer and nursing as well as increased access to counselors. [5]

The counselor evaluation process works well. Counselors are evaluated based on observation of factors which support student development. [40] The level of competence of existing counseling staff is at the highest level possible and there is emphasis on providing quality counseling services to students.

Merritt College is involved in an ongoing process to design, maintain and evaluate counseling and/or academic advising programs.

- d. The institution designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.***

Descriptive Summary

The ethnic makeup of the Merritt College student body is exceptionally diverse. As reported in the Equity for All Scorecard Report, when viewing new matriculating students as of Fall 2004, no one ethnic group is in the majority; Merritt College is a majority minority campus. As of Fall 2007, the ethnic makeup of the student body was 35% African-American, 21% White, 16% Hispanic/Latino, 15% Asian, 7% Unknown, 3% Filipino, 2% Other, and 1% Native American. [15]

The Merritt College faculty is also ethnically diverse, though not as diverse as the student body. As noted in the Fall 2006 College Profile, the ethnic makeup of the faculty in Spring 2006 was 51% White, 28% African-American, 9% Filipino, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 7% Hispanic/Latino, and 4% Unknown. [47]

New major

Currently in the development stage is a new Liberal Arts major with an emphasis in cross cultural studies. The major includes courses from a broad range of academic departments. Students choosing to earn this degree will be required to complete 9 core units (with courses from ethnic studies, communications and anthropology), plus 9 units from four categories: women and gender, race and ethnicity, regional and national identities, and cultural expression. [48]

Ethnic studies

Merritt College proudly offers many courses which seek to offer students information about ethnicity and culture, both in the United States and beyond. In this regard, our largest academic department is African American Studies. Courses are also offered in Asian American Studies, Mexican/Latin American Studies, and Native American Studies. [1] Not only are courses offered in the standard lecture format, there are also opportunities to study abroad. Excursions have been offered to the following [49]:

GHANA: African Heritage Educational Tour
KEMET (ANCIENT EGYPT): Classical Africa Educational Tour
JAMAICA: Africa in the Caribbean Educational Tour
HAITI: African Rights Activist Tour
EL SALVADOR
MEXICO

The programs and services at Merritt College that support and enhance understanding and appreciation of diversity on the campus are as follows:

- CalWORKS/MerrittWORKS
- DSP&S
- DSP&S Accommodations Center
- DSP&S High Tech Computer Lab
- EOPS/CARE
- PUENTE
- Centro Latino
- Fruitvale Center

The Associated Students of Merritt College sponsor student clubs which also support and facilitate diversity on the campus. [33] The clubs listed below sponsor activities and events that encourage members of our diverse campus community to come together in appreciation of the many diverse cultures at Merritt.

- Asian Cultural Club
- Black Student Union

- M.E.C.H.A.
- Puente Club
- C.O.S.E.R. Club
- Queer Club

ASMC also sponsors events and activities in celebration of Black History Month, Women's History Month and Cinco de Mayo.[32]

Regarding the institution providing programs, practicing and supporting /appreciating diversity, the institution underwent a self evaluation called Equity for all Scorecard Project. The final report states:

Chart 1 shows that of new matriculating students no one group is in the majority at Merritt College. Merritt College is a majority minority campus. The largest ethnic group is African American and the smallest is Native American.

The Executive Summary states

Key Findings for Discussion and Agenda Setting: On the one hand, African American and Hispanic/Latino students are the overwhelming majority of students enrolled in basic skills or lower level courses and their share of basic skills enrollments is much greater than their representation in the student body. On the other hand, based on what would be expected from their overall enrollment shares, large numbers of African American and Hispanic/Latino students are “missing” from higher level and transfer courses. In addition, a relatively small percentage of African American and Hispanic/Latino students are honored on the Dean’s List, which indicates they are not being supported to achieve at the highest levels in their courses.” [15]

Self Evaluation

As reported in the Staff Self-Study Survey, staff appeared to be satisfied with ethnic and gender diversity but less satisfied with the diversity of political views.

*An overwhelming majority of staff responded that the college seeks gender diversity in the following areas: promotions and staffing (89%), staff in student support services (83%), and instructor diversity (82%).

*On the other hand, a much smaller percentage of staff members responded that the college seeks diversity in political views in: staffing and promotion (31%), staff in student support services (31%), and instructor diversity (33%).

As reported in the Faculty Self-Study Survey, faculty members appeared to be satisfied with ethnic and gender diversity but less satisfied with the diversity of political views. An overwhelming majority of staff responded that there is ethnic diversity in staffing and promotions. Only one third of faculty responded that there is diversity in political views in the area of staffing and promotions.

About nine out of ten faculty members responded that there is ethnic diversity in instructors and staff. Likewise 8 out of 10 responded that there is gender diversity in staff and faculty. [50]

The standard is met in the sense that the institution is being proactive by evaluating itself to determine measures to enhance its own level of diversity. The results point to areas where measures can be taken to correct and redirect the current outcomes.

e. The institution regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases.

Descriptive Summary

The assessment instruments utilized by the Peralta Colleges are listed on the Chancellor's Office approved list. All tests approved by the Chancellor's office must present evidence that the tests are valid and minimize biases. According to the PCCD Assessment Handbook, 5th Edition, March 2002, validation studies are performed by the District Office of Research and Institutional Development on all assessment instruments currently in use by the college." The district office also conducts studies to ensure that the placement instruments used by the college are free of or minimize cultural and linguistic bias. Data is gathered and analyzed for any disproportionate impact on a particular group of students. Studies may also be requested by the campus researcher officer. [51]

The counseling faculty uses assessment test scores in conjunction with multiple measures placement criteria in recommending student course placement to further aid in minimizing cultural and linguistic biases. The multiple measures placement criteria includes factors such as previous educational record, grades, number of hours employed, primary language of student, learning disabilities, life experience interest, time for study, etc. [52]

Self Evaluation

The college in collaboration with the district office has a process in place to evaluate assessment instruments currently in use.

f. The institution maintains student records permanently, securely and confidentially, with provision for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which the files are maintained. The institution publishes and follows established policies for the release of student records.

Descriptive Summary

Release of student records

Merritt College is in compliance with requirements regarding access to education records established by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-380, as amended) and regulations in Title V of the California Administrative Code, Chapter 6, Article 6.

Merritt College publishes and follows established policies for the release of student records. These policies can be found in the college catalog (published every two years) as well as in the student handbook (published each academic year). [1]

Maintenance of Student Records

Peralta Community College District Administrative Procedure 6.34 addresses record retention, which includes student records. The policy establishes what constitutes a student record, the length of time records are to be maintained and procedures for the destruction, storage and retrieval of records by departments. [53]

The following campus programs/departments maintain student records:

Department/Program	Records kept?	Paper/Electronic	How protected?
Admissions & Records	Yes	Both	Paper files stored in secured, locked cabinets in storage area behind A&R office; only accessible to A&R staff. Password required to access electronic data. Paper files are kept on campus for current term and forwarded to the District A&R office the following term.
Assessment	Yes	Both	Stored in secured, locked cabinets; password required to access electronic data
DSPS	Yes	Both	Maintained in locked file cabinets
EOPS	Yes	Both	Password required to access electronic data; paper files in secured area of office
General Counseling	Yes	Both	Password required to access electronic data;

			paper files in secured area of office
Health Services	Yes	Paper	Locked cabinets; confidentiality stmt signed by all Health Center staff
Financial Aid	Yes	Both	Files stored in a locked room
Puente	Yes	Both	Paper files kept by Puente counselor in secured, locked office in cabinet which is only accessible to Puente staff. Password required to access electronic files
Veterans	Yes	Both	Paper files stored in locked office in secure, locked cabinets. Accessible to VA certifying officer only. Password required to access electronic records
Student Activities		Electronic	Authorized access; only IT personnel can delete records
Transfer Center	Yes	Both	Stored in locked office; password required to access electronic records

Self Evaluation

In the course of researching compliance of this standard, it was found that this standard is partially met. All programs/departments do maintain student records permanently, securely and confidentially. However, all programs/departments in Student Services need to establish procedures for regular back up of their files/records. Additionally, programs and departments should follow district policy for storing out- of-date paper files in the approved manner, which is to use a specified outside storage company. Peralta Community College District has contracted Records Preservation and Management to remove, store and destroy all out-of-date paper records. [54] It is recommended that this issue be addressed at a Student Services meeting, in which all department chairs and program coordinators are in attendance. Programs and departments need to be trained on these policies and procedures. These Student Services meetings are currently held twice monthly. [55]

4. The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Student Support Services at Merritt College use data/information to inform decision-making. The information/ data used to inform decision-making are derived from a variety of instruments and sources. The sources of information/data include the district research office, Merritt College's Research and Planning Office, and locally created surveys. At the institutional level, reports such as the Student Needs Survey and The Equity for All Scorecard Report provide necessary information to assess programs. At the program level the assessment of student learning outcomes, student exit surveys, program review, and student feedback surveys are instrumental in providing invaluable information for the improvement of services. A description of the data collected, the regularity of the data collection and how the results are used are delineated below.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

A relatively large proportion of student support service units created student learning outcomes. The units also created or identified assessment tools to measure the department's progress towards the outcome. The achievements of student learning outcomes are assessed through pre/post surveys, post surveys, and performance surveys. This information has been used to modify activities and programs. The most recent progress review of SLOs was held in December 2008. A schedule is being developed for regular review of student learning outcomes and assessment in Student Services. [56]

Student Exit Surveys

Many programs utilize exit surveys at the end of the semester or at the end of workshop to determine the programs effectiveness. The information gleaned from these activities provides general programmatic information used to change service delivery when necessary. [57]

Unit Action Plans

Units chart a course for the direction of their program through annual unit plans. During spring 2009, Student Services Unit Plans will be reviewed for resource planning in anticipation of the next budgeting cycle. [58]

Program Review

Our program review process until recently was conducted once every 6 years; however, the process has been modified. Now program review is conducted as required by state regulations for categorically-funded programs, or every three years. [59]

Self Evaluation

The standard has been partially met. While a majority of programs have created a mechanism for evaluation, too few have consistently used the mechanism for program evaluation. Additionally, all programs could benefit from a systematic approach to gathering information to inform decision-making.

Planning Agenda

MerrittWorks and CARE: Hire a part-time counselor to provide mental health related workshops regarding abusive relationships, stress reduction, depression support and other issues common to many service recipients.

Financial Aid: Hire staff dedicated to outreach and academic counseling for Financial Aid probation students and money management counselor.

High Tech Center: Under the DSPS umbrella, the High-Tech computer lab is in the process of developing an on-line course for students with disabilities.

DSPS: Improve physical and electronic access for students with disabilities.

Learning Opportunities Program: Increase staff to expand program capacity and to provide services in a timely manner to current students. Expand tutoring services for learning disabled students.

Counseling: Advocate for additional full-time counselors, and provide needed assistance to students in the areas of transfer and nursing program information. Collaborate with district office to provide training for counseling staff.

EOPS: Expand EOPS services by developing guidance courses and other curricula, community activities, and mental health services for students.

Veterans' Affairs: Ensure that all students who are veterans have SEPs. Create an informational FAQ link on the Merritt web site for student veterans

Recruitment: Ensure marketing and registration materials are available in Spanish.

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Standard IIC Library and Learning Support Services

1. The institution supports quality of instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.

a. Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

The Library currently occupies the second and third floors of the “L” Building and comprises approximately 19,000 square feet. Several departments function within the library, viz. reference/instruction, cataloging, acquisitions, circulation/reserves, periodicals, archives, administration. Library and Learning Center operations report to the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; in the last accreditation cycle, the unit reported directly to the Vice President of Instruction.

The Library/Learning Center Building design (LRC and LIB) architectural planning committees, which had originally been designated as separate projects, were joined during fall semester 2007 [1]. This team has worked with the district architectural consultant and architect (Fischer-Friedman Associates) to develop a coherent building design that would support all learning resource and library functions within the existing L Building. Upon completion, the L Building will integrate the campus computer laboratories, smart classroom, tutoring, writing center, science/math tutoring, archives, reference, circulation, cataloging, special collections into one footprint. Currently these are separated within the D and L Buildings.

The Library functions on the second and third floors of the L Building, with most public services (viz. reference, instruction, circulation, periodicals, archives, reprographics) located on the second (main) floor of the building. Most “back office” support functions (acquisitions, processing, cataloging, repair, weeding) take place on the third floor that also houses the circulating collection as well as student group study rooms.

Library/LRC are integral parts of the Educational Master Plan and the Unit Plan which determine the mission and goals of the departments while the latter supports the immediate goals and needs of the respective areas, particularly in the areas of human, instructional, and technological resources [2, 3].

The print collection is small but sufficient for the needs of most students at Merritt College; faculty may, with advance notification, consult and use many of the print

resources available at CSU and UC libraries. Print periodical subscriptions currently number about 98 titles [3].

Collection Development has occurred in three areas directly affecting students, viz. selection and acquisition of print circulating and reference materials, selection and acquisition of networked information resources, and acquisition of digital texts. For print materials, the college disciplines have been divided among the three full-time library faculty who have responsibility for soliciting recommendations from faculty, making recommendations through reviews of selection tools, and for de-accessioning materials to maintain collection currency; in addition, two faculty are completing a project to integrate relevant materials from the Grove Street Merritt Collection that had remained in Dewey format until this 2007-08 academic year [3].

Collection procedures and policies are guided by the Merritt College Library's Collection Development Policy which is consistent with the selection and acquisition policy standards set by the Association of College and Research Libraries [4]. Bibliographers make every effort to support existing programs/departments in the reference collections, and as budgets have permitted, in the circulating collections.

Print Collections [3]

- Holdings are approximate 50,000 circulating volumes
- Includes Dewey Collection Integration Project
- Reserve holdings are approximately 450 titles per semester; instructional faculty put textbooks/supporting materials on reserve for student use.
- Active print periodicals holdings approximately 100 titles
- Active periodical databases approximately 30
- Archive holdings for Campus, Governance documents, and Black Panther Collection

Committee Memberships (Library and LRC) [5]

During the past cycle, library faculty have served on the CDC (Council of Department Chairs), Staff Development (including Chair), PCCD Library/IT District Committee (including Chair), Academic Senate, Curriculum, Campus Technology, Tenure Review, Facilities, and Architecture Committees. Library faculty have also participated in CCCCCO activities including the CCL consortium and the Dean's and Directors meetings.

The Library also provides the following resources/equipment to support access to information and student learning. Currently there are nineteen computers in the reference area, three of which are ADA compliant. The second and third floors and west outer perimeter are supported by 802.11 (b) wireless for student use. The student computers are networked to a pay-for-print system that can use student ID cards as payment medium. Two self-serve photocopiers and one staff-assisted color photocopiers support the Periodicals/Circulation areas. One microfilm scanner/printer can be used for archival film collections [3].

Self Evaluation

A review of the MCL's Collection Analysis Report demonstrates that the average age of printed works still falls in the 1960s, based on mean distribution of works by decade; however, the Department has brought the reference collection into better currency particularly in the ethnic studies, business, allied health, and literature disciplines. As noted, a de-accessioning Project has continued in the past two years weed, replace, or integrate materials from the Merritt Dewey Collection. Two library faculty have been reviewing the Dewey Collection and weeding those books, particularly in foreign languages no longer taught at the campus/district, in preparation for integrating the remaining works into the general collection.

Upgrading of library faculty and staff computing skills is significant in order to stay current with changes in administrative and academic computing changes, as well as to monitor or assist students with Web 2.0 applications.

Library Budget(s) 2005-06; 2006-07; 2007-08

Budgets remained inconsistent, viz. usually year-end, unallocated/unspent funds from the other academic departments. During 2007-08 fiscal year the Library benefited from the efforts of the District Library/IT Committee which placed a successful proposal for \$100,000 per campus per year for the life of the Measure A bond. This will insure the rebuilding and currency of the print collection. A one-time grant of \$25,000 was given in FY 2006-07 from the Chancellor's Office to the individual campuses in order to help modernize and expand the four college campus libraries [6,7].

Descriptive Summary

LEARNING CENTER

The Learning Center provides learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth and variety to facilitate educational offerings. The center is staffed by teaching faculty, classified staff, and student peer advisors. The mission of the Learning Center is to assist students in becoming more efficient, effective, and independent learners. Services are primarily focused on supplemental instructional support to help students in reinforcing and mastering concepts in courses across the curriculum [8].

The Learning Center is located in Building D and is open Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday. A Director of the Learning Center (.5), Coordinator of the Learning Center (1.0), Computer Lab Specialist (1.0), and teaching faculty who are assigned on a semester-to-semester basis report directly to the Division I Dean. Approximately 22 Peer Advisors provide tutoring, computer lab tech support, and receptionist responsibilities for the Center. Tutors are recommended for hire by faculty in the related discipline. Periodic Learning Center staff meetings are held to facilitate general tutor training, but funding through the Title III grant will provide an opportunity to identify and purchase an on-line tutor training program. The Chairperson of the English Department provides training for

the English tutors and training of tutors in Mathematics and other disciplines will be implemented in Spring 2009 [9].

The college utilizes general fund and ongoing block grant allocations to purchase materials and equipment and to support free drop-in tutorial services. Special grant program funds such as the Basic Skills Initiative, a five-year Title III grant, and two-year Maximum Achievement Program grant focused on African American males and other low-income students will be used to expand the current number of peer advisors providing tutorial services and to purchase additional educational equipment and resource materials [10].

Supervised tutoring is offered in English in a Writing Across the Curriculum program, ESL, in Mathematics, Sciences, Business, and Social Sciences. In addition, the Center serves students, faculty, and staff in an Open Computer Lab and in an Electronic Classroom used to facilitate instruction and course offerings, as appropriate. The Learning Center also offers credit/no credit English and Learning Resources courses [9,11].

The college is expanding support of Learning Center and the Library facilities, programs, and services with funds from the District's bond measure. In July of 2007, a Learning Center and Library Facilities Planning Team was established to plan the move of the Learning Center from its current location in Building D, to a newly renovated space in the lower level of Building L by Fall 2010. The Learning Center and Library Facilities Planning Team was also responsible for planning the renovation of specific areas of the Library (located on the 2nd and 3rd floors of Building L), a new elevator system that will connect the Library and Learning Center, and a new HVAC system for the entire Building L complex [1].

Since July 2007, the Learning Center and Facilities Planning Team has met bi-weekly with the District's project manager and architectural team to design a state-of-the art Learning Center facility that will include the following: 1) General tutorial services; 2) Writing Across the Curriculum (WRAC) lab for English and ESL; 3) Mathematics and Science tutorial labs; 4) small and large group study areas; 5) a general open computer lab; 6) an electronic computer classroom; 7) faculty and staff offices and conference meeting rooms; 8) restrooms; and, the college's home for the Black Panther Party Archives [1].

The Learning Center uses a variety of tools to identify service gaps, to improve services, and to set priorities to ensure that services are meet identified student needs. The Center conducts periodic student surveys, student evaluations of tutors, and workshop evaluations [12]. Learning Center faculty and staff participate in departmental meetings and other college committees to obtain feedback and use the unit planning process to set priorities services, needs for equipment and resource materials [13].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The Learning Center has been productive in providing free drop-in tutoring and open computer labs for student use including daytime service hours five days a week and evening hours to 7:00 p.m. four nights a week. The appropriate expertise of faculty supports the delivery of services to students in the center and through course offerings in variable unit courses in English and Learning Resources.

Faculty and staff have played a central role in the schematic design and selection of fixtures, furniture and equipment for the college's new Learning Center that will open in 2010 in Building L, and in temporary relocation of the Learning Center to Swing Space in Building A scheduled for June 2009. At the same time, the Learning Center acknowledges the need, and has requested increased funding to improve the depth and variety of available supplemental instructional and resource materials, and software to support student learning.

The Director of the Learning Center conducts in-class presentations and workshops on study skills to increase student retention and outreach on Learning Center services. To date, those presentations support student learning in English, Counseling and College Success classes, LVN and Medical Assisting, psychology, and other disciplines, as well.

In the past three years, the Learning Center has provided tutorial services to the following number of students during the academic year [14]:

Summer 2005: 871 students	Summer 2006: 878	Summer 2007: 637 students
Fall 2005 2,465 students	Fall 2006 2,482	Fall 2007 2,308 students
Spring 2006 2,404 students	Spring 2007 2,257	Spring 2008 2,138 students

b. The institution provides for ongoing instruction for users of the library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency

Descriptive Summary

BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION

The Library provides bibliographic instruction to faculty upon request; these have occurred primarily in the humanities and social sciences areas. The library offers bibliographic instruction, primarily in humanities and social sciences courses, in the access and use of library materials, services, and remote resources. The Department currently has four course offerings, but has not offered for-credit instruction due to low enrollment/funding [11,9].

REFERENCE

The Library provides certificated reference librarians for all open building hours; these provide one-on-one instruction and service to students and faculty in support of their

academic needs. In addition, the library provides research guides and library handouts in both print and web-based forms in order to provide for student learning and support. [15] Currently the Library has 3.0 FTEF and .6 FTEF part-time certificated librarians. There are currently 3.5 FTE classified to support non-certificated areas.

WEBPAGE

The Library webpage provides pathfinders and information guides in the access and use of print and electronic materials. A number of links provide for self-study by remote users in order to more effectively use the networked information resources provided through the Library webpage [16].

Self Evaluation

BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION

Instruction has been limited due to the lack of an accessible instruction laboratory within the building. Although faculty express satisfaction with the current format, the librarians would prefer a more “hands-on” approach in a self-contained classroom. The Library Department currently has four courses that have completed the curriculum review process, viz. LIS 48, 85, 248, and 348; however, there has been little demand for these offerings as elective courses [17].

REFERENCE

The Library Department keeps daily reference statistics that reflect a mix of query patterns usually in computer/database support, general reference, subject-specific reference, and directional or support (e.g. FAFSA/registration assistance) questions.

The Library has one faculty and one classified representative on the Campus Technology Committee; this year the Technology Committee has focused primarily on the distribution of faculty computers and trainings related to the changes in the Passport (administrative computing) and Web CMS; this area has established a “Technology Tips” subcommittee that may provide an avenue for distributing information about networked resources available at/through the Library [18].

DISTRICT LIBRARY/IT COMMITTEE

This Committee has been the interface between the Campus Library Department Chairs and the district. The Committee has been instrumental in allowing resource planning and sharing within and between the four campus libraries. Currently, the district supports the online union catalog, its user support group, the CalRen network, the GoPrint contracts (3 campuses), webpage CMS, webpage CMS training, distribution of TTIP funding, online catalog server and maintenance, library book bond allocations, Passport access profiles, Passport training sessions. This committee has taken on the role of library/technology information/lobbying group in order to provide the funding, training, network access, and technology resources and support that allow the individual libraries to deliver their instruction and services [19].

- c. The Institution provides students and personnel responsible for learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.***

Descriptive Summary

The Library provides access to its collections in both its onsite and digital resources. The remote access resources include: access to the PCCD Union Library Catalog, access to the Merritt College Library website, access to over 22 full-text databases in a variety of disciplines, access to full-text electronic books (within and outside the Library). In addition, a currently registered student/faculty has borrowing privileges at the three other Peralta Colleges (Laney, College of Alameda, and Berkeley City College) [9].

Increasing open building hours has been a longstanding recommendation from the students, faculty, and library department; however, the loss of two library technicians resulted in diminished evening hours and cataloging/processing efficiency. As of fall, 2008 however, library evening hours have been increased to 7pm to meet evening student need. Building hours were increased by ten hours per week during the Spring 2008 semester.

DISTRICT/CAMPUS/DEPARTMENTAL WEBPAGES

In order to support student access, the library department has been a partner in the district webpage modification projects as well as consulted with the content management system vendor(s) to facilitate the transition of existing content to a new uniform webpage upgrade. The webpage provides 24/7 access with minor downtime for upgrades and virus protection [16].

DATABASES

Similarly, the department has participated in the CCL consortium purchases of databases that provide 24/7 access to registered students and faculty.

ELECTRONIC BOOKS

As noted, the Library has purchased rights to nearly 8,000 full-text digital texts that can be accessed by any Merritt College student once they have completed an onsite registration. These provide 24/7 access in a broad academic collection comprised of recent titles [9].

Self Evaluation

Building hours have been increased by ten hours per week since the last review. During Spring 2008, a permanent, part-time evening technician was hired to support increased student access to the library. The department successfully completed a search and placement of a part-time evening library technician which permitted the library's opening in compliance with Education Code and bargaining unit agreements. Two upgrades to the online catalog Horizon system have been successfully implemented and integrated into operations. The Department is currently involved in

the redesign and content-management system of the new web-pages slated to roll out in 2009.

The Department has also purchased, with perpetual rights, three offerings of NetLibrary that currently comprise almost 8,000 volumes. Similarly, the CCL-sponsored databases provide access to full-text periodicals in a variety of disciplines to students on campus network and (via passwords) remotely; these have been retained within budget despite costs that are linked to campus FTES.

The department has strong holdings, relative to district library peers, in the allied health and literature areas. The department has acquired access and ownership of approximately 8,000 titles per year through the OCLC NetLibrary consortium purchase.

d. The institution provides effective maintenance and security for library and learning support services

Descriptive Summary

The Library currently uses a 3M 2301 BP gate for security of the main lobby entrance. All incoming books and retrospective conversion books receive Tattle Tape Security Strips as part of the book processing sequence. These detector strips are linked to the 3M security gate. Fire security is provided throughout the first, second and third floors, an emergency call system [Code Blue FP1] was updated in 2008 on the western perimeter of the L Building. Emergency exits are provided on the north and south walls on both floors of the library.

Self Evaluation

The Department Chairs of the Library and Learning Center have worked closely in the conceptual architectural design process in order to remedy existing materials, personnel, fire code, and ADA-compliance issues. The current iteration of the conceptual design will provide for a second elevator to handle increased foot traffic once both departments are reintegrated, will provide for greater staff safety, and make for better ADA accessibility to the service and instruction areas of the combined Library/Learning Center building.

Security of the library collection remains an issue; funding provided for a second security gate (to cover "first floor shrinkage" of materials) was allocated and then rescinded. Due to the design defect of the existing building, full security for library personnel and materials will not be achieved until the remodeling recommendations are completed [1].

The Library Department needs to be more fully integrated into the campus-wide disaster plan. Equipment, procedures, and personnel training are needed in preparation for a predicted 6.0+ earthquake for the region; the campus' adjacency to the Hayward Fault

makes this planning most essential. The library faculty and staff, through the District Library/IT Committee, requested and received Passport System training relevant to the areas of student personnel information needed in order to support the circulation and reserves areas; this mitigated an oversight that would have left library personnel without appropriate permissions to verify student information and to initiate registration blocks for overdue materials.

Currently, some library faculty and staff have assisted with, and received webpage CMS (content management system) design, links, and training.

- e. When the institution relies on collaboration with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible, and utilized. The performance of these services is evaluated on a regular basis. The institution takes responsibility for and assures the reliability of all services provided either directly or through contractual agreement.***

Descriptive Summary

Currently the Peralta College Libraries honor the library cards, and offer circulation privileges, to students on sister campuses. Students are also permitted **onsite** access to electronic databases to which the individual campus subscribes. In addition, tenure-track and tenured faculty can obtain limited circulation privileges (Doe Library) on the UC Berkeley campus. Peralta students, staff, and administrators are not granted library privileges at UC. As noted, the four campuses share the Horizon Online Library Catalog. Each campus contributes to the collection's catalog holdings; however, the contract agreement is held through the district. Similarly, the four colleges participate as OCLC members; however, the interlibrary loan function is not used by Peralta libraries [3].,

Merritt College Library, as well as its sister libraries participates in the CCL—Community College League consortium for database pricing and purchasing. The network on which these applications run is supported by the CCCC Technology Unit. The District also has a contract agreement with GoPrint which provides pay-per-use printing to three of the colleges (COA, Laney, and Merritt) [3].

Self Evaluation

The Library/Learning Center has a number of agreements that support learning resources on the Merritt campus. The Horizon online union catalog is currently provided through a district agreement with Sirsi/Dynix. Through the Community College League, the Library has purchased the CQ Researcher, EBSCO Premier, Encyclopedia Britannica, Expanded Academic, Literature Resource Center, Lexis-Nexis, Proquest

Career and Technical Education, Rand California databases. The pay-per-use format (GoPrint) for printing has worked well for the Library; the Learning Center is considering its adoption as part of the architectural renovation project.

Summary of library/learning resource vendor agreements [20]::

- Sirsi/Dynix
- CCCCO CCL EAR Committee Consortium Database contracts
- GoPrint
- OCLC—Online Computer Library Center
- EBSCO (subscription service)
- RICOH (reprographics)

2. The institution evaluates library/learning support services to assure adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

The Library/Learning Resource Centers have participated in the following evaluative tools in order to learn more about their students, their resource use/information seeking behaviors, and the outcomes of such use [21]:

The Library participated in the Faculty self-study survey report that took place during the intersession of AY 07-08; five statements dealt specifically with Library services and collections.

NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) Survey

This data provides a benchmark, or peer comparison tool, for allocation of resources to the library/learning center; the tool can be used for comparing similar FTES colleges within a particular region or across the United States [21].

The CCL Annual Data Survey has been postponed for the past three years due to lack of staffing at the State Chancellor's Office; however, this survey has been reissued in a new form (late April 2008) [21].

Self Evaluation

Merritt College has become more data-driven in its governance and resource allocation processes. The Library/Learning Center has participated in the following survey of user statistics and satisfaction:

Faculty Self-Study Survey

The Faculty Self-Study Survey revealed that only twenty percent of faculty consider themselves to be frequent library users; nearly two-thirds noted that they did not use or were not aware of the library's internet resources. A slight majority found the library personnel helpful in providing information; an interesting dovetail with faculty library usage is that a majority were uncertain about the currency of the library's print collection. Similarly a majority of faculty polled did not find the library's hours sufficient for campus needs [21].

Internal Self-Study—Library

The MCL conducted an in-house survey of its students and found, from its sample, that Nursing and Allied Health students used the Lib/LRC with greater frequency than was anecdotally perceived. Close to 60% of users were full-time students who planned to transfer to a four-year institution; in addition, nearly 90% reported having a computer (or access) to a networked computer at home. In terms of functional use of the department's services, the top five included: studying alone, reserve material checkout, group study, circulating material checkout, and reference [21].

Campus Survey

The Merritt College campus-wide survey reinforced what was already well-known within the department, viz. that building hours had not been sufficient to support late afternoon/early evening students; students were generally supportive of the reserve collection and photocopy services availability [21].

NCES Survey

The Library faculty have attempted to use NCES data as a peer comparison tool in order to review certificated and classified staffing at similar FTES community colleges as a way to augment current allocations; in addition, the library has kept reference and workstation use data in order to provide more optimal staffing and support for student queries and computing use [21].

Planning Agenda

Technology: Library faculty and staff will transition from a paper-based selection and acquisition process to a fully electronic one. Student workstations will be upgraded to adequately support access to digital content.

Resources: Library faculty and staff will continue to advocate for a stable, consistent general fund allocation for ongoing and annual expenditures.

Security: Library faculty and staff will collaborate with the Business Office to determine a security solution for the Library that includes secure doors and security measures for the general collection.

References

1. Learning Center/Library Facilities Planning Team Minutes 2007-08
2. College Educational Master Plan, 2009
3. Library Unit Plan, 2007-08
4. MCL Collection Development Policy
5. Academic Senate Committee Membership, 2007-08
6. Library Budget, 2005-8
7. Library Grant Awarded by Chancellor Harris, 2006-07
8. Learning Resource Center (LRC) Description
9. LRC Unit Plan
10. Maximum Achievement Project (MAP) Grant Description
11. Merritt College Catalog, 2007-2009
12. LRC Surveys and Evaluations, 2007-08
13. LRC Department Meeting Minutes, 2007-08
14. LRC Report on Student Contact Hours
15. Library Student Handouts
16. Merritt College Website: www.merritt.edu
17. CIC Minutes (need date of Library visits)
18. Technology Committee Meeting Minutes, 2007-08
19. District Library/IT Committee Minutes, 2007-08
20. MCL/LRC Vendor Agreements
21. Library Survey Participation

STANDARD III RESOURCES

The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.

A. Human Resources

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

- 1. The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.***
 - a. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non- U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.***

Descriptive Summary

Merritt Community College employs qualified staff and faculty who in accordance with the State laws are proficient in their fields. The guidelines for such are developed and maintained by the Board of Trustees to ensure district wide equality and fairness. In this process, departments determine their individual hiring needs, although these needs are ranked and ultimately justified to the Board of Trustees by the Faculty Senate. [1,2]. The Chancellor and The Board of Trustees determine the total number of hires that the budget permits. The College president presents the needs to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

The Peralta Community College District has developed policies for ensuring that all personnel are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support all programs and services. The policies are in the Board Policy Manual: BP 1.18 and 1.18b for administrative hires; BP 1.20 for selection of a chancellor; BP 3.18 for certificated and classified hiring; and BP 3.26 for faculty hiring. These policies were developed in consultation with the District Academic Senate and the Peralta Federation of Teachers, Operating Engineers, and Service Employees International unions. These policies are accessible to all via the Peralta website [3]. Further the governing board ratifies union contracts which also address hiring [4].

These policies include, but are not limited to, providing full, objective, and equal access for all applicants; actively seeking applicants who demonstrate the required technical expertise, competency, and sensitivity that will enable them to work effectively in a multicultural educational environment; complying with all federal, state, and local laws; ensuring participation by faculty, classified staff, and administrators in their respective roles throughout the process; ensuring diversity on all screening committees; ensuring that members have knowledge in the position area, reviewing all components of the process to ensuring the integrity of the process; and maintaining confidentiality throughout the process.

The guidelines for the selection of employee groups- classified staff, faculty and administrators - covers the development of the job announcement, selection of the screening committee, development of screening criteria and interview questions with desired responses, the screening of application materials, the screening of candidates, the recommendation of finalists, final interviews, reference checks, and the candidate-approval process [5].

The Human Resources Department at the Peralta Community College District Office handles all hiring after selection by the colleges. HR works closely with college and district-wide constituencies, starting with the job announcement. All job announcements provide a description of the college or district, and emphasize the importance of an applicant's being able to demonstrate sensitivity in working within a multicultural, multilingual educational environment [6].

Specific duties and responsibilities of each position are clearly outlined in all job announcements. Job announcements for faculty positions are written by college faculty, relying on discipline experts, and clearly state minimum qualifications as determined and published by the state academic senate. The announcement emphasizes the importance of discipline knowledge, current pedagogy, and commitment to student learning. The "Request to Hire" personnel action includes an attachment that confirms that the department chair or discipline expert, the academic senate president, the Peralta federation of teacher representative, and the hiring manager have all been consulted on the justification for the hire and the description of the position [6].

The job description for classified staff and managers are created based on the needs of the college and edited by the Human Resources department so that the job

announcement states the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position in an effective manner [7].

District procedures ensure faculty play a significant role in the selection of new faculty. Screening committees for faculty positions include at least three faculty in the discipline, or an aligned discipline, an administrator, and are chaired by a faculty member [8]. Classified committees have at least three members, including a committee member appointed by the respective union [9], while management selection committees have a minimum of five members comprised of faculty, classified staff, and administrators [10].

The composition of all screening committees (first level of any hiring process) is approved by Human Resources which seeks balance by ethnicity and gender. The hiring process begins with a review of the job description and the development of criteria for the paper screening process. The paper-screening process for all hires includes a checklist based on the job announcement and provides a review of the applicant's minimum qualifications, including educational and professional backgrounds, and a systematic assessment of each applicant's materials, as it pertains to the duties and functions as required of the position. The Office of Human Resources monitors each phase of the selection and interview process. Forms requiring signatures to proceed to the next step are utilized to ensure that policies are adhered to [5].

For faculty positions, an equivalency process has been established for applicants who do not directly meet minimum qualifications to determine equivalence, based on academic background equivalence. All applicants holding degrees from non-U.S. institution must have the degree evaluated through an external evaluation agency and provide the written evaluation with the application materials. The equivalency process includes review by an equivalency committee, made up of discipline experts. The job applicant is responsible for submitting the required forms and supporting documents to provide the rationale for an equivalency. Board Policy 3.26 provides the general guidelines for determining equivalency [8].

Screening committees develop interview questions which address the knowledge, skills, and abilities of each applicant as they pertain to the duties and responsibilities of the position. The screening committee also develops key response elements to provide a common basis for what is sought in an applicant's response [11]. Many faculty screening committees include a skills demonstration such as some type of teaching demonstration as part of the screening process [11]. Those candidates forwarded to final interviews are evaluated and assessed for their potential to contribute to the mission and goals of the department and the institution.

The college president, with the appropriate vice president, the academic senate president, and the chair of the selection committee, conduct the final or hiring interview for faculty focusing on issues of expertise in the discipline, and what the candidate can contribute to the greater college community [8]. Following the final interview, appropriate reference checking is conducted by the appropriate parties to verify the qualifications of the finalists. The College President, in consultation with the Selection

Committee Chair, shall recommend the finalist to the Chancellor for final approval. The Tenure Review Committee is also appointed by the College President at the time the recommendation for employment is made.

Part time faculty are hired through one-on-one interviews with the Dean of the respective area [8]. At times, Chairs are involved in the process in that interested applicants generally send resumes and letters of interest to Chairs, and first level discussions begin there. Part time faculty who are hired are then evaluated in their first year of hire. The evaluation procedure includes student evaluations [12].

In order to seek qualified applicants, Human Resources staff routinely advertise classified, faculty, and administrative positions through the District Human Resources website, the California Community Colleges Registry, and through flyers to our local colleges. Dependant on the position, additional outreach may include resources such as The Chronicle of Higher Education, Women in Higher Education, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, as well as many on-line websites such as Craig's list for vocational and select classified positions. List Serves have been an added tool for recruitment as well as the utilization of the California Community Colleges Registry database, primarily for administrative and faculty positions [8,9,10].

Self Evaluation

The hiring procedures and processes function effectively and successfully at Merritt College. The process is one in which a variety of constituents are involved, including unions, classified staff, administration, and District Human Resources personnel. The policies for advertising employment, selection, committee composition, evaluation of candidate and final hire are clearly stated and followed at every stage of the hiring process. Importantly, a system for ensuring that all committee members are aware of the policies and procedures at each stage of the process maintains integrity and compliance.

- b. The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.***

Descriptive Summary

All personnel are evaluated systematically and at stated intervals as outlined in the Local 1021 and Local 39 Collective Bargaining Agreements (Article V. SEIU and Article

19) and the Peralta Federation of Teachers “Faculty Evaluation Guidelines”, Appendix A20 [13].

Administrators are evaluated on an annual basis pursuant to the Management Evaluation Handbook and the Implementing Procedures of Board Policy 3.65. Management evaluation packets are provided to senior administrators for guidance, in both hard copy and electronic format [14]. Each evaluation process follows specific guidelines, which include evaluating performance with the intention of aligning performance-goal setting by establishing manager *Performance Goals* in alignment with the district-wide *Strategic Goals* and *Institutional Objectives*.

The primary goals for the administrative performance-goals process are to:

- Use data and analysis to set challenging yet realistic goals;
- Ensure that manager performance goals and institutional objectives are closely aligned;
- Promote widespread understanding of institutional objectives;
- Distinguish between goals that are directly controllable from those that are influenced by events outside organizational control; and
- Faculty and management evaluations incorporate a shared governance approach where appropriate.

During the four-year tenure review process, new full-time faculty are evaluated by a four-member committee, including the division dean or vice president, and three faculty members from the discipline or closely aligned discipline [12]. Probationary faculty undergo rigorous evaluation, which includes student evaluations, faculty portfolio, peer observation, administrator observation, and self-evaluation during each of the four years before a recommendation is made. All materials are reviewed by the candidate and filed in the office of the vice president of instruction. The tenure track faculty evaluation process is coordinated by a tenure review facilitator who is afforded release time to ensure effective administration of the many evaluations that are ongoing each year [15]. The tenure review facilitators for the four colleges meet regularly to address and discuss various issues occurring at the individual colleges. Each fall semester the tenure review facilitator and the academic senate president sign a form for each candidate stating that the tenure review process has been followed. The appropriate vice president and the college president annually sign a form either recommending non-continuance, to continue probation, or to grant tenure [12].

Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years. Comparable to the tenure-track process, the evaluation process includes peer observation (for instructional and non-instructional faculty), student surveys, an administrator evaluation, the faculty member’s self-evaluation, and a portfolio. The evaluation process provides opportunity to give commendations and recommendations for improvement. If a rating below satisfactory is assigned, a plan for improvement is developed and a re-evaluation is scheduled for the next academic year [12].

As noted, monitoring the evaluation of tenure track candidates is a collaboration between the tenure review facilitator, the appropriate dean or vice president, and the committee chair. The monitoring of the evaluation of contract faculty rests with the division offices.

The evaluation of adjunct faculty takes place in the first semester or first year of service, and at least once every six semesters thereafter [12]. The evaluation includes peer evaluation, student surveys/evaluations, administrator evaluation, and self-evaluation. For initial evaluations the evaluation committee consists of two faculty members (full- and/or part-time) and an administrator. For subsequent evaluations, the committee consists of one faculty member (full- or part-time) and an administrator. Monitoring and documentation for the evaluation of adjunct faculty resides in division offices. Adjunct faculty who have taught six out of the last ten semesters and who receive a rating above satisfactory are eligible for the part-time faculty preferential hiring pool [12]. Adjunct Faculty who are in the Minority Internship program are also placed immediately in the preferential hiring pool as a mean of encouraging diversity in instruction.

Monitoring of the evaluation of classified personnel is managed by the Office of Human Resources. District developed forms may be found online at <http://peralta.edu/apps/comm>.

Evaluation of managers is conducted on an annual basis. Evaluation instruments are sent to 25 employees identified by the manager, including other managers, faculty, and classified staff. The evaluation process is an open process and others, in addition to the 25, can complete an evaluation form. The performance evaluation addresses the strategic planning goals of the District [10].

Self Evaluation

The standard is partially met. Evaluation of administration and faculty undergoing the tenure process has been consistent, ongoing and in alignment with policy; however, the regular evaluation of tenured and adjunct faculty is in process. The main reason for this is the demanding work load of deans. Although policy and procedures for evaluation in both areas are clear, there are over 200 part-time faculty in each division, and only about 35% have been evaluated or are undergoing evaluation. There are 93 contract faculty, with 23 who are undergoing the tenure review process. Of the 70 who are tenured, nearly all of them are in need of re-evaluation which is to occur every 3 years. Efforts are currently underway to address this deficiency. Department Chairs are assisting in the evaluation process of adjunct faculty, and have been given the mandate to evaluate three adjunct faculty per semester [1].

- c. Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.***

Descriptive Summary

During the 2006-07 and 2007-08 academic years, Merritt College has placed creating SLO's for courses, programs, certificated and degrees as a top institutional priority. Faculty have received training as a whole and individually by department on what SLO's are, their importance to student success and to the integration of SLO's into our overall thinking about how Merritt College ensures effective instruction [16]. During those same academic years every staff development training that occurred before each semester and during the spring semester was dedicated to SLO training and cooperative activities. Experts in the field were brought to campus to assist Merritt College in the understanding and development of institutional and program level SLO's. Each of these trainings was coupled with trainings and updates to department chairs and members of the academic senate. The effectiveness and commitment of these efforts has culminated in the formation of the fall 2007 SLOA committee in which an SLO trained faculty was given release time to form a committee to assist in the ongoing process of SLO formation [17].

The committee has been very productive and has worked with the curriculum committee (CIC) to train and integrate SLO's into programs and courses. SLO's are not currently a part of faculty evaluation as this is a union contract issue. An MOU was written by the academic senate and union that states that SLO's are not a part of faculty evaluations [18]. Faculty evaluation is negotiated by the Peralta Federation of Teachers, including procedures and the forms. Neither allows for or recognizes SLO's to be part of faculty evaluations. This, however, has not halted the formation and implementation of SLO's for the campus. In fact, the entire campus community, including faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes, have embraced the concepts and process of forming SLO's [19].

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. Student learning outcomes have been developed for the majority of programs at Merritt College. Faculty and others who have direct responsibility for student progress toward achieving stated SLO's are engaged in the process of creating course SLO's; however, the evaluation of faculty based on this standard is incomplete.

d. The Institution upholds its code of professional ethics for all of its employees.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 5.15, Code of Instructional Standards, makes the "Ethical Standards of the American Personnel and Guidance Association" and the "Code of Ethics of Ethics for Librarians of the American Library Association" policy for the Peralta Community College District. These administrative procedures for BP 5.15 provide the full text for

each. The AAUP agreement was adopted years ago and is part of BP 5.15, Code of Instructional Standard [20].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

- 2. The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.***

Descriptive Summary

Similar to other colleges in the CCC system, Merritt College has a sufficient number of full time (FT) faculty, but is always seeking to hire additional FT faculty to improve the ratio of FT to PT (part time/adjunct) faculty. As of fall 2008, Merritt College has 93 full time faculty and roughly 217 actively teaching part time faculty. In addition, Merritt College has advocated for and been able to hire 10 new FT faculty in the last two academic years. The priority in hiring is in filling positions that are state mandated to have a particular amount of FT faculty such as Nursing, filling highly enrolled disciplines that have a vacancy due to retirement such as History, supporting the growth of new programs in demand that are based on community labor needs, such as Administration of Justice. The process for determining new hires is a shared governance process in which faculty who serve as chairs submit proposals for hire that include enrolment and other discipline statistics that aid the decision process [21]. The ultimate decisions are made by the VP of Instruction, President and the Chancellor and are based on the financial recourses available and the proposed need [8].

Faculty, staff and administration are all hired upon review of their credentials and the requirements for the position. All hires meet and/or exceed the stated requirements and were selected through a rigorous hiring process that ensures equal access, shared governance and scrutiny of the backgrounds and qualifications of those hired. The hiring procedures are detailed in board policy and checked in process by the Human Resources department. Internal/Interim administration positions are advertised throughout the District to ensure equal access and opportunity. Minimum qualifications and hiring policies are adhered to for these and all hires for all staff, faculty and administration [8, 9,10].

Merritt College has a sufficient number of staff and administration with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the services and support needed to fulfill our institutional mission. Merritt College is however always seeking new positions particularly support staff and faculty to increase services and maintain a high ration of counselors and FT faculty. Because state finances and the hiring demands of a multi-college district place budgetary constraints upon our hiring aims, Merritt College's

Research and Development officer along with faculty and administrative support have successfully received over 5 million dollars in grant monies (2008-2013) that include new counseling and support positions, numerous tutors and teacher training [22].

Self Evaluation

The standard is met.

3. *The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.*

a. *The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.*

Descriptive Summary

The Peralta Community College District has established policies and procedures via its Human Resources Department. While there are Policies in place for example, Board Policy 1.18 and 3.26, the HR Department also provides detail guidelines to all committee members who speaks to non-discrimination, equity and fairness in the process. These guidelines are:

- Board Policy 3.1 prohibits Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment toward employees [23].
- The Peralta Community College District has established policies and procedures via its Human Resource Department. Board Policy 1.18 and 3.26 provides guidelines to all committee members which speaks to non-discrimination, equity and fairness in the process.

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. The written policies and procedures have been developed and refined adequately to ensure fairness in employment procedures. Administration faculty and staff are aware of each of these policies and work to ensure that they are followed. These policies are also reiterated consistently through human recourses especially in hiring processes and by the faculty and classified senates and union representatives who at times are approached with issues related to fairness and equity. In the Faculty Survey Results: Question 19: Faculty are fairly evaluated. Responses were 62.5 +3.6 agreed or; 3.6% + 5.4% disagree or SD; 25% are uncertain [24].

b. The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.

Descriptive Summary

All employees have access through the new PROMPT system to the contents of their own personnel files [25]. All information is held in confidentiality by the Human Resources Department at the district office. The process for reviewing personnel files may be located in the various collective bargaining agreements and Education Code. [26] The release of personnel records (outside of public information) must be approved by the employee through a signed statement. Employees are encouraged to add to their personnel file additional training and other supplementary documents to complement their records.

- Any employee may request to review his/her personnel file in the presence of Human Resources staff.
- All employees have access to the contents of their own personnel files. All information is held in confidentiality by the Human Resources Department at the district office. The release of personnel records must be approved by the employee through a signed statement.
- Any employee may request to review his/ her personnel file in the presence of Human Resources staff.

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. Personnel files are held in confidence and are filed in a new secure system at the district office. Managers and confidential employees have access to personnel information on a need-to-know basis only. While the new PROMPT/PeopleSoft system is overly complex and hard to access, this system does make the information more secure and access to that system is more restricted than it was previously. While training on this and the accompanying Passport student registration system has been better than previous district-wide installations and training, the need of ongoing workshops and other related training for current and new faculty and staff is crucial.

4. The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.

a. The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has a very diverse faculty in comparison to the community that surrounds us and other colleges in the CCC [27]. Diversity is considered to be an important strength of the institution and is stated as part of our college mission and ILO's [28]. Hiring policies ensure equal access, and that diversity is honored, celebrated and discussed in campus programming, staff development training and throughout the hiring practice. Consistently throughout each academic year faculty, staff, students and administration hold campus wide events such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month and Women's History Month [29]. Programs are supported through district and student life funds. Students are encouraged to organize cultural awareness clubs and events such as the LGBT club and the Puente club [30]. The budget for the ASMC (Associated Students of Merritt College) comes from bookstore funds and other funds allocated by the district office. They are able to fund student events and club projects [31]. They are advised by a classified staff member who assures that they adhere to college and student government regulations. Staff development trainings such as the "Success of African American Male Students" and collaborations with community organizations like the Native American Indian School and the Bay Area chapter of 100 Black Men are supported and encouraged by administration and are often initiated by administration [32]. In addition, Merritt College has a strong history of creating and supporting Ethnic Studies as course options and degree attainment which enables faculty and students to explore issues of race and ethnicity in more depth. The courses for this program are degree applicable and are accepted for transfer to the CSU and UC systems [33].

Various workshops are provided for classified and academic employees at both the college and District level. [32] These include training in the following:

- Sexual harassment
- Technology
- Hiring practices
- Leadership
- Management

When surveyed, faculty were asked the following question: "Through staffing and promotions, the institution effectively seeks diversity in the following areas: Staffing" 84.6% responded "yes" [24].

Self Evaluation

The standard is met.

b. The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.

Descriptive Summary

The district follows Equal Employment Opportunity policy in all its hiring procedures, including a commitment that successful candidates demonstrate sensitivity to and ability to work with the diverse academic socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of students, faculty, staff, including ethnic minority group identification, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, or physical or mental ability. Board policy in hiring ensures that committees are diverse and procedures are checked throughout the hiring process to ensure that policy is met [8,9,10]. The College maintains a standard for hiring members of the community that are reflective of the diversity of our student body [27].

Diverse programming and training assist Merritt College in ensuring that our equality policies and diversity missions are reiterated and actualized on campus [29, 30].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College should maintain its efforts towards diversity in all areas of campus life.

c. The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.

Descriptive Summary

Through its representative bodies, Merritt College has established avenues for advocacy for administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The advocacy groups are the Peralta Federation of Teachers Local 1603 and the Academic Senate for faculty; SEIU Local 1021, I.U.O.E Local 39, and the Classified Senate for classified staff; and the Associated Student body for students. District-wide policies assure integrity in the treatment of administrators and non-represented employees [23].

In addition to advocacy groups, the institution is guided by policies, procedures, and statutes, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, in its treatment of all constituencies. The district has specific policies which are published in the college catalog and include the following [33]:

- Policy Prohibiting Discrimination;
- Implementing Procedures Prohibiting Sexual, Racial, and Disability Harassment and Discrimination toward Students;
- Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures;
- Student Grievance Procedures;
- Student Conduct, Discipline, and Due Process Rights

Merritt College's treatment of its administration, faculty, classified staff, and students is guided by advocacy groups and district-wide policy and procedures, which are clear and consistently followed. Furthermore, the District has a Director of Employee Relations to provide oversight in non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

The Associated Students of Merritt College is organized according to their constitution and bylaws. The ASMC president meets regularly with college administration and sits on all shared governance bodies [31].

Self Evaluation

The standard has been met. Merritt College consistently promotes equality and diversity through policies and practices.

5. *The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.*

a. The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.

Descriptive Summary

In 2005-06, the Peralta Board of Trustees developed several directions and priorities for district strategic planning. One of these priorities is Human Resource Development: to "provide training and professional development for all employees" [34]. The Peralta Community College District currently provides training for all. Faculty training is by far the most comprehensive. Current training efforts will be discussed at length below [35, 36, 37].

- **Manager's College**
PCCD has implemented ongoing management training in the spring of 2007. The manager's college meets one time during the winter and 2-3 times per year though the academic year. The Manager's College has covered strategic planning issues, team building and leadership training, as well as "Nuts and Bolts" training, with an overview of the budget, union contracts, facilities planning and purchasing procedures, and an introduction to the new district Student Passport System. Additional sessions covered Reasonable Accommodations, Employee Productivity, Effective Meetings, Enrollment Management, and Negotiating and Developing Contracts.
- **Leadership Succession Program**
In fall 2007, the Peralta district has started a new management mentoring program to help develop leadership and possible succession planning.

Participants in the program are currently meeting once a month and members include classified staff, Faculty and administrators.

- **Title III Staff Training**

As the recipient of the 2008-13 Title II grant, Merritt College was approved to use some of the funds to establish a teacher training recourse center and offer additional training to enhance and promote excellence in instruction.

- **Selected Topics Managers Training**

In addition to the Manager's College and the Leadership Succession Program, the District has held training on selected topics, as needed, including Student Grievance and Discipline Procedures, Contract Negotiations, Sexual Harassment, and Reasonable Accommodation, to name a few.

- **Classified Training Program**

Classified Handbook (located at [http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=264](http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=264)) has been written by Employee Relations. A formal employee orientation program for new employees is currently being developed.

- **Faculty Training**

Currently most of the training activities are scheduled for faculty; most of which provided for under Staff Development. Started in 1989 with a mandate from SB1725, the faculty gave up a raise and the district implemented Flex Day training for faculty using these monies. The Peralta Community College District Staff Development Office runs six flex days per year, and a host of varied training and staff development projects.

- **Individual Projects**

Currently faculty may earn up to 60% of their flex obligation through Individual Projects. These projects are good for a project that would require individual participation or would not adapt itself to a workshop format and/or would take more time than a workshop. In 2006-07, the district staff development office supported 30 Individual Projects.

- **Miscellaneous Hourly Accrual**

Currently faculty may earn a total of up to five hours towards their yearly staff development obligation by attending district-wide and campus-based meetings, trainings, workshops, and concerts. There is no doubt that this form of participation is very popular, since most of campus governance, department meetings, assessment, discipline currency, technological training, and strategic planning is part of staff development but does not happen during Flex Days, but rather on a periodic basis throughout the semester. The District Staff Development Office has given staff development credit for 126 meetings, trainings, workshops, and speakers during the 2006-07 academic year.

- **Tuition Fee Waiver**
The District has implemented tuition waiver reimbursement for faculty and classified staff who takes classes within Peralta to further professional development.
- **Conference Clearinghouse**
The District Staff Development Office sends out electronic notices of professional conferences or workshops that are not held at Peralta throughout both the fall and spring semesters through the Peralta e-mail system.
- **Staff Development and Faculty Diversity Internship Program Workshops**
The District Staff Development Office and the Faculty Diversity Internship Program partnered and sponsored the six workshops on the Multicultural Classroom in 2007-08, and five other trainings including working with “Asian and Asian American Students,” “Working with African American Students,” “Getting Past the Gate Keepers: Tips for you Cover Letter, CV, and Interview.” The Diversity Program in 2008-09 includes “Becoming an Educator in a Multicultural Context,” “Exploring Special Populations,” “Developing Race Relations in the Classroom,” “Designing Multicultural Curriculum,” and others.

Additional Training

Employee Relations has run a series of workshops on *Employee Benefits*. *Outside of Staff Development period, the Office has provided training sessions for managers on Employee-Employer Relation matters, Sexual Harassment, Union Grievances and Contract Compliance, Evaluations, and Employee Discipline.* [38]

- Since fall 2006, Employee Relations has been sending out Employee Relations Bulletins via email to all employees related to equal opportunity and workplace issues and employment laws. ([http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=402](http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=402)). An additional publication presents information for managers (Manager’s Journal).
- Risk Management has run a series of workshops on: *Emergency Preparedness, CPR Training, Forklift Training, Smoking Cessation, and Handling Blood Products*. We are currently attempting to do some scheduling on Flex days for these workshops.
- Human Resources has provided various training topics include contract negotiations, hiring of classified and academic personnel.
- Last year, the District Academic Senate provided one or two workshops during the year on technology.
- *New faculty orientations* (for both contract and adjunct faculty) usually take place on each campus during the second flex day of each semester.
- *Sustainable Peralta* runs workshops during Flex Days and has a grant that faculty may apply for to develop sustainable curriculum units in their existing classes. They also host their own workshops and conferences in the district. Need insert on college staff development

Faculty surveyed were asked, “Do faculty have adequate opportunities for professional development.” Responses were as follows: 58.2% agree; 20.5%+ 5.5% disagree or SD; 12.5% uncertain [24].

b. With assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

At every Staff Development training evaluations are given to each participant to assist in improving professional development opportunities. The evaluations are done by the participants and are anonymous. Once they are collected the results are evaluated by the Staff Development committee and utilized for future programming [39].

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. PCCD and Merritt College plan to continue providing appropriate opportunities for professional development that is consistent with the mission of the college and is informed by the needs of faculty and students.

6. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement. The development of Unit Plans by department chairs is the first level Merritt uses to identify long term staffing needs [40]. Unit Plans are integrated into the College Educational Master Plan after evaluation from the Vice President of Instruction [41]. The College Educational Master Plan, which includes staffing needs, is then integrated into the District Wide Educational Master Plan after consultation with the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and the Chancellor.

Peralta Community College District regularly assesses its human resources needs in a number of ways which integrate human resources planning with institutional planning. Levels of staffing are reviewed by managers through information generated in discussions at the various constituent levels: faculty, classified, and managers; through the college faculty prioritization process; through College Budget Committee discussions and recommendations; and through consideration of college mission and goals [42].

The process for hiring new faculty starts with a request prepared by department chairs based on consultation with the appropriate dean and discussed with the Council of

Department Chairs and Program Directors [1]. The deans prioritize hiring requests based on program reviews, program growth and need, enrollment projections, retirements and the college master plan. A prioritized list of faculty hiring requests is forwarded to the Academic Senate, the College Council, the Vice President of Instruction, and the President. The list of potential new hires is reviewed by the Academic Senate and the College Council, who make recommendations to the College President. The college president then presents these recommendations to the Chancellor and the Board for approval [8].

In the case of new classified positions, proposals are developed at the department level. The request is ultimately reviewed by the College President and forwarded to the Chancellor for approval and funding [9]. The College works with Human Resources concerning college needs and the appropriateness of the classifications.

Additionally, Desk Audits are available to classified staff to determine the scope of duties and functions as performed [12].

Hiring decisions for replacing administrators are made by the College President or District Vice Chancellor, which are then brought to the Chancellor for approval. There is consultation with the local classified senates pursuant to Board Policy 1.18 and its Implementing Procedures concerning the job announcements.

Planning Agenda

The evaluation process for part time faculty is currently being addressed in that Chairs have been notified regarding their responsibility to continue and complete adjunct and tenured faculty evaluations.

- Evaluations of part time faculty will be completed by the end of Fall 2009 which will then allow the evaluation process to focus on tenured faculty.
- Classified evaluations are in process and nearing completion.
- Student Services has written plans to complete classified evaluations, which have not been completed due to the lack of a permanent vice president of student services.

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17. SLOAC Membership and Planning Agenda
18. Academic Senate, PFT MOU on SLO's and Evaluation
19. SLOAC Progress Report, fall 2008
20. BP 5.15
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23. BP 3.31
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31. ASMC Guidelines and Policies
32. Staff Development Trainings on Diversity
33. Merritt College Catalog, 2007-2009
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35. www.peralta.edu trainings
36. Office of the Chancellor
37. Staff Development trainings, 2006-2008
38. Office of Human Resources, Employee Benefits Trainings
39. Staff Development Evaluations, 2006-2008
40. Unit Plans, 2006-2008
41. Merritt College Master Plan, 2008
42. District Wide Master Plan, 2008

Standard IIIB

Physical Resources

Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Overview

Merritt College is comprised of a main campus located on 125 acres in the hills of East Oakland, California, and an outreach site, the Fruitvale Education Center, located in the Fruitvale area of Oakland.

The main campus consists of seven buildings completed in 1971: Building R, the Student Center (houses all Student Services related , including the Bookstore; Building L, the Library; Building Q, (houses administrative offices, copy production, Business Office, and mailroom); Building P (houses Community Social Services program, High Tech lab for DSPS, Learning Opportunities Program, CIS, and Business); Building D, the largest classroom building in the district at 65,000 sq ft (houses the college's Allied Health programs [Nursing, Radiologic Technology, Nutrition & Dietetics], science programs, college Learning Center, and instructional offices); Building E/F, (houses the Gym, men and women's locker rooms, and faculty offices); and Building A, (houses Art programs, Child Development [including Lab School for Preschoolers], African American Studies, Anthropology, Music, Administration of Justice, Communications, and the college's Fitness Center) [1].

The college has a district-run Childcare Center, 6 tennis courts, 4 soccer fields, and an all-weather track renovated in 2005. Up the hill from the tennis courts is the 7.5 acre Landscape Horticulture facility. Completed in 1980, the facility consists of 3 classrooms, a small office space, tool room, a 5,000 sq. ft. lath house, and 5,000 sq. ft. of greenhouses [1]. The grounds, which are developed by the students during class projects, include a California native plant garden, fruit tree orchard, permaculture hillside, vegetable gardens, Mediterranean plants area, natural building site, a meadow area and a redwood deck overlooking the bay [2].

Adjacent to the college's track is the Environmental Science Center, where most of the Environmental Studies classes are held. This structure was begun in 1987 as a student-instructor project and was occupied in 1998 [1]. It was designed to be a model of sustainability and energy efficiency and has undergone many design changes as technology continues to evolve.

Merritt College has 78 classrooms including lecture rooms, laboratories, allied health portable skills labs buildings (3), computer labs, the Fitness Center, and the Gym. There are approximately 30 restrooms on campus, and the Student Center (Building R)

was completely renovated in 2005-06. The purpose of the renovation was to locate all Student Services under one roof for the convenience of students and enhanced collaboration among Student Services units.

The Fruitvale Education Center is located on the premises of the Unity Council at 1900 Fruitvale Avenue in Oakland. This outreach site has been affiliated with Merritt College since the 1980s, with citizenship classes as initial course offerings in a non-credit mode [2]. Eventually, Merritt developed and offered credit course offerings in English as a Second Language and CIS computer courses. There are plans to expand the offerings as funding and facilities will allow; currently however, the above courses are the only classes offered at the site [3].

Equipment replacement and maintenance are determined by the college at the department and division levels. Equipment needs are annually evaluated [4]. Instructional equipment needs are reviewed by each department, and requests are brought to the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD). These requests are prioritized, and instructional equipment funds amount of distribution is determined amid Chair and Director members in a shared governance process. The CDCPD recommends the distribution and prioritization to administration who then approves program allocations, with distribution allocations finalized by the Business Office [5]. Faculty, staff, students and administration provide input to inform and address equipment and replacement needs on an ongoing basis. Recently, the college went through an extensive review of equipment needs based on the Measure A bond funding allocation for facilities and equipment improvement [6].

1. the institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.

a. The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

The College Facilities Committee, management team, faculty and staff are all involved in the evaluation process to improve and update facilities [4, 7]. In June 2006, Measure A, a \$390 million bond, was approved by Alameda County voters for improvements within the Peralta Community College District [8]. The college evaluation process to determine need involved each department identifying facility and equipment needs. Currently, equipment needs at the college have been identified, prioritized, and many of the items purchased and received. Faculty and staff have collaborated on the following building projects since the passage of Measure A [7]:

- Complete renovation of the Student Center

- Renovation of the top floor of Building P
- Ongoing design for renovation or reparation of Building D (this matter is still under scrutiny and under question as to whether Building D will be provided minimal repair to get by until a new Science Center or similar building is built), the allied health and science building
- Design for a new child development center
- Design for relocated college Learning Center (to be housed in Building L)
- Plans to upgrade the Library

The Director of Facilities and Operations for the Peralta District has administrative responsibility for maintenance and grounds at Merritt College [9]. The college has been assigned two full-time and one part-time engineer and two groundskeepers. The Business and Administrative Services Manager (BAS) at the college coordinates the physical needs of the institution with the District office and college staff [10].

The establishment of a District electronic work order system helps Business and Administrative Services staff to send and monitor all college requests for repairs and maintenance services. Merritt College's online work order system has been vastly improved in the last two years. Previously, when staff submitted work orders, there was no feedback to the requestor. The current system provides a work order number which is then given to the requestor, enabling the requestor to reference the request to check the status of the work. This number can also be used to resubmit the request, should assignment of the work be lagging [11]. All work order requests are prioritized, with safety-related issues given top priority, followed by issues preventing faculty and staff from fully executing their duties and responsibilities. The system assigns the lowest priority to non-essential upgrades [12]. In addition, Business Office staff members maintain a spreadsheet of work orders to provide a record of all maintenance issues, which can be analyzed to identify the types of maintenance challenges Merritt faces building by building as well as campus-wide [13].

The BAS Manager, in coordination with the District, arranges for delivery and receipt of supplies, pest control, garbage collections, disposal of hazardous materials, and processing of utility bills. The BAS Manager also oversees facilities use, safety coordination, communication services, duplication services, telephone and voice mail procedures, and postal and internal mail. In addition, the BAS Manager supervises Custodial Services, whose staff consists of one head custodian, one lead custodian, and nine approved custodial positions [10]. The engineers assigned to the college perform work orders under the supervision and direction of the Business and Administrative Services Manager, and they attend to the mechanical and utilities systems repair and maintenance [14].

College facility requests are generally addressed at the College Facility Committee with recommendations to the College Council and ultimately to the President, who then invites input from college administrators before forwarding requests to the district [15]. The college unit plans are consulted during planning processes. Once a project has

been given district approval for funding, faculty are asked to participate with architects and district project managers in the design phase of the project [17].

Infrequently, the above process is circumvented in special circumstances forwarded by the college and approved at the district level. Generally, working outside the normal shared governance process is only warranted when there are safety issues, or when a program's continuation is in jeopardy if facility issues are not immediately addressed. District personnel and consultants work in collaboration with the college to review existing facility conditions [15]. This evaluation process includes surveying faculty and staff about facility concerns that may impact the district's decisions on future repairs and upgrades.

Self Evaluation

The college is in the process of meeting this standard through a capital improvement plan made possible through Measure A bond funds. Merritt College has excellent programs that provide quality instruction in spite of the aging facilities; however, the planned upgrades will address necessary repairs and improved technology in most of the college's instructional programs, such as essential upgrades to the organic chemistry laboratory, and state of the art laboratories for the radiologic science program.

Annual planning is documented in unit plans that provide program data on ftes generation, productivity, student success, progress on student learning outcomes, equipment and facility needs, and plans of action. The unit plans comprise the college Educational Master Plan, which in turn informs the district Educational Master Plan. The district facility resource and technology plans capture needs documented in the college's unit plans.

A challenge that Merritt faces is hiring and keeping competent and committed custodial staff, and there are five vacant positions that are back-filled with hourly custodians. It is an added challenge to recruit applicants with the required experience who will clear background investigations. The current custodial staff attend to the essential needs of the campus as well as provide services for campus events. On the Faculty survey, only 24% of respondents agreed that "Routine maintenance to ensure cleanliness in offices, program areas, and classrooms is adequate" [17]. In addition, the college's 125 acres need more care than two groundskeepers can manage, and the 37-year-old buildings require more maintenance than 2.5 engineers can provide. This is compounded by a significant accumulation of deferred maintenance items and an inadequate preventative maintenance program.

The Environmental Science Center, started in 1982 and inhabited in 1994, needs numerous upgrades and repairs. The construction of the new track and field removed easy access to the Center, and students and staff must now trek up a path in order to gain access.

b. The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.

The college's Business and Administrative Services office continually evaluates the college facilities, particularly when concerns are raised about health or safety issues. When warranted, the college Business Manager consults with the district Risk Management Director to assess a potentially hazardous condition and facilitate repair. [18] For example, a one-floor renovation project in Building P in 2007 necessitated closing of the three-story building after staff complaints that the air quality was adversely affected by the construction. The Risk Management Director assessed the air quality and recommended that the building be closed to students and staff [19].

The College Health and Safety Committee is a governance committee with faculty, staff, and administrators, and it makes recommendations to the College Council on policies and regulations that concern health and safety issues. The committee also reviews disaster/emergency preparedness and response, fire and earthquake information, American with Disabilities Act compliance, and campus signage [20]. The Oakland Fire Department conducts regular inspections, and district conducts spot safety inspections and notifies Merritt and the district of unsafe conditions [21].

Since 1996, the Peralta District has contracted with the Alameda County Sheriff's Department for policing of Peralta campuses [22]. In addition to sheriffs, the college provides Safety Aides to assist in maintaining a safe campus. Approximately ten to twelve Safety Aides patrol the campus in late afternoons, and early evenings. They wear Safety Aide jackets and have equipment that provides immediate contact with the sheriffs [23].

Board Policy 6.62 governs hazardous materials management [24]. Several instructional programs have to contend with hazardous material handling. These include biology, chemistry, nursing, and landscape horticulture. There is a plan in place, developed jointly by the College Business Office and The District Office of Risk Management, for disposing of hazardous materials from these instructional programs [25].

Disaster planning for Merritt College is being coordinated through a district-wide effort that involves disaster planning at all four colleges and the district office. Evacuation routes have been posted in every classroom, and college disaster plan will be presented to the college in spring of 2009 [26].

The Fruitvale Education Center has recently been evaluated regarding the functionality, health and safety of its classrooms. A recommendation has been made to replace the carpeting in one of the classrooms, and the college is in the process of finding funding to complete this project. In addition, the evaluation revealed that computers in one of the classrooms were too old to work effectively and efficiently. Therefore, twenty-five

new computers have replaced the old ones, and a class in computer technology is scheduled for spring, 2009 [27].

Self Evaluation

The physical plant is almost 38 years old, and most of the buildings at Merritt College are in need of renovation or repair due, in part, to the deferred maintenance common among California community colleges. The Student Center, Building R, underwent a complete renovation in 2005-06, and all of student services are now housed in this building. Measure A and Measure E funding (an earlier bond measure) have made possible many short term repair projects: upgrading restrooms throughout the campus, upgrading classroom lighting, asbestos abatement, upgrade and replacement of floor tile in various classrooms, window tinting and coverings, handrail replacements, Gymnasium roof replacement, roof repair to Building D, painting in Building A, as well as provided funding for equipment, furniture, and larger construction projects such as the installation of a new track and field and the renovation of the top floor of Building P [28].

Merritt College is actively engaged in assessing its facilities and in making recommendations for renovations and repairs in Building D; Building A to create to create a possible swing space during campus renovations; and Building L to create a new, permanent space for the Learning Center and to provide necessary upgrades for the Library; and Building Q to provide more effective working spaces for Administrative Services. In spring of 2008, the Peralta Board of Trustees approved allocation of funds to engage an architectural firm for a new allied health and sciences building for Merritt College, contingent upon the completion of a district wide facilities master plan [29]. The facilities plan is scheduled for completion in December of 2008.

Disaster planning needs broader engagement and communication at the college level, as well as more frequent drills that require evacuation and shelter in place.

2. To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

a. Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.

Descriptive Summary

The college engages in a shared governance process to determine equipment and facility needs. Instructional equipment funds are allocated to the college and a prioritized list is developed for instructional programs by the Council of Department

Chairs and Program Directors [5]. After the passage of Measure A, which includes funds for capital equipment, a college-wide list was developed and then approved by the Board of Trustees for funding [30].

Facility requests are made at the Facilities Committee, which considers the requests in the context of the college needs. Capital construction projects are usually prioritized at the district level via the Five Year Capital Outlay Plan, which is being incorporated into an updated and revised Facilities Master Plan that will identify and prioritize facility needs at the four colleges as well as at the district [31].

In most instances, facility requests are driven by institutional improvement goals for instructional programs, student services programs, and administrative priorities. The planned renovation of the science and allied health labs is driven by the need to reflect state of the art technologies and practices to appropriately prepare students for the workforce. The goal of improved coordination among student services units for greater student retention and success resulted in the renovation of the college Student Center [32]. All these plans engage faculty, staff, and college administrators in conversation with district personnel given authority over capital projects.

Self Evaluation

With the passage of Measure A in 2006, district-wide long-range capital planning became an essential goal. Over the past two years, the colleges have been engaged with district planning facilitators to create a district-wide strategic plan with delineated goals and activities to achieve those goals [33]. The next phase of strategic planning was the development of college Educational Master Plans and a district-wide Educational Master Plan from which facility and technology plans could be derived. The college Educational Master Plans identify resource priorities through the annual unit plans completed by each unit at every college, and every attempt is made to forecast related costs associated with equipment purchases and facility requests. The college Educational Master Plan was presented to the Board of Trustees in December 2008 [33].

b. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

The college Facilities Committee, comprised of administrative representatives, faculty, classified staff, and students, is charged with responsibility for all matters related to planning and use of the college facilities. It assists in the planning of major capital improvement projects and makes recommendations for improvement in the aesthetics, safety and security of all college faculties, including buildings and grounds. Facility requests are taken to the Facilities Committee for review and recommendation to the College Council [15].

The district-wide Facilities Master Plan is based on the mission, planning goals and instructional objectives of the colleges as reflected in the college Educational Master Plan and approved by the Merritt College Council [31].

The college has begun to evaluate facility needs based upon data provided by the district Office of Institutional Research that is captured in the college Unit Plans. Facilities assessment takes place at the college and district levels using this data as justification for requests submitted at both levels. The district then works with the college and stakeholders on prioritization of major building projects to ensure that long-range capital projects are linked to institutional planning [32].

College unit planning links institutional planning to resource allocation through the college Educational Master Plan. Faculty and staff participate in annual updates and revisions of the Master Plan by providing relevant information through the unit plans to the College Educational Master Planning Committee. The plan is reviewed when requests for equipment or staffing are submitted to the Budget Committee, which in turn, submits expenditure recommendations to the College Council. If the President accepts the Council action, the approved plans are implemented.

The intent of the district is to fully integrate planning, assessment, and budget allocations in order to more effectively and efficiently achieve college and district goals and objectives [33].

Planning Agenda

- Establish a more efficient and effective system of processing Measure A requests.
- Schedule more frequent drills for disaster planning.
- Fill vacant custodial positions.
- Schedule upgrades and repairs to Environmental Science Center.
- Complete upgrades at the Fruitvale Education Center.

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24. Board Policy 6.62
25. Plan for Disposing of Hazardous Materials (Business Office)
26. Evacuation Route Classroom Maps
27. Fruitvale Education Center Health and Safety Review, 2008
28. Measure A and E funded repairs (completed)
29. Board approval of proposed Allied Health and Sciences Bldg.
30. Measure A approval list (instructional equipment)
31. Facilities Master Plan
32. Unit Plans with repairs and updates
33. DWEMPC (District Wide Education Master Plan Committee)

Standard IIIC Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs, services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technological planning is integrated with institutional academic and facilities planning.

1. Technological support within the institution is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communication, research, and operational systems.

a. Technology services are designed to enhance the operation of the institution through professional support, facilities, and hardware and software to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College technology resources are meant to support the college's learning programs and services by providing students, faculty, and staff with appropriate hardware and software based upon the instructional, student services, and other professional needs of our users. Current technological resources are adequate, though lacking upgrade in areas of pedagogy such as multimedia stations with built-in laptop, document display, LCD, microphone/sound system, and wireless controls.

Using a bottom-to-top process, as exemplified in the college's Integrated Planning and Budget Process [1], the campus community continues to develop a growing awareness of the need for consensus, oversight and healthy dialogue about technology resources and services that can enhance the operations and effectiveness of the institution. The greatest challenge to the advancement, standardization and consistency of technology lies in our ability as a college to maintain full communication via shared dialogue at key committees as an ongoing means to assure transparency and effectiveness of the planning and purchasing cycle.

To assure transparency and meet technological needs and resource requests, there is an opportunity to identify technology needs at the Program Unit Plan [2] level. A matrix, or Institutional Action Priority Plan, of these needs are then incorporated into our overall College Education Master Plan [3] and provided to shared governance committees for further review. The College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) met on November 14, 2008 to discuss the results of the College Master Plan resource requests, such as technology needs, order to make recommendations to the College Council on November 19, 2008 [4]. This Institutional Action Priority list, as developed from the Unit Plan matrix, was compiled and provided for approval to the College Council [5]. It was discussed at this College Council meeting that the above process will be documented in the College Educational Master Plan and submitted to the Board of Trustees in January. The fourth priority on the College's Institutional Action Priority

list (gleaned from all College Unit Plans) is: #4) *Technology upgrades, particularly for smart classrooms and computer labs.*

Merritt College has a support team that is dedicated to providing technology resources for instructional and student services and administrative needs. The Information Technology goals and values for the College are outlined in the Educational Master Plan (2007 – 2008), the Institutional Action Priorities with Action Plans (2007 - 2008), and the Institutional Learning Outcomes (2006-10) [6].

The College's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's) include the following six statements, of which "Information and Computer Literacy" is in direct alignment with the efforts of the college to provide students, staff, and faculty with ongoing and state-of-the-art opportunities in technology. This particular ILO supports a college-wide value to imbed learning experiences for students at the program and course levels, such that they are able to demonstrate information competency and technological literacy upon transfer or in the workforce.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate with clarity and precision using oral, nonverbal, and/or written language, expressing an awareness of audience, situation, and purpose.

CRITICAL THINKING

Think critically using appropriate methods of reasoning to evaluate ideas and identify and investigate problems and to develop creative and practical solutions to issues that arise in workplaces, institutions, and local and global communities.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

Apply college-level mathematical reasoning to analyze and explain real world issues and to interpret and construct graphs, charts, and tables.

INFORMATION AND COMPUTER LITERACY

Use appropriate technology to identify, locate, evaluate and present information for personal, educational and workplace goals.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

Through knowledge of history and cultural diversity, recognize and value perspectives and contributions that persons of diverse backgrounds bring to multicultural settings and respond constructively to issues that arise out of human diversity on both the local and the global level.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT and ETHICS

Internalize and exhibit ethical values and behaviors that address self respect and respect for others with integrity and honesty that will enable success and participation in the larger society.

Both the College and District have invested in technology, with substantial allocation of funds directed to District IT personnel, software, administrative systems, and district-wide infrastructure.

Two of the most recent examples of district-wide technology resources are administrative systems developed by Peoplesoft: Prompt (Finances) and Passport (Student Administration Systems). The implementation of both these administrative systems began in 2005, with the Prompt system being implemented in spring 2006. Passport was implemented as of summer 2008 as a partial pilot program prior to full implementation. Development and refinement of these tools have been ongoing [7]. The various modules developed as a result include financial services and purchasing, human resources, faculty course management, enrollment, and student user components. Training on these new tools and modules has been provided throughout the district and college [8].

Glitches that arise via this new application of technology, particularly in the faculty course management arena, have slowed progress in some instances and impact overall efficiencies when troubleshooting and resolution are necessary before moving forward. As these new data system modules continue to be modified and revised, they will constitute a major improvement to the functionality of administrative systems that impact the college's online registration and off-campus student access, as well as faculty and administrator access, to college information and resources.

Information Technology (IT) Team

Merritt IT staff report to the Vice President of Instruction; however, the College works with the District IT on network infrastructure issues. There are two IT positions staffed within the College Department: one College Network Coordinator and one Computer Network Technician. Both staff members are working to capacity and are challenged to meet the overall technological demands of the College, including individual employee assistance, College infrastructure, advisory role in computer standards and purchasing, upgrading, inventorying, surplus of old equipment, security, PA system set-up, server and other interdependence or centralized work with District IT. As technology needs increase, it will be important to address staffing in IT.

Connectivity between the administrative and District networks is via a dedicated T1 line. Upgrade and expansion of wireless access to the internet, using a wireless LAN (WLAN) standard, is a resource the college has available for students in the Library, Learning Resource Center [9] (LRC), and 18 new wireless access points on campus targeting areas where students congregate. There are now a total of 22 wireless access points on Merritt campus. The college continues to expand this service to increase connectivity accessibility to all areas of the campus including the LRC once it is relocated to Building L, Lower Level of the Library (estimated move June 2010). This move will be the LRC permanent location and will provide a much needed expansion in LRC services for students.

Technology resources and issues of access for Distance Education learners has become an increased effort for the college. IT has assisted the Distance Education sub-committee in the areas of reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security through a combination of contractual arrangements and IT capabilities. The course management platform is contracted through *Etudes*. *Etudes* and all course management systems are contractual agreements authorized by the district [10]. The district is scheduled to migrate to a new course management platform, *Moodle*, after spring 2009, although many Merritt College faculty members are currently using *Moodle* as their main course management source. *Moodle* is a free, open-source course management program currently being hosted at Berkeley City College. Specific implementation details are being developed now with the campus DE Coordinators working with district office staff. Merritt College began offering online training courses for faculty on *Moodle* in the summer 2008 term.

The College has a campus-wide fiber optics core line that connects all the buildings with the exception of the Self-Reliant House and Track & Field Building. Currently, the College has six pairs of data fiber optic lines that span from each college building back to the main network room where core switches are installed.

All faculty and staff have the ability to save data files to a district server, which has regularly scheduled backups. A backup system for college operations is currently being purchased through Measure A funding to better protect the College's data files.

The integrity of the college system is monitored by IT staff and protected by the software and equipment owned by the Peralta Community College District. District IT provides a spam filter and virus protection for incoming messages via the Peralta District email server. Anti-virus programs are upgraded regularly. In addition, the college is currently ordering new *locking systems* for computers, laptops, LCD projectors, and other such equipment to prevent theft. The following is a list of recent technology provided by the college:

1. New computers (laptops or desktops) to approximately 91 contract faculty.
2. The new computer systems provided necessary latest technology for faculty members to access the district's new Passport/PROMT System.
3. A new Faculty and Staff IT Training Center including new furniture, instructor technology/media station, and approximately 16 computer systems.
4. A newly installed Welcome Center including approximately 12 new computers located in Building R for students' access to online registration and admission process, FAFSA applications, and similarly related Student Services needs.
5. Installed 18 new wireless access points on campus targeting areas where students congregate. There are now a total of 22 wireless access points on Merritt campus.
6. Installed 25 new computers at Fruitvale Center.
7. Upgrade of Math Lab will include 30 new computers upon renovation of college LRC.

College Technology Committee

The College Technology Committee is a shared governance committee that holds regularly scheduled meetings twice a month throughout the academic year to address technological progress and issues regarding College-wide technology, and to make recommendations to the College Council. The Committee's process of transparent communication, recommendation, funding, and implementation is consistent with the process (bottom – top model) followed by the College to develop the College Educational Master Plan. All campus groups are represented in the Technology Committee including: a faculty member and college administrator as co-chairs, and 12 other voting members consisting of faculty, classified, and student committee members.

The Technology Committee has accomplished a number of important tasks and made significant contributions to the college's success through their role in technological advancements over the past 5 years. For example, the Technology Committee conducted a survey to assess the status of technology on campus [11]. The survey data results provided the College a means to identify and later analyze the College's current IT inventory and IT inventory processes. In addition, the discussion of the survey's data results served to formalize the College's process of re-using and recycling computer related equipment and materials.

In April 2006, the Technology Committee developed a Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline [12]. This Plan has served to guide the Technology Committee in its role and actions regarding technology within the College and in collaboration with the District. The Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline is included its entirety as an addendum document of evidence attached at the close of this Standard III Section. Below is the Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline Introduction and Table of Contents.

Technology Committee *Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline*

Introduction

This document constitutes a preliminary outline of what the Merritt College Technology Committee would like to develop into a College Technology Plan. The Committee developed this plan by a) identifying and discussing College technology needs during committee meetings during the 2005-2006 academic year, b) reviewing approximately 15 technology plans from community and state colleges nationwide, c) soliciting ideas regarding technology needs from Merritt College staff, faculty and administrators via a survey, and d) critically evaluating and rewriting the outline on a regular basis from its inception in December, 2005, to the present date.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, I ask the members of the College Council to review this outline, to give the Technology Committee your feedback and suggestions, and to endorse this document as a work in progress.

*Respectfully,
Chris Grampp
Chair, Technology Committee, 2005-2006 academic year
April 19, 2006*

TECHNOLOGY PLAN OUTLINE TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1. Institutional Success**
- 2. Technology Spending and Funding**
- 3. Information Technology and College Infrastructure**
- 4. Inventory of Existing Equipment**
- 5. Hardware and Software Purchasing and Distribution**
- 6. Security, Updates, and Filters**
- 7. Web Pages**
- 8. Staffing and Training**

As the Plan Table of Contents shows above, the Technology Committee has played an active role as a forum for discussion and recommendation of College-wide standards in purchase and distribution of computers, projectors, presentation devices, and all smart-classroom technology, equipment, security-related issues, and maintenance. The Committee advocates for standards in all areas of technology and continues to be a support and forum for researching and recommending technology based best practices and standards for the safe and secure use of technology.

The Merritt College Technology Committee has also been an important voice and participates in the ongoing effort to design a new district-wide website. Lastly, the Technology Committee has been an integral partner in the discussion and planning of Merritt College remodeling including individual classrooms or offices, as well as in the technological update of several buildings with regards to infrastructure and the allowance for future technology yet to come.

Learning Resources Center Labs

The college LRC labs are currently housed on the first floor of the D Building and consist of the Writing and ESL Labs, Math Lab, and Open Lab. See Standard IIC for a detailed description of the LRC. LRC technology hardware and software is driven by student use and need. The LRC, with the help of the college IT Team, provides and maintains the latest editions of standard educational and productivity software. Additionally, student schedules are linked to the campus student tracking system (SARS) which enables faculty to track student use of LRC resources. SARS also assists the LRC Coordinators in identifying and addressing gaps in appropriate learning levels and content area applications.

The IT Team works closely with LRC faculty and coordinators to insure that all LRC networks are properly updated and configured between terms with deliverable dates prior to the first day of the term. Additional and subsequent adjustments to software installation(s), and other necessary changes to configurations are communicated to IT by the LRC faculty coordinator.

Audio-Visual Services

Audio-Visual Services are made available to administrators, part-time and full-time faculty, staff and students. A/V equipment is delivered by IT staff or aides, set-up, and

operated on campus (classrooms, meeting rooms, and public areas). IT staff members assist in A/V planning and coordinating all college special events in conjunction with a variety of faculty, administrators and staff. The organization, budget, and managerial structure of the Audio-Visual Department is currently under review. Several new restructuring models are under consideration with a goal to best serve students, staff, faculty, administrators and community via collaboration between the IT Team, Library, Business Office, and Instructional Services.

Disabled Students Programs and Services

Access to computers is necessary for students with disabilities to participate successfully in post-secondary education. Programs and services for students with disabilities (DSPS) at Merritt College provide instruction in assistive technology and cognitive skills improvement. The following assistive technology is available to college DSPS students at the DSPS High Tech Center:

- Screen Readers
- Screen Magnifiers
- Ergonomic Keyboards
- Ergonomic and Alternative Mice
- Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Jaws
- Visual Thesaurus
- Skills Bank

Students in the DSPS program can enroll in the Learning Opportunities and related LRC courses to receive instruction in assistive technology appropriate to their specific disability. Adaptive software and hardware include programs to increase print size on the screen; speech synthesizers that read aloud information on the screen; voice input to allow “hands free” computer operation; an embosser for Braille output of written material; and programs that modify the keyboard. Students can use this adaptive technology for writing, proofreading, doing Internet research, and other activities appropriate to their academic and vocational goals (see above list of assistive technology available in the High Tech Center).

Self Evaluation

Since the last 2003 self-study, the Technology Committee has developed a Technology Plan Preliminary Outline (2006) to assess current procedures and policies and provide more efficient and collaborative ways to approach planning for technology resources. The Technology committee has considered a wide range of issues including purchase, upgrade, and maintenance of technology resources as well as goals and guiding principles to better plan for expansion and innovative uses of technology at the college. The Technology Committee is a regular shared governance committee of the college and a subcommittee of the College Council. It is comprised of administrators, faculty and staff representatives from all instructional and student support service areas of the college.

With guidance from the Vice President of Instruction, the Technology Committee has met to make crucial decisions regarding the creation of or clarity of policies and procedure that concern technology needs of the campus. Coordination of technology issues among the various college constituents to standardize hardware and software is ongoing. As part of this analysis, the IT department has inventoried hardware and software in use on the campus.

According to the recent college-wide survey [13], 28% of Merritt College faculty members agreed that the college's technological equipment is purchased, maintained, upgraded or replaced in a timely manner: 53% disagreed, 28% strongly disagreed, and 19% were uncertain. While existing technology resources are sufficiently used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness, the college continues to work on strengthening processes to enhance purchasing, maintenance, and timeliness of computer and other technical equipment procurement. Some of the low faculty responses in this survey may be the results of district and college-wide cooperative planning and training in the current change in technology for financial and student services (Passport and Prompt).

Among the issues raised in Technology Committee are the following: Computer Roll-down Policy, Distance Education needs and policies for instructor training and course management systems, a hardware operating systems and applications suite as a standardized technology campus package, design and planning for new "smart classrooms," prioritization of technology training needs reflected in the plan for a new Teaching and Learning Center designated in Building R, Room 29, reconfiguration of the Audio Visual disbursement of equipment to reflect new technology and instructional service needs, and several crucial issues concerning the college's web page, including the hiring of a web master, or web administrator [14]. The Technology Committee is currently revising its college Technology Plan from 2006 to better reflect technological and campus changes and to serve as a guidance tool integrated into the College Educational Master Plan.

Discussions about the college web site have centered on the pros and cons of the utility of web service software systems contracted by the district. The original system designed by SchoolWeb was developed and implemented in 2006. More recently a new vendor, iSITE, was contracted to redesign the PCCD web site. District consultants are still developing the site, but the "go-live" date has been postponed by the Board of Trustees. Several problems and issues were encountered by college personnel concerning the new redesign. These center on lack of participation in the design process, instability of outside personnel responsible for the project that made communication between constituents difficult, a conflict between fundamental conceptualization of a college's web site as a marketing tool or an informational/instruction tool, the system's workability for an academic institution, security of and access for administrative users, control of academic and information content, responsibility for design, and upkeep and maintenance, DSPS concerns. These issues have been brought to the attention of the Technology Committee

members, and campus and district Academic Senate, as well as the College Council. Discussion continues at the district level with district IT staff, the Marketing Director and the vendor.

Interlinked with the district IT and web contract concerns is the campus's responsibility for maintenance and updating of the web. Individual faculty and staff members are currently responsible for the content and maintenance of their own web pages. In some instances, departments such as the Library and career and technical programs (Nursing, Radiologic Science, and Nutrition and Dietetics, etc.), and limited programs in the Student Services area, have formed internal procedures for responsibility for design, context, and updates of their webpages. However, issues still remain as to who is responsible for general campus and departmental/divisional webpages. It is incumbent on the Peralta Colleges as a whole and collaborative team to help the district clarify and resolve these issues, so that responsible persons can be identified, and the creation of a useful and up-to-date website can move forward. Information and online resources are critical to students' education, progress and success.

b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

Descriptive Summary

The college currently does not have a central location for training personnel in using the college's information technology. Training for students also is provided in various locations. Besides classroom instruction, students receive instruction in Student Services for online registration and access to enrollment in courses, in the library for research and information literacy, and in the LRC labs where instruction and tutoring is focused on specific academic and basic skills subjects. Training for personnel (administration, staff and faculty) is held in the Faculty and Staff Training Center that was identified as such upon the opening of Building R after an expansive remodel. Other training sites for faculty and staff have been held in the P Building computer labs, and in the Student Service's Welcome Center.

Disabled Student Services and Programs provide information technology training in the DSPS Lab for students with disabilities, as an essential part of their regular program and courses offerings. Campus IT and the DSPS also provide and help maintain software for two computer workstations in the library for library research, as well as the High Tech Lab [15]. DSPS provides assistance to students whose goals include transfer to 4-year college, Associate Degree, Certificate of Completion, basic skills improvement, independent living skills, employment, and personal growth. DSPS offers academic advising, counseling, diagnostic testing, access to assistive technology, and other academic accommodations.

Self Evaluation

While these labs have various capabilities for training purposes and are well used, availability of space and updating of equipment remain problematic. Some training by IT staff on the use of hardware occurs at individual workstations. However, IT is not sufficiently staffed to allow for more than minimal training during installation of hardware and software. Other training for software systems purchased and launched by the district also occurs at a number of locations on campus, at Laney College Computer Center, and District IT labs. The lack of comprehensive and ongoing training, including adequate space and personnel, has been an identified problem area for the college. Due to lack of proper attention and funding, the district has also been negligent in providing adequate training for personnel. As a result of surveys, data collection, and college-wide dialogue, the Technology Committee and other crucial campus constituents have recommended the continued development of the college's new Teaching and Learning Center.

Due to staffing issues, providing ongoing 24/7 "help desk" style technology and computer assistance from district services has been problematic and inconsistent. However due to the service from college IT team staff many issues and problems are solved. Issues of consistency of service, training of staff as well as adequate staffing remain to be resolved. Another innovation was the concept of "train the trainer" where the college and district identified and trained individual faculty and staff members. These individuals acted as sources of information and individual training for other college personnel, called *Prompt/Passport Business Readiness Teams (BRTs)*. Merritt College has greatly benefited from the Merritt College BRT representative's expertise and assistance, as well as from the BRT district team that implemented a "Faculty Experience Survey" summarized December 2008 [16]

The college's IT Team is responsive to the technology demands of the college though staffing remains an issue. Local IT has the ability to either resolve problems, or refer the user to the proper district resource. However, the college needs to retain the ability to implement, maintain, and resolve its unique technology issues and problems. Many of these training issues will be resolved with the continued development of the Teaching and Learning Center. Funding from Title III and Measure A will be of special benefit to faculty and students in the use of the proposed "smart classrooms," and assist other programs such as the Library/LRC, Audio-Visual, and Student Service in accessing and using these new technologies as they emerge.

Audio-Visual Services

Currently training in Audio-Visual technology/hardware is done on an individual basis when possible by IT staff, self teaching, or peer to peer teaching. If necessary, the IT technician can assist in AV but his primary assignment is as a member of the IT Team. With the implementation of a technology Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), mentioned elsewhere in this Standard, training for multimedia products and utilities will increase dramatically.

- c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.***

Descriptive Summary

The management, maintenance, and operation of the college's technological infrastructure and equipment are managed through the Office of Instruction. With the cooperation of faculty, staff, and the IT Team, the hardware needs are agreed upon and purchased through standard district purchasing policies. The development of the college's comprehensive planning and budgeting process has helped to insure that the college's technology needs are addressed by an inclusive dialogue. As a part of this reorganization, the creation of department chairs with annual unit plans will also serve as a means for keeping technology relevant and current. Using the unit plans, together with program reviews, will assist the various decision-making bodies in the planning and budgeting process to make informed decisions and establish college priorities among the various requests for technology. According to the new more strategic approach that both the college and the district are implementing, the documents mentioned above will inform the master plan which in turn will help establish a more integrated and transparent process of planning, acquiring, maintaining, upgrading, and replacing technology infrastructure and equipment. Also, the campus Technology Committee has contributed in numerous ways to technology planning, e.g., by producing the planning document included at the end of this report and recommending policies, inviting timely vendors and speakers, and recommending procedural changes.

The IT Team has also conducted surveys and evaluations of existing equipment for currency (faculty and staff computers, projection equipment, printers, scanners, AV equipment, players, etc). This kind of record keeping will assist the responsible parties in assessing technology needs and help lead to informed recommendations for the replacement of outdated equipment and new technologies.

The college provides office technology for each full-time employee and relevant technology resources for faculty. Ongoing funding for these resources remains problematic; however, the recent Measure A bond will allow for an overall upgrade and replacement of all older hardware on campus.

The ideal process at the college would have all decisions regarding the distribution of its technology resources channeled from individual personnel to departments, from department chairs to division deans who then bring these requests to the appropriate committees and management. Prioritized lists of equipment needs, including technology, are finally distributed for dialogue and recommendation by the College Council. However, staffing issues and communication between the college and district IT continues to hinder the efficiency of this process. The new budgeting and planning process is to provide a public opportunity for all members to advocate for the resources needed to improve services and instruction.

As are all purchases, technology purchases are facilitated by the campus business office, in coordination with the district business office, and can include vendor demonstrations, negotiating competitive pricing, license agreements, and warranties.

The IT Team evaluates technology, recommends upgrades to current institutional standards, and informs programs of new technologies that may be of interest. IT also works with individual faculty and staff members who have technology needs that affect learning and course development. IT also works with all departments (e.g. the Library and LRC) to evaluate their special technology needs (assistive technology as well) and provides advice on selection and purpose of their respective curricular or services development.

Audio-Visual Services

This is primarily distribution/delivery/set-up services for loaning A/V equipment for classrooms, special events, etc. This area is funded and supervised by the Office of Instruction. Request for services from faculty continue to be by individual or division request. Currently the Audio Visual Services does not have a designated staff person to offer extensive set-up, delivery, and maintenance of A/V equipment to faculty and administration. From set-ups for audio-video presentations in classrooms, to professional day presentation, and graduation, the demands made on IT staff for AV needs and equipment is great.

Self Evaluation

Attention to technology needs, especially for distance education courses, has been made a priority by the Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) and special technology needs of new courses have been made a part of dialogue and requirements to developing new courses.

Although the campus Technology Committee has contributed to the planning for the college, more clarity is needed as to its role in the overall planning process. All programs and services driven by technology needs experience problems with adequate funding. Measure A funds has given the college an opportunity to update on a large scale all college technology. However, problems with stable, consistent budgets for technology needs and overly complex and micromanaged ordering and purchasing processes (multi-level authorization and sign-off process) continue to cause challenges with prompt update and delivery of technology components including resultant vendor problems and excessive delays in delivery and outdated inventory.

DSPS

In general, there is very good cooperation among DSPS, the IT Committee, and IT staff related to equal electronic access. However, this cooperation is built largely on the skill and long-term positive working relationships among the individuals involved rather than a system of sustainable practices.

At the District level this process is more problematic. The District has not adopted a consistent policy about electronic accessibility. For example, there are specific concerns about access to web sites [17] and to the new Passport student system, but there seems at present no systematic way that these needs are evaluated and met.

d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance and enhancement of its programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

Distribution of technology resources on campus has become an increasing priority, and the college has, through development of its new internal planning procedures, begun to establish clarity and transparency in all aspects of planning for technology resources. Proposals are developed college-wide to request technology funds through annual unit plans that include written justification for use of the requested technology. These plans and other written requests are processed through the Office of Instruction. Requests are prioritized via the budget and planning cycle described earlier in this Standard. Since the 2002 creation of the Committee of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), these meetings have been a forum for dialoguing about the college's technology needs wherein all programs and services have a voice in the discussion and potential recommendation.

The continued growth in technology-enhanced courses makes support for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services a challenge. Lack of funding for additional classified or student assistant positions has been problematic.

Funding and allocation priorities for faculty and staff member's desktop computers and replacements and upgrades are coordinated by the Office of Instruction, Business Office, and college's IT Team. Funding for replacements and upgrades for laptops and desktop computer systems is inconsistent. While faculty use of computers and multimedia resources in instruction is increasing, no future or continuing source or cycle of funding for replacing or upgrading has been directly identified. Currently, Measure A bond funds are being used to obtain the IT equipment for the entire college's infrastructure including faculty, staff, and students, their usage, and whether to upgrade or replace equipment and materials. Continued dependence on one-time funding sources for technology and other essential college services is problematic.

Audio-Visual Services

Funds for A/V supplies and equipments remain on a "by-request" or emergency basis. Funding for A/V is usually allocated from the annual State Equipment and Library Materials fund, or Instructional Supplies. In Fall 2006 A/V finally received an annual general fund budget allocation to purchase badly needed supplies and parts for aging equipment; however, these funds have not been institutionalized or allocated on a predictable or ongoing basis. Since Measure A funds have become available, AV has

benefited from the planning by the Office of Instruction for upgrades and the purchase of new equipment. Also the “smart classroom” project to be implemented during the 2008-08 academic year will accomplish two goals: 1) Providing state-of-the-art multimedia equipment and capabilities to a select number of classrooms, and 2) Lessen the physical demand on moving equipment from place to place, thus allow more time for the Media Specialist to plan and develop AV services and collection with the Office of Instruction and the Library.

Self Evaluation

Campus IT Team support of individual instructional programs and department and services has been adequate. However, with only two staff, there is a need to develop a scheduled maintenance plan that will enhance the college’s programs and services. Increased staffing may be a necessary consideration.

The college is challenged by the ongoing need to update technology and equipment in all types of instructional delivery. The increased demand for installation and implementation of new technologies in departments and buildings has not been followed by an increase in staffing or funding to sustain an equivalent level of maintenance, and has not resolved the ongoing and rising costs of technology. The college recognizes that long-term planning for a technology infrastructure should not depend on one-time funding sources.

Due to recent changes in financial utility and procedures, the process for acquiring new equipment is very complex and rather disjointed. Communication about the purchasing process between constituents, including between campus and district Business Offices, can be improved. Coordination of purchases and standardization of equipment would bring savings to the college and allow for more accurate assessment of staffing needs.

Technology needs should continue to be identified and discussed using the new budget and planning process, that allows for integration and inclusions at all levels of the college. Consultation with the Office of Instruction, Business Office, and IT Team during this process is crucial. As the college plans to increase its installation and use of technology including technology-enhanced classrooms (smart classrooms), enhances AV, and multimedia Library resources. Advanced scheduling for maintenance and replacement need to be included in the plan. Funds need to be allocated for scheduled maintenance, and budget considerations need to be included in any assessment, inventory and replenishment strategies.

Technology for instructional and Student Support services require expansion and funding to increase the functionality of these components as needs and demands increase and change. As more instructional, Student Services, and business activities are conducted online, it is expected that there will be an increase in demand on network services, and the college’s ability to provide Internet access on and off campus. It will continue to be a challenge for the college to dialogue and compete for funding at the

district level unless college-level technology needs are institutionalized through budgeting and formerly integrated in district technology planning.

2. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Since the introduction of the college's integrated planning and budgeting process, a realistic and transparent integration of technology planning has begun to occur. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning through various participatory governance processes and master plan processes such as unit plans, Five-year Facilities & Construction Plan Update, and college committees (e.g., Department Chairs Committee, Technology Committee and College Council). Inclusion of the college's technology goals and needs in the Educational Master Plan will help assure future integration into district-wide technology goals and planning. At the district level, a strategic technology plan has been developed that will also help inform and integrate technology planning thorough the district. This is evidenced by the recent publication of campus technology committee's agendas and minutes.

District technology planning is accomplished by dialogue within the Strategic Planning Management Team, a planning and advisory committee drawn from all constituents district-wide. If the college Technology Committee continues to be a driving force for an integrated planning on campus, it will be a great improvement. All major technology projects are integrated with the institutional planning process. One of the goals in the Master Plan relate to instructional areas and services that demand technological innovation and development. These include: online and distance education, administrative use of technology, curriculum management, and most importantly classroom use of technology. Beyond the committee work, individuals working with technology participate in the Chancellor's and many other district committees that set district standards, goals, directions, and needs for technology.

Self Evaluation

Technology planning is critical to the college's ability to stay current with student needs and industry demands. Improvements have been made at the college over the last five years. One of the most important identified goals of the college by its constituencies, as outlined in the college's institutional priorities and action plans, is the development and implementation of a Technology Plan. This plan will be updated by the Technology Committee and become part of the Educational Master Plan. The updated draft of the 2006 plan is currently being written by a sub-committee of the Technology Committee and will be presented to the whole committee and approved by other governance committee during the 2008-09 academic year. This process should be led by the Technology Committee and then submitted for approval and recommendation using the shared governance process.

Planning Agenda

Processes:

- Refine and clarify a clear college-wide process for requesting technology related equipment and sustainable funding sources (district, state, federal, and private).
- Establish increased, effective communication between all LRC, Library, Instruction, and IT constituencies regarding scheduling and coordinating services and programs, including deliveries of technology-related materials prior to term start dates.

Planning:

- Approve and implement a college-wide Technology Strategic Master Plan that allows adequate time for regular and emergency planning, maintenance, and prompt purchase and installation that includes a tracking system to alert the college of vendor and District IT delays.
- Expedite planning, design, and implementation of the Teaching and Learning Center.

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[http://www.merritt.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=40021](http://www.merritt.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=40021)
16. Business Readiness Team (BRT) Faculty Experience Survey summarized December 2008
17. District Web Page/Information Technology www.peralta.edu

Standard IIID
Financial Resources

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.

- 1. The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.***

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College is allocated funds through the Peralta Community College District, which is funded primarily through SB361 apportionment funding from the state [1]. State funding is comprised of unrestricted general funds and restricted categorical funds allocated to serve special populations or fund specific programs and services (DSPS, EOPS, CalWorks, Matriculation).

Table IIID.1: PCCD General Funds –from Adopted Budget 07/08

	YEAR END 05/06	YEAR END 06/07	(Estimated) YEAR END 07/08
GENERAL FUNDS REVENUES			
Unrestricted General Funds			
Program Based Funding	83,946,436	95,478,362	98,222,348
Other State	4,921,170	6,543,531	3,651,110
Other local	3,940,359	5,046,326	4,582,872
Book Commission (<i>transfer in</i>)	<u>270,060</u>	<u>296,718</u>	<u>297,583</u>
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS	93,078,025	107,364,937	106,753,913
Restricted General Funds			
Federal	3,054,008	2,875,165	2,961,247
State	10,239,227	10,763,444	14,971,075
Local	<u>1,157,462</u>	<u>869,914</u>	<u>1,416,531</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS	14,450,697	14,508,523	19,348,853
TOTAL OF GENERAL FUND REVENUES	107,528,722	121,873,460	126,102,766

District revenues are allocated to the four Peralta colleges based on previous year allocations and expenditures and a review of needed adjustments. The Budget Allocation Committee, a subcommittee of the district Budget Advisory Committee, was formed in 2006 in response to concerns about possible inequity in allocations to the four colleges, particularly in regards to Vista College’s anticipated growth as they took possession of a new building. The Budget Allocation Committee developed a formula for allocation of district resources which was then taken to the Budget Advisory Committee.

The mission statement of Merritt College forms the core of the college’s strategic planning process, and is reflected in the college’s strategic directions, unit plans, and priorities articulated in the Merritt College Educational Master Plan [2]. Allocations to programs are determined in a number of ways: 1) by formulas which are FTES driven; 2) by mandated appropriation through grants and contracts; 3) through allocations to categorically-funded programs; and 4) through resource development. The college has recently implemented an aggressive resource development initiative focusing on developing alternative resources in response to needs identified in an open, participatory task force [3].

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The college remains committed to the Mission, Values and Vision developed and approved in December 2003. Merritt’s planning processes and planning templates encourage faculty to consider the mission of the college and to develop unit mission statements during the unit planning process. Merritt’s 2006 unit planning template was adapted by the District Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) for use by all four colleges, beginning in October 2007. The piece below, copied from a Merritt Unit Plan, documents how the template requires a Mission Statement for the unit. The complete template is included in the appendices at the end of the Self Study.

**Peralta Community College District
UNIT PLAN UPDATE Template ~ September 2008**

Each discipline will complete this form to update the unit plans developed in 2007. These will be reviewed at the college level and then forwarded to the district-wide planning and budgeting process. The information on this form is required for all resource requests – including faculty staffing requests – for the 2009-10 budget year.

I. OVERVIEW

		Date Submitted:	10/25/2008
Discipline	Art	Dean:	Stacy Thompson
Department Chair	David Morales		
Mission/ History <i>Brief, one paragraph</i>	The Art Department at Merritt College seeks to generate and nurture the creative element in human life. Artistic impulse is an intrinsic human necessity for holistic health. The shared creative process of a class in painting or ceramics fosters, in the warmest, most accessible		

Mission/ History	way, a general communication that spreads out to benefit the entire community.
-----------------------------	--

a. Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.

Descriptive Summary

In September of 2004, Merritt College created a task force on Integrated Planning and Budgeting under the auspices of the College Council. The first Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model was developed and approved by the College Council on April 20, 2005 [4]. Upon approval of the new model, the Task Force was disbanded and the Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) was created. As a subcommittee of the College Council, the charge of the IPC was to 1) conduct a situational analysis; 2) recommend 3-5 Strategic Directions to shared governance groups; 3) recommend institutional priorities; and 4) review, analyze and comment on annual Unit Action Plans. The IPC composition was as follows: two administrators (one from instruction, one from student services), three faculty, two classified staff, (including the College Research and Planning Officer), and one student.

In June 2005, the IPC held a two-day retreat to review documents and identify critical issues and future directions related to the following: teaching and learning; access, success, growth and diversity; workforce and economic development; facilities; technology; budget and budget process; and community engagement. Documents reviewed included the Accreditation Self Study and ACCJC Responses; College Mission, Values, and Vision; Program Reviews; College Educational Plan; College Facilities Plan; Matriculation Plan; Title III documents; and Annual Program Plans from Categorical Programs. Four Strategic Directions for the next five years were drafted: 1. Student Learning Outcomes; 2. Culture of Communication; 3. Technology and Media Resources; 4. Human, Fiscal, and Physical Resources.

In July 2005, the IPC held a half-day retreat [5], during which it drafted 2006-07 Institutional Priorities and refined the draft institutional effectiveness statement, which follows:

As an effective institution committed to its mission, Merritt College galvanizes and organizes its human, fiscal and physical resources to ensure that students attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society. In this spirit, College constituents remain committed to continually examining and utilizing data as the basis for collegial dialogue and institutional decision-making.

In October 2005, each unit developed Unit Action Plans for 2006-07 that supported the approved Strategic Directions, identified needed resources, and listed performance indicators based on the planned activities. Each year since, instructional and student services units have submitted unit plans to articulate planning at the discipline/department level, and to provide data-driven requests for resources.

Merritt College's unit planning process was adopted district-wide as the colleges collaborated on a strategic planning process that required planning processes at the micro unit level as well as the macro district-wide level. It was agreed that unit planning would inform the college educational master plans that in turn would form the district-wide educational master plan.

For the past few years, the colleges and district have engaged in developing an annual Strategic Planning and Budget Process model that ties budget processes to college planning [6]. The new planning model is based on empirical data for managing resources, and effectively bases the "institutional planning and budget allocations" on measurable and quantifiable data.

The planning process also includes essential dialogue and input from various constituencies through the college's shared governance process which provides opportunities to test and challenge the data in the decision model. Resource requests are gleaned from the unit plans, considered at the College Budget Committee, and then recommendations are made to the college president.

The Board of Trustees is presented a preliminary district budget, usually in June or July, which includes a detailed Merritt College budget that describes allocation of revenues and projected expenditures. In recent years, due to a delay in adoption of the State Budget, the district's and, consequently, the college's budget have been adopted well after the start of the fiscal year. The current year's recommended budget was presented to the Board in October, 2008.

State Measure A and Measure E bond funds are allocated for building construction and renovation, as well as equipment and new program development. These funds are monitored by the district bond oversight committee that ensures proper use of the funds.

Self Evaluation

Over 95% of the total college budget is predetermined and nondiscretionary. Allocated discretionary funds are augmented indirectly through salary savings which accrue as funded full-time positions remain vacant. This is an informal and unrealistic method of funding budgetary proposals developed from funding requests generated at the discipline/department levels and reviewed by deans and vice presidents. Relying on salary savings to provide needed funds prevents meaningful planning and resource allocation. For this reason, the Resource Development Task Force focuses on realistic means for bringing additional funds to the college.

Of faculty responding to a faculty survey, 65% are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning [7]. When asked if budgets have been negotiated using the shared governance process, there was no clear agreement among respondents; nearly a quarter agree with the statement, nearly a quarter disagree, and more than half were uncertain. In addition, faculty had mixed views about the

sufficiency of their department budget. Equal proportions of faculty disagree, agree, and are uncertain about the adequacy of their departmental budgets.

Staff responses to a staff survey resulted in the following: Nearly half of staff (46%) are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. Further, one quarter of staff agree and one quarter disagree that financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning [8].

b. Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has continued to implement processes and procedures that address a realistic assessment of financial resources and expenditures. For example, the College Budget Committee reviews and discusses the president's discretionary funds, and makes recommendations to the president based on college needs. The Unit Plan template provides an opportunity to identify needed human, equipment, and facility resources. The approved college Measure A list documents allocation of Measure A funds, and instructional funds for equipment and supplies (funds 14 and 17) are communicated to faculty through the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors. [9]

The District Board of Trustees received the 2008-09 budget recommendation for adoption in October, 2008. Given the nature of the California economy, it is important that the availability of financial resources be reflected in both the adopted and projected budgets for financing operations. In recent years, the district-adopted budget has been approved after the beginning of the fiscal year. In the last two years, with the migration into the PeopleSoft/Prompt financial system, the college has been challenged in accessing budget information when needed to perform the "realistic assessment of financial resource availability." As one of the four colleges in the district, the college's budget process is intricately interwoven with that of the district.

Self Evaluation

This standard is only partially met. The college has structures in place for institutional planning as a reflection of financial resources; however, the uncertainty over the state budget as well as lack of clarity concerning allocation of Measure A funds has made it difficult for the college to ascertain if its financial planning is realistic. In addition, the implementation of the PeopleSoft system has resulted in challenges for those using the purchasing system.

As stated earlier, 95% of the college budget is predetermined. There are processes in place to allocate other funds (funds 14, 16, 17) received from the state and federal

governments that are not predetermined but are targeted for specific purposes such as instructional programs and career technical programs.

Merritt College has been fortunate in attracting additional revenue streams targeted for specific programs. The Associate Degree Nursing program has been awarded close to three million dollars in grants to expand capacity, enhance student retention and success, and develop a respiratory therapy program. The Child Development program has an on-going contract with First Five of Alameda County to improve outcomes of students in the program. Also, the college was awarded a five-year, 1.6 million-dollar Title III Strengthening Institutions grant to address the basic skills needs of Merritt students. Finally, the Resource Development Task Force has successfully established partnerships with community partners that have resulted in additional funds for the college, such as the partnership with Temple Sinai for a childcare facility on the Merritt campus.

Despite the best efforts of the college to align resource planning with institutional planning, over a third of faculty survey respondents and nearly half of staff respondents disagree that at Merritt College, “financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.”

c. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

Descriptive Summary

At Merritt College, resource requests are documented in the unit planning cycle every fall, and are provided in the context of student success data, program productivity, industry trends, and program plans. Unit plans are submitted each October, and this year’s cycle of unit planning aligns with the development of the college’s educational master plan as well as the district-wide educational master plan. A draft of the college’s funding priorities was submitted to the College Council for approval (November 19, 2008) [10] and inclusion in the educational master plan, and these priorities will be considered as part of the district’s facilities and technology plans.

Both short-range and long-range financial planning are reflected in the program planning process at the college through the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) [11] and at the district through the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) [12]. During the past two years, DWEMPC focused on developing a process for assessing instructional programs in order to more effectively allocate district funds. For programs identified as weak, the DWEMPC process may culminate in additional resources to support the program, a recommendation to consolidate like programs across the district, or a recommendation to deactivate the program due to limited student demand.

Plans for payment of long-term liabilities are incorporated into the budget process at the district level. Long-term liabilities consist primarily of general obligation bonds and future retiree benefits. Approved by voters in November 2000, Measure E authorized PCCD to issue \$153 million in bonds to repair and renovate classrooms, training facilities, science and computer labs, and to meet health and safety standards. In addition, a \$390 million bond measure, Measure A, was passed in June 2006 to be used for construction, renovation, and instructional equipment. General obligation bonds are paid with taxes assessed on personal and real property located within the Peralta district.

In response to a Commission recommendation to “provide funding for the long-term liability posed by health care benefits,” in 2005 the Chancellor directed the district chief financial officer to identify and take steps to locate funds for long-term medical liability benefits. In December 2005, the Peralta Community College District sold a series of 2005 bonds that would provide funding for the long-term liability coverage of the district’s retirees’ health care obligations.

The proceeds of the series 2005 bonds were placed in a Retiree Health Benefit Program (RHBP) Fund held by a trustee, to be used only to pay or reimburse the district for payment of retiree health benefit costs. The district projected that the investment earnings on the fund would pay its retiree health care costs while the bonds are outstanding, assuming an annual return of 6%. By virtue of this transaction the district anticipates that it will maintain its retiree health care costs at a constant 6.7% of budget through the 2049 final maturity of the bonds as opposed to experiencing an increase in such costs to almost 9% of budget over the next 15 years.

GASB 45, which requires reporting and accounting for OPEBs, (other post employment benefits such as retiree health care), became effective for employers in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2006. The statement generally requires that employers complete an actuarial valuation to determine their retiree health care liabilities and also calculate the annual required contribution (ARC) to pre-fund such liabilities. The difference between actual annual contributions to the plan and the ARC would be reported as a net OPEB obligation in the district’s financial statements. The district’s preliminary GASB 45 actuarial valuation reported the present value of benefits for retiree health care ranging from \$132 million, at a 7% discount rate, to \$196 million, at 4.5%. The district’s ARC for fiscal 2006 is projected at approximately \$12 million compared with an estimated pay-as-you-go cost of about \$5 million (see Focused Midterm Report, Response to District Recommendation #3) [13].

Self Evaluation

The district is responsible for payment of long-term liabilities, and has clearly identified and planned for payment of these liabilities through general obligation bonds. However, district and college allocation processes do not appear to be transparent to faculty and staff at the college according to survey respondents. When asked if budgets have been negotiated using the shared governance process at the college, there was no clear

agreement among faculty respondents; nearly a quarter of faculty agreed with the statement, nearly a quarter disagreed, and more than half were uncertain. [6] In response to the staff survey, fifty-four percent of staff were uncertain if resources are distributed according to negotiations using the shared governance process, and one-third of staff disagreed with the statement. [7]

Many mechanisms are in place to identify college priorities through a shared governance process and to communicate those priorities to the college community. A lack of understanding concerning funding of college priorities indicates that improvement is needed in communicating allocation processes and decisions. Sixty-five percent of faculty survey respondents and nearly half of staff respondents (46%) are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

d. The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development, with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.

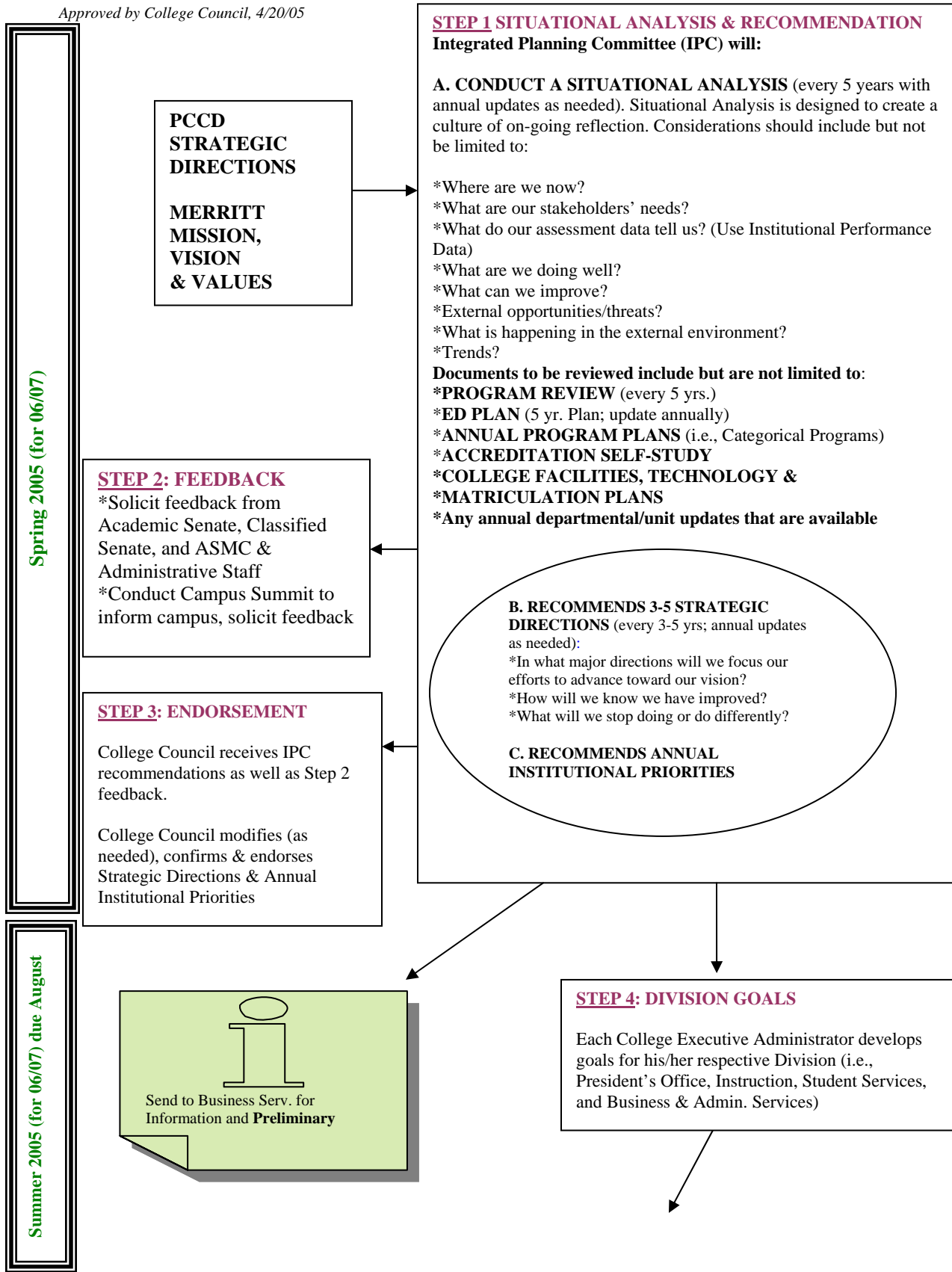
Descriptive Summary

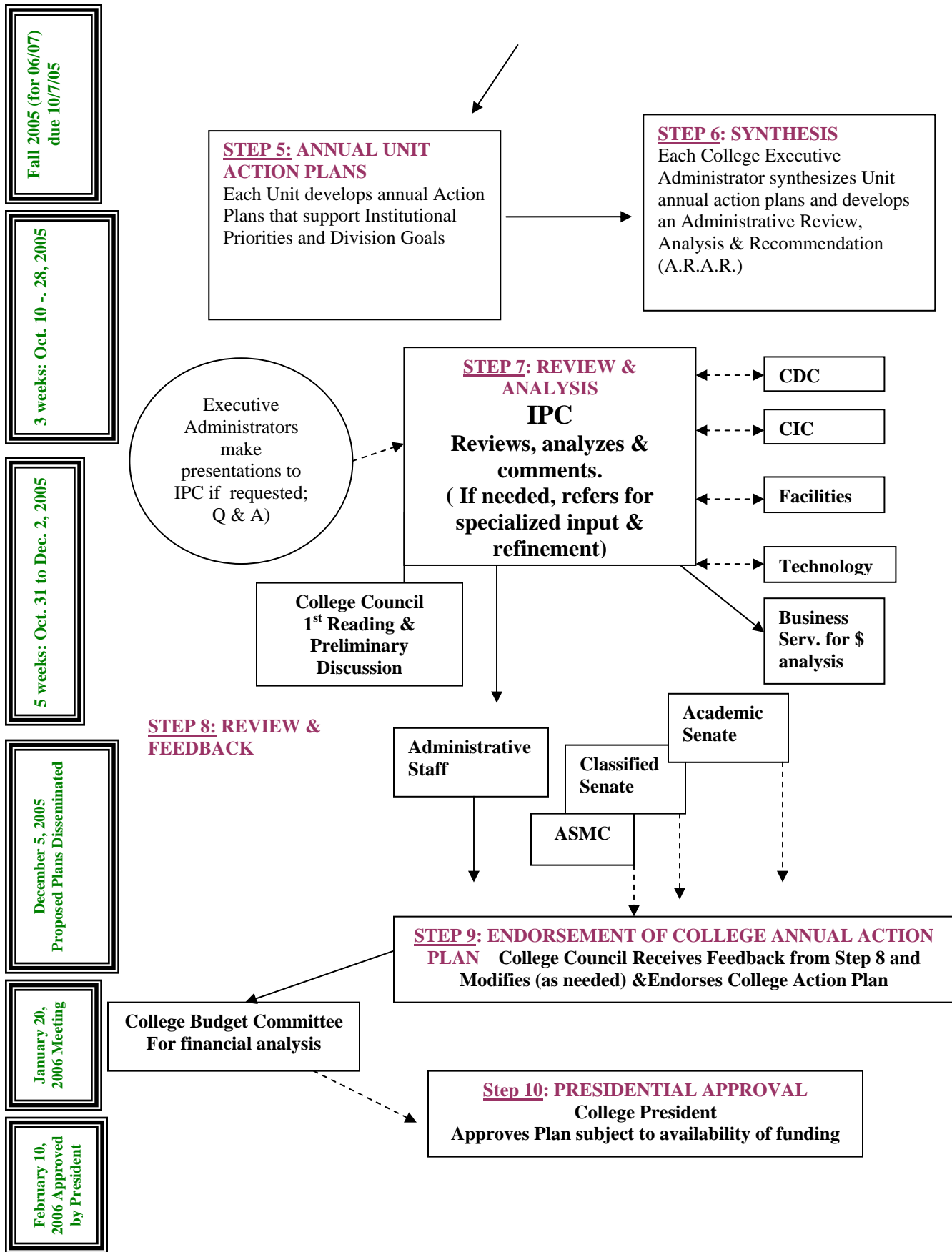
Merritt College's Integrated Planning and Budgeting model was developed in 2005 by the Task Force on Integrated Planning and Budgeting. The Task Force was disbanded and reformed as the Integrated Planning Committee, a subcommittee of the College Council. After much discussion, the College Council adopted the planning model on April 20, 2005, and defined what constitutes for Merritt College an effective institution (see following 4 pages).

Merritt College has continued integrating its strategic planning and budget processes with its internal constituency groups. On the March 6, 2008 Professional Day, Merritt College faculty, staff, and students reviewed the college's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's)², which serve as a reminder of Merritt College's Mission, Vision, and Values.

² ILO's describe an integrated set of foundational knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare the student for future academic and career success.

MERRITT COLLEGE PLANNING MODEL





BUDGET DEVELOPMENT BEGINS

**Budget Process
 Paper Flow**

Due Dates

February 1
 (Launch)

March 17

Due to CDC
 Chair
 March 31

April 5
 May 3

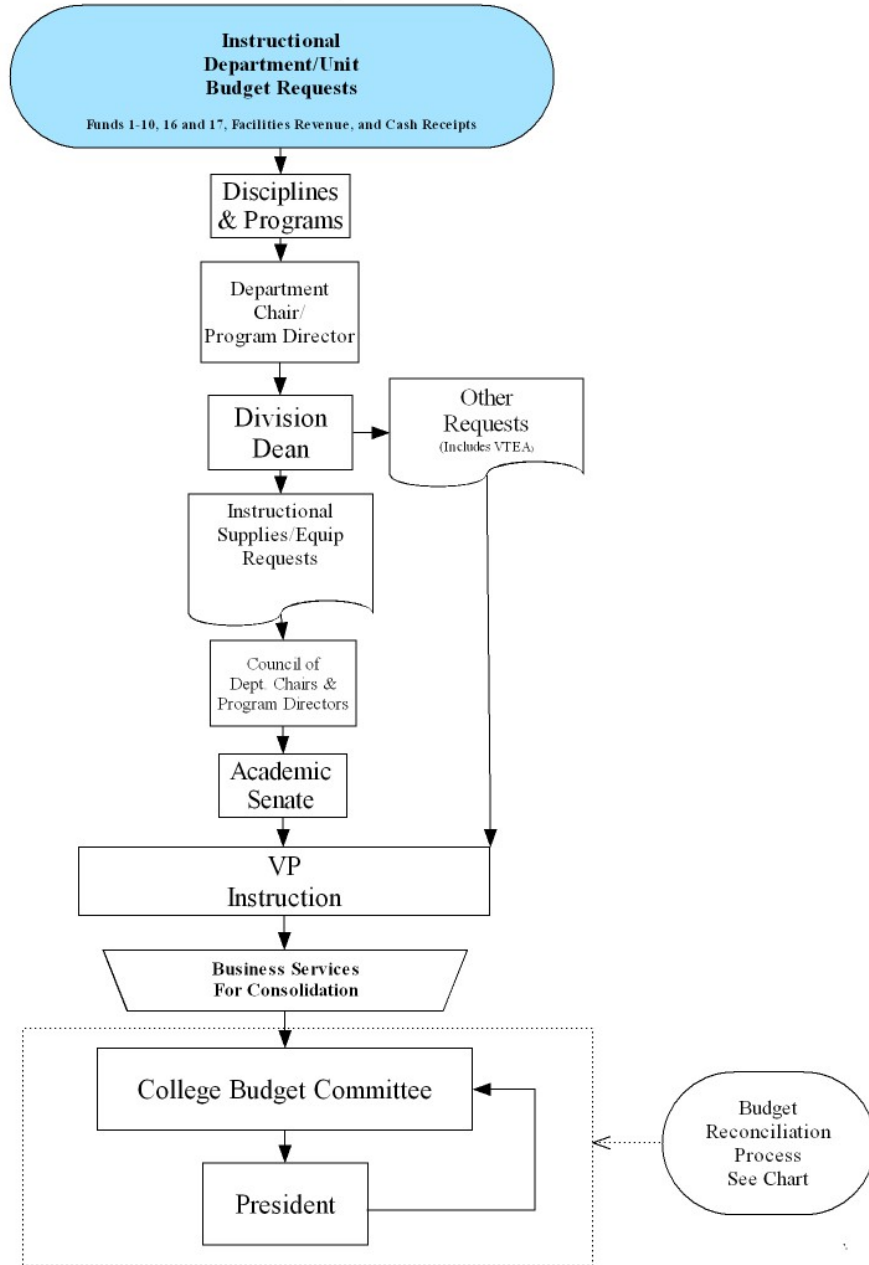
May 5

May 8

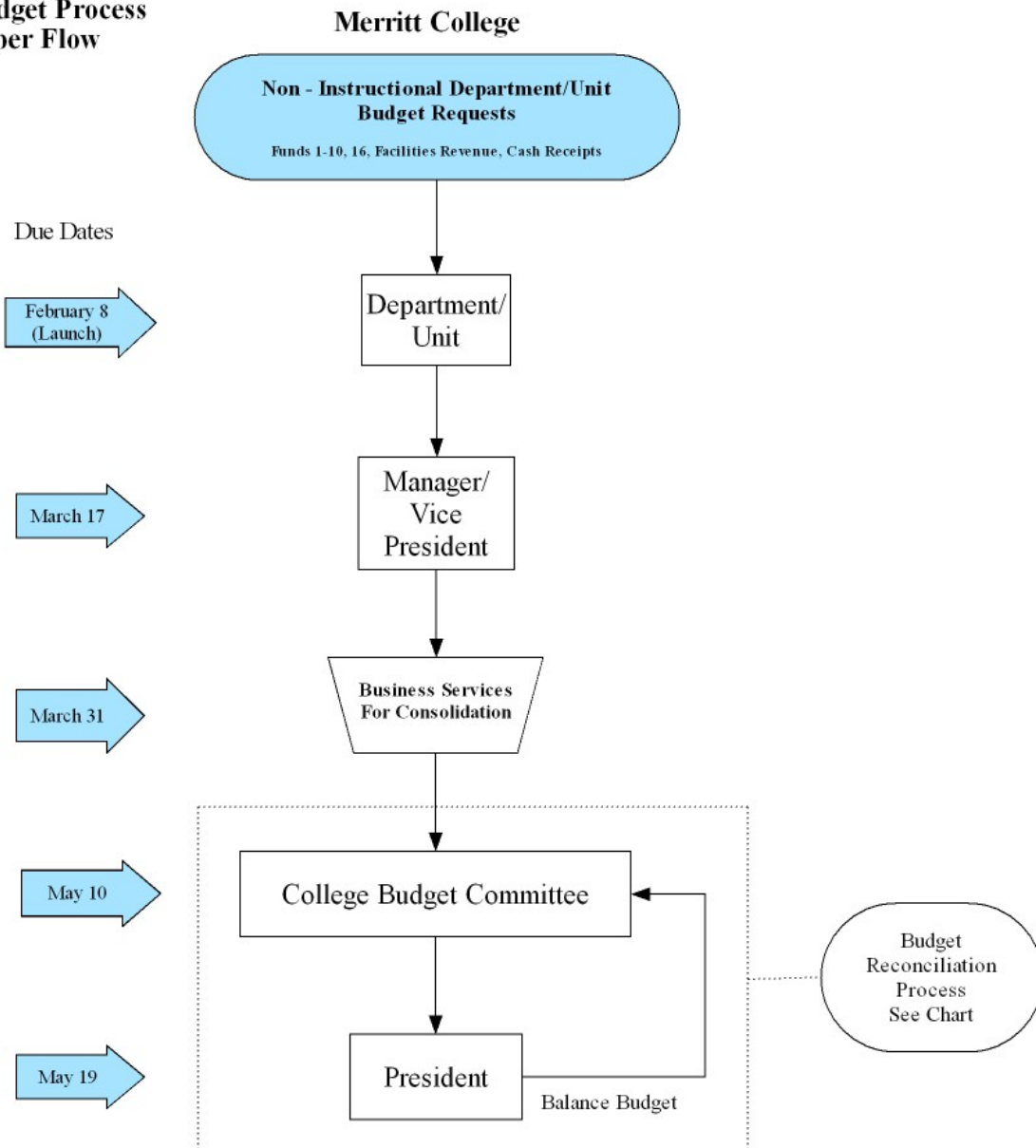
May 10

May 19

Merritt College



Budget Process Paper Flow



Self Evaluation

In spring of 2007, a district wide Committee for Strategic Educational Planning (CSEP) was formed to evaluate all instructional programs in the district. This more focused level of scrutiny led to the development of a Unit Plan template that delineated program data such as ftes generation, productivity, program trends, and resource needs. Program faculty and staff were required to review their program data and program evaluation, to design action plans that addressed the data, and to identify necessary resources that would assist the program in achieving their intended outcomes. The CSEP Unit Plan format was based on Merritt College's unit planning begun the previous year, so Merritt was well ahead in terms of the concept of unit planning and identification of resources for budget purposes.

Currently, the college has completed its 2008-09 unit planning and the college educational master plan. A unit plan matrix for instructional programs 1) identifies plans of action to address program evaluation, particularly for programs rated as "Watch/Revitalize;" 2) itemizes equipment and resources needed; and 3) documents facility needs. [14] Needed resources identified in the matrix are now captured in the college's educational plan as well as in the district wide educational master plan. An additional matrix sent to instructional programs requests that programs articulate in what ways they address the college and district concepts of access, equity, and student success.

The process described above has led to streamlining of the college planning and budgeting model, although the various governance committees remain actively involved in the process of recommending resource allocations: the Facilities Committee, the Technology Committee, and the College Budget Committee. The College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) assumed the role of IPC (the Integrated Planning Committee) as district-wide planning took place in SPC (the Strategic Planning Committee) and DWEMPC (the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee).

Merritt College continues to engage in the integrated strategic planning process at the college and through district planning. We are committed to the college's four strategic directions, to our institutional priorities, and to assisting the district in making significant progress on its five goals: to advance student access and success; to engage our communities and partners; to build programs of distinction; to create a culture of innovation and collaboration; and to ensure financial health. Merritt College is well-positioned to further these district goals through leadership in the district-wide retention and persistence initiative, through our extensive community partnerships, through faculty creativity and innovation in designing new curricula, and through college-wide collaboration to remain fiscally healthy. To further address these district goals, Dr. Robert Adams, the new president of Merritt College, formed the "3 R" task forces to plan activities and articulate needed funds to address these initiatives: A. Recruitment and Outreach Task Force, led by the VP of Student Services; B. Retention and Student Success Task Force, led by the VP of Instruction; and C. Resource Development Task

Force, led by the College Business Officer [15]. Requests for funding from the president's discretionary budget have been submitted.

The college, in collaboration with the district, continues to work on the District Strategic Plan and ensure that strategic planning is focused on the educational planning needs of the colleges.

2. To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound decision making.

a. Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

Descriptive Summary

The Peralta Community College District develops a budget on a yearly cycle according to the PCCD Budget Development Calendar. The proposed Tentative Budget is submitted for approval to the Board of Trustees in June each year. This budget reflects the Governor's proposed budget and includes strategic planning from the colleges, guidelines from the PCCD Budget Advisory Committee, and program data such as ftes generation, productivity, growth, and program trends. Budget allocations are generated from the state after the California Legislature and Governor approve the state budget, which includes funding of community colleges.

The PCC District follows all California regulatory codes regarding posting, review and approval of the Peralta Final Budget. The development of the Final Budget reflects the integration of research, college and district planning, and budget development described in the district's and college's planning processes. Merritt College's budget planning process is part of the district wide budget planning process as depicted in the PCCD Annual Process for Planning and Budgeting Integration [6]. All four college's Tentative, Adopted, and Final budgets for each year can be found within the District's publications labeled Tentative, Adopted, and Final budgets.

College budget processes are directed through the College Budget Committee during which budget information is disseminated and discussed. Programmatic needs are assessed and reviewed at the unit level for instructional discipline and student services units, and are then documented in the Unit Plans. The allocation process progresses through the College Budget Committee for recommendations to the college president.

External audits may be college-specific in the case of Financial Aid, or district wide with information requested from the colleges.

Self Evaluation

The District's Independent Auditor's Report of the Annual Financial Report (issued May 8, 2008) audited the annual financial statements of the Peralta Community College District for years ending June 30, 2007 and June 30, 2006. The following findings were presented.

Because of the problems with the implementation of the financial accounting system, the District was not able to properly monitor financial activity on a timely basis which has resulted in the delay in accurate reporting of activity to Federal and State agencies, as well as the delay of the audit report. Additionally, internal controls that are considered standard within the industry have been set aside to provide for processing of financial transactions. (p. 62)
[16]

The audit concluded that the District's annually audited financial statements provide standard assurances that all mandated financial compliance standards and controls are in place to protect assets with the exception of an integrated and effective asset valuation and inventory control system. The District and Merritt College have completed a comprehensive survey and identification of all assets and equipment valued in excess of \$500. This data was compiled and entered into an inventory management system for the first time, and was completed in July 2008. All new purchases of goods and equipment valued in excess of \$500 are now scanned, and the inventory management system generates an electronic tag which is affixed to the asset [17].

The system tracks and adjusts write-downs in value as appropriate to accounting standards and schedules which are now integrated within the financial accounting system. This system can adjust asset values to market for more accurate financial reporting.

Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support learning programs and services. Financial documents are audited annually for compliance with board policy and GASB standards, and the district is currently in compliance with these standards.

The District responds to external audit findings in a comprehensive and timely manner. Results are communicated to the District Finance and Audit committee and meetings are announced and open for attendance. Despite the availability of information, more than a third of respondents to the faculty and staff surveys either disagree or strongly disagree that "Financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning." Nearly half of staff (46%) are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

b. Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

Descriptive Summary

District financial information is published regularly and copies of financial documents are made public and archived in the College Library. District budget documents are published on the district Budget and Finance website, and the adopted budget is presented annually at a board meeting which is televised, webcast and open to the public. A flow chart of Annual Planning and Budget Integration of the Peralta Community College District was published in the April 2008 edition of the *Creating our Future: Strategic Planning* newsletter. [18] The flow chart presents the budget process calendar and captures input from the District Wide Educational Planning Committee.

College budget and planning information is provided through the College Budget Committee to committee members and the college community. Information on instructional funds is provided directly to the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors for discussion and allocation, and categorical fund information is disseminated to student services personnel. [8]

Self Evaluation

A relatively large proportion of staff members (45%) are uncertain if resources are distributed according to plans to achieve student learning outcomes, according to respondents on the staff survey. A smaller proportion (36%) of staff disagree with the statement. [7]

Communication between the college and district constituencies have improved over the past few years due to the strategic planning and integrated planning and budgeting efforts. Newsletters, memos, forums, Board listening sessions, and meetings have been utilized to present and discuss the district wide planning and budgeting procedures and allocations. Although budget information on allocations and expenditures is available through the financial system, it is far more challenging to access than budget information in the old legacy computer system, and access is limited to some files such as personnel salary information.

Financial information is available in a variety of formats throughout the institution. Faculty and staff unfamiliar with retrieval of electronic information find it difficult to navigate through the PeopleSoft system to extract financial data. A number of new management financial reports are now available for distribution to College Managers and the College Budget Committee which include expenditures by cost centers.

c. The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

The Peralta Community College District has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability. The instability of the state budget, and the very real threat of midyear cuts to community colleges, has resulted in the chief financial officers of the district maintaining a district reserve beyond the 3% required by law. During fiscal years 2006-07 and 2007-08, the reserve fund at the beginning of each year was 6.62% and 14.15%, respectively. [19]

The district has in place mechanisms for appropriate risk management, particularly in the areas of future retiree benefits and fund management. In response to an accreditation recommendation, a bond offering of \$150 million was initiated in 2005 to fund future costs of retiree health benefits. On the advice of external financial managers, district funds held in custodial investment accounts have been realigned to provide additional safety and security for district funds.

Board Policy 6.04 provides a vehicle for the district to access general fund reserves to meet financial emergencies. The district's 07-08 reserve of 14.15% provides a safety net as the district faces midyear budget cuts due to the state deficit. [20]

Self Evaluation

Merritt College receives annual discretionary funds through the president's office, and has identified annual recurring expenditures that must be funded through discretionary funds allocated from the district or generated through other revenue streams such as facility rental. The College Budget Committee, in collaboration with the college Business Office, created a list of these college expenses that is updated every year. General fund reserves are not allowed at the college level, but the college is able to maintain some cash flow based on revenue generated from outside sources.

d. The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

Descriptive Summary

The District Budget and Finances Service Center is under the direction of the Vice Chancellor of Finances. The Vice Chancellor and the District Budget Advisory Committee provide fiscal oversight to ensure that the district's finances are conducted in accordance with sound business practices, district policy, the district's business operating procedures, the state education code, and other state and federal regulations. The District Budget Advisory and Budget Allocation Committees are reviewing a model for allocation of funds to the four colleges that accounts for ftes generation, productivity, growth, and inequity in funding. [21, 22]

The College Business Office, under the direction of the business manager and college president, provides direct oversight and management of funds allocated to and

generated by the college. This includes budget analysis, accounting reconciliation, contractual relationships, grant management, and reporting out on all college finances. The college bookstore and food services are run by private entities, and are monitored by the college Business Office.

Self Evaluation

The institution has inadequate systems and practices regarding oversight of finances that include financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contracted relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations and institutional investments or assets. Problems with the implementation of the financial accounting system (PeopleSoft) resulted in an inability to adequately monitor financial activity in order to provide accurate financial reports to state and federal agencies in a timely manner. The college's Associate Degree Nursing program has failed to file financial reports for state grant awards due to the responsibility for these reports, as well as access to information, residing at the district level rather than the college level.

The College Business Office and District Finance Officer share direct accountability for oversight of finances. The historical practice has not involved a routing process which included the College Business Officer or a comprehensive program planning effort.

e. All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Over 95% of the total college budget is predetermined and nondiscretionary, provides funding for personnel, and is based on collective bargaining agreements as well as a collaborative process to determine how many faculty and staff can be hired. Personnel hiring decisions take into account the mission and goals of the college, and reflect the integrity of the college's governance processes. Commitments to major capital projects are based on identified needs of college programs and services, and are funded by general obligation bonds and reviewed by the following: a district oversight committee, district Budget and Finances Service Center, College Facilities Committee, College Business Officer, and the College Council. Reports on facility repairs, renovations, and construction are regularly provided at administrative meetings and College Council.

Monies from student clubs' fund-raising activities are deposited in trust accounts under the Associated Students of Merritt College (ASMC) and are managed by the college's Principal Accounting Technician for ASMC and the Business Office. Funds from auxiliary activities such as facility rental are properly accounted for and managed by the College Business Officer.

The college has received a number of grants in the last few years: several state nursing grants, two Song Brown and Kaiser grants for nursing, a Predominately Black

Institutions grant, and a federal Title III Strengthening Institutions grant. Grant project directors and administrators ensure that grant funds are used in accordance with the criteria on which the funding was based. The Title III grant includes an external evaluator to monitor and verify that the performance standards of the grant have been met.

Self Evaluation

Merritt College administers funds in accordance with state law, generally accepted accounting principles, and district accounting guidelines. Revenues are used to support college programs and services, and to support the college president's three initiatives: Recruitment, Retention, and Resource Development. The College Business Officer has formed close relationships with the District Budget and Finance Services office to facilitate management of college funds.

A concern on the part of college faculty and staff is the allocation and administration of Measure A bond funds for equipment. Merritt College was allocated approximately \$5 million based on a list that was compiled by the College Budget Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Due to some early issues with the purchasing systems under PeopleSoft, some of the ordered equipment has never been received. The College Business Officer has formed closer collaboration with District Purchasing in order to resolve any purchasing problems and to address faculty responses on the faculty survey that the neither the district office nor the College Business Office demonstrates adequate two-way communication. [6] In addition, the Business Office has conducted training on purchasing procedures and on compliance issues for grants and contracts. [23]

Although programs funded by grants were informed that the district Finance and Budget Services Center was responsible for submitting the financial reports for all grants, in reality these reports have not been submitted in a timely manner, or have not been submitted at all. The program director for the state nursing grant awards does not have the access or capacity to ferret out grant expenditures; therefore, she is hiring an internal consultant with approved grant funds to complete the financial reports, including those that the college and district were remiss in submitting.

f. Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

District procedures require that contractual agreements are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution and adhere to set policies and lawful agreements. A review of all contracts by the Business Officer is essential prior to presentation to the Board for approval. Contracts can only be executed by authorized officers of the district, and compliance with this policy is being reinforced by recent training conducted by the

Merritt College Business Office and General Counsel. In spring 2008, college faculty and staff were informed of board policy governing contractual agreements.

The district guidelines are upheld by the College Business and Administrative Services, and the College Business Officer provides oversight for all contracts executed for Merritt College through district procedures.

Self Evaluation

There has been inconsistent adherence to this requirement due to lack of understanding by faculty and staff of the business process and requirements. Training on contract procedures has been conducted by the Merritt College Business Office and District General Counsel, and will be ongoing as needed.

g. The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.

Descriptive Summary

The institution's financial management processes are formally evaluated primarily through external audits and during the accreditation review cycle. The district Budget and Finance Services Center, with participation of the college, submits an annual unit review for the purpose of evaluating department effectiveness and improvement opportunities [24]. Informally, budget management processes are discussed at the College Budget Committee and College Council, and there is a process to make recommendations to the president for improvement of management systems.

Self Evaluation

The financial management systems are not well understood by all college constituencies. There are faculty and staff complaints that budget information is not easily accessible on the district's electronic financial system. This is due in part to a lack of training, and in part to a desire to have the budget and budget processes be absolutely transparent and easy to use. In addition, there is some confusion regarding the rolling over of unspent and encumbered funds at the college. While ease of use is not a realistic goal, transparency is, and the College Budget Committee is the vehicle through which budget information is disseminated from the Business Office to the college constituencies.

The current financial accounting system is being enhanced to integrate data bases for end users to develop customized queries to access budget data. The implementation of Business Intelligence applications allowing customized queries will greatly enhance the availability of information and management reports, resulting in improved data-driven fiscal decisions.

Concerns regarding expenditure of Measure A bond funds have prompted the college's Business Officer to establish meetings with district purchasing agents in order to clarify the processes and procedures expected by district purchasing [25].

3. *The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.*

Merritt College is in the process of implementing a systematic process of evaluating productive use of financial resources. The District Wide Education Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) reviews the *Annual Planning Budgeting Framework* and develops guidelines and methodologies for planning and budgeting. Through the comprehensive development and annual updating of the educational master plan, program reviews and unit plans, the college community reviews and evaluates planning priorities in order to support decision making regarding the allocation of resources.

Regarding personnel resources, each year the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors engages in a process to prioritize requests for additional faculty through the presentation of data to the Council [26]. The list is then forwarded to the Academic Senate and the college president. The assessment component is contained within the results achieved: was sufficient data provided for agreement on the part of the president and chancellor; do new faculty contribute to the college in a meaningful and productive way.

Assessing the effective use of funds allocated is far more direct in that the financial system can be accessed to extract reports on budget expenditures. If instructional equipment and supply funds are not expended in a timely manner, they are re-allocated to needier programs, and the department/program that has failed to effectively spend its funds may not receive additional funds requested.

Self Evaluation

The college needs to be more mindful of effective use of all budget allocations. In 2007-08, unexpended VTEA funds were returned to the district for re-allocation to another Peralta college in need of additional funds. This has led to the establishment of a benchmark of December 15 for expenditure of 50% of VTEA funds allocated to Merritt College.

Planning Agenda

- Refine the budget planning process such that all resource allocation decisions are aligned with institutional plans.
- Communicate the alignment of planning and budgeting in written documents and on the web so that the planning and budgeting processes are transparent to staff, students, and the community.
- Establish facilities and technology priorities for the college through the educational master planning process.

- Review the budget development process for possible streamlining.
- Establish procedures at the college for submitting financial reports for grants and contracts.

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STANDARD IV LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enable the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

1. Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.

Descriptive Summary

The mission and vision statements of Merritt College clearly identify the college's primary institutional goals as providing quality instruction and strong student support. The mission statement specifies that Merritt College will strive to uphold "open access to excellent instructional programs," and explicitly states that "challenging and rigorous learning experiences" are a core value and a necessary part of student success.

Furthermore, the Merritt College Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), which were developed collaboratively during campus-wide forums held in 2005 and 2006, and most recently reviewed and revised during All College Flex Days in January 2008 and March 2008, detail real-life expectations for Merritt College students. Areas where students are expected to improve their skills include communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information and computer literacy, cultural awareness, and civic engagement and ethics. These expectations are articulated in the ILO document, demonstrating Merritt's commitment to excellence in education [1].

The mission and vision statements are available to everyone on campus by inclusion in the Faculty Handbook [2], Classified Staff Handbook [3], Student Planner [4], Schedule of Classes Spring 2008 [5], and the Merritt College Catalog 2007-2009 [6]. The statements are also available through the "Shared Governance" webpage, accessible from the home webpage of Merritt College [7].

The staff, faculty, and administration of Merritt College are dedicated to serving student needs. Explicit in the college mission statement is the core value of “Campus Climate – We strive to create a student-centered learning environment that leads to student retention, persistence, and success.” Recently, Merritt College President Dr. Robert Adams reemphasized this core value by forming two taskforces: the Recruitment and Outreach Taskforce, and the Retention/Persistence Taskforce [8].

Merritt College’s Student Services Council is committed to student success. This council is comprised of representatives from all units operating under the organizational umbrella of Student Services: Counseling, Financial Aid, Admissions, DSPS, EOPS, Career/Transfer Center, Puente, and the Health Center. Bylaws for the Student Services Council are currently under review [9]. A full range of student services is central and accessible at Merritt College, including the Disabled Students Program, High Tech Center, Learning/Tutorial Center, Library, Counseling, Puente Program, EOPS program, Financial Aid office, Career/Transfer Center, and the Health Center.

Faculty and staff reflect the importance each person on campus places on serving student needs. Faculty understand that they play an essential role in student attainment of the institutional goal of academic excellence, both within the classroom and through faculty and campus-wide organizations. Faculty progress on student learning outcomes for programs and courses attests to their dedication to charting and measuring student pathways through the curriculum. According to the Faculty Survey (2008), a majority of faculty respondents (54%) agreed that, “Merritt College depends on faculty [including the Academic Senate and CIC (Curriculum and Instruction Council)] for recommendations about student learning programs and services.” A striking majority of faculty respondents (88%) agreed or strongly agreed that “instructional methods used in the classroom reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of [Merritt College] students” [10].

The staff of Merritt College is similarly aware of their vital role in student success. In an interview Tim Brice, a custodian with the Peralta District for 15 years and with Merritt College since 1997, stated that Dr. Adams recently attended a meeting with the custodial staff and emphasized that everyone on campus has the same “goal of working for the good of the most important thing here – the college students” [11]. Furthermore, a variety of positive approaches to serving student needs are showcased during each flex day session. For example, Merritt College’s Title III grant and Microscopy program were among the programs showcased at the January 13, 2008, Flex Day. Other workshops presented at past Flex Days include the following collaborative workshops: “SLO Work Session,” “Basic Skills Initiative Workshop,” “District Wide Counselor Workshop,” “Empowerment through Education,” and “Fostering Student Independence” [12].

There is widespread agreement by faculty that the practice of shared governance has greatly improved at Merritt College in the past several years. Past College Council Chair and faculty member David Morales stated, “I believe Merritt’s institutional leaders continue to improve in involving all constituencies of the college to participate in

discussion, planning and implementation” [13]. According to Ann Elliott, Chair of the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), “Merritt's Senate and Curriculum Committee, the College Council, CDCPD, the facilities and the budget committee all make faculty perspectives and voices strong on campus [and] provide structures for shared governance. Stronger than they have ever been in my 17 years at Merritt” [14].

As an example of administrative commitment to participatory leadership and shared governance, the college president and administrative staff arranged an all-staff retreat in fall 2007 in Monterey, and encouraged all staff and faculty to attend. An expert facilitator was hired to assist staff in identifying and articulating their shared desire to enhance student success at Merritt College. Almost seventy staff participated in the retreat, and many responded that this was the best college retreat they had ever attended.

Faculty and staff are continually encouraged and recruited to participate in shared governance. A majority of staff respondents to the Staff Survey (53%) said they feel informed about how to participate in the shared governance process [15]. The President of the Faculty Senate does a great deal to encourage faculty participation in all phases of shared governance, including publicizing open positions on committees through faculty mail, phone calls, and email, as well as making announcements during Professional Day forums. Faculty members also receive regular email updates from the Faculty Senate President about Merritt committee discussions and district governance issues [16]. A list of shared governance committees and their respective bylaws are accessible through the Merritt College Shared Governance webpage (<http://merritt.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?Q=40136>) [17].

Students have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and shared governance through a variety of options. Several shared governance committees require integration of students, faculty, staff, and administration (Bylaws of CIC, College Budget Committee, Student Services Committee, Culture of Communication Team, and Facilities Committee) [17]. Also, students are encouraged to run for office or attend meetings of the Associated Students of Merritt College (ASMC). According to the President of the ASMC, “We definitely spearhead the activities here on campus, the welcoming of new students, [and] try to get information out to students that student government is a vehicle for student voices to be heard” [18]. In spring 2008, the ASMC distributed an election pamphlet with photographs and descriptions of the student candidates in order to inform voters of their choices (ASMC Election Pamphlet, April 2008). However, many students still have questions about how to participate in shared governance at Merritt College [19].

Merritt College makes institutional evaluations available to faculty, staff, and students. Merritt's last progress report (March 15, 2008) is posted on the Merritt College website for anyone to access. All accreditation reports from the ACCJC are distributed to shared governance committees and to anyone who attends Professional or Flex Days. Additionally, all accreditation reports are kept on file in the Office of Instruction, in the

Merritt Library, and online in the Merritt College Documents Archive (<http://www.merritt.edu/apps/page.asp?Q=705&T=Pages>).

To ensure that faculty within their individual disciplines are empowered to participate in strategic planning for the future of course offerings and programs, Merritt College and the district Office of Institutional Research provide department chairs with data to use in program planning. Faculty use this information to inform their Unit Plans and Program Review documents [20]. Unit Plans submitted by instructional disciplines and college units are then used by the college in the creation of the College Educational Master Plan [21], and by the district in the creation of the District Wide Educational Master Plan [22].

Data on student outcomes from The Equity for All/Scorecard Project and Title III Grant is also provided to department chairs to use as a reference and comparative study when assessing their program demographics and student success data [23, 24]. The College Educational Master Plan is an overarching document provided to department chairs to assess program alignment with college-wide strategic goals and institutional learning outcomes [21]. In 2007, a College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) [25] was formed to guide the development of the College Educational Master Plan, and to ensure the integration of college plans with the District Wide Educational Master Plan in development through the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) [26].

Faculty and staff are asked to participate in and are kept well informed about the accreditation process at Merritt College. An open email was sent to all faculty in August 2007 asking for volunteers to chair Standard teams of the Accreditation Committee. Each standard committee was chaired by a faculty member and a classified staff member, and each standard was assigned an administrator as a resource partner. Committee chairs were asked to form teams of at least six members consisting of faculty, staff, and students. All together, there were 6 standard committees, and 35 faculty, staff, students and administrators on the Accreditation Committee. Furthermore, faculty, staff, and students were asked to complete a college survey. Faculty participation was elicited through several email requests [13, 16], notes in faculty mailboxes, and a hard copy of the survey on the first Professional Day of spring 2008. Staff surveys were distributed via email, and student surveys were facilitated by instructors during class time. All accreditation reviews and reports are distributed to all shared governance committees, as well as shared with staff and faculty at Professional Days. The most recent Progress Report from Merritt College for the ACCJC is posted on the Merritt website ([http://merritt.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=40671](http://merritt.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=40671)).

Self Evaluation

The college partially meets this standard. Merritt College clearly identifies and articulates its institutional goals and values. However, the college needs to do a better job of ensuring that all students, staff, faculty, and administrators are familiar with and can articulate the college mission and goals. Although Merritt College's mission and

vision statements are available to students, faculty, and staff in their respective handbooks and course catalogs, these documents are not posted in any conspicuous places on campus. Nor is the mission or vision statement in an obvious place on the Merritt College home page on the web.

Faculty and staff are in agreement that the shared governance process has greatly improved over the past 3 to 5 years. However, there are areas of needed improvement that were highlighted by both groups. Disappointment about the amount of time and effort it takes for serious problems to get attention and resolution, as well as “having to make multiple requests and tracking down the progress of requests” for problem resolution were concerns stated by several faculty members [27, 28]. In addition, the following was reported: “Classified still feel they are marginalized and lack respect from faculty and most managers” [29]. Members of the Classified Senate reported negative experiences with “an overwhelming imbalance in favor of the faculty when it comes to improving and staffing the workplace,” as well as a general feeling that classified staff members sometimes get left out of decision-making [30]. These sentiments were echoed by additional classified staff members, with a general feeling that “there are levels among administration, faculty, and classified staff. Classified staff is the last group listened to” [31].

Although Merritt College makes an effort to inform all constituents on campus about opportunities to participate in shared governance, faculty feedback on this issue was mixed. According to one PFT Representative, “I think we are encouraged to join committees and to take initiative” [32]. However, when given the prompt, “I feel informed about how to participate in the shared governance process,” nearly 30% of faculty respondents answered that they were “uncertain,” with an additional 17% marking “disagree” and 7% marking “strongly disagree” [10]. Although most shared governance committee bylaws are listed on Merritt’s website, it will help inform staff, faculty, and students if meeting dates, times, and agendas for future meetings were also posted.

Students who participate in shared governance feel empowered by the process. As President of the ASMC stated, “When we speak up – we get a positive response” [18]. However, many students do not feel informed about how to get involved in student government or on other committees on campus that integrate the voices of faculty, staff, administrators, and students [19]. This disconnect may be a direct result of the current difficulties Merritt College faces in communicating with students outside of the classroom. Because many Merritt College students do not necessarily have fixed phone numbers and addresses while attending school, the “Culture of Communication” Committee recognizes the need to create “peralta.edu” email addresses for each student at Merritt College [33]. The Culture of Communication Committee (CCC) was formed as a task force under the umbrella of the College Council to address deep concerns regarding a general lack of communication on campus. The CCC determined that communication with each other and, most importantly, with students would increase exponentially if all students, faculty, administrators, and staff were assigned peralta.edu email addresses. The CCC has also recommended to the College Council the

purchase of a Digital Messaging System (DMS) that will allow for messages to be sent via peralta.edu email [34]. This DMS on the Merritt College campus will be established and maintained by the college, and will better provide information and guidance to specific students or to a larger student group or population, which will greatly assist with their educational success at Merritt College.

2. The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.

a. Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.

Descriptive Summary

Both faculty and administrators have substantive and clearly defined roles in institutional governance at Merritt College. The Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD) is a committee of faculty and administrators that acts as an “advisory body to both the Merritt Academic Senate and the Vice President of Instruction in all matters relating to instruction” [35]. The faculty have two very strong “faculty-only” groups: the Academic Senate and the Peralta Federation of Teachers (PFT). The Academic Senate is an organization whose primary function is to make recommendations with respect to “academic and professional matters.” “Academic and professional matters” refers to the following policy development matters:

1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites.
2. Degree and certificate requirements.
3. Grading policies.
4. Educational program development.
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success.
6. College governance structures, as related to faculty roles.
7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes.
8. Policies for faculty professional development activities.
9. Processes for program review.
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development.
11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon [36]

The PFT Constitution, Article I, spells out the purposes of this faculty organization, including representing “the ideas and interests of faculty members in the Peralta Community College District” [37]. The Faculty Handbook also includes all rights and responsibilities of instructors [2].

Staff and students at Merritt College also have the opportunity to participate in shared governance through organizations that invite input into institutional decision-making. The Classified Senate is made up of Classified Staff only. Additionally, the Classified Staff handbook provides a listing of all staff rights and responsibilities [3]. Classified Staff have two union organizations, Local 1021 (educational staff) and Local 39 (custodial and engineering staff), which advocate for members' rights as employees.

The Associated Students of Merritt College's constitution states the organization's purpose: "to encourage students in community participation, and in the planning and direction of student and community activities." The bylaws state the group's central mission as "the improvement of the quality of campus life" [38]. According to its website, the goal of the ASMC "is to be the voice of the Merritt Student Body" [39]. The ASMC is also responsible for forming and promoting student clubs on campus through its subcommittee, the Inter-Club Council of Merritt College [40].

The bylaws of several shared governance committees at Merritt College are explicit that members of faculty, administration, classified staff, and students work cooperatively in college governance. For example, the College Council bylaws state, "it shall be the policy of the college community to establish procedures to ensure Merritt College students, faculty, and staff (permanent and hourly) and administration have the right to participate effectively in college governance" [41]. A subcommittee of College Council, the College Facilities Committee (CFC) makes recommendations to the College President via the College Council concerning "renovations, remodels, and use of Bond Funds designated for facilities and the physical environment." It is further made clear in the CFC Bylaws that "The College President should consult with the College Council on all major facilities issue before a decision is made" [42]. Another subcommittee of the College Council is the Merritt Technology Committee (MTC), a mixed body of faculty, classified staff, administrators, and students, set up to advise the College President, via the College Council, on all issues relating to Information Technology on campus [43]. The Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) was an important shared governance committee (a subcommittee of College Council) made up of administrators, faculty, classified staff, and at least one student. IPC had the responsibility to "conduct situational analysis; recommend 3-5 Strategic Directions; recommend Annual Institutional Priorities; review, analyze & comment on unit Annual Action Plans and Administrative Review, Analysis & Recommendation" [44]. As the district and colleges have engaged in integrated master planning, the IPC functions are gradually being redirected to the College Educational Master Planning Committee, which is in the process of developing bylaws that specify committee membership, charge, and areas of responsibility [25].

The College Budget Committee, with a membership requiring a mix of administrators, faculty, classified staff, and at least one student, emphasizes the role of shared governance "in matters relating to budget development processes, procedures and the allocation of funds" in its bylaws [45]. The roles of all governance groups, including College Council, Faculty and Classified Senates, ASMC, CDCPD, CIC, Facilities,

Technology, and Budget Committees are clearly laid out in a synopsis of Merritt College's Integrated Planning and Budget Cycle (<http://merritt.edu/IntegratedPlanningAndBudget.html>) [44].

Self-Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Merritt College's shared governance committee bylaws and constitutions clearly articulate the roles of faculty, administrators, staff, and students in institutional governance and decision-making. Rights and responsibilities of each group are also specified in the Faculty, Classified Staff, and Student Handbooks. Disappointingly, however, when asked if "faculty have a clearly defined role in Merritt College's shared governance process," 49% of respondents indicated "uncertain" [10]. On the staff survey (distributed in January, 2008), 37% of respondents indicated they were "uncertain" while another 26% marked "disagree" or "strongly disagree" when asked whether "staff have a clearly defined role in Merritt College's shared governance process" [15].

Clearly there is a disparity between the clarity of the written policies and the level of knowledge staff and faculty have about their roles in the shared governance process at Merritt College.

b. The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

The faculty at Merritt College have strong leadership and organizations that play a role in determining student learning programs and services. The administration of Merritt College relies heavily on the Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC), Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), Student Services Committee (SSC), and Faculty Senate for recommendations about curriculum, education plans, and other student learning programs.

The Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) is a committee of the Academic Senate, and therefore a body made up of voting members who are mostly faculty, with one student. Non-voting administrators (deans and vice presidents) are expected to attend when matters arise within their areas of responsibility. The CIC "makes its recommendations" to the Academic Senate and Vice President of Instruction on "approval of new programs or courses" as well as other matters relating directly to curriculum [46].

CDCPD requires all instructional department heads to participate as voting members. Other faculty members include the chairs of Counseling and the Library. The Assessment Coordinator, Instructional and Student Services Deans, Vice President of Instruction, and Academic Senate President are non-voting members. The bylaws of

CDCPD specify their responsibilities “To review and make recommendations on all instructional matters” [47].

Self-Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Faculty are strong advocates for educational planning, and have several committees that are required, by institutional policy, to recommend approval of new course outlines or programs, improvements on current curricula or programs, and advise on any and all instructional matters. According to Merritt College written policies, administrators are non-voting members on these faculty-run committees [42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47].

3. Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution’s constituencies.

There are several effective shared governance committees at Merritt College that require collaboration of all four college constituencies: faculty, administration, staff, and students in their written bylaws. These include the College Council, College Facilities Committee, and College Budget Committee [41, 42, 45]. On all three of these committees, students, staff, faculty, and administrators are expected to contribute, through both voicing their opinions and using voting privileges. Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) involves faculty and one student as voting members; administrators are expected to attend and participate (especially concerning instructional programs for their areas), but do not vote [46].

In addition to the above-mentioned policy and educational-program-oriented committees, Merritt College also has many essential standing committees that function as a partnership among students, staff, faculty, and administrators. The Accreditation Committee requires each standard committee to have faculty and classified staff as co-chairs during the self study process. Additionally, there must be at least one administrator serving on each standard committee. Standard committee co-chairs are encouraged to incorporate the voices of every constituent group on their individual teams. The Graduation Committee also has a mix of constituent groups, including a student representative from ASMC, Dean of Student Services, Student Activity Coordinator, Classified Staff and Faculty representatives that work together to plan a successful graduation ceremony at Merritt College [48].

Apart from official shared governance and standing committees, several organizations at Merritt College operate with a volunteer membership that incorporates a working group of students, faculty, and classified staff. The Merritt College Reporter is a newspaper published by the ASMC, with articles contributed by faculty and classified staff [49]. Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, operates a chapter at Merritt College with a volunteer faculty advisor [50]. The Puente Project, with two faculty advisors, is a two-semester counseling and reading/writing

program to foster learning skills through focusing on Chicano/Latino reading and writing topics [51].

Interviews with faculty, students, and classified staff representatives on campus provided evidence that groups on campus work together to improve the college. One example from the ASMC President detailed how the College Council changed the policy regarding reserving the Student Lounge on campus, after representatives from the Associated Students of Merritt College presented their case. As Mr. Brown stated, “When we speak up – we get a positive response” [18].

Another example of different constituencies partnering to further student success comes from a faculty advisor of the Puente Project. Recently, the two faculty advisors of the group, along with two student members, attended a meeting of the College Budget Committee to self-advocate and ask that their budget not be cut for the 2008-2009 academic year. Both the students and advisors spoke at the meeting, and the CBC immediately gave positive feedback to the Puente representatives, telling them that their budget would not be cut for the following year.

Self Evaluation

Although this collaboration among different entities at Merritt College works well, nearly all constituents report a breakdown when it comes to communication. Students reported that communication on campus is not effective for students seeking essential information. None of the eight students involved in a shared governance focus group session said that they receive regular communication about health and safety, the President’s Office, or the Office of Instruction. When asked, “Do you feel informed about what is going on at Merritt?” the students unanimously answered “no” [19].

Faculty also expressed disappointment with communication, most resolutely from the District and Board of Trustees. According to the 2007-08 Faculty Chair of College Council, “The district does not clearly delineate nor communicate in general. It is common to get more than one response from key district personnel to serious issues affecting the colleges. What is most clear is that there is ineffective communication among district managers” [13]. Peralta Federation of Teachers representatives simply said, “Communication is not effective” (PFT Representatives interview, 2008). The Academic Senate President suggested that the lack of communication between the Board of Trustees and Merritt College manifested in policies that were passed at the District Level by the Board, but that never come to fruition at the campus level. “Look at the smoking policy, passed by the board last year and we are still nowhere with it. I don't think the board has a clue on how its policies are carried out at the college level. I don't see a feedback loop for them which connects what they pass and then a report on how it is being enacted” [16].

According to the most recent faculty survey [10], there was wide dissatisfaction with communication both on-campus and at the district level. When given the following prompt, “Please select all units from the following list that demonstrate adequate and

regular two-way communication,” the best response was for the Office of Instruction, while the least positive was for the Business Office. Below are the units that were evaluated on their communication practices by the faculty and the percentage of faculty who felt these units did an adequate job [10].

- 11.6% - the Business Office
- 14.6% - the District Office
- 15.9% - Student Support Services Dean
- 27.4% - Student Services Offices
- 28.7% - President's Office
- 29.3% - Division Dean Humanities
- 31.1% - Division Dean Sciences
- 37.2% - Office of Instruction

Merritt College recognizes both the significance and urgency to improve communication on campus. “Culture of Communication” was named one of four strategic directions in 2006-2007, and was declared an institutional priority. The goal is “To have clear communication and listening be a way of life at Merritt College in order to arrive at true shared values, and develop an appreciation of the diverse perspectives in the College community” (http://merritt.edu/DRAFT_STRATEGIC.html).

To this end, Merritt College organizes a number of flex day speeches and activities dedicated to informing staff and faculty about institutional efforts to achieve goals and improve learning. The college website has also been expanded to include a “Shared Governance” page, replete with names, bylaws, meeting times, and minutes of the various governance committees. The Integrated Planning and Budget Model (<http://merritt.edu/IntegratedPlanningAndBudget.html>) as well as the Draft of Strategic Directions and Institutional Priorities are also posted on the shared governance page (<http://www.merritt.edu/apps/comm.asp?Q=40136>).

4. The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-study, and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.

Merritt College takes seriously the recommendations made by the Accreditation Visiting Team and has made it a priority to respond quickly and honestly. After the April 11, 2007 visit by the ACCJC, the college submitted a Progress Report on March 15, 2008 (Progress Report, March 2008). The information included in the progress report accurately discloses all developments undertaken by Merritt College in order to continuously improve its practices and better meet the educational needs of our students. Since the last self study submitted in 2003, Merritt College has written and submitted five progress reports to document progress on recommendations made by the ACCJC/WASC.

In preparation for the ACCJC visit and review of Merritt College in spring 2009, the college convened an Accreditation Committee, with monthly meetings of the Chairs and monthly meetings of individual teams. The Accreditation Committee began meeting in September, 2007. Standard Chairs were given their tasks and took on the responsibilities of collecting data and writing responses to the standards. The Steering Team of the Accreditation Committee will continue to meet through the ACCJC's visit in March 2009.

In addition to communicating with the ACCJC, Merritt College has many vocational programs that require regular communication with external agencies, either for the purpose of accreditation or community involvement. As part of the college's VTEA funds, Merritt College must provide evidence "that a group of individuals [are] involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs" [52]. The Dean of Division II communicates regularly with the Vocational Program chairs to ensure that they are maintaining contact with appropriate external agencies [53].

The Associate Degree Nursing Program at Merritt College is the recipient of several state grants, as well as two Song Brown grants and a grant from Kaiser Permanente to increase student retention and success. The grant coordinator is required to communicate regularly with the State Chancellor's Office and private granting institutions and to file annual progress reports.

The Merritt College Radiologic Science Program works with many different agencies, including Alta Bates Summit Medical, Children's Hospital Oakland, Doctor's Hospital San Pablo, and Eden Medical Center) both reporting to and seeking advice from these organizations [54]. The program must comply with California Department of Public Health Radiologic Health Branch policies and Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations. The program also maintains separate (from WASC) accreditation by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology [JRCERT] [55]. The Nutrition and Dietetic programs receive approval and accreditation from the Dietary Manager Association and the Commission on Accreditation of Dietetic Education/ American Dietetic Association (CADE/ADA).

Similarly, Merritt's Child Development Department communicates regularly with several organizations, including Oakland Head Start, the East Oakland License Child Care Association, Alameda County Health, First 5 of Alameda County, the State Foster Care and Kinship Program, and the Regional Center of the East Bay [56]. The Licensed Vocational Nursing program (LVN) reports to the Board of Vocational Nurses for clinical and faculty approval, including annual reports on students and programs and submission of an accreditation report every four years [57]. Additionally, the LVN program representatives meet with other California Vocational Nursing program directors, at least twice per year.

Although the Allied Health and Child Development programs communicate in an official capacity with their accrediting agencies and local licensed facilities, other vocational programs participate in voluntary communication with community organizations. The Administration of Justice (AJ) program collaborates with the Oakland Police Department to better prepare students for the law enforcement field, as well as supporting current police officers with information on degree programs [58]. The Real Estate program at Merritt College works directly with the California Department of Real Estate, California Association of Realtors, National Association of Realtors, and the California Association of Real Estate Educators (among others) in an unofficial capacity. Similarly the Business program stays in close contact with the Local Chamber of Commerce [59].

According to Audrey Trotter, Project Director for the Title III planning grant and liaison to the U.S. Department of Education's Title III Program Officer, Merritt College maintains regular email, telephone, and written communication with the Department of Education. Merritt College was awarded a Strengthening Institutions Part A Title III Planning Grant in 2004, and a one-year extension of the grant through September 2006. Due to this grant, the Program Officer from Title III made one on-site visit to Merritt College during the first year of the planning grant. In addition, Merritt's Research and Planning Officer, grant writer, and Title III Project Director participated in U.S. Department Strengthening Institutions Pre-Application Technical Workshops prior to the submission of the college's Title III grant applications in 2006 and in 2008 [60].

Merritt has filed an application for eligibility (twice) which is the first step in applying for the five-year comprehensive development Title III grant. As required for the Title planning grant, mid-year and annual reports were submitted to benchmark progress in achieving grant goals and objectives and to ensure compliance in budgetary expenditures [61]. Merritt College was recently awarded a five-year comprehensive development Title III Strengthening Institutions grant, effective from October 2008-September 2013 [62]. Every effort has been made to maintain integrity in the college's relationship with the Department of Education, and to report accurate institutional data [63].

Self Evaluation

The college partially meets this standard. The Associate Degree Nursing Program has, through no fault of its own, experienced difficulties in submitting grant reports in a timely manner due to the inability of the district Office of Finance to provide the financial data that is to accompany the narrative progress report. After struggling with the issues of access and accountability, the college president has agreed to assign the responsibility to a retired employee who has the skills and system knowledge to assist the grant coordinator with extracting financial data.

Additionally, as the result of poor management and oversight, the college lost funding for both the Foster Care and Kinship Program and its partnership with First 5 of Alameda County. The dean responsible for these programs has been replaced with an

interim dean from the Child Development area, whose goal is to re-establish relationships with both of these agencies. The interim dean has already succeeded in arranging an ongoing collaboration with First 5 of Alameda County, and is working on identifying a faculty lead for the Foster Care and Kinship Program in order to receive funding for 2009-10.

All other external relationships are collaborative and successful. In the last few years, Merritt College has engaged in extensive outreach to area high schools to enhance the academic success of high school students [64]. Merritt's vice president of instruction recently presented a workshop at the CCLC Conference (Anaheim, November 2008) entitled "Partnering with High Schools for Academic Excellence" [65].

5. *The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.*

Descriptive Summary

Bylaws for all college governance committees – College Council, College Budget Committee, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors, Curriculum and Instructional Council, Facilities Committee, and Technology Committee – were initially drafted by the Governance Subcommittee in 2003-2004 and submitted to the various governance committees for review and comment. College Council bylaws were unanimously adopted on October 29, 2003, with a stipulation of the manner in which amendments to the bylaws may be proposed and approved. In addition, the bylaws were to be reviewed after one year by the college president, administrative leaders, Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and Associated Student Council, and amended if deemed necessary in accordance with the amendment provision [41]. Attached to the College Council bylaws is Board Policy 2.23, which describes the role of the Academic Senate in district governance [66].

All governance committee bylaws have undergone a rigorous review, revision and approval process culminating in approval by College Council [67]. Additionally, the Shared Governance Committee (formerly the Governance Subcommittee) drafted for review and comment a charge, membership, and meeting frequency for all Standing Committees: Accreditation Committee, Financial Aid Petition Committee, Graduation Committee, Health & Safety Committee, Matriculation Committee, Scholarships & Awards Committee, Shared Governance Committee, Staff Development Committee, Student Disciplinary Hearing Panel, Student Grievance Hearing Committee, Student Outreach Committee [67].

College administrators are evaluated annually, with input solicited from faculty, staff, and administrative colleagues. The evaluation results are communicated by the supervisor to the evaluatee and college president, and to the chancellor and governing board by the president [68].

Self Evaluation

Prompted by the Peralta District's strategic planning process and educational master planning process, Merritt College has engaged in an educational planning process for the college during the last two academic years. This process has given rise to questions concerning how the various governance committees align with one another as well as with district committees such as the district Strategic Planning Committee and the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee. The college's Integrated Planning Committee (IPC), a subcommittee of the College Council responsible for facilitating the integration of institutional planning and budgeting, appears to have been subsumed by the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). Discussions have begun in College Council concerning the need to have formal bylaws and charge for CEMPC, and to evaluate the continued usefulness of the IPC [67].

Overall, Merritt College's governance structure has evolved over the past four years into a system that provides opportunities for all college constituencies to take part in college governance. As the educational master planning process is formalized, any college committees arising out of this process must be fully integrated into the college's governance and decision-making structure, and the decision-making process must be adequately communicated to all groups on and off campus.

Planning Agenda

Campus Climate: Areas of needed improvement were highlighted by both faculty and staff, such as the amount of time and effort it takes for serious problems to get attention and resolution. Often a campus problem is in process of being resolved, but campus constituencies are unaware of actions that are being taken to address the problem. This illustrates a need to better communicate with faculty, staff and students.

In addition, classified staff report that they feel marginalized and lack respect from faculty and most managers. A college retreat in October 2008 helped classified staff to recognize not only their significant contributions to student success, but also the regard in which they are held by others on campus. The college president plans a follow-up meeting with the same retreat facilitator.

Communication: There is a disparity between the clarity of the written policies and the level of knowledge staff, faculty and students have about their roles in the shared governance processes at Merritt College. The college will design processes to ensure that each constituent member is invited to participate in decision-making at Merritt College.

The college needs to better communicate the mission, vision and value statements of the college by posting these documents in conspicuous places on campus and on the Merritt College home page on the web. In addition, the Culture of Communication Committee presented a report to College Council recommending the purchase of an

electronic communication system, and the issuance of a Peralta.edu email to all students. The College Council is in the process of addressing these recommendations.

External Relationships: Merritt College plans to 1) continue to respond to all ACCJC recommendations; 2) expand when possible its high school partnerships; and 3) ensure that all grant progress reports are submitted in a timely manner by hiring a retiree familiar with the Peralta systems who can assist the project director with the financial information.

Governance: The College Council will formalize the charge and draft bylaws for the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). CEMPC members will continue to fully participate on the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) to ensure that college concerns and plans are adequately represented.

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Standard IVB Board and Administrative Organization

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.

Descriptive Summary

The Peralta Community College District consists of four colleges: Berkeley City College, College of Alameda, Laney College, and Merritt College. The governing board of the Peralta Community College District is a seven-member board. Each member is elected from a specific geographic region in North Alameda County and each serves a four-year term. Board member terms are staggered with biennial elections in accordance with California Education Code [1: BP 1.01]. Although elected by geographic region, governing board members represent the interests of all county residents [1: BP 1.06]. Two student trustees are elected by the student body of the four colleges for one-year terms [1: BP 1.02]. On an annual basis the Board of Trustees elects a president and vice president [1: BP 1.04]. The foundational responsibilities of the Board of Trustees vested in them by the voters of Northern Alameda County constitute the following.

- provide the best possible learning experience for students of the four colleges;
- assure that the district and its colleges are effectively and efficiently managed;
- maintain fair and equitable policies for employees and students of the district and its four colleges;
- represent the general interests of the entire college district;
- be knowledgeable of and support the mission and philosophy of the California community colleges;
- support the work of the district office and the colleges in meeting the district mission, vision, values, and strategic planning goals [1: BP 1.05, 1.16, and District-wide Strategic Plan (2)].

The PCCD Board of Trustees developed and approved the following mission statement for the district.

The mission of the Peralta Community College District is to provide accessible, high-quality adult learning opportunities to meet the educational needs of the multicultural East Bay community [3].

The Board of Trustees keeps up-to-date on the district-wide strategic planning process and implementation of the five strategic planning goals [2] In 2007 the Board did the following:

- approved hiring a consultant (Chuck McIntyre, Computer-Aided Planning) to conduct an extensive external and internal environmental scan to aid in unit planning and educational master planning;
- approved hiring a consultant (WLC) to assist the district in formulating a district-wide facilities plan;
- kept informed of the implementation of the PROMT and PASSPORT components of the PeopleSoft system;
- received regular reports in the 2007-2008 academic year on the creation of an updated district-wide educational master plan and college educational master plans.

Periodically the board conducts study sessions and workshops to examine key initiatives and provide overall guidance. In addition, the governing board holds formal, posted, and publicized “listening sessions” at each of the four colleges at least once a year to obtain direct input from faculty, staff, students and the public. On a monthly basis, the Board Standard and Management Committee is briefed on accreditation and strategic planning [4].

The Board of Trustees is regularly updated on the status of district finances. Such reports are provided both at meetings of the Board of Trustees, as well as the meetings of the Board of Trustees Audit and Finance Committee. Reports include an update on the status of state funding and the state budget; the status of the district budget, including the district reserve; external audit report; and expenditure of bond monies. In accordance with state regulations, the board has established a bond oversight committee to directly oversee Measure A funds [5].

The Board Policy Review Committee with the assistance of General Counsel three years ago began the task of reviewing and updating all board policies and has been regularly forwarding policy revisions to the full-board for review and approval. Policies are posted on the district website under the General Counsel Service Area [6], and are available at the college in hard copy in the Office of the President. The authority and process for determining policy are stated in Board Policy 2.20, last reviewed and updated in 1993 [1].

The Board Facilities and Land Use Committee reviews all facilities action items and land use initiatives prior to review by the full board. This process has allowed for effective oversight by the board [7].

Board Policy has a clearly defined procedure for hiring the Chancellor [1: BP 1.20] and college presidents [1: BP 1.18]. In addition, Board Policy delineates the role of the Chancellor [1: 2.05] and the role of the college presidents [1: BP 2.10].

Annually, the Board of Trustees conducts an evaluation of the Chancellor and the Chancellor evaluates the college presidents. Evaluations are conducted to assure that the job performance of each individual is assessed and communicated to the individuals being evaluated in accordance with established procedure. The review and evaluation process includes an annual performance contract which serves as the basis for the annual performance review of all district administrators, with the governing board solely responsible for the Chancellor's review and evaluation. Other performance reviews are presented to the governing board in closed session as part of administrative contract renewal. With the implementation of integrated strategic planning, performance evaluations are correlated with the five district-wide strategic planning goals [2].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees works to support the interests of the district and takes an active role in advocating for the interests of the community as a whole. The Board has taken seriously its role in and oversight of integrated strategic planning, an ACCJC recommendation to which the district and colleges have responded on an annual basis. The Board also has taken seriously a previous ACCJC recommendation not to micromanage and relies on the Chancellor, as the chief administrator, and the college presidents to operate the colleges in accordance with the policies and implementation procedures of the governing board. The board has consistently funded any additional or outside assistance the district and colleges need to write and implement an integrated strategic plan, as well as to update district and college educational master planning, facilities master planning, and technology planning. The board has requested regular reports on the various planning processes. In the process of updating educational master plans, the board has asked the colleges to make monthly presentations at board meetings on programs of distinction and to comment on student and program learning outcomes. With the new California community colleges curriculum approval process, the board receives monthly reports on curriculum changes, and individual board members ask pertinent questions regarding curriculum actions. The Board of Trustees acts as a board of the whole, and even when votes are not unanimous, individual members honor the decision of the whole.

Regarding the hiring of the Chancellor, the Board reviewed and approved changes to Board Policy 1.20, Chancellor Selection, on July 12, 2005.

- a. The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.***

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees is an independent policy-making body representing a publicly-owned institution. The board president and vice president adhere to their roles and responsibilities per Board Policy 1.04 [1]. Board members adhere to their appropriate

roles and responsibilities per Board Policy 1.05 [1]. In this regard, each member of the board works to “base decisions upon all available facts in each situation, vote their honest conviction, and abide by the final majority decision of the board” [1: BP 1.06]. Individual members of the board observe the policies that govern decision making; board members have authority only when acting as a board legally in session. The Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior was reviewed and revised in 2005.

The Board of Trustees, as outlined in Board Policy 1.10, Meeting of the Board of Trustees, section I, Public Participation, seeks advice and opinions of the community it serves by providing opportunity for “Communication from the Public” at all open sessions of the Board of Trustees and permits public comment on individual board agenda items [1: see also, Board Policy 1.11, Standing Rules for Public Hearings]. Further, in the last two years, the board has begun to hold “listening sessions” at the colleges to provide itself additional opportunity to hear the advice and opinions of the college constituencies.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees acts as a whole to represent the public interest in the four colleges of the district and takes care, through effective policies and transparency, to preclude conflicts of interest.

- b. The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.***

Descriptive Summary

The district per its mission statement strives to “provide educational leadership to empower our students to achieve their highest aspirations and to become community leaders.” The district envisions meeting the mission “by providing learner centered educational experiences and by being committed to innovation and continuous improvement.” During the process of developing a district-wide strategic plan, an updated mission statement was created emphasizing that “our programs and services enhance the human, economic, and social development of our communities” [3].

The five strategic planning goals of the district provide for implementing the mission of the district: A. Student Access, Success, and Equity; B. Community and Partner Engagement; C. Programs of Distinction; D. Culture of Innovation and Collaboration; and E. Ensuring Resources to meet our Mission [2]. Board policies related to academic

programs [8] and student services [9], developed and reviewed by the board, are consistent with the district and college mission statements and Title 5 requirements.

The board has adopted the District-wide Strategic Plan comprised of five strategic goals (as noted above), all of which address student learning programs and services and the resources which are necessary to support them, and it reaffirmed the strategic plan at a special board workshop on November 27, 2007. The governing board directs the colleges and district staff to compile reports on program review, educational master planning, enrollment, curriculum changes, and programs of distinction.

With the development of a District-wide Strategic Plan and the updating of a district-wide educational master plan and college educational master plans (which are driving the completion of a comprehensive district-wide facilities master plan and a new resource allocation process and calendar), the district under the purview of the Board of Trustees demonstrates its commitment to the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services aligned with the district's mission, vision, and values [3, 10, 11, 12, 13].

The Board directs the Chancellor to work closely with the college presidents to coordinate resource allocation and to identify short-term and long-term resource needs. Since September 2006, the Chancellor has been meeting bi-monthly with the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administrative Services, the Vice Chancellor of General Services, and the four college presidents, as the Strategic Management Team, to ensure ongoing accountability for meeting the mission of the district and to ensure ongoing implementation of district-wide strategic planning and resource allocation based on educational master planning [14].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees, through the Board Policy Review Committee, for the last three years has been conducting a deliberative review of all board policies. One focus of this review is to assure that the district meets its mission, in keeping with the mission of California community colleges, and to ensure quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services. Further, this review of board policies ensures conformance with existing laws, regulations, court interpretations, and best practices. The Board Standards and Management Committee regularly reviews the implementation of strategic planning and receives reports from the colleges regarding accreditation. The Board Audit and Finance Committee receives regular reports regarding the district-wide budget and the state of the State budget, providing oversight of resources necessary for student learning programs and services. These board committees report directly to the full board. Through these various processes this standard is met.

c. The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

Descriptive Summary

Final approval and responsibility for educational programs and fiscal integrity of the district rests with the Board of Trustees. As stated in Board Policy 1.06 [1], Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior, the Board works with the Chancellor to “recognize the importance of understanding and evaluating the educational program of the District and of providing long term educational planning,” as well as “shape the direction of the District through strategic planning, setting goals and priorities.” Various board policies in chapter 5 of the Board Policy Manual speak to educational quality. Those policies include the following: BP 5.11, Review Policy for Instructional Program; BP 5.12, Articulation Policy for Instructional Programs and Support Services; BP 5.15, Code of Instructional Standards; BP 5.20, Requirements for Degrees and Certificates; BP 5.22, Standards of Scholarship; and BP 5.61, Educational Advisory Committees.

As mentioned previously, the Board is regularly updated on the strategic planning process, educational master planning, programs of distinction, and curriculum changes. The Board is also provided the findings of the State Chancellor’s Office Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) [15].

In conjunction with the chancellor and district general counsel, the Board is apprised of, and assumes responsibility for, all legal matters associated with the operation of the colleges and the district office. As needed, the district hires other counsel to take on specific tasks.

The Board of Trustees bears responsibility for monitoring all aspects of the district and college finances. An independent audit of the district’s financial statements and accounting practices is made annually by an external auditor and reviewed by the board. The Board Audit and Finance Committee and the full board are regularly updated on the OPEB investments which meet GASB 45 regulations. The Board receives an annual report on the financial condition of the district, as required by the state and following the guidelines of the State Chancellor’s Office for California Community Colleges [16].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees, functioning as an independent body, has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. The Board’s decisions are made with adherence to federal, state, and local policies and guidelines.

- d. The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board’s size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.***

Descriptive Summary

Bylaws and policies specifying the governing board's size, duties, responsibilities, structures, and operating procedures are approved by the board and published in the Board Policy Manual: BP 1.01, Membership; BP 1.02, Student Trustees; BP 1.04, Board Officers and Duties; BP 1.05, Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees; BP 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior; BP 1.09, Parliamentary Procedures; BP 1.10, Meetings of the Board of Trustees; BP 1.11, Standing Rules for Public Hearings; and BP 1.21, Committees [1].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The policies related to this standard are published in the Board Policy Manual which is posted on the district's Web site and available in hard copy at each college in the Office of the President.

- e. The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.***

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees for the Peralta Community College District is charged with establishing broad policies, which govern the operation of the district, and has the expectation that all policies and procedures are followed properly. The Board Policy Manual, which contains policies and implementation procedures, as previously noted, is posted on the district Web site and is in the president's office at each of the four colleges. As previously noted, the Board Policy Committee is involved in a process of reviewing and updating all board policies as necessary, a process which began three years ago.

Board Policy Committee meetings, as per the Brown Act, are open meetings, and representatives of the various district constituencies attend these meetings to provide input and recommendations on the review process of board policies. When appropriate, proposed policy revisions are additionally reviewed at other board committees. As the past-president of the board noted, "All board policies are reviewed, discussed, and debated in at least one of the board committees in an open, quasi-informal, and posted forum that includes the various stakeholders, the public, and the media." All revisions to policy are taken to the full board for review and adoption. In the fall of 2007 the board developed a new self-assessment instrument and has taken seriously the need to conduct such a self-assessment [17].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The current Board's review process demonstrates its commitment to meeting this standard.

- f. The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.***

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees has a process for board member development and new member orientation. Individual trustees are expected to regularly attend workshops and forums conducted by the California Community College Trustees (CCCT), the Community College League of California (CCLC), and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) for professional development, and to keep current on issues and trends affecting post-secondary education. Board membership and staggered terms of office are stated in BP 1.01, Membership [1].

The president of the governing board, the chair of the Board Standards and Management Committee, and the Chancellor formally meet, on a semi-annual basis, with congressional senators and representatives and with senior staff of the Federal Departments of Education, Labor, Homeland Security, Health and Welfare, Justice, and the National Science Foundation to advocate for initiatives and programs on behalf of the Peralta colleges. These representatives meet with the district's Washington, D.C. lobbyist on a regular basis, either in person or by telephone conference call, to define and refine strategies to pursue legislative earmarks and federal grants.

Board members and the Chancellor also meet with State of California legislators, agency staffs, and the district's State lobbyist to advocate on behalf of the four Peralta colleges and California Community Colleges in general. Individual board members are expected to "carry the flag" of the Peralta colleges at a broad array of functions and forums within the district's service area. Board members also visit other community colleges to gain insight into best practices which can be adopted by the Peralta district.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board has effective policies which ensure board member development and new member orientation. In addition, board membership and staggered terms of office are clearly defined in board policy and relevant Government and Education Code regulations, as referenced in BP 1.01 [1].

- g. The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.***

Descriptive Summary

In the past, the board held a fall semester board retreat which served as a team building session and an opportunity for informal self-assessment. In fall 2007, the board

officially engaged in a formal self-assessment process. The self-assessment instrument focused on board organization and leadership, board policy, community relations and advocacy, board-chancellor relations, standards for operations and performance of the Peralta district, and board education. These areas were responded to using a Likert scale of evaluation. Open ended questions addressed board strengths, accomplishments, areas in need of improvement, board operation, and setting board goals [17].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. With the initiation of an official self-evaluation process in fall 2007 and the codification of this process into board policy, the college and district came into compliance with this accreditation standard.

h. The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior, [1] details the expectations for the conduct of board members. Topics covered by the policy include confidentiality of information discussed in closed session; the need to work in harmony and cooperation with other board members when there is a difference of opinion; the need to base decisions on the available facts; and the significance of resisting use of the position of trustee for personal gain.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The current Board of Trustees works to be collegial, collaborative, and professional.

i. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees has been informed and involved in the accreditation process through regular reports from the Chancellor, vice chancellors, and college presidents. As is well known, the four Peralta colleges have filed numerous progress reports with ACCJC, as well as a focused mid-term report, since the time of the last accreditation site visit. In this regard, the Board has probably received more reports than many other governing boards regarding district and college efforts to meet the accreditation standards.

Various reports have been provided to the board on integrated strategic planning, educational master planning, resource allocation, student learning outcomes and programs of distinction, facilities master planning, technology planning, and many

others. Based on board response to the various reports provided, it is evident that the board takes the accreditation process seriously and wants to be knowledgeable of all the work that is being done to meet accreditation standards. Board members have seriously reviewed progress reports and the focused mid-term reports and have reviewed this accreditation self-study. The governing board assumes full responsibility for ensuring that all ACCJC recommendations for “corrective action” are effectively and efficiently responded to in a timely manner. Further, the board has taken an active role in responding to Standard IVB, 1a-j, which pertains to the governing board.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

- j. The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively.***

In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.

Descriptive Summary

The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and hiring the Chancellor of the district per BP 1.20, Chancellor Selection [1]. This procedure was adopted in 2005. The Board conducts annual evaluations of the Chancellor in closed session. The role and responsibilities of the Chancellor are outlined in BP 2.05, The District Chancellor/ Superintendent, and the role and responsibilities of the college presidents are outlined in BP 2.10, College Presidents [1]. The selection process for college presidents is outlined in BP 1.18, Management Hiring Policy [1].

The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to the Chancellor to implement and administer board policies without board interference, and holds the chancellor accountable for operation of the district. The governing board has taken seriously a previous ACCJC recommendation to not micromanage the district and has charged the Chancellor with full responsibility for administering the district. The Chancellor in meeting the charge of the board meets twice a month with his Strategic Management Team, comprised of the three vice chancellors and the four college presidents. These meetings provide the forum for addressing district strategic and educational planning and for providing and maintaining quality educational programs and services for the community [14].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Procedures are in place for the selection and evaluation of the Chancellor and the college presidents. These procedures have been followed, clearly and successfully, in the hiring of all chief executive officers since their approval. The board has and upholds a policy for delegation of authority.

2. The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.

The president of Merritt College has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution, and he provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.

The college has a structure that allows the president to influence the quality of the institution. The current President of Merritt College promotes an outstanding educational institution by supporting and advocating for grants, new programs, recruitment and outreach, resource development, and retention and student success. To this end, the President established three task forces in 2007: the Recruitment and Outreach Task Force; the Retention and Student Success Task Force; and the Resource Development (formerly "Entrepreneurial Leadership") Task Force [18]. In addition, the President has supported and advocated for the budding Microscopy and Genomics programs, Reviving Baseball in the Inner City (RBI) summer program, the Project Soar summer program, the Title III grant, the Predominately Black Institution grant, the Basic Skills Initiative grant, the array of grants awarded to the Associate Degree Nursing program, and the college's work on student learning outcomes [19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27].

Self Evaluation

The structure of the college allows for and encourages the president to be an effective leader who is actively engaged in the daily governance of the college, and who provides oversight and support for all college activities. For example, the President attends the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors meetings, and informs Council members about district and college actions. Both the College Council and College Budget Committee make recommendations directly to the President, who accepts the recommendations or rejects them in writing [28, 29]. The President advocates to the Chancellor for his personnel choices, whether faculty, classified staff, or administrative staff, and the Chancellor holds the President responsible for the performance of college personnel.

a. The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and

complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.

Descriptive Summary

The president of Merritt College supervises an administrative structure of three executive administrators and three mid-level managers, as delineated in the College Organizational Chart [30]. The president also directly supervises the Public Information Officer, the Research and Planning Officer, an Executive Assistant, and a Staff Assistant.

In the Instructional Division there is a Vice President of Instruction (VPI) and two Division Deans. The VPI oversees all instructional services, which include accreditation, audio visual, catalog and class schedules, curriculum, information technology, learning resources, educational master planning, and instructional coordination. Division Deans provide direct oversight and planning for the eighteen instructional departments of the college, and report directly to the VPI on all instructionally-related issues.

The Student Services Division is comprised of a Vice President of Student Services (VPSS), and a Dean of Student Services. The VPSS oversees all categories of student services, which include admission and records, counseling, financial aid, health services, career services, veterans' affairs, student activities, EOPS, CARE, and Cal-Works.

In addition to the vice presidents, there is a Business and Administrative Services Manager who oversees all facility and business services for the college, including finance, custodial, safety and police, duplicating, mail room, and switchboard services [30].

The Merritt College president, with the assistance of executive and mid-level administrators and college governance committees, plans and evaluates the need for resources and promotes those needs within the Strategic Planning Matrix of the district [31]. The president delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities.

Self Evaluation

The college's administrative structure provides, for the most part, effective oversight of college programs. In the past, prior to 2000, there were five instructional division deans. A series of reorganizations and state budget cuts, particularly the 2003-04 budget cut, resulted in the loss of division dean positions and the re-alignment of departments under just two division deans. Over several years, the role of instructional department chair has increased in complexity as the district moved to a relational database with the

implementation of PeopleSoft for financial and student administration services, resulting in new procedures for everything from purchasing to grade submission.

Merritt's current president is supportive of allocating re-assigned time to faculty to address the many activities the college has committed to, such as facilitating student learning outcomes identification and assessment through the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC), engaging in the accreditation self study (whereby the college compensated faculty and classified staff co-chairs), and approving release time for organizing and implementing new programs such as Microscopy and Genomics [19, 20].

b. The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following:

- ***establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities;***
- ***ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions;***
- ***ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; and***
- ***establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts.***

Descriptive Summary

The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment. In addition to establishing his three task forces that address recruitment, retention, and resource development [18], the president convenes the executive administrators weekly, the entire administrative team bi-weekly, and the College Council monthly. Any governance or standing committee can draft a recommendation to be reviewed for approval at College Council, which can then forward a recommendation to the college president. Shared governance committee membership is defined in the committee bylaws, and includes broad representation by faculty, staff and students [32]. The president encourages participation in shared governance and attends committee meetings as appropriate. The president also convenes forums to discuss college issues and district projects. With the support of the president, students established the Merritt Reporter in order to apprise the college community of activities and events at the college [33].

Additionally, the president supports and reviews the College Educational Master Plan [11] and the college's work on student learning outcomes. The Plan is derived and compiled from Unit Plans completed by instructional and student services units. The president ensures that needed data is provided by the college researcher and made available for planning purposes as well as for grant applications. Student learning outcomes are almost completed for all college degree programs, and the college is now engaged in drafting learning outcomes for courses. In fact, new and revised course outlines submitted to the Curriculum Council must include the SLO addendum. Several

SLO workshops have been presented at the college and attended by the president, and the language of learning outcomes (i.e. referring to the “students’ journey”) has permeated the institution.

As the college transitions from its previous Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) to a College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) recognized and supported by the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC), procedures for institutional planning and implementation are being established at the colleges that are standardized [31]. The district wide strategic planning process will culminate in the District Wide Educational Master Plan and Facilities Plan [10, 12], and will formalize the procedures by which college and district planning take place.

c. The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.

The college president’s role and responsibilities are defined in Board Policy 2.10 [1]. The president provides guidance, oversight, and accountability to the Peralta Board of Trustees to assure the implementation of statutes, regulations and Peralta district policies. The president holds managers accountable for abiding by statutes, regulations, and all board policies, communicating with unions, the faculty senate, and the General Counsel at the district. When issues arise, the president meets with his administrative team to review district and college policies and procedures. The president assures that Merritt College’s practices are consistent with its mission, vision, values, and strategic directions, and reiterates the college’s commitment to student success with the college motto, “At Merritt College, We Change Lives” [34].

The president meets monthly with the Academic Senate President, the Classified Senate President, the President of the Associated Students of Merritt College, and the Chair of College Council to set the agenda for the monthly College Council meeting [35].

Self Evaluation

The college president provides appropriate oversight of institutional practices through close and direct contact with his administrative team and others that he directly supervises, the PIO and College Researcher and Planner. At every College Council meeting, the president requests status reports from the three task forces, the Academic and Classified Senates, and the Associated Students of Merritt College. Throughout the accreditation self study and educational planning processes, the president requested regular status reports at administrative team and College Council meetings [35, 36].

d. The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.

The President effectively controls budget and expenditures by promoting shared governance and strategic planning. As part of the college educational planning process, a list of college priorities was derived from Unit Plans and presented to the College Council for approval. The list is duplicated below.

PRIORITY #	The following are recommended priorities from CEMPC. ITEM
1	Critical facility/equipment repairs or upgrades that address health and safety issues.
2	Marketing the college programs to improve enrollment and services to students.
3	Critical repairs that affect delivery of services.
4	Technology upgrades, particularly for smart classrooms and computer labs
5	Student desks college-wide
6	Dedicated space for Microscopy and Genomics programs
7	Large Autoclave for Microbiology
8	New Science/Allied Health building or renovation to D Building
9	New building for Child Development funded by the State
10	Space conversion of existing lath house for new design lab at Landscape Horticulture
11	Expansion of parking for Landscape Horticulture by reconfiguring tennis court parking
12	Establish a portable tissue culture lab at Landscape Hort where diesel tank is
13	Establish Respiratory Therapy program with district funding of 2 FT instructors
14	Establish 1 office and reception area for mental health services for students
15	Establishment of Black Panther Educational Archives in Building L
*	Better district support for research

The list above was submitted to College Council for endorsement so that it could be presented at the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee meeting in December [34]. Although there was some concern that the list had not been vetted in a sufficient number of venues, it was agreed at College Council that numbers 1-5 addressed broad, campus-wide needs that covered a multitude of critical college needs. The President was supportive of the intent to submit this draft of Merritt College's priorities, and to continue to refine the list in collaboration with additional college constituencies. In fact, #13 on the above list is no longer a priority because of the decision that in the current state budget crisis, it is not feasible to incur the start-up costs of a new allied health program.

Monies allocated to Merritt College are determined by fixed costs such as personnel and facility costs, funds received from the state, parameters established by bargaining-unit contracts, district-wide strategic planning processes, and required reserve balances. The President is given latitude by the district to spend discretionary funds according to college priorities. The initial allocation of discretionary funds goes toward

what can be regarded as fixed college costs, such as licensing fees for radiologic science x-ray equipment and the annual cost of periodicals for the Library.

Self Evaluation

The President relies on the administrative team, the senates, and ASMC to keep him apprised of resource needs. In 2007 the college developed scenarios for 2%, 4%, and 6% budget cuts that are currently being considered as possible responses to the 2009-10 state budget crisis [37]. The Business and Administrative Services Manager works closely with the President to assess and develop external revenue streams, and to address resource needs of college programs. The purpose of the College Budget Committee, of which the Business and Administrative Services Manager is co-chair, is to review all college budgets and make recommendations for allocation and expenditures to the college president.

e. The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.

The President is very active in the communities served by Merritt College. He regularly participates in the Oakland Rotary Club, and is a member of the Black, Latino, Chinese and Oakland area chamber of commerce organizations. It was through his contacts and interest that Merritt offered the RBI summer program in 2008 (Reviving Baseball in the Inner City) to inner city youth. As soon as the current President was selected in 2007, he began forging relationships with Oakland high school principals, public and private universities, faith-based organizations, and city government representatives to ensure that the communities that Merritt serves are aware of its willingness to form educational partnerships.

Self Evaluation

The President is committed to the college mission statement and is determined that Merritt College will indeed “change lives” in the communities served by the college. He represents the college at all college and district functions, and works diligently so that the “story” of Merritt College is loudly heard in the community.

3. In multi-college districts or systems, the district/system provides primary leadership in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity throughout the district/system and assures support for the effective operation of the colleges. It establishes clearly defined roles of authority and responsibility between the colleges and the district/system and acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board.

a. The district/system clearly delineates and communicates the operational responsibilities and functions of the district/system from those of the colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice.

Descriptive Summary

The publicly elected Board of Trustees, the governing board for the four Peralta colleges, is the policy-making body for the district. The authority of the governing board is delineated in the Education Code of California and its mandate is to provide oversight of and direction to the district. The governing board has established a Board Policy Manual, is currently in a process of reviewing and updating the Board Policy Manual, and strives to have policies in place which address key operational issues of a California community college district. The governing board appoints the Chancellor, who serves as the “chief administrative officer” of the district, and to whom is delegated authority to implement and enforce the policies and procedures of the governing board. The role and responsibilities of the Chancellor are delineated in Board Policy (BP) 2.05 [1]. At the college level, authority and responsibility for implementing the policies and procedures of the governing board, as well as directives from the Chancellor, rest with the college president. The role and responsibilities of the college president are delineated in BP 2.10 [1]. District office direct reports to the Chancellor are the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, the Vice Chancellor of General Services, and the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administrative Services. The roles and responsibilities of the vice chancellors are delineated in job descriptions housed in the district office Human Resources department. Direct reports to the college president are the vice president of instruction, the vice president of student services, and the college business officer. The roles and responsibilities of these administrators are delineated in job descriptions housed in the district office Human Resources department. Meeting this standard was a recommendation of the last accreditation visiting team. Several progress reports, to the satisfaction of the visiting teams and subsequently ACCJC, addressed the delineation of district office roles and responsibilities versus those of the colleges.

In fall 2006, the Chancellor established the Strategic Management Team in an effort to build strong working relationships within the district and among the district office and the colleges, and to facilitate dialogue, transparency, and effective planning. The team consists of the Chancellor, the three vice chancellors, and the four college presidents. This team serves as an additional method of ensuring a clear delineation of the role of district office administrators versus the college presidents [14].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Chancellor is clear about his role as “chief administrative officer” of the district and the role of the college president as “chief administrative officer” of the college. The college presidents, through the Strategic Management Team, collaborate with the district staff on integrated strategic and educational planning, the budget, and other matters affecting the colleges and the district. The presidents are given wide latitude in managing college planning, the

college budget, and decision making regarding expenditures on instructional programs and student services that supports the mission of the individual colleges.

The district/system provides effective services that support the colleges in their missions and functions.

Descriptive Summary

The district's primary purpose is to provide operational and logistical support to the four colleges. In this effort, the district office offers key support services to the colleges. The main services involve instructional and student services support, including institutional research, admissions and records, and international students; human resources and employee relations; business services; financial services; legal services; public relations and marketing; facilities planning; information technology; and community and governmental relations. These services support the colleges in their missions and functions.

The District Office offers district-wide coordination and support of educational services through the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services in conjunction with the Associate Vice Chancellor of Institutional Research and Planning, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Services and Admissions and Records, and the Associate Vice Chancellor of International Student Affairs. The Office of Educational Services is responsible for coordinating district-wide educational master planning, reports to the governing board, and for compiling and filing routine reports to the State Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges. Also under the purview of Educational Services are curriculum and instruction, student services policies and procedures, Tech Prep, grants, financial aid, a faculty diversity internship program, staff development, and tenure review processes. Recently, through the advocacy of Educational Services, the district purchased CurricuNet to provide a 21st century method of curriculum management; purchased SARS for use by counseling services at all four colleges; and worked with administrative services in implementing the student administration system component of the PeopleSoft system. Additionally, the district just purchased TaskStream software to facilitate identifying and measuring student learning outcomes for courses and programs [38].

Additional services to support the colleges in meeting mission and function are provided by the vice chancellor of general services. The department of general services provides facility and property services as well as purchasing, warehousing, duplication, facilities maintenance and operations, capital planning, and police services. The facility and property services include capital planning and management, real property leasing, maintenance of facilities and equipment, engineering, energy management, custodial and security services. Additional services include central purchasing and contracting, mail, and surplus property and warehousing.

Coordinated services are also provided under the direction of the vice chancellor of finance and administrative services. These services include human resources and employee relations, finance, payroll, and information technology. One major initiative in this area has been the implementation of the PeopleSoft system, both the finance and human resources component (PROMT) and the student administration component (PASSPORT). A new ACCJC recommendation was given in June 2007 regarding implementation of the finance portion of PROMT, and this was addressed in the March 15, 2008 Progress Report from the four colleges [39].

District staff members are active on a variety of institutional and administrative committees. The Strategic Management Team engages the college presidents, and the Strategic Planning and Policy Advisory Committee engages other college constituencies in dialogue regarding district services and district-wide planning. Beginning in fall 2007, the various district office units began unit review to address the services provided and how these services assist the colleges in meeting their missions and functions [40]. Administrators are annually provided an orientation and training on the varying roles and responsibilities of administrators throughout the district.

Self Evaluation

The district office provides coordinated support in the various areas reported above in the Descriptive Summary. Face-to-face meetings among the chancellor, vice chancellors, college presidents, and other administrators provide opportunity for dialogue, if necessary, regarding these district services to the colleges. District-wide attention will continue to be provided for the full implementation of the PROMT and PASSPORT systems, with the realization that the process often can be eight- to ten-years in duration.

College faculty and staff report challenges with the district Purchasing Department and the district Office of Finance. Faculty and staff are expected to contact vendors and secure quotes before submitting purchase requests, and this often leads to delays in purchasing. As stated earlier in IV.A.4 (Self Evaluation), grant progress reports to the state have been delayed because of the difficulty of accessing financial information required by the state. This ongoing problem has been solved by assigning this task to a retiree, who will be employed as a consultant to assist with submission of grant reports.

The district/system provides fair distribution of resources that are adequate to support the effective operations of the colleges.

Descriptive Summary

For many years the distribution of resources first focused on fixed costs at the district office and at the colleges, and those fixed costs were generally salaries. Then the next step in budget planning focused on the allocation of discretionary funding so that each college could meet its FTES targets, which were set to maximize the return on state

funding for FTES (factoring in growth and cap). An additional consideration was maintaining a necessary reserve.

With the active engagement in district-wide integrated strategic planning, a calendared method of looking at resources and distributing resources to meet the planning goals of the district and the four colleges was adopted. The process is more deliberative and allows for more input and dialogue. This budgeting and resource allocation process was spelled out in detail in the Progress Reports the four colleges submitted to ACCJC on March 15, 2008 [19].

The new process begins with a research phase under the direction of the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, who develops an Annual Planning Budget Framework providing data on a variety of areas that are central to resource allocation. The process involves the District-wide Educational Master Plan Committee, college councils, college budget committees, the District-wide Budget Advisory Committee, and the Strategic Management Team making budget and resource allocation recommendations to the Chancellor and the governing board. In this process each college is provided a base budget that includes funding for fixed costs and funding determined necessary to meet FTES and productivity goals for the academic year. This funding is made available on July 1, the start of the fiscal year. If the state chancellor's office in any given fiscal year makes cuts in funding or provides additional funding, these decisions affect the base budget. Beyond providing a base budget for each college, there is an annual determination of available discretionary funds which are allocated based on priorities established in the educational master plan (i.e., faculty positions, classified positions, funds for new program start up, etc.) and determined through a review process wherein the District-wide Educational Master Plan Committee and the District-Wide Budget Advisory Committee make recommendations to the Strategic Management Team. The Chancellor makes the final decision on the allocation of discretionary funds. The process is an honest attempt to combine a necessary base budget and program-based funding.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Merritt College's Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) submitted a list of proposed priorities to College Council and then to the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee. These priorities are integrated into the college's educational master plan, and funding for them must involve discussions at the college and district levels to identify a fair distribution of resources [41].

The district/system effectively controls its expenditures.

Descriptive Summary

External audits for the last number of years have produced no adverse financial findings and the district has consistently had a positive ending balance. Systematic and procedural controls at the district and college levels also help to prevent overspending and reinforce accountability from budget managers. As an educational institution, the district uses governmental accounting with emphasis on the uses of resources to attain the institution's objectives. With specific fund numbers for each source of funds, funds are tracked to account for revenue and expenditures. In order to provide effective oversight of funds, the district launched a PeopleSoft financial system to put in place an up-to-date relational database system to manage funds.

The Chancellor has overall responsibility for the management of the district's budget. The vice chancellor of finance and administrative services is responsible for the general management of the budget, budget controls, and the accounting program of the district. Such oversight led to a 14% reserve in 2007-2008 which provided a fortunate safety net when the State recalled \$1.5 million from the Peralta District during the middle of spring semester 2008. The president of each college is responsible for operating the college within the limitations placed by the budget. College administrative responsibilities include adherence to procedures established by the district office of finance; compliance with deadlines; and adherence to generally accepted accounting principles. It should be further noted that the district is in compliance with GASB 45 through the establishment of OPEB bonds which provide adequate funding for expenditures.

Self Evaluation

Overall, the district is well managed for financial stability and control as evidenced by the 14% reserve in 2007-08, and general audit results [42]. The district is fairly well-positioned to weather the state budget crisis through the efforts of the Office of Finance and chief financial officer.

The chancellor gives full responsibility and authority to the presidents of the colleges to implement and administer delegated district/system policies without his/her interference and holds them accountable for the operation of the colleges.

Descriptive Summary

The college presidents' responsibilities and authority for implementation and administration of district policies is outlined in Board Policy 2.10 [1]: "The President is directly responsible to the Chancellor of the District for the administration of the College in accordance with District and College policies and procedures." The Chancellor gives the presidents this authority and holds the presidents accountable for the operation of the colleges through an annual performance evaluation process. As part of the evaluation, the president establishes goals in keeping with the strategic planning goals of the district, and the Chancellor and president annually assess the progress on these

goals. The Chancellor in closed session briefs the governing board on the presidents' progress toward their goals.

Additionally, as noted earlier, the Chancellor meets bi-monthly with the three vice chancellors and the four college presidents, as the Strategic Management Team, to discuss concerns related to the individual colleges, the district office, or issues that may be of concern district-wide, as well as planning and resource allocation. The presidents also attend meetings of the governing board and report on college initiatives, programs, and other pertinent issues.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The president of Merritt College confirms that the Chancellor gives him full responsibility and authority to implement and administer delegated district policies without the Chancellor's interference and holds him accountable for the operation of the college. For example, the Chancellor annually provides the college president with a discretionary fund and the president has total discretion in expending this fund. Further, once college budget allocations related to faculty positions have been determined at the district level, the college president, through a shared governance process, determines how best to meet the staffing needs of the college and forwards his recommendation to the Chancellor.

The district/system acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board. The district/system and the colleges use effective methods of communication, and they exchange information in a timely manner.

Descriptive Summary

The Chancellor, as chief administrative officer of the district, is the liaison between the colleges and the governing board. The Chancellor submits all college matters on behalf of the colleges to the full board for consideration.

The district/system and the colleges use effective means of communication in a timely manner to relay information to the board and others about upcoming board agenda items. Items to be considered at board meetings are widely distributed electronically via the board packet to the board, college presidents, the district academic senate president, union presidents, and other interested community members in advance of a board meeting. The board packet contains documentation which are summaries, prepared by the responsible college or district personnel, and the Chancellor submits them to the board for consideration. Board meeting minutes are posted on the district's Web site and past minutes are archived on the site [43]. Board agendas, likewise, are posted on the district Web site and at the entrance to the district office building. The college presidents and the district academic senate president attend board meetings and report on college and senate initiatives and programs. The governing board

includes two student trustees who at board meetings voice the issues and concerns of the students in the district.

In addition to meetings of the governing board, there are board committees through which communications between the district, the colleges, and ultimately the full board may occur. Those committees are the Audit and Finance Committee, the Student Services Committee, Policy Committee, Standards and Management Committee, and Facilities and Land Use Committee [43].

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. PCCD Board activities are well communicated, and agendas and minutes are posted for the Audit and Finance Committee, the Facilities and Land Use Committee, the Policy Review Committee, the Standards Committee, and the Student Services Committee. Postings for the Technology Committee are not up-to-date. The web pages for the district service centers are replete with useful information [44] to guide and inform not only Peralta employees, but the community at large.

The district/system regularly evaluates district/system role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the colleges in meeting educational goals. The district/system widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

The district has various governance and decision-making structures in place, which include the Strategic Management Team; the Strategic Planning and Policy Advisory Committee; the District-wide Educational Master Planning Committee; the Council on Instruction, Planning, and Development; the District-wide Budget Advisory Committee; the District-wide Facilities Committee; a District-wide Distance Education Committee; as well as ad hoc “groups” that are created from time to time. Excluding the Strategic Management Team, which was designed to bring the Chancellor and high level manager together in a regularly scheduled manner, all committees are collegial and inclusive, with constituents working together to help the colleges and the district reach their goals. All of the listed groups have a written “charge” and set informal goals. Faculty and staff are well represented on district-wide committee. Students have a voice through the two student trustees who are members of the various district committees.

Self Evaluation

The college partially meets this standard. This past year the Strategic Management Team conducted a formal evaluation using a survey that provided opportunities to write

statements of evaluation regarding the work of the Team. In spring 2008, a survey was forwarded to the membership of the Strategic Planning and Policy Advisory to begin a formal assessment of the work of the group. No formal assessment of the other groups has happened.

Planning Agenda

Resource Allocation:

Develop external resources through grants and partnerships, including expanded facility rentals, in order to more fully fund instructional and student support services to students.

The district and college should continue to utilize research data to determine strategic allocation of resources at both the district and college levels.

Relationship with District Service Centers:

Clarify district procedures for purchasing and financial reporting such that college purchasing requests and grant reports are processed in a more timely and efficient manner.

Advocate for greater access to institutional data currently housed in the district Office of Institutional Research. Retirements have led to delays in data being sent to the college, and college researchers have requested direct access to the data.

Evaluations:

Develop mechanisms for regular formal evaluation of district/college role delineation and governance and decision-making structures.

Evaluate district service centers to assess effectiveness in providing services to the colleges.

Evaluate institutional planning at the college, and strengthen processes and communication of processes such that all college constituents have the opportunity to be well informed.

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28. College Council Bylaws
29. College Budget Committee Bylaws
30. College Organizational Chart
31. District Wide Strategic Plan
32. Shared Governance Manual, 2005
33. Merritt Reporter
34. College Council Minutes, 2008
35. College Council Agendas
36. Administrative Team Agendas
37. Budget Cut scenarios, 2007
38. Email from Ann Elliott regarding TaskStream, November 24, 2008
39. March 15, 2008, Merritt College Progress Report
40. District Service Centers Unit Reviews
41. Merritt College Priorities for 2009 Ed Plan
42. Peralta District Audit Report for 2007
43. <http://www.peralta.edu/apps/docs.asp?Q=Projects/2>
44. <http://www.peralta.edu/apps/page.asp?q=District%20Information&menu=public>

Merritt College: Planning Summary

ACTION PLAN COMPONENTS
STANDARD I A: MISSION
Mission Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The college will review and revise the mission statement at least every six years, or as necessary, to reflect a new direction of the college agreed upon by the governance groups and approved by the Board of Trustees.
STANDARD I B: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
E-Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrade the Merritt College website for better communication with the community.
STANDARD II A: INSTRUCTION
Student Access and Success <ul style="list-style-type: none">• During the 2008-9 academic year, faculty plan to update, create and hire part-time faculty in areas related to women, GLBT communities, and Latino Americans to offer more courses that teach to the experiences of diverse groups. On-line instruction and purchasing more classroom technology are in process and are included in the college master plan.• To facilitate student access and success, Merritt wants to ensure that its new website is easy to navigate and that all critical information is timely posted. In addition, Peralta students should be given access to Peralta.org email so that instructors can expand their communication with students. Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through Basic Skills proposals, Title III and MAP grants Merritt College has committed to creating more learning communities and extending service learning opportunities.• A Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty policy is to be initiated by the Office of the Vice President and addressed by the Academic Senate.

STANDARD II B: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

MerrittWorks and CARE

- Hire a part-time counselor to provide mental health related workshops regarding abusive relationships, stress reduction, depression support and other issues common to many service recipients.

Financial Aid

- Hire staff dedicated to outreach and academic counseling for Financial Aid probation students and money management counselor.

High Tech Center

- The High-Tech computer lab is in the process of developing an on-line course for students with disabilities.

DSPS

- Improve physical and electronic access for students with disabilities.

Learning Opportunities Program

- Increase staff to expand program capacity and to provide services in a timely manner to current students.
- Expand tutoring services for learning disabled students.

Counseling

- Advocate for additional full-time counselors, and provide needed assistance to students in the areas of transfer and nursing program information.
- Collaborate with district office to provide training for counseling staff.

- Expand EOPS services by developing guidance courses and other curricula, community activities, and mental health services for students.

Veterans Affairs

- Ensure that all students who are veterans have SEPs.
- Create an informational FAQ link on the Merritt web site for student veterans.

- Ensure marketing and registration materials are available in Spanish.

STANDARD II C: LIBRARY

Technology:

- Library faculty and staff will transition from a paper-based selection and acquisition process to a fully electronic one. Student workstations will be upgraded to adequately support access to digital content.

Resources

- Library faculty and staff will continue to advocate for a stable, consistent general fund allocation for ongoing and annual expenditures.

Security:

- Library faculty and staff will collaborate with the Business Office to determine a security solution for the Library that includes secure doors and security measures for the general collection.

STANDARD III A: HUMAN RESOURCES**Human Resources:**

- Address the part time faculty evaluation process and notify Chairs regarding their responsibility to continue and complete adjunct and tenured faculty evaluations.
- Complete evaluations of part time faculty by the end of fall 2009, which will then allow the evaluation process to focus on tenured faculty.
- Complete classified evaluations, which are nearing completion.
- Student Services has written plans to complete classified evaluations, which have not been completed due to the lack of a permanent vice president of student services.

STANDARD III B: PHYSICAL RESOURCES**Physical Resources**

- Establish a more efficient and effective system of processing Measure A requests.
- Schedule more frequent drills for disaster planning.
- Fill vacant custodial positions.
- Schedule upgrades and repairs to Environmental Science Center.
- Complete upgrades at the Fruitvale Education Center

STANDARD III C: TECHNOLOGY**Processes**

- Continue to refine and clarify a clear college-wide process for requesting technology related equipment and sustainable funding source (district, state, federal, and private).
- Establish increased, effective communication between all LRC, Library, Instruction, and IT constituencies regarding scheduling and coordinating services and programs, including setting deliveries of technology-related materials prior to term start dates.

Planning

- Approve and implement a college-wide Technology Strategic Master Plan that allows adequate time for regular and emergency planning, maintenance, and prompt purchase and installation that includes a tracking system to alert the college of vendor and District IT delays.
- Expedite planning, design, and implementation of the Teaching and Learning Center.

STANDARD III D: FINANCIAL RESOURCES**Planning and Budgeting**

- Refine the budget planning process such that all resource allocation decisions are aligned with institutional plans.
- Communicate the alignment of planning and budgeting in written documents and on the web so that the planning and budgeting processes are transparent to staff, students, and the community.
- Establish facilities and technology priorities for the college through the educational master planning process.
- Review the budget development process for possible streamlining.
- Establish procedures at the college for submitting financial reports for grants and contracts.

STANDARD IV A: CAMPUS LEADERSHIP**Campus Climate**

- Areas of needed improvement were highlighted by both faculty and staff, such as the amount of time and effort it takes for serious problems to get attention and resolution. Often a campus problem is in process of being resolved, but campus constituencies are unaware of actions that are being taken to address the problem. This illustrates a need to better communicate with faculty, staff and students.
- In addition, classified staff report that they feel marginalized and lack respect from faculty and most managers. A college retreat in October 2008 helped classified staff to recognize not only their significant contributions to student success, but also the regard in which they are held by others on campus. The college president plans a follow-up meeting with the same retreat facilitator.

Communication

- There is a disparity between the clarity of the written policies and the level of knowledge staff, faculty and students have about their roles in the shared governance processes at Merritt College. The college will design processes to ensure that each constituent member is invited to participate in decision-making at Merritt College.

- The college needs to better communicate the mission, vision and value statements of the college by posting these documents in conspicuous places on campus and on the Merritt College home page on the web. In addition, the Culture of Communication Committee presented a report to College Council recommending the purchase of an electronic communication system, and the issuance of a Peralta.edu email to all students. The College Council is in the process of addressing these recommendations.

External Relationships

- Merritt College plans to 1) continue to respond to all ACCJC recommendations; 2) expand when possible its high school partnerships; and 3) ensure that all grant progress reports are submitted in a timely manner by hiring a retiree familiar with the Peralta systems who can assist the project director with the financial information.

Governance

- The College Council will formalize the charge and draft bylaws for the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). CEMPC members will continue to fully participate on the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) to ensure that college concerns and plans are adequately represented.

STANDARD IV B: BOARD, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT SERVICE CENTERS

Resource Allocation

- Develop external resources through grants and partnerships, including expanded facility rentals, in order to more fully fund instructional and student support services to students.
- Continue to use district and college research data to determine strategic allocation of resources at both the district and college levels.

Relationship with District Service Centers

- Clarify district procedures for purchasing and financial reporting such that college purchasing requests and grant reports are processed in a more timely and efficient manner.
- Advocate for greater access to institutional data currently housed in the district Office of Institutional Research. Retirements have led to delays in data being sent to the college, and college researchers have requested direct access to the data.

Evaluations

- Develop mechanisms for regular formal evaluation of district/college role delineation and governance and decision-making structures.
- Evaluate district service centers to assess effectiveness in providing services to the colleges.
- Evaluate institutional planning at the college, and strengthen processes and communication of processes such that all college constituents have the opportunity to be well informed.

Key Reference Terms and Acronyms

AAUP – American Association of University Professors

ASMC- Associated Students of Merritt College (elected student representatives)

BAS- Business and Administrative Services Manager

BFAP - Board Financial Assistance Program. Financial Aid to students provided by the Board of Governors through the California Community College System.

BP – Board Policy

BSI – Basic Skills Initiative

CalWORKS – Welfare for families with dependent children

CARE – Cooperative Agencies Resource for Education

Career & Technical Education - The term “career-technical education” is used in place of the term “vocational education” to be consistent with current usage in state and federal legislation and programs. Career Technical Education (CTE) courses and programs are those educational options that offer specific occupational and technical skills related to identified industry clusters.

CCL – Council of Chief Librarians

Census - the date enrollment is established in a class for funding purposes. Census is the Monday closest to the point at which 20% of the class has been completed (Title 5 §58003.1.b). For the primary terms, this date is typically the Monday of the fourth week of a semester based on 20% of 17.5 weeks = 3.5 weeks rounded to four weeks); the number of students enrolled in a class on that date is the enrollment number used in the funding formula. For short term classes, the census date is calculated individually for each short term pattern.

CDCPD- Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors

CIC- Curriculum Instructional Council

CIPD - Council on Instruction, Planning and Development

College Council- A shared-governance body with representatives from a variety of areas in the campus community including administration, faculty, staff, students, union

CurricuNet- On-line curriculum management system

CEMPC- College Educational Master Planning Committee

CTE- Career Technical Education

DE- Distance Education Committee

DWEMPC - District Wide Educational Master Plan Committee

Educational Master Plan- College wide plan for growth and improvements

Facility Efficiency Ratio [Building Efficiency] – Assignable square feet divided gross square feet. Typical net to gross percentages range from 60-85%. (2008 Facilities Space Inventory Update:08/27/08 addressed to college presidents from Sadiq B. Ikhara, Vice Chancellor for General Services.

FTE or FTEF- full-time equivalent or full time equivalent faculty. This is used to refer to a full-time faculty load, e.g., a 3-hour lecture class is listed as .20 FTE or 20% of a 100% load (15 units).

FTES - Full Time Equivalent Students, is one of our most important measures and is used to evaluate a variety of things. For state accounting purposes, a full-time student is one who attends 15 hours per week for 35 weeks (two primary terms). The rule is: 15 hours x 35 weeks = 525 total WSCH = 1 FTES.

LRC- Learning Recourse Center

MAP- Maximum Achievement Project. A grant awarded to improve the success rate of African American Male and other under-represented students.

Measures – Quantifiable data are assessments that could be presented in numbers, ranking categories, ratios, percentages, etc. These assessments may represent baseline averaging, trends, delta changes and/or measures of significance.

MTC- Merritt Technology Committee

PASSPORT- Student enrollment and administration on-line system which was implemented spring 2008

PFT- Peralta Federation of Teachers (Union)

PIO- Public Information Officer

Primary Term - The fall and spring semesters are primary terms. The terms are

between 16 to 18 weeks long including both instructional and flex days. Courses within this average 17.5 week period may meet for the full 17.5 weeks (semester length courses; FTES calculated by weekly attendance accounting formula) or may meet for fewer than the full 17.5 weeks (see short term courses below). Summer is an intersession, as are courses taught in between primary terms.

PROMT- On-line classroom, student, human resources and management system

Short Term - Short term courses meet for less than the 17.5 weeks of a primary term. These courses may be scheduled within the primary term period (e.g., 6-week or 12-week classes) or during an intersession (e.g., summer, winter). Funding for short-term classes may be calculated either by the daily attendance accounting method or by actual hours attendance accounting method.

Scorecard Project- Equity and student success report.

SD – Staff Development

SLOAC- Student Learning Outcome and Assessment Committee

SMT- Senior Management Team.

Title III- Grant awarded to provide institutional support in key areas.

WSCH - weekly student contact hours. As a generalization, the formulas for state funding are a function of weekly student contact hours (the amount of time faculty and students interact). This is simply a count of the number of scheduled hours per week students meet with faculty.