



**M**erritt  
College

# **Follow-Up Report**



Submitted By  
**Merritt College**  
12500 Campus Drive, Oakland, CA 94619

Submitted To  
**Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**  
**Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

Date Submitted  
**October 1, 2016**



## Follow-Up Report—Certification Page


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


**From:** Marie-Elaine Burns, Ed.D.  
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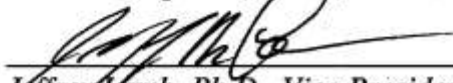
I certify there was broad participation by the campus community and believe this Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

**Signatures:**


  
Marie-Elaine Burns, Ed.D., Interim President, Merritt College  
8-29-16  
Date


  
William "Bill" Riley, Ed.D., President, Peralta Board of Trustees  
09-13-16  
Date

  
Jewel C. Laguerre, Ph.D., Chancellor, Peralta Community College District  
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Date

  
Jeffrey Lamb, Ph.D., Vice President of Instruction  
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Arnulfo Cedillo, Ed.D., Vice President of Student Services  
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Mario Rivas, Ph.D., Academic Senate President  
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Waaduda Karim, Classified Senate President  
8/29/16  
Date

  
Anita Johnson, Associated Students of Merritt College President  
8/29/16  
Date



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## Merritt College Overview

Graced by a beautiful new science and health building completed in 2015, Merritt College offers its students cutting-edge technology and state-of-the-art equipment to take them boldly into the future. But along with the futuristic progress, the college has retained its 62-year-old reputation as the heart of a thriving, diverse community where students of all ages and backgrounds can get a quality education at a very affordable price.

The college opened in 1954 at its original location on Grove Street in north Oakland (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way). In 1971, the campus moved to its current location in the beautiful Oakland hills surrounded by open space in one of the most dramatic natural settings in northern California. It is in this welcoming environment on 125 acres of land that more than 6,000 students each year have the opportunity to reach their educational goals.

In this rich urban setting, Merritt College offers nearly 100 programs of study which can lead to associate degrees and certificates and transfer to a four-year college or university or preparation for in-demand careers in the workforce. Our dedicated faculty and staff are committed to helping students achieve academic and professional success. The College's many highlighted programs include Landscape Horticulture, Administration of Justice, and Child Development, as well as the Allied Health Programs (Nutrition and Dietetics, Nursing, Radiologic Science, Medical Assisting, and EMT) and Biosciences (Genomics, Histotechnology, and Microscopy), all located in the new 110,000 square-foot Barbara Lee Science and Allied Health Center.

Merritt's Student Services programs are especially designed to guide and support students and direct them to the resources needed. The campus has a newly renovated Library and Learning Center, programs with positive learning experiences geared toward both Latino students (Puente) and African-American students (Sankofa), and a First-Year Experience Program created for many first-generation college students to ease into college life in a supportive environment. The College's Counseling, Veterans, Financial Aid, Assessment, and Admissions and Records offices provide exceptional service with the students' welfare their number one priority.

The diversity at Merritt College is marked each year by numerous events open to the entire campus and community—from Women's and Black History Months to Hispanic and Native American celebrations. The events are filled with rich culture, lively entertainment, and always delicious food to share. Merritt also has more than 20 active student clubs on campus in a multitude of interests. The college also has award-winning sports for men and women, including basketball, soccer, track and field, and cross-country.

Over history, Merritt College has strived to prove its slogan, "We Change Lives," as tens of thousands of its graduates have gone on to be successful and make a difference in the community and beyond.





**PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DISTRICT**

**DISTRICT RESPONSES  
TO EIGHT ACCJC 2015 TEAM  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1 OCTOBER 2016**

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## **Statement of Report Preparation**

Accreditation teams visited the District Office and four Colleges of the Peralta Community College District (PCCD) during the week of March 9-12, 2015. In a letter dated July 20, 2015, the ACCJC Team cited two Commendations and eight Recommendations for the Peralta District to address.

In July 2015, a new Chancellor was selected. Upon a recommendation from faculty, the Chancellor approved the hiring of an Accreditation consultant to assist the District Leadership in responding to the eight ACCJC District Recommendations and to provide support to the Colleges. The consultant began work in late October 2015 and over the course of Fall semester 2015, District Leadership Teams were formed, and each Team drafted a Plan of Action for each District Recommendation. By January 2016, all Teams had leads in place for the eight Recommendations. A District Accreditation Calendar [\[DR0.1\]](#), PCCD Accreditation Guidelines [\[DR0.2\]](#), and a District Accreditation Web page were created and regularly updated. The consultant assisted the District leads in collecting evidence and in writing responses to the eight District Recommendations. Furthermore, the consultant convened a group of Accreditation leads from each College to meet frequently and to ensure that all ACCJC District Recommendations were being addressed as they pertained to the Colleges [\[DR0.3\]](#).

To ensure broad dialogue in addressing the District responses and to explain the significance of meeting Accreditation Standards, presentations pertaining to the District responses were given monthly at the Peralta's shared governance Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) meetings, District Academic Senate (DAS) meetings, and bi-weekly at the Chancellor's Cabinet [\[DR0.4\]](#). In order for PCCD to stay abreast of District Accreditation work, frequent written reports were disseminated in the Chancellor's weekly newsletter, *C Direct* [\[DR0.5\]](#). Furthermore, District responses and Accreditation Standards were reviewed with the Student Body Council, the Governing Board, District Classified Senate leadership, and other constituent groups [\[DR0.6\]](#). "Brown Bag" discussion sessions were held at each College in May and Accreditation sessions were held during District Flex [\[DR0.7\]](#). In April 2016, a comprehensive draft of all eight District responses was distributed to PBC and in early

September 2016, revised drafts were distributed to all four Colleges. Finally, College leads and the District consultant worked collaboratively to integrate the District responses and the College responses into the four PCCD College Follow-Up Reports. On September 13, 2016, the four College Follow-Up Reports, including the District responses, were presented to the PCCD Governing Board for approval [\[DR0.8\]](#).

<b>STATEMENT OF REPORT PREPARATION: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR0.1	PCCD Accreditation Calendar
DR0.2	PCCD Accreditation Guidelines
DR0.3	PCCD Leads' Meeting Minutes, Mar. 28, 2016
DR0.4	PBC, DAS and Cabinet Agendas
DR0.5	C-DIRECT June 22, 2016
DR0.6	Classified Senate Email, June 14, 2016
DR0.7	District Flex Agenda, Aug. 17, 2016
DR0.8	PCCD Governing Board Agenda Excerpt, Sept. 13, 2016

## **COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**

**District Commendation 1.** “The District’s Institutional Research Department is commended for its work in creating a robust data system for a complex multi-college district. By continuously refining its data model, by developing and supporting a multitude of standard reports and dashboard/data mining reporting strategies, and by providing the needed user training, the department makes available a critical toolset that should be used as the foundation of evidence-based practice.”

**District Commendation 2.** “The team commends the District and the individual Colleges for their efforts to ensure that hiring practices cultivate a workforce that is as diverse as the student population. The District and the Colleges within it, have successfully maintained College personnel that mirror the student demographics, which enrich the College environment and promote equity.”

## **DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS TO RESOLVE DEFICIENCIES**

### **Recommendation 1:**

“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the District follow the 2014 audit recommendations and develop an action plan to fund its Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, including associated debt service (III.D.1.c, III.D.3.c).”

### **I. Introduction**

Recommendation 1 addresses the need for the District to follow the 2014 audit recommendations and develop an action plan to fund its Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, to include its associated debt service.

### **II. Plan of Action**

The 2014 Audit Report finding related to OPEB stated: “The long term planning for the continued financial stability of the District should continue to include attention to obligations that will be coming due in the future, such as the postemployment health care benefits and the annual line of credit repayments, which impact the District both at the operating fund level and the entity-wide financial statement level.” [\[DR1.1\]](#).

Respecting the 2014 Audit Report recommendation, PCCD has developed a long-term plan to fund its Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, including its associated debt service (i.e., the principal and interest due on the OPEB bonds). The District has also taken short-term actions to mitigate the impacts of the OPEB debt service on District finances.

### **A. Short Term Actions**

The District has actively managed its OPEB Bond program over the past twenty-four months. In September 2014 the District issued a request for proposal (RFP) to establish an underwriter pool in anticipation of financing the OPEB Bond program and General Obligation Bond program [DR1.2]. The Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and the District's Municipal Financial Advisor performed a semi-annual review of the OPEB bond program in anticipation of the automatic conversion of the next series, or tranche, of bonds from "capital appreciation" (where fixed rate bonds' interest is calculated and added to the principal amount every six months but deferred in payment) to the "auction rate" securities (variable interest bonds subject to auction every five weeks) [DR1.3]. The timing of this transaction was critical and was determined by the original structure of the OPEB bond program; the District was required to restructure the B2 tranche of bonds by August 15, 2015 or potentially pay investors a default interest rate of 17%, due to the failure of the auction rate market in 2008.

Recognizing the importance of the August 2015 conversion date for the B2 tranche, and its potential impact on the District's finances, a plan of finance and an associated timeline were developed. This plan included the analysis of various financing options and risks associated with those options [DR1.4].

In January 2015, the District's OPEB Finance Team was formed, consisting of members with expertise in the areas of OPEB, Letters of Credit (LOC), swaps, variable rate bonds, and credit. The Team included the District's Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, District Counsel, District Bond Counsel and the District's Municipal Financial Advisor. An RFQ was circulated to the District's underwriter pool with the intent

to select a firm for the August 2015 transaction and Barclay's Bank was added to the Team, given its ability to provide a letter of credit or LOC [DR1.5].

Working diligently over the next several months, the OPEB Finance Team developed a conservative bond structure that provided the District the lowest interest rates possible at the time [DR1.6]. As part of due diligence, the original bond financing documents were reviewed, as were the initial financial assumptions and program goals. The objectives were to verify all data and to insure that indentures and covenants were legal and being practiced. At this point the District engaged a law firm, with expertise in retiree health benefits programs, to provide advice to the Retirement Board of Authority (RBOA), as well as to review and update essential legal documents related to it and the OPEB program (this OPEB Counsel was added to the OPEB Finance Team). This work was arduous, methodical, and necessary to accomplish the B2 tranche remarketing. These initiatives benefitted the District by providing clarity and transparency related to the transaction and its governing structures, i.e. the RBOA and Governing Board [DR1.7].

In August 2015, the District successfully converted \$38,450,000 of Convertible Auction Rate Securities (CARS) to variable rate bonds with a LOC from Barclays Bank [DR1.8]. This action saved the District approximately \$12.5 million in debt service payments over the life of the bonds, assuming a failed auction rate of 17% against a current assumed taxable variable rate of 4.5% [DR1.9]. The bonds carry Barclays' short term rating of A-1 (Moody's Investors Service) and A-2 (Standard & Poor's). The District elected not to terminate the swap associated with this tranche because the termination value of the swaps approximated the expected cash flows for termination over time. The conversion and structure of subsequent tranches, the next one maturing in 2020, may mirror this approach.

### **B. Long Term Plan**

Since August of 2015, the newly-appointed Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, the District's Financial Advisors, and District Counsel and OPEB Counsel have focused on OPEB program management, cash flow modeling, and funding options to reduce existing and

future debt service over the long term. Moreover, in Spring 2016 the District received two legal opinions that impacted this OPEB planning:

1. Bond Counsel opined that the extant OPEB Trust, Fund 94, could not be converted into an irrevocable trust [DR1.10].
2. OPEB Counsel opined that the District's intent with respect to the extant OPEB Trust, Fund 94, was to service only those District retirees hired *prior to July 1, 2004* retirees [DR1.11].

After receiving opinion #2, the District commissioned its actuary to recalculate the OPEB liability associated with each of the two groups: "pre-July 1, 2004" and "post-July 1, 2004" retirees. Subsequently, the revised liability as of November 2014 for *pre-2004* retirees was actuarially determined to be \$150,325,680, down from \$152,429,020. OPEB liability for *post-2004* retirees as of November 2014 was actuarially determined to be \$4,166,272. The District will commission its next actuary study in November 2016 as required by GASB 43/45 (the Governmental Accounting Standards Board) with respect to OPEB accounting treatment. This new actuarial study will refine further the liability associated with the District's OPEB program.

Predicated on the two recent legal opinions, the following objectives have been identified for a Long Term OPEB action plan:

1. Develop a ten-year cash flow analysis, across all District funds, with respect to servicing the OPEB bond debt and meeting obligations to the District's *pre-2004* retirees.
2. Create an Irrevocable Trust in order to mitigate the OPEB liability on the District's financial statements and to service the District's *post-2004* retirees.
3. Commit annually 5% of general fund revenues – specifically, the State. Apportionment Computational Revenues-- to OPEB bond debt service and the establishment and maintenance of an Irrevocable Trust.
4. Strategically re-fund OPEB bonds and/or SWAPS as required by subsequent tranches.
5. Reduce the District's overall OPEB liability.
6. Update the District's Substantive Plan on an ongoing basis as per GASB 43/45.

This action plan was shared with the District's Planning and Budget Council (PBC) on April 29, 2016 [DR1.12] and endorsed by the Board of Trustees at its workshop on July 12, 2016 [DR1.13].



### **C. Cash Flow Planning**

In Fall 2015 current and future OPEB cash flows were modeled, reviewed, and refined under the direction of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration who provided more precise fiscal and programmatic assumptions [DR1.14]. The goal was to facilitate a working cash flow of all OPEB-related revenues and expenditures, including interest rate assumptions and future expenditures. Working with the District's OPEB Finance Team, revenues and expenditures are now updated quarterly, based on actual costs and/or returns, and compared against estimates. The Model also enables the District to monitor and reduce program expenses when possible.

#### **The Cash Flow Model's variables include:**

- Precise revenue and expense projections through 2025, including swap offsets.
- Five percent of the District's Computational Revenue received from the State annually dedicated to OPEB debt service.
- OPEB charge calibrated to meet required annual coverage.
- Interest rates and structures to determine refunding of future series.
- Integration of eligible trust funding for future debt service.
- Financial options to establish an irrevocable trust to service *post-2004* retirees.

The Cash Flow Model is predicated on the fact that any surplus funds in the OPEB Trust, i.e., assets over and above the actuarial liability created by the *pre-2004* retirees, can be utilized to service OPEB Bond principal. This use is provided for in the foundational documents of the OPEB bonds [DR1.15]. The Model also includes the continuation of the OPEB charge against payroll expenditures, as well as the establishment of a new, irrevocable trust [DR1.16]. This Model gives the District the financial flexibility to develop realistic future scenarios and to accurately monitor current cash flows as necessary for debt service management to progress. A summary of this Cash Flow Model was shared with the District's Planning and Budget Council on April 29, 2016 and endorsed by the Board of Trustees at its workshop on July 12, 2016.

While the aforementioned Model will provide guidance for the District in the nearer long-term, the District's longer-term goal is to implement a model that will allow the District to quantify reasonable approaches to reducing the OPEB program's overall debt service.

Starting in Fall 2016, the OPEB Finance Team will commence with an analysis to evaluate possible restructuring options to achieve this long term goal. This is a complicated analysis, but one that will serve as an important roadmap for OPEB program planning throughout the next ten to twenty years. One objective of this new process would be to determine the efficiency of a purchase of some or all of the outstanding bonds from investors. If successful, this restructuring maneuver would reduce the District's overall debt service and reduce the length of the existing program.

Given the number of external variables, it is difficult to set a precise deadline for a completed OPEB analysis (and, of course, interest rates represent a significant factor). To initiate this process, in March 2016, the District issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for investment banking firms with an emphasis on experience and knowledge of complex pension programs. Citi and RBC (Royal Bank of Canada) were identified as key partners in the District's undertaking of this important first step to move forward with the OPEB program and both have been added to the Team.

### **III. Conclusion**

The District has developed a comprehensive long-term plan to fund its OPEB liability and associated debt service. With conservative fiscal assumptions, it has modeled precise cash flow projections through 2025, and general projections through 2050, the final maturity date of the *pre-2004* program. The *post-2004* OPEB program, with significantly less liability, has also been addressed. As is evident, all District funds impacted by the OPEB program—Funds 1, 69, and 94—have the capacity to support the plan as developed, including the establishment of a new irrevocable trust fund. In addition, the District continues to look forward and has been actively assessing options to restructure the current OPEB program to reduce both long-term liability and annual costs, in full recognition of the importance and impact of the OPEB program management in years to come. The District's OPEB Finance Team will provide continual assessment of the OPEB program and report to the Planning and Budgeting Council and Board of Trustees periodically.

As evidence of its continued work in the area of bond and debt management, the District revised its Board Policy and Administrative Procedures with respect to Debt Management; these revised policies and procedures were reviewed with the District’s Planning and Budgeting Council in May 2016 and approved by the Board of Trustees in at its July 2016 Board meeting. In addition, the Peralta Community College District received an AAA rating, the highest credit rating possible on general obligation bonds, in May 2016. The District was the first community college district in the state to receive this stellar credit rating. During a PCCD visit to New York this past summer, the ratings agencies complimented the District for its OPEB program planning over the past year.

The District has followed the 2014 audit recommendations and developed an action plan to fund its Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, including associated debt service, and is confident that we have met Standards (III.D.1.c, III.D.3.c) and will continue to do so.

<b>RECOMMENDATION 1: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR1.1	PCCD Financial Audit Report 2014 excerpt
DR1.2	2014 RFP to Acquire OPEB Bond Program & General Obligation Bond Program
DR1.3	Definitions taken from Indenture of Trust
DR1.4	PCCD Board Presentation June 2, 2015 Bonds
DR1.5	Letter for RFQ 2015 OPEB
DR1.6	OPEB Refinancing Options example
DR1.7	OPEB Trust Indenture Amendment
DR1.8	B-2 Tranche Official Statement
DR1.9	Maximum Rate ARS Savings at 4.5%
DR1.10	Memo regarding Irrevocability of OPEB Trust
DR1.11	Memo regarding Scope of OPEB Trust Coverage for Pre-2004 Retirees
DR1.12	PCCD PBC Agenda, Apr. 29, 2016
DR1.13	PCCD Board of Trustees Workshop, July 12, 2016
DR1.14	PCCD OPEB Cash Flow Plan
DR1.15	Use of Trust Funds pages 21 and 22
DR1.16	RFQ Investment Banking and Underwriting Services Feb. 2016

## **Recommendation 2:**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the District resolve comprehensively and in a timely manner the ongoing deficiencies identified in the 2013 and 2014 external audit findings (III.D.2.b, III.D.3.h).”**

### **I. Introduction**

Recommendation 2 addresses the need for the District to resolve ongoing audit findings/deficiencies identified in 1.) 2013, and, 2.) 2014.

### **II. Explanation of Audit Findings**

The District has resolved all ongoing deficiencies identified in the 2013 and 2014 external audit findings.

Audit findings represent conditions that external auditors have determined involve specific deficiencies in internal controls. These deficiencies may result in material misstatements in the District’s Financial Statements and/or in certain reporting gaps that may result in non-compliance with the requirements of the funding source, usually Federal or State.

Audit findings are classified in terms of severity, either as a Material Weakness (most severe) or a Significant Deficiency (least severe). According to the District’s external auditing firm, *a material weakness in internal controls over compliance results in the reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a Federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A significant deficiency in internal controls over compliance is less severe than a material weakness yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance* [DR2.1].

### **III. Number, Type, and Classification of Peralta Community College District Audit Findings**

The table below illustrates an overview of the number, type, and classification of the Peralta Community College District audit findings reported over the past three years:

<b>Type of Audit Finding</b>	<b>FY 2012-13 (2013)</b>	<b>FY 2013-14 (2014)</b>	<b>FY 2014-15 (2015)</b>
Financial Accounting & Reporting	3	3	2
Single Audit Findings (Federal)	6	5	2
State Compliance Findings	5	2	0
General Obligation Bond Performance Findings	0	2	0
<b>Total Audit Findings</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Classification of Audit Finding</b>			
Material Weakness	4	1	2
Significant Deficiency	10	9	2
Not Applicable (Bond Performance Findings)	0	2	0
<b>Total Audit Findings</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>

External auditors identified a total of fourteen findings in 2013 [DR2.2]; a total of twelve findings in 2014: the Annual Financial Audit (10 audit findings) and the Bond Audit findings (2 audit findings) [DR2.3 and DR2.4]. Furthermore, there were four audit findings in the Annual Financial Audit in 2015 [DR2.5]. District Recommendation 2 requires resolving *ongoing deficiencies*, referring to those deficiencies specifically noted as findings in both 2013 and 2014. Of the twelve 2014 findings noted, six were ongoing, having been noted in 2013 audits as well [DR2.6].

Each of the six ongoing deficiencies was classified by the external auditors as a “significant deficiency,” as opposed to the more severe “material weakness.” These six ongoing deficiencies have been resolved, evidenced primarily by the fact that they were acknowledged as such by auditors in the District’s 2015 Financial and Bond Audit Reports [DR2.7].

In the “Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs” section of the District’s 2015 Financial and Bond Audit Reports, there is a subsection entitled “Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings for the Year Ended June 30, 2015.” As is standard practice, the auditors note the District’s progress in having implemented corrective actions to mitigate deficiencies noted in the prior year audits, in this case in 2014.

In ten of the twelve prior audit findings, i.e., those reported in 2014, the auditors assessed the “Current Status” of each as “Implemented” [DR2.8, DR2.9]. Here the auditors validated

evidence that the District had implemented corrective actions which resolved these particular deficiencies. Consequently, there were no reported findings for those (corrected) deficiencies in the current year audit.

In two of the twelve prior audit findings, the auditors noted “Current Status” as “Partially Implemented” [DR2.10]. The first of these two findings pertains to long-term fiscal planning with respect to OPEB and is addressed at length in the Response to District Recommendation 1, which delineates how this finding has been resolved. (See also Recommendation 1).

In the second finding, the District implemented corrective actions necessary to resolve the deficiency halfway through the fiscal year. So, while sample testing in the first half of the year resulted in examples of non-compliance, samples in the latter half demonstrated compliance. The auditors state this fact clearly: “While it was noted that the District did implement a new process during the Spring (2015) semester, thereby addressing the issue, several instances of noncompliance were noted during the Fall (2014) semester. The District should continue to monitor the procedures surrounding the COD reporting at all Colleges to ensure continued compliance” [DR2.11].

To summarize, all twelve 2014 findings have been resolved, to include the six ongoing deficiencies from 2013 and 2014.

#### **IV. Summary of the Resolution of Ongoing Deficiencies**

The District tracks its progress in resolving audit findings on its Corrective Action Matrix [DR2.12]. This dynamic document is adapted regularly to reflect progress in correcting gaps in District business processes, reporting processes, etc., that may result in inadequate internal controls. In addition to monitoring progress, the Corrective Action Matrix also enhances accountability and responsibility by assigning the implementation of corrective actions to specific District managers.

Below is a summary of the six ongoing deficiencies taken from the Corrective Action Matrix:

##### **2014-002: Reporting- Common Origination and Disbursement (COD)**

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Condition (1): Disbursements were not being reported within the 30-day requirement.

Resolution: A cross-functional team consisting of Finance, Financial Aid, and IT developed a file transfer submittal process to ensure compliance with Federal requirements. Instructions and training have been disseminated to the Colleges and the District's Financial Aid Policy & Procedures Manual has been updated to reflect this new process [DR2.13]. Additionally, Merritt College's data were resubmitted [DR2.14 and DR2.15].

Status: Resolved.

**2014-003: Special Tests and Provisions – Return to Title IV**

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Condition (2): Identification/ calculations of Pell Grant returns were not being completed.

Resolution: Corrective actions have been implemented at the Colleges to ensure R2T4 calculations are performed and that funds are returned as applicable in a timely manner. The District's Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual has been updated to reflect these revised procedures [DR2.16] and training was provided to all Colleges [DR2.17]. The District's Financial Aid team meets monthly with the Colleges to offer continued support and ensure compliance [DR2.18]. Furthermore, key vacancies in the Financial Aid departments at the two Colleges cited have been filled as of November 2015 [DR2.19].

Status: Resolved

**2014-004: Special Tests and Provisions – Direct Loan Reconciliations**

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Condition (3): Loan records, data files and College records were not reconciled monthly.

Resolution: The District has implemented policies and procedures to verify that the School Account Statement (SAS) data file and the Loan Detail records included in the DOE's Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) system are reconciled with the District's financial records regularly. The District has provided training for College Financial Aid Office personnel and management to more efficiently perform the COD reconciliation process [DR2.20, DR2.21, and DR2.22].

Status: Resolved

**2014-006: Equipment Management**

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Condition (4): Lack of tagging and protecting of assets purchased with Federal funds.

Resolution: Administrative procedures have been developed by the Purchasing Department, reviewed by the Internal Auditor, endorsed by the Planning and Budgeting

Council and approved by the Chancellor to ensure appropriate controls over the safeguarding of assets and the recording of equipment inventory. Training was provided to the storekeepers and Business Directors at each College [DR2.23, DR2.24, and DR2.25]. In addition, the Purchasing Department has implemented quarterly audits at the Colleges and District Office to ensure compliance [DR2.26].

Status:            Resolved

**2014-007:    Time and Effort Reporting**

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Condition (5): Time Certifications for employees working within Federal programs were not completed and/or submitted in a timely manner.

Resolution:    The District Grants Coordinator has established a Compliance Assurance Program (CAP) that includes site training in time and effort reporting, as well as regular communications to responsible College management. The District Grants Manual has been updated and distributed. A new Grants Administration Team (GAT), consisting of representation from the Colleges, Ed Services, Finance, and Student Services, has been formed and meets monthly to monitor grant compliance. Members visit the Colleges periodically to check on status of time and effort certifications and to provide additional training as needed [DR2.27, DR2.28, DR2.29, DR2.30, DR2.31, DR2.32].

Status:            Resolved

**2014-009:    Residency Determination for Credit Courses**

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Condition (6): Lack of thorough residency verification process performed at Colleges.

Resolution:    Implementation of the following procedures: a query identifying students whose residency changed from their applications was created to generate a list that is provided to each College so each can conduct self-audits. Colleges verify the residency change and ensure that proper documentation was collected and that comments were entered into the system. The District requires that each College submit documentation of any changes to the District for record keeping. The District's Admissions & Records Team held compliance-training sessions for each of the Colleges and continues to provide ongoing support [DR2.33, DR2.34].

Status:            Resolved



## **V. Audit Resolution Work Team**

In December 2014, the District convened an emergency meeting of Finance, Ed Services, IT, and Student Services personnel to address audit findings related to Financial Aid reporting and other deficiencies [DR2.35]. This group met and then reconvened as the Audit Resolution Work Team the following month (January 2015) when it began its cross functional collaboration of reviewing business processes, identifying root causes of process shortcomings, and developing sustainable solutions to these from a “ground level” perspective [DR2.36]. This group met as needed, throughout the year, and continues to meet, in order to address fiscal and reporting challenges identified by or submitted to the team [DR2.37 and DR2.38].

At the October 20, 2015, Board of Trustees meeting the newly-appointed Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration presented a user-friendly version of the Corrective Action Matrix to report on the work of the Work Team and, more generally, on the District’s progress in resolving its 2014 audit findings [DR2.39 and DR2.40]. The presentation included a Corrective Action Plan Summary, as well as progress slides on the twelve audit findings, that is, the six ongoing deficiencies and the six non-recurrent findings.

Each slide detailed the Corrective Action required; the Status to date of developing and implementing the action; the Evidence for such action; and the Responsible/point person for the continued monitoring of the action. Below is an example of one slide representing audit finding Number 002.

**PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN 2014-15  
2014-002 Common Origination & Disbursement**

<b>Corrective Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement procedures to ensure student data is reported on a timely basis to the U.S. Department of Education's Common Origination &amp; Disbursement (COD) website within the required 30 days. (Repeat finding for Merritt College)</li> <li>• Accreditation District Recommendation #2 (Standard III.D.2.b, III.D.3.h)</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility/Point</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible: College President; Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Services; Associate Vice Chancellor of Information Technology</li> <li>• Point: Financial Aid Director</li> </ul>
<b>Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the supervision and guidance of the District Financial Aid Director, reports are now transmitted to the Federal Department of Education on a timely basis</li> <li>• To ensure compliance with Federal reporting deadlines, a file transfer submission process &amp; instructions have been developed &amp; disseminated to the Colleges</li> <li>• The District's Policy &amp; Procedures Manual for Financial Aid has been updated</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Correction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2014 Peralta Community College District Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual</li> <li>• Merritt College Transmission Activity Log</li> </ul>

In November 2015, the Audit Resolution Work Team presented a Status Summary Report to District Management recounting their collaborative accomplishments over the past calendar year [DR2.41]. In the conclusion to the Report, the group recommended ongoing staff, faculty, and management training – with associated documentation—to ensure continued compliance. Additionally, the District’s Internal Auditor has been working closely with other District management to schedule regular, relevant training sessions [DR2.42].

**VI. Continual Improvement**

A significant cause of the historical internal control deficiencies at the District has been turnover in leadership in the District’s Office of Finance and Administration. Over the past five years, for example, the District has employed three Vice Chancellors for Finance and

Administration. Lack of consistent and permanent leadership in this area has challenged the District's ability to effectively develop and implement sustainable business process improvements.

In addition, the Office of Finance and Administration has lacked appropriate staffing to ensure a concerted and consistent focus on internal controls and operational business processes. Under the leadership of the current Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, who was hired in August 2015, the Office of Finance and Administration has reworked its organizational structure to include two new critical positions: a Senior Accountant and a Payroll Manager [DR2.43]. Each of these positions will provide additional support and guidance to the Colleges, as well as to provide for enhanced internal controls through monitoring and continued improvement.

The District's commitment to strengthening its internal controls and enhancing its business processes is evidenced by the marked decrease of audit findings over the past three years. Given the work of the Audit Resolution Work Team and other collaborative District efforts, the District has reduced completely its number of findings: the four findings noted in 2015 (See also DR2.2; DR2.3; DR2.4) the fourteen findings noted in 2013, and the twelve findings noted in 2014.

The District is confident that the number of recurrent audit findings will be minimal. As the Audit Resolution Work Team and other cross-functional groups—such as the Grants Administration Team—continue their collaborative efforts, District operations and compliance mechanisms are only strengthened. The re-organization of the Finance Division, and the stability of its leadership, will provide the requisite resources to support this crucial work of audit reform.

## **VII. Conclusion**

The District has resolved all ongoing deficiencies identified in the 2013 and 2014 external audits and meets the Standards (III.D.2.b, III.D.3.h).

Now that the ongoing deficiencies have been resolved, and the non-recurrent audit functions that are considered key to its operational efficiency, fiscal integrity, and educational services delivery capacity have been addressed, the District is focusing its attention on other business processes identified as needing improvement, e.g., debt issuance/management and purchasing/contracting processes, thereby ensuring a model for continued improvement as The District strives to exceed ACCJC Standards. The Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) shared governance body provides a forum for ongoing discussion and evaluation [DR2.44].

<b>RECOMMENDATION 2: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR2.1	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30, 2015 (excerpt): Auditor's Definition of Types of Control Deficiencies, page 85
DR2.2	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30, 2013 (excerpt), pages 70-100 total 14 findings
DR2.3	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30 2014 (excerpt) pages 95-111, 10 findings
DR2.4	PCCD Measure A General Obligation Bonds Election 2006 Audit Report June 30, 2014 findings
DR2.5	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30, 2015 (excerpt) pages 94-99 (4) findings
DR2.6	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30, 2014 (excerpt) pages 100-106, (6) ongoing findings
DR2.7	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30, 2015 (excerpt) pages 103-111, (6) ongoing findings resolved
DR2.8	PCCD District Annual Financial Report June 30, 2015 (excerpt) pages 103-111, (8) ongoing findings resolved
DR2.9	PCCD Measure A General Obligation Bonds Election 2006 Audit Report June 30, 2015 pages 6-7, Status FY2014 (2) findings resolved
DR2.10	PCCD Annual Financial Report June 30, 2015 (excerpt) pages 101-103, (2) findings partially resolved
DR2.11	PCCD District Annual Financial Report June 30, 2015 (excerpt) page 103, COD finding partially resolved
DR2.12	PCCD Corrective Action Matrix 2014-15 Audit Updated July 27, 2016
DR2.13	PCCD Financial Aid Policy and Procedures Manual, pages 1-73
DR2.14	Merritt Transmission Activity Log- Part 1
DR2.15	Merritt Transmission Activity Log - Part 2
DR2.16	Peralta Community College District Financial Aid Policy and Procedures Manual, pages 1-73
DR2.17	PCCD District Financial Aid Training Schedule
DR2.18	PCCD Financial Aid Supervisors Meeting Minutes
DR2.19	PCCD Financial Aid Supervisor Job Description
DR2.20	PCCD Direct Loan Reconciliation Procedures

<b>RECOMMENDATION 2: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR2.21	Laney Direct Loan Reconciliation
DR2.22	Merritt Direct Loan Reconciliation
DR2.23	District Fixed Asset Training Presentation Material
DR2.24	College Federal Asset Tag Training Session Notice
DR2.25	Revised AP 6551 Inventory of Property and Equipment Maintenance
DR2.26	Example of Email Notification of Equipment Inventory Audit
DR2.27	Compliance Assurance Program (CAP) for Grant Management
DR2.28	PCCD Revised Draft Grant Manual
DR2.29	Grants Administration Team Organization Chart and Charter
DR2.30	Revised Time and Effort Certification Form
DR2.31	Grants Training Schedule for Colleges
DR2.32	Sample Notification to College of Time and Effort Certification Follow-up Monitoring and Training
DR2.33	A&R Training Meeting Agenda July 10, 2014
DR2.34	A&R Training Meeting Agenda July 7, 2015
DR2.35	PCCD Emergency Financial Aid Meeting Minutes Dec. 19, 2014
DR2.36	Audit Resolution Meeting Minutes Jan. 23, 2015
DR2.37	Audit Resolution Meeting Minutes Apr. 12, 2016
DR2.38	Links to Audit Resolution Workgroup Meeting Minutes
DR2.39	Board Document Audit Resolution Progress Oct. 20, 2015
DR2.40	Corrective Action Plan 2014-15 Board Presentation Oct. 20, 2015
DR2.41	Audit Resolution Work Group Team Minutes, Feb. 23, 2016
DR2.42	Grants Training Schedule for College Grant Administration
DR2.43	District Organization Charts, Sept. 2016
DR2.44	PBC Meeting Minutes Apr. 29, 2016

### **Recommendation 3**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that District General Services (DGS) work with college personnel to implement a plan to address total cost of ownership for new facilities and equipment, including undertaking critical deferred maintenance and preventive maintenance needs at the Colleges in order to assure safe and sufficient physical resources for students, faculty and staff (III.B.1, III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a).”**

#### **I. Introduction**

Recommendation 3 addresses the need for District General Services (DGS) to work with College personnel to implement a Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) Plan for new facilities and equipment, to include critical deferred maintenance needs and preventive maintenance needs to assure safe and sufficient physical resources for students, faculty, and staff.

#### **II. PCCD’s Action Plan for TCO**

In response to Recommendation 3, an Action Plan to address Peralta’s Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) was created by the Department of General Services (DGS) and the District wide Facilities Committee (DFC) and presented at PCCD’s Planning and Budgeting Implementation Model (PBIM) August Summit meeting 2015 [DR3.1]. At that time, the Plan included the following elements:

1. A list of New and Modernization Facilities Projects, to include funding resources.
2. An action plan for addressing Equipment Needs (and Technology acquisition) and Critical Deferred Maintenance Needs.
3. An action plan for addressing Preventive Maintenance Needs: The Peralta Community College District is responsible for ninety-eight (98) buildings throughout the District, including the District Administrative Center (DAC) with a total area of 1, 596, 887 gross square footage.

In early October 2015, the TCO District Team Committee was formed to examine the TCO needs of all four Colleges and to continue to revise the existing TCO Plan (alternatively referred to as Guidelines). The Committee membership includes: a Recorder, the Facilities Planning & Development Manager, the Chief Stationary Engineer for Maintenance and Operation (M&O), the Facilities Project Coordinators, the Director for Facility Maintenance and Operations, and the Vice Chancellor for General Services. This Committee began its

work by meeting with each College to address the TCO elements that are College specific and the resources needed to achieve College objectives. A list of Capital Projects and scheduled and deferred Maintenance Projects was then generated [DR3.2]. The initial meetings with each College were as follows:

1. Oct. 9, 2015 - Meeting with Merritt College stakeholders [DR3.3]
2. Nov. 4, 2015- Meeting with Laney College stakeholders [DR3.4]
3. Nov. 24, 2015-Meeting with College of Alameda (COA) stakeholders [DR3.5]
4. Nov. 23, 2015-Meeting with Berkeley City College (BCC) stakeholders [DR3.6]

Furthermore, a Town Hall meeting was held at BCC to encourage additional dialogue pertaining to new facilities for Total Cost of Ownership planning [DR3.7].

In November 2015, the Department of General Services presented a revised Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) plan to Peralta's Planning and Budgeting Council so as to establish and document institutionally agreed upon, systematic procedures for evaluating facilities and maintenance needs at all four Colleges. In this document, the term "total cost of ownership" was explained as a financial projection to help identify direct and indirect costs of facility and equipment needs, to include the total economic value of the physical property investment, scheduled and deferred maintenance needs of the Colleges, custodial maintenance, and costs of technology acquisition and replacement [DR3.8].

### **III. Meeting Outcomes with the Four Colleges Regarding the Implementation of TCO**

#### **A. BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE (BCC)**

BCC opened the doors of its new campus in September 2006. While issues of preventive maintenance are always relevant, no major repairs were then necessary.

1. **New Acquisition:** On May 7, 2015, the District and the College procured new property for BCC (located on 2118 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA) so as to provide more areas for student services, to deploy technology laboratories and "smart classrooms," and to decongest the single building College. The TCO operational

expenditures for the new BCC site were outlined in the TCO Plan presented to the Board of Trustees on April 28, 2015 [DR3.9].

2. **Indirect Costs:** The College has expressed a need for additional indirect costs to be budgeted annually to meet its basic obligations. For example, because BCC is located in an urban site, parking for staff and faculty has to be rented (as compared to sister Colleges with their own parking spaces) and the District funds BCC parking on an annual basis. The College pays for Security Guard services on an annual basis, whereas the District pays for security by hiring and contracting with the Alameda County Sheriff's Office. The District Administration has also established a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Berkeley Police Department as the College is only one block away from Police Headquarters.
  
3. **Other resources as identified by the College are listed below and to date, have been funded by the District:**
  - Sheriff to patrol the College as a visible demonstration of security
  - New Technology
  - Instructional Equipment
  - Library Supplies
  - Classrooms Supplies
  - Lab Equipment

## **B. MERRITT COLLEGE**

In early October 2015 DGS met with Merritt College stakeholders to discuss TCO as it impacts the teaching and learning environment at the College. Most of Merritt College's buildings and infrastructures were built in the early 1970's when the College moved from its historical site on Martin Luther King Blvd. to its present location in the Oakland Hills).

The need to update Educational and Facility Master Plans was a major discussion item, as was the need for DGS to revise its Integrated Educational Facilities and Technology Master Plan (DGS is currently reviewing bids for this undertaking). Other topics included:



1. **Preventive Maintenance:** About 50% of the College work orders were for preventive maintenance such as fire drill testing, according to District Wide Work order requests [\[DR3.10\]](#). Other work orders were for adequate and proper lighting, hot water leaks, and uneven pavement hazards and plumbing. To date, all hot water leaks have been repaired.
2. **Weed Abatement:** Weed abatement is also a major requirement, not just for campus aesthetics, but as a requirement of the City of Oakland Fire Department. There are three Grounds workers/gardeners assigned to the campus year round, but the District contracts out to vendors to assist with major weed abatement every summer. All weed abatement was completed in August 2015 and again in August 2016.
3. **Maintenance Software:** Merritt stakeholders argued that the District should be more responsive to deferred maintenance conditions. The District explained that it was acquiring maintenance software which is “user friendly” and will enable the College work order originators to know the ongoing status of their requests (the software called “Maintenance Connection” was implemented in May 2016 and will be evaluated in December of 2016) [\[DR3.11\]](#).
4. **Keys and Electronic Key cards:** The College leadership stated that the demand for keys is a major issue, e.g., some keys are not returned and some are not issued in a timely manner. Custodians note that they have to spend about 25% of their time opening doors. The crux of the issue here is the District and College’s ineffective key/card management process. Plans to develop a new Key/Card procedure District wide are ongoing and this issue should be resolved in Fall 2016 [\[DR3.12\]](#).
5. **Equity:** Merritt College asked for more equity in the distribution of maintenance resources to the Colleges, the main issue being the claim of an inequitable distribution of custodians. The equity concern was discussed at the DFC with a recommendation to the PBC for consideration of their equity request [\[DR3.13\]](#). Currently, advertising is underway to hire two additional custodians which should diminish Merritt’s concern for equity.
6. **Safety Issues:** The DFC unanimously agreed that issues of human safety should take priority over all College project requests [\[DR3.14\]](#). For example, the College raised the issue of security cameras that were not operable. In response, the DGS staff

indicated that a vendor had been hired to fix and maintain all cameras District wide. The District hired a vendor and all cameras are now operational [\[DR3.15\]](#).

7. **Re-lamping:** The issue of re-lamping the College sidewalks and other dark areas was raised at the March 2016 DGS Task Force meeting [\[DR3.16\]](#). In response, the District has implemented the following:
  - By March 2016, Parking lot C lighting was restored.
  - Portable lighters were rented to serve areas that were not well lighted.
  - The lighting manufacturing company that installed most of the existing sidewalk lighting was contracted to replace the units that have burned out or give poor illumination. This project was completed in August 2016.
8. **Staffing Needs:** An assessment of personnel determined that Maintenance Stationary Engineers with licenses to maintain HVAC and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) were needed. These new staff will not only serve Merritt College, but its sister Colleges as well. The College also opened a new Science building in September 2015, the Barbara Lee Science and Allied Health Center, with a total square footage of approximately 104,000. This building received a LEED Gold award [\[DR3.17\]](#). An additional Stationary Engineer was hired and advertising is underway for hiring an additional Custodian. Also, existing Stationary Engineers from all of the Colleges were cross-trained for electrical, HVAC work, and preventive maintenance work for the Barbara Lee building by the end of August 2016.
9. **Training of existing staff:** Extended training of existing staff is vital to the success of any maintenance program as modern building technology requirements are constantly changing. The Director of Facilities & Operations has been given the charge to ensure that existing maintenance personnel get additional training from their Local 39 Union. Subsequent meetings to plan and implement training are on-going and are reflected in the DGS Program Review [\[DR3.18\]](#).
10. **New facility:** The College plans to build a new Child Development Center that will house the current Child Development Program on the southeast end of the campus. The TCO Guidelines are being considered as the College moves forward on this project. The Center will be paid for with District Capital Bond Outlays and leveraged with the California Community Colleges' Chancellor's Office funds (contingent upon the passage of state-wide Capital Outlay Bond initiatives scheduled for the November

2016 election). The total cost of the Project is approximately \$18 million dollars [DR3.19].

### **C. COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA (COA)**

1. **Repairing or Replacing the Infrastructure:** College of Alameda opened in 1970. After 46 years, much of its infrastructure needs repairs and/or replacement, while existing buildings need modernization.
2. **Maintenance Personnel:** Generally, TCO discussions centered on hiring. Initially, DGS hired an hourly Assistant Chief Stationary Engineer. In January 2016, a regular employee assumed this position. An Assistant Grounds Supervisor has been hired, as well as an additional grounds worker.

The Alameda College leadership is committed to creating an inviting and welcoming campus for everyone. Areas of improvements addressed in COA's Action Plans include:

- Elevators (replacement to meet ADA requirement)—An elevator design company has been contracted to do the work.
- Light fixtures (LED lighting for the Library)—A Contract has been established to replace all lighting.
- Additional space—To date, the College is not pursuing this request.
- Building a new Theater—This project is included in the ongoing Facilities Master Planning.
- Bookstore renovation—This project has been completed.
- Health Services (renovation of space)—A Contractor has been hired and is now working on the design of this project.
- New Fence for Auto and Diesel Building—Project is ongoing.
- Chemistry Hoods project to offer additional classes on the main campus—This project was completed in March 2016.
- Completion of the Veteran Center—The project was completed in November 2015.
- Landscape contracting—In August 2015, phase one was completed and the remainder of the project was completed in August 2016.
- External painting of all Buildings along Webster Street and Appezzato Memorial Parkway—A Contractor was hired for this project.

- Internal painting of selected doors—Project completed in 2015.
  - Mechanical HVAC project for the Library—The design is ongoing.
  - Ergonomic furniture for DSP—All furniture has acquired.
3. **New construction:** The District and the College are planning a New Building C that will house general classrooms and Administration. In keeping with this Educational Master Plan requirement, the Administration sold additional Measure A Bonds (\$50 million dollars) in Summer 2016 to fund the construction of this building. A Steering Committee of the District and the College was formed to continue planning for this project [\[DR3.20\]](#).

#### **D. LANEY COLLEGE**

Laney College, adjacent to the Peralta District Offices, is the largest of the four Colleges that comprise the Peralta Community College District. About 43% of all Peralta students attend school at Laney College. This urban academic institution is situated in 60 acres of land. A plan for the on-going collaboration of the District and College leaders was established as part of the efforts to improve institutional effectiveness. The areas of discussions included:

- Capital Projects
  - Scheduled Maintenance
  - Deferred Maintenance
  - Life Safety related projects
  - Outstanding work orders and plans to implement these requests
1. **Personnel Needs:** The DGS recruited two maintenance staff that will assist the College to deal with MEP related repairs. The Assistant Chief Engineer has been hired and the Director of Facilities & Operations position is anticipated to be filled by November 2016. Laney has also hired two additional Stationary Engineers and one Grounds worker/Gardener.
2. **Work Orders and Maintenance Software:** As mentioned in the Merritt discussion, the Laney stakeholders were concerned also with the District’s ability to stay abreast of work orders. The new “Maintenance Connections” software is sophisticated in terms of functionality and will store data in the cloud while providing stakeholders the status of their work orders via email. This new software system should improve

the execution of deferred maintenance project lists. DGS, Stationary Engineers, and Grounds maintenance personnel (including custodians) have reduced outstanding work orders from 1,200 in August 2015 to 105 in August 2016.

3. **Action Plans to Implement Work Orders:** The DGS is conducting a formal bid to contract with outside vendors in the areas of MEP. These vendors will undertake the implementation of those work order requests that cannot be accomplished by the College Stationary Engineers due to their complexity and sheer volume. All work contracted for Laney (outside vendors) was completed by Summer 2016. Future contracting with outside vendors will assist all four Colleges.

Laney College has articulated its concept of a TCO, which consists of:

- Alignment with the College Mission and Budget Planning Principles
- Importance of TCO
- Objectives of TCO as it relates to the facility
- Cost of utilities
- Establishment of ownership guidance
- Building Modernization and Maintenance
- Guiding Principles for TCO in Strategic Planning

[\[DR3.21\]](#)

4. **New Projects and Modernization:**
  - A. **Elevator Replacements:** Vendors have been contracted for a total of approximately \$1.2 m to replace the elevators at the Laney Tower and Building E.
  - B. **Women's & Men's Locker Room Modernization:** There is an urgent need to relocate the students' locker rooms in the main campus as the distance between the LC Athletic Field House and the women's and men's locker rooms does not meet Title IX requirements. An architect was hired to design the project.
  - C. **BEST Center (also known as the Zero New Energy building):** The Building Environmental Sustainability for Tomorrow (BEST) Center will allow for additional student training, especially in the Career Technical Education (CTE) Program for Solar and Environmental Control Technology. The District broke ground in February 2016 for a Zero New Energy building for community

education, to boost the local economy, and to promote environmental sustainability. Construction is ongoing and anticipated to be completed by Summer 2017 [\[DR3.22\]](#).

- D. **Swimming Pool Heating and Chlorination:** Chlorination machines and commercial heaters will replace the existing units that often break down and impact swim lessons (as these units were not commercial by design). The final project design has been completed.
- E. **Student Center:** New construction is being considered to replace the existing Student Center. Funding costs have escalated and the project is dependent on the November 2016 state elections. Swing space has been designed were the project to go forward.
- F. **Laney Parking Lot Overflow:** This project will add additional parking to accommodate College parking needs. This parking lot will be situated across the Highway 880 overpass. Striping has been done and the parking lot was used by students at the beginning of Fall 2016 semester.
- G. **Laney Library Learning Resource Center:** This will be the biggest new construction project in the District and is expected to cost over \$70 million. Like the Student Center, however, the project funding is dependent on the November 2016 state elections. This proposed four-story building will provide study access to over 16,000 students that attend the College [\[DR3.23\]](#).
- H. **Laney Culinary Program Facilities:** Since 2004, Laney has had numerous issues with the kitchen facilities in this Program. However, as the new Chancellor was made aware of ongoing issues, steps have been taken in collaboration with the Vice Chancellor of General Services, in the past several months, to correct various deficiencies [\[DR3.24\]](#). Additionally, the District has expended \$1.22 million to modernize, refurbish, and repair the existing Student Center and Student cafeteria to meet health and safety needs.

#### **IV. Implementing TCO Guidelines: Addressing Deferred Maintenance, Capital Projects, and Safety Needs Across the Colleges (Summary)**

##### **A. College Facilities Committees' Scheduled and Deferred Maintenance Needs**

Each College's Facilities Committee works with the President, Departmental chairperson, Business Director, and the College Assistant Chief Engineers to develop a list of Scheduled and/or Deferred Maintenance needs. Furthermore, work orders are sent to the DGS on a daily basis and the DGS then publishes this list of the Colleges' deferred maintenance needs. All annual scheduled and Deferred Maintenance items (which may require outside contractors) are sent to the District wide Facility Committee (DFC) for evaluation and planning. The Vice Chancellor for DGS and a faculty member usually co-chair this Committee which prioritizes project proposals and ranks them using the California Community College Chancellor's Office's (CCCCO) three broad criteria as follows [DR3.25]:

- To protect the safety of students and campus staff
- To prevent the disruption to instructional programs
- To avoid increased repair or replacement costs in the future

Specific deferred maintenance projects include (in order of priority):

- Roofs
- Utilities
- Mechanical
- Exterior
- Other projects

Capital projects include (in order of priority):

- Classrooms and Labs
- Library/LRC
- Faculty and Administrative Offices
- Cafeterias
- Theater and Physical Education
- Roadways and Walkways
- Warehouse and Maintenance facilities

The DFC Committee then finalizes the ranking of these Scheduled and Deferred maintenance categories (above) and forwards them to the PBC by April of every fiscal year.

### **B. Deferred Maintenance and Scheduled Maintenance Projects' funding**

During the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 fiscal years, the District made approximately \$3,800,000 available for various deferred maintenance projects. In 2016-2017, funding was also made available for deferred maintenance in the amount of \$1,256,881.00 District wide. Additionally, the State Chancellor's Office, through a one-time Physical Plant and Instructional Support Block Grant, allocated funding to contribute to the District's College-identified scheduled maintenance items.

This year, the PBC recommended that the Chancellor fund projects utilizing the State allocation of \$1.9 million with the caveat of giving priority to life safety projects. Those projects that are in excess of this amount are deferred to the following fiscal year. Presently, there is an estimated deferred maintenance need of over \$8 million dollars District wide. The cumulative average number of work order requests and preventive maintenance requests has been up to 1,000 in any given week. This dire backlog occurred during the State of California budget crisis (2009) and the District utilized most of its funding for classroom instruction. In 2009, all PCCD stationary engineers' positions were vacant due to resignations and retirements and were not filled. The State of California Scheduled Maintenance allocations to the Colleges were also suspended between 2009 through 2013 due to the State of California Budget shortfall.

### **C. Progress in Addressing Deferred Maintenance Needs**

To date, the District has made significant progress in addressing deferred maintenance projects across the Colleges: for example, there were 1,270 work orders in August 2015 and by the end of August 2016, there remained 105 outstanding work orders— only approximately 8% of deferred maintenance projects had not yet been addressed [\[DR3.26\]](#).



Additionally, there are plans to hire a one-time outside Stationary Engineering service for HVAC and MEP that will address applicable back-logged work orders. The understanding is that the remaining requests will be managed by the existing Stationary Engineering staff.

#### **D. Addressing Safety Needs and Providing Safety Training**

In addition to attending to ongoing safety needs already discussed such as lighting and broken windows, Peralta has distributed 250 digital radios District wide. These 2 way radios bridge communication between law enforcement officers and all PCCD constituents and ensure safety at the Colleges and the District. In July 2016, a 40-hour District wide safety training was conducted at Merritt College. Topics included: parking lot security, reporting incidents, emergency preparedness, etc. At the end of the training, participants were awarded a certificate to enable them to work as Safety Aids [DR3.27].

#### **E. Capital Project Programs and Instructional Equipment**

The District sold \$50 million in Measure A bond monies in July 2016 in order to begin the design and construction of the College of Alameda building C (general purpose Humanities building). The money may also enable the Laney Library and/or the Laney Learning Resource Center project to be implemented, depending on matching state funding that will be determined by the November 2016 statewide election. Additionally, all the Colleges received \$100,000 each in 2014-2015 and \$160,000 each in 2015-2016. \$1,885,321 dollars (total) will be allocated to the Colleges during the 2016-2017 fiscal year for Instructional Equipment.

### **V. Specific College Projects**

#### **A. BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE**

##### **1. Modernization of New Facilities**

Stakeholders have recommended renovation of the newly acquired 2118 Milvia building.

##### **2. Technology Acquisition**

The Information Technology Department has upgraded Voice Over IP (VOIP).

3. **Critical Deferred Maintenance**

The District has contracted with Netronix to fix and maintain gateway access controls for classroom locks in rooms 224, 218, and 227 at BCC.

**B. LANEY COLLEGE**

1. **Elevators**

A contract has been secured for a vendor to replace elevators in Laney's nine story Tower building as well as Building E that houses the Laney Culinary Academy.

2. **Theatre Flooring and Rigging**

This project has been completed.

3. **Welding Lab**

This contract has been awarded and 98% of the construction was completed by the beginning of fall 2016.

4. **Broken Windows and Glass Doors**

A contract has been secured to replace broken windows and doors resulting from vandalism campus wide.

5. **L.E.D. Lighting**

L.E.D. lighting has been utilized to replace exterior lighting in the quad and other outdoor areas at Laney. This project will be completed by November 2016.

6. **Cafeteria Modernization/ Construction**

Construction is ongoing.

7. **B.E.S.T Center (or Zero New Energy Building)**

This project is under construction.

8. **Upgrading Restrooms**

Laney College restrooms have been painted; graffiti resistant mirrors, as well as paper (toilet and towel) dispensers, were replaced.

9. **HVAC air intake filters**

are being replaced at Laney and District wide.

**C. MERRITT COLLEGE**

The following projects were completed by August 2016:

- The replacement of sidewalk lighting
- Parking lot striping and curbside painting
- Deep cleaning in the quad area and terrain, Chemistry and Biology Labs

#### **D. ALAMEDA COLLEGE**

The following projects were completed by August 2016:

- The Building D Elevator
- Pruning of trees and removal of dead, diseased trees
- Deep cleaning and window washing
- Plumbing, deep cleaning and electrical work completed at College of Aviation

### **VI. PCCD's Revised Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) Guidelines**

#### **A. The Inclusion of IT Considerations into the TCO Guidelines**

In May 2016, DGS called together a “brainstorm” meeting of IT leadership, the Vice Chancellor of General Services, the Project Manager of Maintenance and Operations, the Director of Energy and Environmental Sustainability, the Executive Assistant of General Services, and the Facilities Project Coordinator, to examine current revisions to the TCO Guidelines and to ensure that additional revisions needed would be embraced to inform ongoing work during the summer of 2016. At the meeting, the participants brainstormed ways to refine TCO Guidelines to best suit PCCD. Specific steps were outlined to expand participation to guide continued revisions to the document [\[DR3.28\]](#).

Because major changes in leadership to IT occurred in 2015-1016, the renewed interest in the urgency of including an IT Plan as an integral element of PCCD's TCO Guidelines became apparent and a separate IT section was added. In the TCO Guidelines, IT leadership determined that the cost of acquiring technology and equipment was key to the network infrastructure across the Colleges and must be expended to attract and retain students, faculty, and staff.

Currently, the Colleges have both (FF/E) and IT funding allocations from the Measure A & E Bond Measures. The Colleges have been procuring computers, printers, and other network infrastructure needs utilizing these allocated funds [\[DR3.29\]](#).

Each College now develops a list of priority technology requests that is vetted through the College shared governance process and submitted to the District Technology Committee (DTC) and PBC Planning Budget Council (See also Recommendation 4 for an explanation of PCCD's shared governance). During the 2016-2017 fiscal period, the District IT unit was allocated \$1.8 million which is equivalent to approximately 1.4 % of the District's total adopted budget [\[DR3.30\]](#). It should be noted that while some Colleges (Laney, COA and Merritt) have adequate Bond funding for equipment procurement from Bond Measure A, Berkeley City College has depleted its Information Technology (IT) allocations and thus needs to have annual budgeted IT allocations.

Plans to update the 2008/2009 Road Map that utilized Bond Measure A and E monies will be undertaken once the Education Master Plans District wide are completed [\[DR3.31\]](#). It is anticipated that the updated Road Map will be completed in the 2016-2017 academic year and will include an IT Plan.

Technology acquisitions on a District wide basis go beyond network and personal computer purchases. Other critical elements include PeopleSoft Enterprise deployment for student registration, modules for instruction, and the infrastructure necessary for the Colleges to communicate, such as VOIP. Additionally, the District established standards developed for the deployment of Smart Classrooms in 2009 are currently under revision [\[DR3.32\]](#).

In 2014-2015, the Colleges received \$100,000 each for Instructional Equipment and Library Materials (for a total of \$400,000) as part of the 2014-2015 Physical Plant and Instructional Support Block Grant from the California Community College Chancellor's Office, in addition to the Bond measures [\[DR3.33\]](#). During 2015-2016, each College also received the sum of \$150,000 for Instructional Equipment and Library Materials from the Physical Plant and Instructional Support Block Grant (California Chancellor's Office) for a total sum of

\$600,000. Though these are expressly one-time funds, there is a possibility that funding from the State may continue in the future [\[DR3.34\]](#).

<u>Name of College</u>	<u>Beginning Balance Allocation (2009)</u>	<u>Outstanding balance as of February 2016</u>
*BCC	\$3,067,376	\$658,457
COA	\$6,953,287	\$3,860,973
Laney College	\$12,504,868	\$2,452,038
Merritt College	\$7,494,026	\$1,366,534
District wide IT	\$12,000,000	\$1,455,421
District Adm. Center	\$2,759,278	\$1,116,649
TOTAL	<u>\$44,778,836</u>	<u>\$10,910,069</u>

\*It should be noted that the above funding figures were utilized to assess equipment and furniture needs, which explains why BCC, a newer campus (built in 2006) with newer equipment, received a lessor allocation.

### **B. Adoption of TCO Guidelines**

The TCO Guidelines were reviewed by DGS in April and PBC in May 2016. A special TCO Workshop was held during the PCCD August 2016 Flex Day [\[DR3.35\]](#). 2016 PCCD's year-long work to revise TCO Guidelines incorporated many collaborative projects to include: 1.) Meetings with each College to determine TCO needs and expectations 2.) the inclusion of IT in PCCD's revision TCO Guidelines, and 3.) Continued efforts to implement TCO Guidelines while, at the same time, working to revise and to improve the existing TCO Guidelines. The new TCO Guidelines were adopted by the DTC in September 2016 [\[DR3.36\]](#). It is anticipated that at its September 2016 PBC meeting, the shared governance body will recommend that the TCO Guidelines be sent forward to the Chancellor for consideration.

### **VII. DGS Action Plan for Hiring within TCO Guidelines**

A proposal to hire additional maintenance staff for all the Colleges has gone through the shared governance process and a recommendation was sent to the Chancellor for implementation [\[DR3.37\]](#). The staffing needs require the recruitment of competent electricians, plumbers and (HVAC) engineers that have licenses in their various trades. The

PBC also recommended that the Chancellor allocate 1.5% or \$1,800,000 of the District adopted General Fund budget to the DGS with an understanding that outside contractors will be hired to undertake some of these work orders, especially those that cannot be done in-house.

### **A. Custodial Staff**

The summaries per College relative to custodian needs and aligned with APPA Industry Standards for Facilities maintenance are as follows [DR3.38].

1. BCC: 6 custodians, calculated standard 31,969 square feet per custodian (casual inattention)
2. COA: 6 custodians, calculated standard 37,142 square feet per custodian (casual inattention)
3. District: 6 custodians, calculated standard 20,111 square feet per custodian (ordinary tidiness)
4. Laney: 15.5 custodians, calculated standard 35,120 square feet per custodian (casual inattention)
5. Merritt: 9 custodians, calculated standard 51,529 square feet per custodian, (moderate to dingy and borderline for unkempt).

This analysis indicates that Merritt College, for example, with a total square footage area of about 463,765 and 9 custodians, needs to hire 3 more custodians in order to approach equity with the other Colleges. The District and the College plans to hire additional custodians for Merritt College especially given that the New Science and Allied Health facility alone, with approximately 104,000 square feet, opened in 2015 [DR3.39].

The overall need for custodial staff is critical. In this year's evaluation of PCCD's existing Budget Allocation Model (BAM) presented at the District's PBIM August 2016 Summit, the Task Force recommended that the District "allocate the appropriate level of staffing to all Colleges, based on industry best practices and an acceptable level of facility cleanliness. Analysis reveals that some Colleges are staffed appropriately and others fall short" [DR3.40].

### **B. Additional Staff**

1. **Director of Facilities and Operations** is currently being filled with an Interim. A regular position is being advertised to hire the full time position by October 2016.

2. **A Project Manager for Maintenance and Operations** is expected to begin duties in October 2016.
3. **A Director of Capital Projects** was hired to address modernization and new construction.
4. **An Interim Staff Services Specialist** for M and O was hired in July 2016 to deal with Colleges' requests for work orders and to support the Project Manager for implementing projects. It is anticipated that the interim position will be replaced by a regular hire by September 2016.
5. **Three Stationary Engineers** were hired to undertake both scheduled and deferred maintenance (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing MEP). One began work in July 2016 and two began work in August 2016.
6. **Groundskeepers:** An assistant groundskeeper was hired in June 2016 to coordinate maintenance of grounds and to assure that the College environments are more inviting.
7. **Two Assistant Chief Engineers** for COA and BCC, responsible for day to day supervision of Stationary Engineers, were hired at the end of August 2016.

### **VIII. Facility Conditions Assessment Study (FCA)**

The District conducted a Facility Conditions Assessment Study (FCA) in collaboration with the California Community Colleges in 2013. As part of the Colleges 5-year plan, the Colleges conduct this assessment every five years. Another update, Facilities Assessment Index (FCI) is due to be completed by the Foundation for the California Community Colleges in September 2016 and will help to determine ongoing Facilities and Maintenance planning. The study will include the use of the California Community College's Facilities Utilization Space Inventory Options Net (FUSION), a web-based application used by all 72 California Community College Districts and the CCCCO facilities staff will submit, plan, review, approve, and track facility activities [DR3.41]. Finally, one suggestion of the TCO Guidelines is to establish an in-house Task Force to monitor the implementation of the FCA study recommendations.

### **IX. Conclusion**

The Team recommended that the District's General Services work with College personnel to implement a plan to address Total Cost of Ownership for new facilities and equipment,

including undertaking critical deferred maintenance and preventive maintenance needs at the Colleges, in order to assure safe and sufficient physical resources for students, faculty, and staff.” Accordingly, the District constructed a DGS Action Plan for creating new TCO Guidelines in collaboration with the Colleges. Furthermore, the District is currently soliciting bids for the revision of the 2009 Integrated Educational Facilities and Technology Master Plan.

The District continues to make progress in addressing and satisfying deferred maintenance needs at the Colleges, “in order to assure safe and sufficient physical resources” for all members of the Peralta community and the reorganization of DGS has revitalized leadership presence and efficiency. The Colleges will be adding Directors of College Operations to work in conjunction with DGS and the implementation of TCO Guidelines and will assist in creating better systems for addressing facilities, maintenance, and IT needs. Beginning in summer 2016, the Chancellor’s C-Direct featured DGS reports that detailed progress on deferred maintenance. These reports have improved communication District wide as TCO objectives are implemented [DR3.42]. By listening to, and collaborating with the Colleges, concerted efforts to work together have resulted in tangible results in meeting Standards (III.B.1, III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a).

<b>RECOMMENDATION 3: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR3.1	DGS Action Plan, Aug. 28, 2015
DR3.2	DGS Team: TCO Meeting Minutes, Oct. 2, 2015
DR3.3	Merritt Team: TCO Meeting Minutes, Oct. 9, 2015
DR3.4	Laney Team: TCO Meeting Minutes, Nov. 4, 2015
DR3.5	COA Team: TCO Meeting Minutes, Nov. 24, 2015
DR3.6	BCC Team: TCO Meeting Minutes, Nov. 23, 2015
DR3.7	BCC Town Hall Meeting, Apr. 13, 2016
DR3.8	TCO Action Plan, Introduction, page 1: Nov. 2015
DR3.9	Total Cost of Ownership and Operational Expenditures 2118 Milvia Property, Apr. 28, 2015
DR3.10	Weekly Work Order July 21, 2015
DR3.11	Maintenance Connect Executed Agreement
DR3.12	PCCD Draft Administrative Procedures - Key Control
DR3.13	PBIM DFC Meeting Minutes, Feb. 5, 2016, pages 9-10
DR3.14	PBIM DFC Meeting Minutes, Mar.4, 2016, pages 4-5



<b>RECOMMENDATION 3: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR3.15	OJO Technology Contract
DR3.16	DGS Task Team Meeting, Mar. 22, 2016, page 3
DR3.17	USGBC LEED Gold Letter, Jan. 12, 2016
DR3.18	DGS Program Review, Fall 2015
DR3.19	FUSION, JCAF-32, Child Development Center Project Details, 2016, 2009 COA Integrated Educational and Facilities Master Plan excerpt, pages 46-50
DR3.20	COA New Building C Meeting Notes, Sept. 6, 2016
DR3.21	Laney Total Cost of Ownership Mission and Planning Principles
DR3.22	Laney College Facilities Master Plan, 2012, pages 3 and 18
DR3.23	FPP Laney Resource Center Project
DR3.24	Culinary Academy Maintenance Emails
DR3.25	CCCCO Deferred Maintenance Criteria, 2014-2015
DR3.26	Work Order Report, Aug. 12, 2016
DR3.27	Campus Safety Aide Training Schedule Aug. 2016
DR3.28	TCO Brainstorm Meeting Notes, May 17, 2016
DR3.29	Bond Measures A & E: Equipment IT and FF/E Procurement, June 2008
DR3.30	IT Allocation and PCCD Adopted Budget, Sept. 8, 2015
DR3.31	Road Map to the Future, page 37
DR3.32	Standards for Smart Classrooms 2009
DR3.33	2014-15 Physical Plant & Instructional Support Block Grants Certification for Expenditures, 2014, page 3
DR3.34	2015-16 Physical Plant & Instructional Support Block Grants Certification for Expenditures, 2015, page 3
DR3.35	District Flex Agenda, Aug. 17, 2016
DR3.36	TCO Guidelines, Sept. 15, 2016
DR3.37	Facility Maintenance and Operations: Proposed Reorganizational Structure
DR3.38	APPA Custodial Service Levels
DR3.39	Custodial Standards for Colleges
DR3.40	What is the BAM Task Force?
DR3.41	FCI 2016 Timeline
DR3.42	C-Direct, Aug. 24, 2016

## **Recommendation 4**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the District should clearly identify the structures, roles and responsibilities, and document the processes used to integrate human, facilities, technology, planning and fiscal planning in support of student learning and achievement and regularly evaluate the process in order to fairly allocate resources to support the planning priorities (Standard III.A.6, III.B.2, III.C.2, III.D.4, IV.B.3.g).”**

### **I. Introduction**

Recommendation 4 addresses the need for the District to: 1.) Identify the structures, roles and responsibilities used to integrate human, facilities, technology, planning and fiscal planning in support of student learning and achievement, 2.) document the processes used to integrate human, facilities, technology, planning and fiscal planning in support of student learning and achievement, and, 3.) regularly evaluate the process in order to fairly allocate resources to support the planning priorities.

### **II. Peralta’s Planning and Budgeting Integration Model (PBIM)**

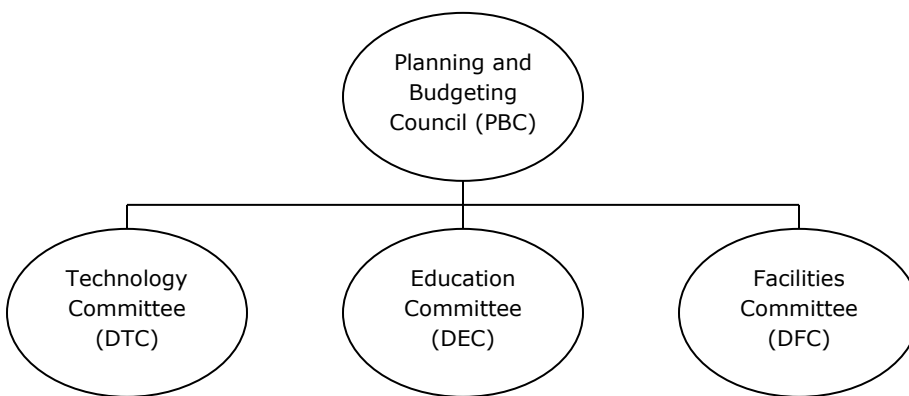
Peralta’s Planning and Budgeting Integration Model (PBIM) includes two major components to support integrated planning and resource allocation: (1) the District Strategic Plan and, (2.) Program Review which is conducted every three years, with an Annual Program Update (APU). The original PBIM Model was created in 2009 and continues to function as the central mechanism in providing the shared governance structure for oversight of the PCCD Strategic Plan. The purpose of the PBIM is to provide a clear process for planning and budgeting decision-making throughout the District. The specific functions of the PBIM are to: (1) Integrate planning and budgeting across the four Colleges and the District Service Centers; (2) Bring the expertise of the four Colleges together to focus on trends, best practices, and student learning and success; (3) Support a culture of collaboration; (4) Streamline decision making among the Colleges and District Service Centers by providing a transparent process of collaboration and making recommendations leading to decisions; (5) Provide a mechanism for implementing the District’s Mission, Strategic Goals, and Institutional Objectives, and (6) Guides the PBIM membership in recommending shared governance decisions to the Chancellor [\[DR4.1\]](#).

In looking at the overarching purpose of the PBIM, the following considerations are key:

1. Educational planning is the foundation of all District decision-making
2. A structured participatory governance process must be transparent and coherent
3. The PBIM is the official guide for all decision-making recommendations
4. Integrated planning, budgeting, and resource allocation has multiple cycles:
  - a. Strategic Planning (6 years)
  - b. Program Review (3 years)
  - c. Annual Program Updates (in non-Program Review years)
5. All planning is integrated with the District's Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives.

### **III. District wide Advisory Committees**

Integral to the PBIM is a District wide planning and budget advisory system consisting of three broad subject-matter Committees that review and recommend decisions that build on District Service Center Functions, College Program Reviews, and annual Institutional plans, goals, and objectives. These Committees are the District Technology Committee (DTC), the District Facilities Committee (DFC), and the District Education Committee (DEC). Each District Committee reports to the Planning and Budget Council (PBC).



Specifically, the DTC, DEC, and DFC are charged to:

1. Stress the use of Program Reviews and Annual Program Updates (APU) in making decisions.

2. Seek collaborative solutions that utilize resources on a District wide basis.
3. Assist in developing District wide strategies that are acceptable to all Colleges.
4. Provide feedback to the Colleges on decision making.
5. Provide technical reviews of College priorities.
6. Ensure consistency between College requests and existing approved projects and identify opportunities for College-to-College collaboration where resource sharing could be useful and economical.
7. Make recommendations based on long-term Strategic Goals, annual Institutional Objectives, and Program Reviews (and Annual Program Updates).
8. Forward recommendations to the Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC).

[\[DR4.2\]](#)

#### **IV. Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC)**

The Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) receives and reviews recommendations from the three District subject matter Committees (DTC, DEC, and DFC described above) and makes final recommendations to the Chancellor regarding educational and resource priorities, Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, and new initiatives. In some cases, the PBC recommends resolutions where there is not agreement regarding issues between the Colleges and District Service Centers or among the Colleges.

The PBC performs the following specific functions:

1. Affirms consistency in Strategic and educational plans
2. Recommends a coordinated, District wide planning approach
3. Recommends a prioritization of plans across subject areas and Colleges
4. Identifies funding approaches to support priorities.
5. Focuses on educational and resources priorities, Board policies and administrative procedures, and integrated planning and budgeting.
6. Critically reviews recommendations from the subject area Committees.
7. Makes final recommendations to the Chancellor.

The PBC is also responsible for oversight of the District's and Colleges' Strategic Plans. Oversight includes tracking various recommendations and determining whether the recommendations are implemented. If particular recommendations are not implemented, the PBC documents a rationale for its decisions. Finally, the PBC ensures accountability in

planning deliberations by determining whether agreed upon steps in the PBIM process are followed.

#### **V. PBIM Annual August Summit**

Each year the District holds its annual PBIM Summit (often referred to as the August Summit) as the “kick-off” event for initiating dialog that will inform the PCCD goals and objectives for the new academic year. In attendance are Senior staff, participatory governance Committees, and other College and District leaders. The PBIM Summit exists to inform annual work plans, to provide accountability, and to help the leadership to identify where improvements need to be made. This event serves as a valuable planning tradition for the District. The August Summit is generally held offsite and PBIM members are expected to attend and participate. The Chancellor provides a brief overview of the State of the Peralta Community College District. The 2015 August Summit included 10 presentations that were intended to reveal a broad understanding of the PBIM to the new Chancellor [DR4.3]. In November 2015, a PBIM Workshop training was held for all Committee members, the goal being to provide more in-depth training for those who serve on the PBIM Committees, especially for those new Committee members [DR4.4].

#### **VI. Implementation of the Strategic Plan Under PBIM**

The PCCD Strategic Plan—prepared every 6 years-- is implemented to ensure the participatory process of the institution and the autonomy of the four Colleges [DR4.5]. The PCCD Plan is aligned with the 2013 California Community Colleges System Strategic Plan [DR4.6].

The PCCD Plan provides the broad direction from which the Colleges can develop their own strategic and operational plans in responding to the populations they serve. The Strategic Plan has sections that include:

Section I, Introduction: provides an overview, articulates the purpose of the Plan and describes the process used in creating the Strategic Plan.

Section II, Guiding Framework: presents the mission, principles, and values that serve as the foundation for the Plan.

Section III, Strategic Planning Context: summarizes major issues and trends affecting District wide planning beginning with mega trends that are expected to have the greatest-impact on the District, and also provides data on demographic changes, student success measures, and job projections in Alameda County.

Section IV, Goals and Institutional Objectives: presents the overarching Strategic Goals of the Peralta Community College District and the Institutional Objectives which are the framework for achieving and assessing student success.

Section V, Implementing the Strategic Plan: describes planning cycles and the approach for ensuring that the Plan will serve as the driver for institutional planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

Section VI, Appendix: contains sources utilized in completion of the Plan.

The 2015 Strategic Plan set forth the following 2015-2016 Strategic Goals: (A.) Advance Student Access, Equity, and Success; (B.) Engage and Leverage Partners; (C.) Build Programs of Distinction; and, ( D.) Strengthen Accountability, Innovation and Collaboration, and states specific Institutional Objectives to align with each Goal. The Strategic Plan serves as a foundation reference document for all PCCD Planning and is approved by the Governing Board.

In September of each academic year, the PCCD Governing Board also approves the budget that is used in conjunction with the Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives. In 2015-2016, the budget was approved at the September 8, 2015 Governing Board meeting [\[DR4.7\]](#).

## **VII. PBIM Annual Calendar for Planning, Program Review, and Annual Program Updates**

PCCD provides a yearly Planning and Program Review calendar, developed by the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and PBC co-chair and used by the PBC. This calendar includes a timeline to develop research, District and College-wide planning, and budget development for use in the evaluation of Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives. The PCCD Planning and Program Review calendar is a useful reference document for integrated planning for the District [\[DR4.8\]](#).

## **VIII. PBIM Resource Allocation Processes**

There are four Resource Allocation processes which affect the Colleges that are formed at the District level through the PBIM structure. These processes pertain to the distribution of:

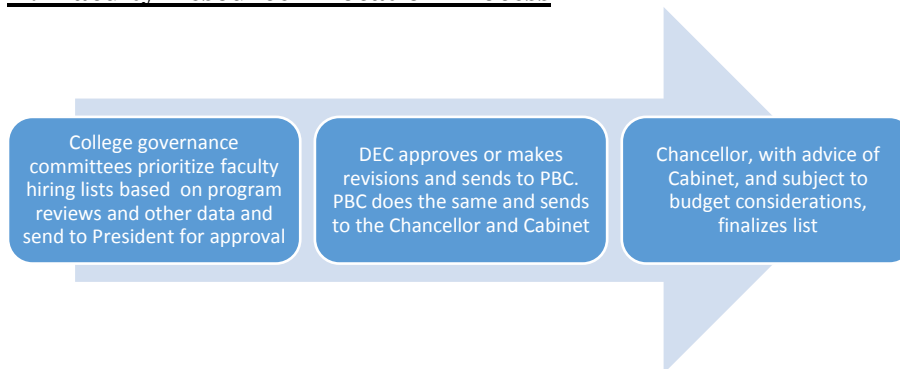
- Faculty Resources
- Staff Resources
- Technology Resources
- Facilities Resources

The Resource Allocation processes originate at the Colleges and at the District Service Centers, where each College, through its respective Governance Committee, and each District Service Center, prioritizes its resource needs as part of its Program Reviews. The prioritized resource requests are then moved forward to the appropriate District PBIM Committee, PBC, and eventually, to the Chancellor.

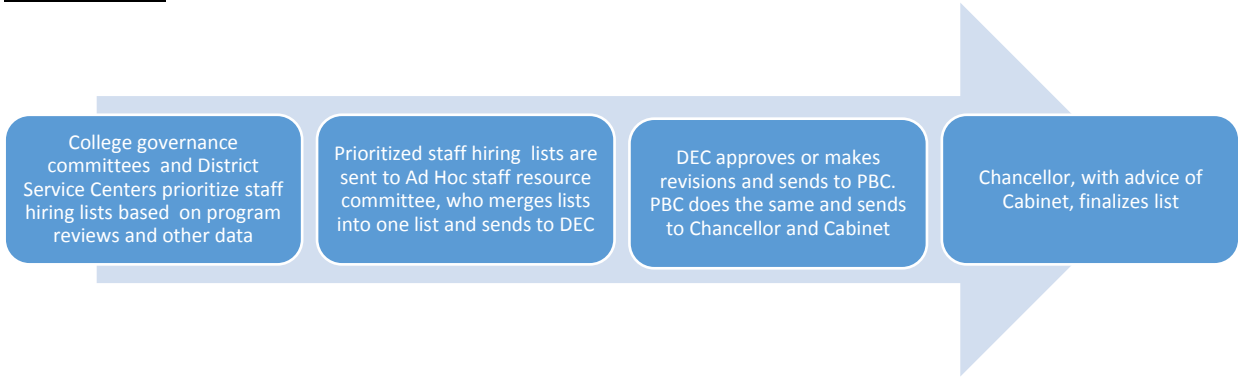
In March 2016, the PBC approved a mechanism for the appointment of Ad Hoc Committees. The first Ad Hoc Resource Allocation Task Force to be appointed was the Resource Allocation Taskforce for Classified Staff (RATF-CS), a task force formed to provide more equitable distribution of resources and to strengthen Human Resource Planning by providing a structure for requesting classified staffing not under the purview of DTC, DEC, or DFC [DR4.9].

The following diagrams illustrate the PCCD PBIM resource allocation processes:

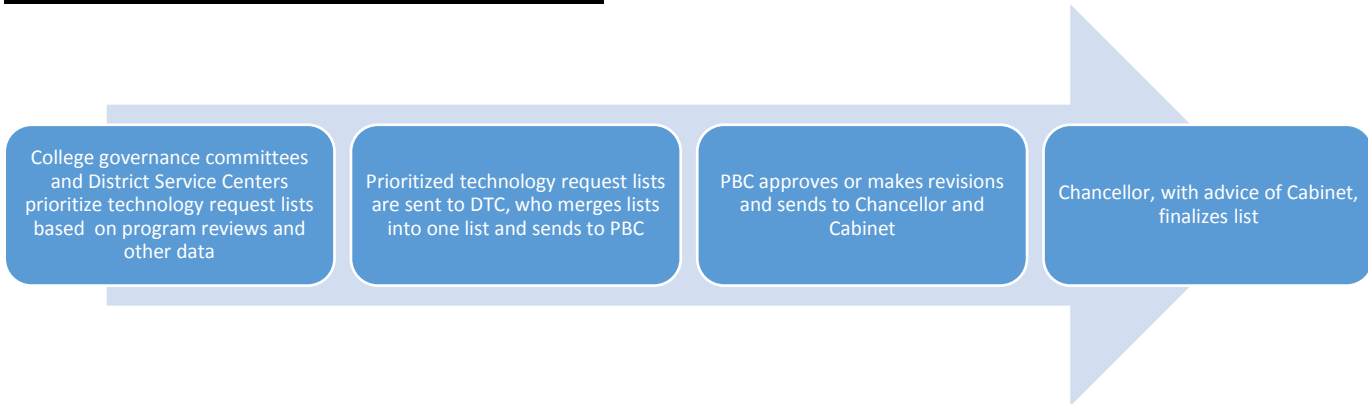
### **A. Faculty Resource Allocation Process**



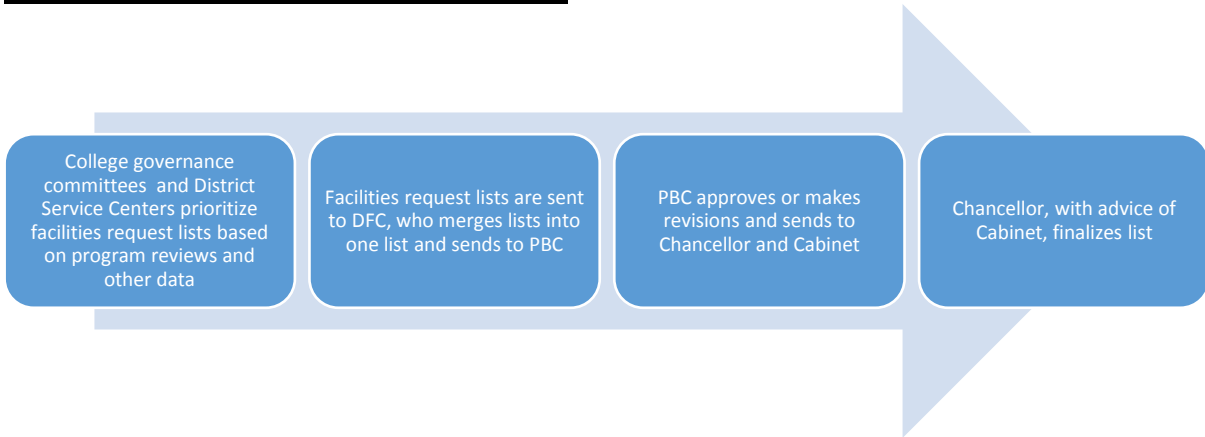
**B. Staff Resource Allocation Process (includes addition of Ad Hoc Staff Resource Committee)**



**C. Technology Resource Allocation Process**



**D. Facilities Resource Allocation Process**



**IX. Planning and Budget Collaboration in Shared Governance**

Regular and ongoing budget updates are provided to the Planning and Budgeting Council and it is the expectation that information from the three subordinate Committees will be taken back to the Colleges by Committee members. Information is widely shared at College planning committees as well as posted on the District website. Historically, the Vice



Chancellor for Finance and Administration and a faculty member have served as co-chairs. In 2015-2016, the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and the District Academic Senate President served as co-chairs of PBC assuring that reports regarding institutional planning and budget were regularly addressed and/or referred for additional research and discussion. The latter two will co-chair PBC again in 2016-2017 providing planning and budget continuity and leadership from the previous academic year.

The PBC forwards recommendations regarding resource allocation and funding to the Chancellor by April 30 of each year. The Chancellor and Chancellor's Cabinet then review PBC recommendations and reconciles them against May Revise budget information. The Chancellor's Cabinet advises the Chancellor who determines the final resource allocations for the upcoming Tentative Budget. The Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration then conducts College budget forums on State budget, as needed, and addresses questions pertaining to the PCCD budget development process.

#### **X. 2015-2016 Revisions to Refine PBIM Resource Allocation Structures**

As discussed in Recommendation 8, an ongoing revision of the District's BAM promises to improve the equitable distribution of resources in overall PCCD budget planning, as will the proposed IT Tactical Plan seek to refine and better integrate the role of technology in District wide planning at PCCD. Finally, the Human Resources Staffing Plan which was introduced to PBC in May 2016 [\[DR4.10\]](#) and presented as a "Q and A" Session at the District August 2016 Flex Day, should frame the much needed structure for providing the data to ensure sufficient staffing [\[DR4.11\]](#).

#### **XI. District Program Review**

In addition to the District Strategic Plan, the second component of PBIM is Program Review. Every three years, Comprehensive Program Reviews are conducted (and Annual Program Updates in the off years). The Program Review provides a structure and process for resource allocation based on data. Throughout these planning cycles and activities (yearly, every three

years, and every six years), the collective results aim to achieve the strategic goals of the Peralta Community College District.

In the 2015-2016 academic year, the District conducted a Program Review of each of its Service Areas and a web site was created. On this web site, the following documents can be found:

- 2015 Planning and Program Review Calendar
- PCCD Calendar for Planning and Program Review
- 2105 CTE Program Review Handbook
- 2015 Instructional Program Review Handbook
- 2015 Library Services Program Review Handbook
- 2015 Counseling Program Review Handbook
- 2015 Non-Instructional Program Review Handbook
- 2015 District Service Center Program Review Handbook
- Annual Program Update Template (May 2016)
- 2014-2016 Program Review Task Force Summary Report
- Validation of the District Service Center's Program Review Reports

The Peralta Community College District Program Review provides Program and/or Department accountability by collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information that will inform integrated planning, resource allocation, and decision-making processes.

The primary goals for Program Review aim to:

1. Provide a mechanism for demonstrating continuous quality improvement, producing a foundation for action.
2. Strengthen planning and decision-making based upon current data.
3. Identify resource needs.
4. Develop recommendations and strategies concerning future directions and provide evidence to support plans for the future, within the department, at the College, and at the District level.
5. Inform integrated planning at all levels within the College and the District.
6. Ensure that educational programs reflect student needs, encourage student success, and improve teaching and learning, which includes the assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs).

The District Program Review process of 2015-2016 began with a Program Review Task Force that met frequently beginning in Fall 2014, with the ongoing purpose of updating all Program Review Handbooks [DR4.12]. The Colleges and District Service Centers completed their Program Reviews at the end of January 2016. In February 2016, the Task Force validated all Program Reviews and created a matrix of all results using the validation rubric that is listed in the appendix to the District Service Center Program Review Handbook [DR4.13]. All Program Reviews have sections for Human Resource needs, Equipment and Technology needs, Facility needs, Professional and Organizational Development needs, as well as sections to include “other” needs. Each of these areas require the linking of requests to an Administrative Unit Outcome and a Program Improvement Objective, and the provision of a specific reason and/or evidence of the need.

In May 2016, 13 recommendations developed by the Program Review Task Force were distributed to the District Academic Senate (DAS) and the District Education Committee (DEC). Specific recommendations included the creation of a permanent District wide Program Review Committee, the revision of the College Program Review Handbooks, the recommendation to conduct more training opportunities for researchers on data collection, the recommendation to provide specific training for faculty and staff, and a recommendation to require each College to provide annual summaries and lists that address all components of Program Review and Annual Program Unit (APU) documents [DR4.14].

## **XII. PBIM Annual Assessment**

At the end of each academic year, a PBIM assessment is conducted. The goal is to assess what worked well and what could be improved. The results are reviewed by the PBIM Committees at the next academic year’s August Summit and during the first PBC meeting of the academic year. Setting annual objectives and reporting progress in attaining those objectives are critical tools for effectively managing the District and the Colleges.

The 2014-2015 goals assessment suggested the need for making some revisions to the overall PBIM process [DR4.15]. The primary areas of improvement were:

1. The revision of the composition of all Committees
2. The sharpening of existing definitions and overall processes

3. The addition of planning related actions that ensure accountability (e.g., annual committee goal setting and annual assessment of those goals).
4. The alignment with PCCD Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives

The PBIM 2015-2016 assessment revealed that there are areas where PBC is well received. For example, survey comments included: “good engaged participation,” “having a forum for people across the District to get informed,” “The PBIM process is good for promoting communication across the District...,” “meeting regularly,” etc. Other comments indicated dissatisfaction, e.g., “not clearly defining task...,” “downsize the group...too many people,” “Too many agenda items,” “too often the District perspective is lost and College-level discussions take over meetings...,” etc. [DR4.16].

At the May 2016 meeting of PBC, the Chancellor addressed the PBC and distributed a draft plan that envisions a restructure of PBC for the membership to consider in the 2016-2017 academic year, his reasoning being that restructuring could improve PCCD’s overall existing planning and budget decision making process based upon the current PBIM and the District reorganization [DR4.17]. The Chancellor emphasized the need to respond to PBC recommendations and resolutions and asked that either the Chancellor or the Chief of Staff be regularly scheduled on the PBC agenda to be provided an opportunity to engage in discussion and to present reports. His suggestion was a direct response to discussions in PBC in Spring 2016 that revealed what is missing in the charge of the PBC is a more collaborative consultation with the Chancellor. In order to ensure that the Chancellor can formally address PBC recommendations, a PBC form was created to document recommendations forwarded to the Chancellor, thus reducing the potential for miscommunication. The 2015-2016 Strategic Goals and Objectives will be assessed and results discussed at the first PBC meeting in September.

### **XIII. PBIM Summit: August 2016**

The 2016 PBIM August Summit was held on August 26, 2016. The agenda reflected suggestions from the PBIM May 2016 Assessment such as “create protocols for all communication streams,” “communication should be task oriented,” “provide budget,

planning, and/or policy info at the first meeting of the year...” [DR4.18]. The principle focus of this year’s PBIM was to strengthen the shared governance process by including more specific training for the PBC members, e.g., familiarizing participants with the Brown Act and Robert’s Rules of Order, and addressing the need to create more uniform Agenda and Minute taking protocols.

Additionally, Summit activities were designed so that all PBIM members understood their roles and that there would be opportunities to progress in meeting 2015-2016 goals and objectives, to encourage collaboration in creating more uniform systems to enhance communication between the District and Colleges, and to effect brainstorming innovative ways in which all District and College constituents could assist in expanding student success. The District PBIM Committees convened to initiate dialogue in the developing of Goals and Objectives for the academic year. These suggestions will be brought forward to PBC where 2016-2017 goals will be determined. As PBC has now created a mechanism to develop Ad Hoc Committees, the PBIM Committees should be able to accomplish more in between the monthly PBC meetings so as to streamline PBC agendas and to be more productive and efficient.

#### **XIV. Conclusion**

The PCCD’s Planning and Budgeting Integration Model’s strategic goals and objectives identifies and provides structure to: (1.) the overall District Strategic Plan, and (2.) the Program Review of human resources, facilities, technology, and fiscal planning. The PBIM continues to be assessed and refined to improve institutional effectiveness.

The PBIM links program review, planning, and the equitable distribution of resources with the goal of reordered planning priorities to support student learning and achievement.

The recent recommendation that the District should create a standing District wide Program Review Committee, revise College Program Review Handbooks, conduct more training opportunities for researchers, faculty, and staff, as well as to require each College to provide annual summaries for Program Review, will set the conditions for better utilization of Human

Resources, Facilities, Technology, and Fiscal Planning strategies by the District and the Colleges.

The District will continue to be engaged in the ongoing assessment of PBIM, and as changes are being discussed and implemented, plans to further refine the PBIM structure and to consider more innovations applicable to improving shared governance planning and budgeting in 2016-2017 will be reviewed. The District has met Standards III.A.6, III.B.2, III.C.2, III.D.4, IV.B.3.g, and will continue its work to improve, identify, document, and assess the structures that lead to the improvement of student success.

<b>RECOMMENDATION 4: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR4.1	PBIM Overview Aug. 14, 2014
DR4.2	PBIM Overview Aug. 14, 2014 Roles and Responsibilities
DR4.3	PBIM Summit Agenda Aug. 28, 2015
DR4.4	PBIM Workshop Nov. 19, 2015
DR4.5	2015 Strategic Plan Apr. 29, 2015
DR4.6	CCCCO System Strategic Plan June 20 2013 Excerpt
DR4.7	PCCD Board Agenda Sept. 8 2015 Budget Approval
DR4.8	PCCD Planning and Program Review Calendar
DR4.9	RATF-CS May 27, 2016 Minutes
DR4.10	PBC Meeting Minutes May 27, 2016
DR4.11	District Flex Agenda, Aug. 17, 2016
DR4.12	PR Task Force May 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes
DR4.13	Program Review Handbook
DR4.14	Spring 2016 Program Review Task Force
DR4.15	PCCD Planning & Budgeting Council 2014-2015 Assessment of Goals
DR4.16	PBIM Assessment Survey, May 2016
DR4.17	Chancellor's Proposed PBIM Restructure
DR4.18	PBIM Summit Agenda Aug. 26, 2016

### **Recommendation 5:**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the District ensure the retention of key leadership positions and that adequate staffing capacity is available to address the demands of three critical areas reflected in the accreditation standards: Institutional Effectiveness and Leadership, Institutional Research, and Financial Accountability and Management (III.A.2, III.A.6).”**

### **Overview:**

Recommendation 5 addresses the need for the District to: 1.) Retain key leaders, and, 2.) Ensure that adequate staff is available to meet the demands of three critical areas: Institutional Effectiveness and Leadership, Institutional Research, and Financial Accountability and Management.

## **I. Retention of Key Leadership and Adequate Staffing Capacity for Institutional Effectiveness and Leadership, Research, and Financial Accountability and Management**

### **A. Introduction**

The Peralta District is a four College and District Office institution with over 2,100 full-time and part-time employees. Peralta, not unlike many other districts, has experienced a number of key leadership vacancies at the District Office and the four Colleges due to factors such as retirements, the desire for personnel to relocate out of the area, for family or personal reasons, and the desire to pursue other professional opportunities.

In response to Recommendation 5 and to meet Standards III A.2 and III A.6, the PCCD Governing Board took action to appoint a new Chancellor who would work to assure adequate staffing capacity for the District and Colleges, to evaluate existing key leadership positions at the District Offices to better support the Colleges, and to institute an ongoing plan to ensure the retention of key leadership.

## **B. Appointment of New Chancellor**

In January 2015, the extant Chancellor announced his intent to retire effective July 2015. The Board of Trustees initiated a national search for the next Chancellor and instructed the Human Resources Office to begin the search. Through a public and competitive process, the Board selected a search firm from the California Community College Search Services [DR5.1]. In February 2015, the PCCD Governing Board then utilized a Survey Monkey to solicit public input in the community regarding what characteristics and attributes were desired in the next Chancellor [DR5.2].

Highlights from the survey included desirable leadership attributes such as the ability to:

- Focus on student success
- Knowledgeably address accreditation issues
- Engage in strong fiscal and operational leadership
- Build a strong and effective management team
- Create an enrollment management plan to deal with declining enrollment
- Obtain data-driven results for District and College improvement
- Lead strong Strategic planning efforts
- Make lasting internal changes

Additionally, in February 2015, the Board conducted a public forum with the search consultant to discuss the Survey Results and to finalize the Chancellor's profile [DR5.3]. Following a successful search, the Board appointed a new Chancellor who assumed his post on July 1, 2015.

The Chancellor's Opening Address at the Districtwide Flex Day in August 2015 reflected his commitment to strengthen Institutional Effectiveness and to make changes that would include professional development opportunities to retain key leadership. At this time, the "New Peralta Way" was introduced, a District initiative calling for changes to strengthen and retain leadership and to redouble efforts to provide better District Support Services to the Colleges and to improve student success [DR5.4]. In part, his "New Peralta Way" vision was informed by a comprehensive Chancellor survey (August 2015) that encouraged the PCCD



community to make suggestions to guide the new Chancellor to effect change [DR5.5]. After considerable consultation and deliberation, in February, the Chancellor announced plans for a Reorganization, which would be ongoing throughout the academic year [DR5.6].

In less than one year, the Reorganization has been gradually implemented, to include the addition of new positions or the reassignment of in-house personnel to reflect the Chancellor's pledge to ensure that staffing and leadership are more stable and centered on student success and serving the community.

## **II. PCCD's Reorganization of Select Administrators and Staff**

In implementing the "New Peralta Way," with its aim to provide more District support to the Colleges and to further student success, certain new key leadership positions were developed. Other existing positions were evaluated and modified to best fit the needs of the District and the Colleges.

### **A. Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration**

A new Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration was hired in August 2015 [DR5.7]. Since the new Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration assumed the post, much of the initial focus has been to resolve the District's financial audit findings, some of them recurring, to address a plan for the District's OPEB Program, and to lead a cross functional Task Force to evaluate and refine the existing Budget Allocation Model (BAM) for the District [DR5.8].

The new Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration also recognized the need for some additional staffing to enhance the District's internal controls and to improve support service levels to the Colleges. Two new positions were created and filled: a Payroll Manager (filled in June 2016) and a Senior Accountant (filled in March 2016) [DR5.9]. In November 2015, a new Budget Director was hired to replace the interim [DR5.10]. Further evaluation of staffing is in progress to ensure succession planning and strengthening of the Finance and Administrative operation.

One employee of the General Services Department handling general obligation bond budgets/expenditures was reassigned to the Finance and Administration team on the recommendation from the District Office Reorganizational Plan. This employee now reports directly to the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, allowing for more effective monitoring and planning for resource needs related to bond projects and construction and increased financial accountability.

**B. Special Assistant to the Chancellor and Chief of Staff (new)**

As the District reassessed its needs and determined how best to effectively provide District level support to the Colleges regarding institutional research and institutional effectiveness, the District decided to eliminate the position of Deputy Chancellor and developed, in its place, the position of Special Assistant to the Chancellor and Chief of Staff [DR5.11]. In addition, under the District's reorganization, the Chief of Staff was assigned responsibilities for the Institutional Research Office, Child Development Centers and District Policy and Procedure Coordination, which were previously under the office of Educational Services. The Chief of Staff also provides supervisory support of the Coordinator of Contracts and Legal Affairs in liaison with external legal counsel.

**C. Vice Chancellor for Student Services (reestablished)**

The Vice Chancellor for Student Services position was eliminated in 2013 and at that time, the Associate Vice Chancellor assumed leadership. However, under the Chancellor's Reorganization, the Vice Chancellor for Student Services position was re-established in July 2016 to provide a higher level of leadership to Student Services and to replace the departing Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Services. Additionally, the reinstatement of the Vice Chancellor of Student Services was a direct response to the Governing Board/Chancellor goal to improve Student Services throughout the District. Because many PCCD students attend more than one College, reestablishing this position should ensure greater interaction among the Colleges, the District, and Student Services' staff [DR5.12].

#### **D. Executive Vice Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships and Advancement (new)**

The Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC) position was developed to provide support for strategic direction, to develop partnerships, to build community support, and to provide government and corporate advocacy. The EVC will lead efforts to fund innovation in the District [\[DR5.13\]](#).

#### **E. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (new)**

As part of the District's reorganization and to provide additional support to the Colleges for strengthening student success, the District developed the position of Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs; an interim was appointed to this position and began work on August 1, 2016 [\[DR5.14\]](#). The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, who oversees all academic and student affairs for the District and Colleges, serves to strengthen the overall academic character of PCCD.

#### **F. Associate Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and Continuing Education (WDCE) (new)**

The District--with a renewed commitment to lead efforts to expand contract education, to develop noncredit education, and to expand contact to the business community--developed the position of Associate Vice Chancellor for WDCE. In the past, the District has lacked the leadership to provide the non-credit opportunities that could foster support for social justice. The Interim Associate Vice Chancellor began work on July 1, 2016 [\[DR5.15\]](#).

#### **G. Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management (new)**

To increase the four Colleges' outreach efforts to their respective high schools and to the communities served, the District developed the position of Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. Because the District had not adequately planned for enrollment volatility-- as is seen in its recent struggle to maintain sufficient enrollment--funding was reallocated to establish the new Assistant V.C. for Enrollment Management to address enrollment management issues District wide. An interim was appointed and began duties on July 1, 2016 [\[DR5.16\]](#).

#### **H. Director of Human Resources**

In February 2016, the PCCD Governing Board ratified the Chancellor's appointment of an Interim Director of Human Resources [DR5.17]. The new Interim Director has extensive experience in Human Resources which has enhanced Human Resource support and services to the District and Colleges.

#### **I. Risk Manager (re-classified)**

The Office of Risk Management provides support and training to the Colleges regarding worker's compensation, hazardous materials, health and safety training for employees, and emergency preparedness. In November 2015 the District Director for Risk Management accepted another position in private industry. To ensure that the Colleges maintained the support provided by the Risk Management Office, the District engaged its insurance JPA (Joint Powers Agreement) and leveraged the services provided under this Agreement to augment and provide risk management training and support services to the Colleges.

[DR5.18]. In addition, the Risk Management function was removed from the Office of the General Counsel and returned to the administrative oversight of the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and Employee Relations. The District then reassessed the Director position and determined that it would not be filled at the "Director" level, and, instead, the position was reclassified to that of Risk Manager. This position is expected to be filled by December 2016.

#### **J. Director of Facilities and Operations**

The current Director of Facilities and Operations (interim) provides support to the Colleges regarding physical facilities and resources; the position is expected to be filled on a regular basis again by November 2016 [DR5.19].

#### **K. Budget Director for Workforce Development and Continuing Education (new)**

This position was developed to support and provide fiscal oversight to the Workforce Development and Continuing Education Program. The District appointed an interim Budget Director who began duties on August 3, 2016 [DR5.20].

**L. Director of Capital Projects** was hired in August 2016 and will provide much needed support for the management of bonds [DR5.21]. The Director position and the reorganization of DGS, allows for strengthening bonds' maintenance, while at the same time, allowing Maintenance & Operations (under DGS) to pay greater attention to facilities. The Director will also provide support to PCCD's TCO implementation.

### **III. Administrative Support for Enhanced Institutional Effectiveness at the Colleges**

The District has sought to provide the necessary Human Resources' support and budget allocations to the four Colleges to continue to ensure leadership retention and adequate staffing positions that address institutional effectiveness and enhance institutional research. Two positions (below) have the potential to expand and refine District/College coordination:

#### **A. Director of College Operations (under consideration)**

The Director of College Operations is now being considered and will be brought to PBC in Fall 2016 for discussion. The intent of this position is to provide additional support for Facilities and IT, with special consideration to strengthen safety and security functions.

#### **B. Associate Deans of Educational Success (new)**

The Associate Dean of Educational Success, allowing for one Associate Dean at each College, was developed to provide additional support to the Colleges' Student Success Programs. The positions are grant funded and will be filled on an interim basis beginning Fall 2016. This position fulfills a need to integrate services provided to special populations that are normally scattered among the Colleges. Furthermore, the position is designed to strengthen support and to ensure continuity to Programs that address the achievement gaps among various student groups as well as to support equity goals [DR5.22].

Furthermore, new positions and reassigned positions have included the following key personnel changes at each College.

## **A. LANEY COLLEGE**

### **1. Laney College President**

In February 2016, the President of Laney College accepted the new position of Executive Vice Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships and Advancement at the District Office. The District ensured continuous leadership and support to Laney College through the appointment of an experienced college president (retired) as Interim President who began on March 1, 2016, and an anticipated start date of January 2017 for the new President.

### **2. Dean of College Research and Planning (new)**

In February 2015 the College initially established the position of Vice President of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, which was filled as an Interim, as the College wanted to assess whether a Vice President or a different administrative classification (e.g., Dean) was most effective to meet its needs. The assessment determined that the creation of a new Dean of College Research and Planning would provide sufficient outreach and planning to support both Laney and Berkeley City Colleges [DR5.23]. On July 1, 2016, the District appointed an interim Dean of Research and Planning to provide 50/50 support to both Laney and Berkeley City College.

## **B. BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE**

### **1. President, Berkeley City College**

In December 2015, the President of Berkeley City College who had served for four (4) years, accepted the Chancellorship at another community college district. A new President of BCC assumed the position on July 18, 2016, following two interims.

### **2. Dean of College Research and Planning (new)**

In July 2015, the College established the position of Vice President, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to serve through June 30, 2016 [DR5.24]. The BCC Vice President of Student Services was temporarily reassigned to this position. After assessing this position, BCC determined that a Dean of College and Planning would best fit its needs. Currently, the new position is shared with Laney (see above).

3. **Vice President Student Services and Dean(s) for Student Services**

Currently BCC has an interim Vice President of Student Services with the position expected to be filled on a regular basis in January 2017. Moreover, to provide additional support and leadership to the College, the District, at its July 2016 Board meeting, appointed on a one-year interim basis, one additional Dean for Student Services, for a new total of two Deans. The one-year assignment will provide the College the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of a second Dean position.

**C. MERRITT COLLEGE**

1. **President**

The President of Merritt College served for two years. However, in June 2016 the President, with a background in student services, was reassigned to serve as the District's Vice Chancellor of Student Services (this position had been eliminated in 2013). The District then appointed an interim President for Merritt, who assumed the position on August 2, 2016. The District will recruit to fill the regular position with an anticipated start date of July 2017.

2. **Vice President of Instruction**

In April 2016, Merritt College appointed a Vice President of Instruction who assumed duties on May 2, 2016.

3. **Researcher (reassessed position)**

In assessing its staffing to better support institutional research, Merritt College determined that a classified full-time position best met this need. In November 2015, the College hired a full-time classified employee in the position of Researcher.

**D. COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA**

1. **President**

On June 30, 2016, the College President resigned to accept the position of Superintendent/ President with another district. The District then appointed an experienced Interim President. A search is underway for a permanent President.

2. **Vice President of Student Services**

The Vice President of Student Services assumed full-time duties on July 26, 2016.

### 3. **Dean of College Research and Planning (new)**

After careful assessment, College of Alameda determined that the position of Dean of College Research and Planning best met its needs. A full-time position is currently being re-advertised [DR5.25].

## **IV. Human Resources' Support for Faculty Hiring and Evaluation**

### **A. Hiring**

During 2014-2016, and without an augmentation in regular staffing, Human Resources handled approximately 100 recruitments, including 41 new faculty positions for Fall 2015, which resulted in Human Resources receiving and processing over 1,500 applications for 41 vacancies. For the Fall 2016 hire, during the Spring 2016 semester, the District recruited and filled an additional 14 faculty vacancies.

### **B. Evaluations of Part-time Faculty**

Since the ACCJC Team visit in 2015, the Colleges have made considerable progress to complete all outstanding part-time faculty evaluations on time. In order to ensure that all evaluations due were completed by the end of the Spring 2015 semester, each College developed an Evaluation Action Plan. As a result, Merritt College, Berkeley City College, and College of Alameda achieved their goals. Laney College did not achieve its goal in completing timely evaluations for all part-time faculty for the following reasons:

- The sheer quantity of part time evaluations. Over 100 part-time evaluations due to be completed by Fall 2015 were not completed.
- Lack of effective management oversight at the Colleges to ensure evaluations were on schedule.
- Turnover in the administrative leadership of the College, in particular Student Services (vacancy in November 2015), and the reassignment of the Vice President of Student Services.

In Fall 2015, release time was assigned to a faculty member to provide support to Laney to schedule and coordinate the part-time faculty evaluation cycle. Nevertheless, several grievances were filed by the Peralta Federation of Teachers (PFT) over the College's failure



to comply with a former grievance resolution to evaluate timely all part-time faculty. As of the Spring 2016 semester, however, Laney College has made significant progress and attained an 85 % evaluation completion rate. Furthermore, evaluation grievances have been resolved. Additionally, the three other Colleges have evaluated all part-time faculty within the contracted timeframe, i.e., Merritt College completed 100% of all evaluations in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016; Berkeley City College completed 84 of 89 evaluations and is scheduled to complete all evaluations in Fall 2016; College of Alameda will be completing 100% of all evaluations in Fall 2016.

## **V. PCCD Commitment to Retain Key Leadership**

Since the March 2015 accreditation visit, the District has made a commitment to ensure the ongoing retention of key leadership. “Strengthen accountability, innovation and collaboration” was a stated Strategic Goal for the PCCD 2015-2016 Academic Year and enhancing leadership to support student success was a primary focus [DR5.26]. Given this focus, the following activities were emphasized:

### **A. Enhanced Professional Development Opportunities**

In addition to the new Chancellor’s District Reorganization, as a deliberate response to the Institutional Goals to “strengthen institutional effectiveness and leadership,” “to advance student success,” and “to engage and leverage partnerships in the community and abroad,” another District Goal in 2015-2016 was the goal to enhance professional development opportunities to encourage retention of high caliber leaders and to encourage innovation.

In Spring 2016, a PCCD Management Leadership Development Academy of Peralta (MLDAP) was instituted by the Chancellor. MLDAP was created to develop leaders within the existing PCCD faculty and staff, to provide greater depth to the organizational structure, and to reduce administrative turnover. The MLDAP participants engaged in an intensive three-day training program that was centered on the enhancement of professional goals. All were asked to design and implement innovative projects that will improve the District’s services to the Colleges. For example, one such project “On-Boarding Cohort,” was initiated by the District’s Benefit Coordinator, along with six other colleagues. This project is

comprised of a “cross-section of District managers from a breadth of administrative and student service professions who will collaborate to deliver a streamlined, efficient and transformative opportunity to the new Peralta employee.” The project has four phases focusing on 1.) new employee orientations, 2.) training, 3.) professional development, and 4.) employee recognition and appreciation [DR5.27]. Furthermore, the faculty development budget was increased by 50%, a budget that had been static for numerous years.

### **B. Leadership Retreats**

The District has held the following leadership retreats, organized by the new Chancellor: in September 2015, December 2015, and July 2016 (Board Retreats) and in December 2015 and January 2016 (Leadership *and* Management Retreats). The focus of these retreats was to provide mentoring and professional growth opportunities for all PCCD leaders and to strengthen leadership stability [DR5.28]. Another Board Retreat is scheduled for October 2016.

### **C. Leadership Evaluation**

During the 2014-2015 evaluation cycles, with very few exceptions, all managers were evaluated. In those cases where an evaluation was not conducted, turnover in supervision was sometimes the cause. At the time of the last Team visit, some senior level evaluations had not yet been completed by the retiring Chancellor and therefore, could not be located. However, all senior level evaluations are now up to date.

During the 2015-2016 Management Performance Evaluation cycle, which began on July 1, 2015 and ended on June 30, 2016, all evaluations were conducted and placed in the Human Resources personnel file. As part of the ongoing efforts to improve assessment and to ensure that management goals are better defined and tracked for results, the Chancellor has added a component to the Management evaluation instrument applicable to the members of the Chancellor’s Cabinet. The performance indicators will be assessed in the 2016-2017 year [DR5.29].

## **VI. Creation of a Human Resources Staffing Plan and Exit Interviews**

The Human Resources Office has developed a Staffing Plan that was reviewed in Chancellor's Cabinet and presented to the Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) at their May 2016 meeting. Specifically, the Staffing Plan will:

- Forecast the recruitment needs by assessing employee's potential retirement date
- Establish an objective method to assess the need for replacement and recruitment based on the Colleges and District's needs
- Develop a vacancies prioritization process to identify the most critical vacant positions and to expedite the recruitment process of vital positions, within budget constraints
- Include an evaluation mechanism

At the end of the 2016-2017 academic year, the District will evaluate the effectiveness of the Human Resource Staffing Plan [DR5.30]. Furthermore, the Interim Director of Human Resources created an "Exit Interview" form, with the purpose of collecting specific data pertaining to employee satisfaction [DR5.31].

In August 2016, the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and the interim Director of Human Resources conducted a presentation of the Staffing Plan during the District's Flex event to provide an opportunity for all College and District constituents to make suggestions and to ask questions about the new Staffing Plan and the Exit Interview form. Here, the forum for dialogue was central to the ongoing evaluation of the new documents. Finally, the implementation of the Exit Interview forms were initiated in August 2016. Both the Exit Interview Form and the Staffing Plan will be evaluated in April 2017.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Under the leadership of the new Chancellor, PCCD leadership has been significantly re-evaluated to ensure adequate staffing capacity, and to introduce new measures to retain key leadership. Additionally, the expertise of the new Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration has fulfilled a critical need at Peralta for strengthening financial accountability and stability. With increased emphasis on sharpening institutional

effectiveness, enhancing financial accountability, and advancing a more strategic approach to the development of institutional research, PCCD has improved its overall educational focus and meets Standards III A.2 and III A.6.

<b>RECOMMENDATION 5: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR5.1	Special Board Meeting Minutes, Feb. 3, 2015: New Chancellor Search
DR5.2	Survey Monkey for Selection of Chancellor, Feb. 18, 2015
DR5.3	Public forum summary for Chancellor's Profile
DR5.4	Chancellor's Address to Faculty and Staff, Aug. 19, 2015
DR5.5	Chancellor's Survey Aug. 2015
DR5.6	Chancellor Reorganization Memo, Mar. 1, 2016
DR5.7	Governing Board Minutes, July 2015: Appointment of Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration.
DR5.8	Budget Allocation Model (BAM)
DR5.9	Governing Board Minutes, June 14, 2016 Payroll Manager and District Senior Accountant appointments: JDs and Board Minutes
DR5.10	Governing Board Minutes, Nov. 10, 2015: Budget Director's appointment
DR5.11	JD for Special Assistant to the Chancellor and Chief of Staff
DR5.12	JD for Vice Chancellor of Student Services
DR5.13	JD for Executive Vice Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships
DR5.14	JD for Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
DR5.15	JD for Associate Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development Continuing Education (WDCE)
DR5.16	JD for Assistant Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management
DR5.17	Feb. 23, 2016, Report of Closed Session Actions regarding the Interim Human Resources Director's appointment
DR5.18	Joint Powers Agreement for Risk Management
DR5.19	Approved ePAF #21211 for the Interim Director of Facilities and Operations
DR5.20	JD for Budget Director for Workforce Development and Continuing Education
DR5.21	JD for Director of Capital Projects
DR5.22	JD for Associate Dean of Educational Success
DR5.23	JD Dean of College Research and Planning
DR5.24	JD VP of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
DR5.25	COA Dean of College Research and Planning Job Posting Details
DR5.26	Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives 2015-2016
DR5.27	MLDAP agenda for June 1-3, 2016 Sessions
DR5.28	PCCD Leadership Retreat Agendas
DR5.29	Management Goals and Measurable Outcomes Matrix Memo, Dec. 14, 2015
DR5.30	District's Human Resources Staffing Plan
DR5.31	Exit Interview Form

## **Recommendation 6**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the District clearly delineate and communicate the operational responsibilities and functions of the District from those of the Colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice; and regularly assesses and evaluates the District role and delineation and governance decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the Colleges in meeting educational goals (IV.B.3).”**

### **I. Introduction**

The substance of Recommendation 6 urges the District and Colleges to attend to the following five key responsibilities: 1.) Delineate functions and responsibilities between the District and the Colleges. 2.) Effectively communicate the functions of the District and the Colleges. 3.) Regularly assess the respective functions and responsibilities of the District and the Colleges, and, 4.) Create a plan to implement assessment findings and to monitor progress.

### **II. Creation of a Specific PCCD Strategic Goal to Respond to Recommendation 6**

In August 2015, the District held its annual participatory governance Summit meeting, one of its primary purposes being to construct Strategic Goals for 2015-2016. In response to Recommendation 6, Strategic Goal D, “Strengthen Accountability, Innovation and Collaboration,” was created, and has, as one of its objectives, to: “Evaluate and update policies and administrative procedures, the overall PCCD organizational structure, and functional responsibilities within the District” [DR6.1]. The PBIM Summit attendees determined that one method of more clearly delineating the functions and responsibilities between the District and the Colleges was to conduct a more comprehensive District Program Review, work which was originally initiated in late Fall 2014.

The Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, in consultation with faculty and District Service Center leadership then developed an Action Plan to address the following tasks:

- To design and implement a District Service Center Customer Satisfaction Survey (follow-up from the 2013 Survey) as a means to more finely evaluate the services provided by the District to the Colleges.

- To continue the work of the District Program Review Task Force to refine the existing District Program Review process.
- To create a series of Delineation of Function Charts to more clearly articulate the operational functions of the District as compared to the Colleges [DR6.2].

### **III. Refining District Program Review**

PCCD defines its Program Review as a “Systematic process for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. . . . providing accountability. . . . to inform integrated planning, resource allocation, and decision-making.” More specifically, Program Review serves to:

- Ensure quality and excellence of academic programs.
- Provide a standardized methodology for review of instructional areas.
- Provide a mechanism for demonstrating continuous quality improvement, producing a foundation for action.
- Identify effective and exemplary practices.
- Strengthen planning and decision-making based upon current data.
- Identify resource needs.
- Develop recommendations and strategies concerning future directions and provide evidence supporting plans for the future, within the department, at the College and at the District level.
- Inform integrated planning at all levels within the College and the District.
- Ensure that educational programs reflect student needs, encourage student success, and improve teaching and learning.

The District recognized that in order to better articulate the delineation of functions between the District and the Colleges that Program Review was indeed the right mechanism by which that differentiation could be made. Accordingly, the District began its reform of Program Review in the Fall of 2014 with the appointment of a Program Review Task Force comprised of appointments from the District Academic Senate and appointments from the administration.

As discussed in District Recommendation 4, the purpose of the Program Review Task Force is to evaluate the District Program Review process and to make Program improvements. The Task Force continued to meet in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 to examine and to validate all District Office Service Center Program Reviews [DR6.3].

The District Service Centers and sub-units who completed the Program Review were: Educational Services (which includes Admissions and Records, Institutional Research, Financial Aid, International Education, and Childcare Centers); Department of General Services; General Counsel and Risk Management; Human Resources; Finance and Administrative Services; Public Information, Media, and Communication; and, Information Technology. All Program Reviews have sections for Human Resource needs, Equipment and Technology needs, Facility needs, Professional and Organizational Development needs, as well as a section to specify “other” needs. Each section requires linking requests to an Administrative Unit Outcome and a Program Improvement Objective, and to provide a reason and/or evidence of a specified need.

The Program Review Task Force determined that in order to more effectively evaluate the delineation of functions between the District and the Colleges, a new component was needed. The new component, namely “section 4,” addresses services provided from the District to the Colleges and reads as follows:

“Please describe the primary functions of your administrative unit as they relate to District wide operations and the goals of the Colleges. Include the relationship and engagement with other District Service Centers and /or administrative units, the services that are provided the Colleges versus the District Office, and the effect these relationships have on the ability of the administrative unit to meet its previous goals and objectives” [DR6.4].

In addition to adding this new section to Program Review, the Program Review Task Force determined that the District’s Service Center Administrative Unit Program Review Handbook needed to be evaluated and revised.

In November 2015, training was provided for the leadership of all District Office Service Centers to review the new requirements for Program Review. At the training meeting, a revised Program Review Handbook was distributed to all [\[DR6.5\]](#).

After Program Reviews were completed, they were submitted to the Program Review Task Force for further review and validation. Once the Program Reviews were validated, the Program Review Task Force compiled resource requests and sent them to the various PBIM Committees for prioritization, i.e., DEC, DFC, and the DTC. Finally, a list of all requests was forwarded to the PBC for review and potential recommendation to the Chancellor [\[DR6.6\]](#).

In February 2016, the Task Force conducted a survey of Program Review for the District and the Colleges. The survey included questions pertaining to timelines, data collection methodology, and training. Common concerns across the District pertained to the utilization of data and program review timelines, in addition, some protested that the distribution of data was incomplete and that training was often inadequate [\[DR6.7\]](#). As reported in Recommendation 4, in May 2016 recommendations developed by the Program Review Task Force advocated for a permanent District wide Program Review Committee to continue to refine Program Review function [\[DR6.8\]](#).

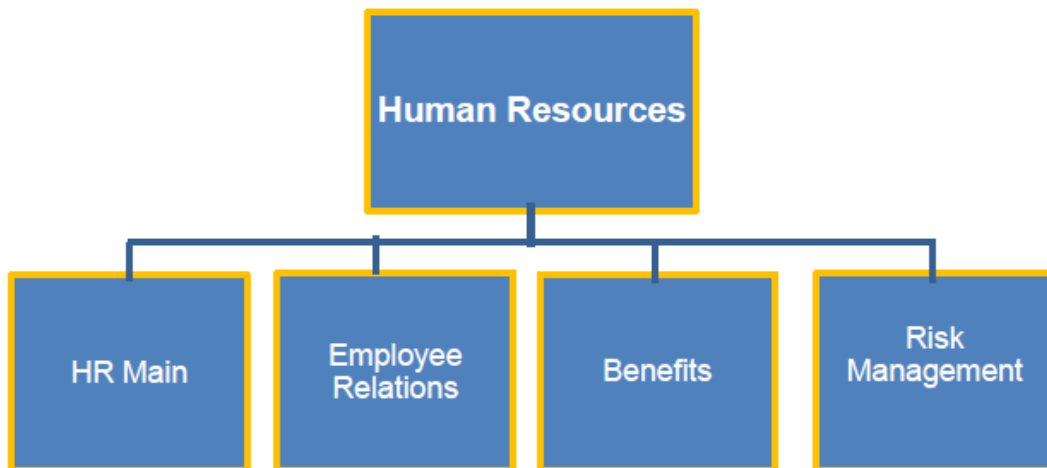
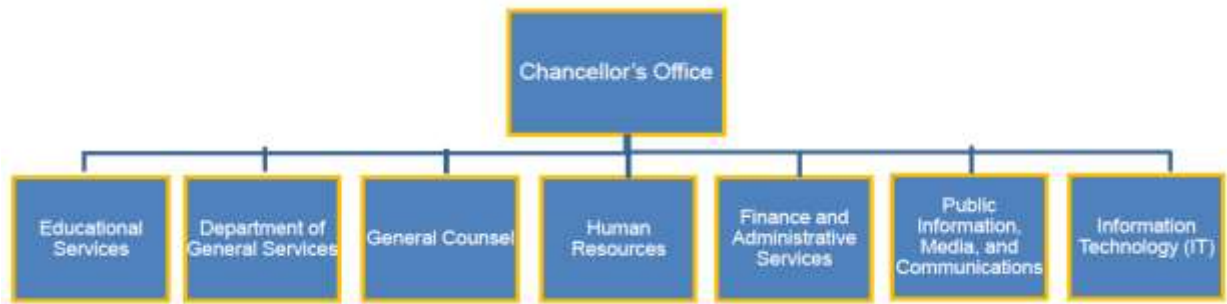
#### **IV. Development of Interactive District Functions Charts**

In December 2015, the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services prepared an initial draft of the District Function Charts to provide details of the operational responsibilities and delineation of functions that the District Service Centers provide to the Colleges. The Functions Charts, when viewed online, allow the user to navigate among the different District Service Centers and their sub-units to see the functions provided for the Colleges.

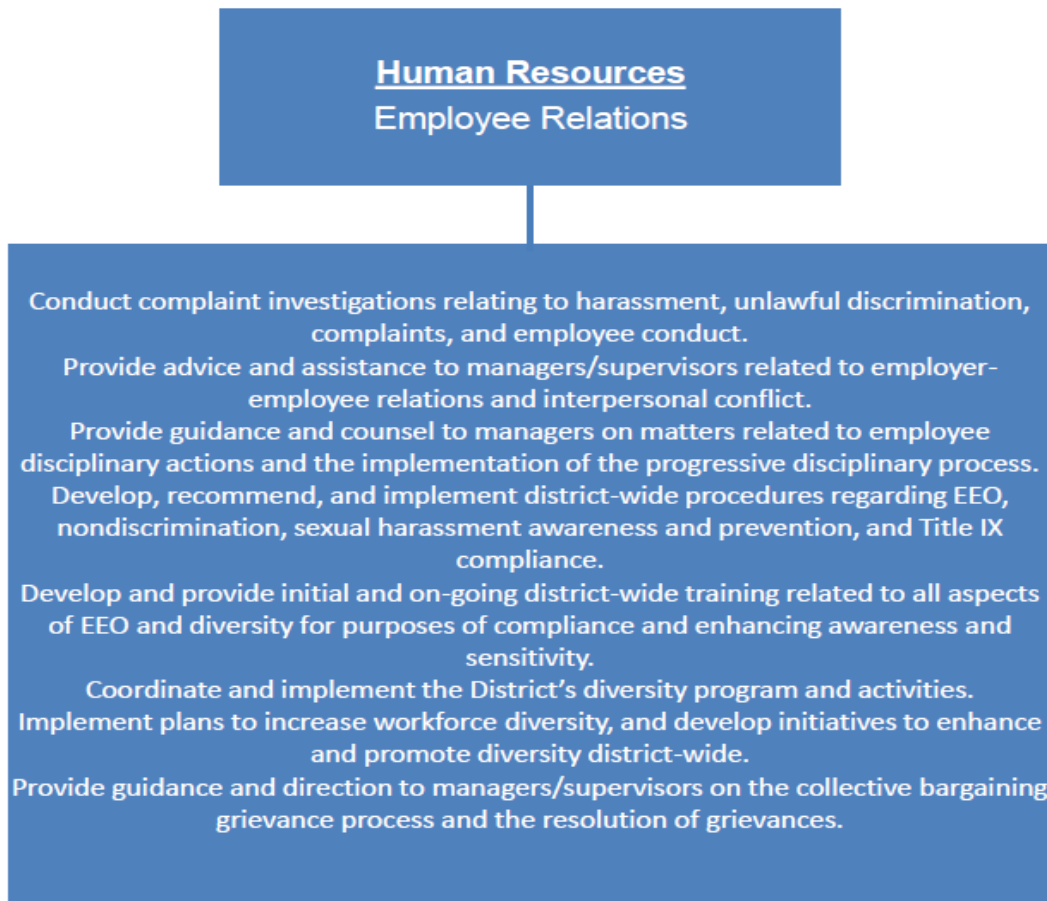
There are three levels of charts: District Service Centers, Service Center Sub-Units, and Functions of Service Center or Sub-Units. The following screen shot provides the schema:



## DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER



## DISTRICT FUNCTIONS



The Functions Charts were sent to the District Educational Committee, the PBC, the Deans and Vice Presidents, the District Academic Senate, the District Classified Senate, and the Chancellor's Cabinet and posted to the Web for all constituents to review and to make any suggested edits [\[DR6.9\]](#). The revisions to the District Functions charts are particularly valuable as the District has initiated a Reorganization, and constituents continue to provide feedback to perfect the understanding of District/College functions.

### **V. District Organization Charts**

In addition to the Functions Charts, District Organization Charts were created to better depict the delineation of functions between the District and the Colleges. The Organization Charts

show the personnel positions for each District Service Center and the hierarchy of each position, whereas the Functions Charts show the responsibilities inherent in each position at the Center level. The Organization Charts complement the Functions Charts. Both are necessary to understand the workings of the District Service Centers and are essential to understanding the structure and dynamics of a work environment with its numerous independent units. As the District has engaged in its reorganization, the Organization Charts have needed revision to complement the Functions Charts; the District will continue to revise both documents [DR6.10].

## **VI. District Functions Matrix**

In Spring 2016, the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and the Executive Vice Chancellor of Strategic Partnerships and Advancement collaborated to revise a 2014 District Functions Matrix that provides a comprehensive narrative of the delineation of functions. The Matrix details indicators that depict College/District responsibilities labeled as Primary, Secondary, Shared, or Not Applicable, and is organized around Accreditation Standards. The most recent version of the Functions Matrix was completed in May 2016 and brought to the PBC for distribution to the Colleges, Cabinet, and the Presidents' Meeting, for review and discussion, was published in C-Direct, and posted on the Accreditation Web page [DR6.11]. As the Colleges and District continue to review the District Functions Matrix, revisions will undoubtedly be forthcoming.

## **VII. 2015 District Service Center (Customer Satisfaction) Survey**

In November 2015, the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services developed and administered a District Service Centers Customer Satisfaction Survey to evaluate services provided by the District Service Centers. This survey was a follow-up survey to a similar one administered in 2013 [DR6.12].

The aim of the 2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey was to determine if, in fact, the District Service Areas put into practice their stated goals and to assess the effectiveness of the Service Center operations. The Customer Satisfaction Survey stated: “we ask your opinion about experiences you have had with each of the District Service Centers during the past

year.” The survey was available to be completed online through November 24, 2015. Those Service Centers addressed in the satisfaction survey were:

- District Admissions and Records (A&R)
- Chancellor’s Office
- Educational Services
- Finance
- District Financial Aid
- General Counsel
- General Services
- Human Resources (HR)
- Information Technology (IT)
- Institutional Research (IR)
- International Education
- Public Information
- Risk Management

#### **A. Comparison of Fall 2015 and Fall 2013 District Service Centers Survey Results**

To assess whether the utilization of and satisfaction with the services provided by the District Service Centers had changed between Fall 2013 and Fall 2015, the results for the 10 Service Centers that were evaluated for both periods were compared.

In Fall 2013, 286 respondents completed the survey, about 19.6% of the population (N = 1,459; data from Fall 2013 MIS report). Approximately 12% of the participants were from Berkeley City College, 14% from College of Alameda, 27% from Laney College, 17% from Merritt College, and 22% from the District Office. At PCCD, approximately 46% were faculty, 39% were staff, 14% were administrators, and 1% were contractors.

Similar to Fall 2015, Human Resources had the highest utilization rate (66.1%), followed by Information Technology (61.7%), Admissions and Records (58.8%), Finance (47.1%), and General Services (40.2%) in Fall 2013. The utilization rates for all 10 Service Centers in Fall

2013, however, were lower than for Fall 2015. Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance, General Services, and the Chancellor's Office exhibited an over 10% increase in the utilization rates in Fall 2015 [DR6.13].

Overall, the utilization of 10 District Service Centers has increased from Fall 2013 to Fall 2015; that is, an over 10% increase for Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance, General Services, and the Chancellor's Office.

A majority of the District Service Centers provided satisfactory "accommodation" and "timeliness" of services. Four District Service Centers were below the standard for accommodation and timeliness in Fall 2015: Risk Management, General Services, Finance, and Information Technology. Risk Management, General Services, and Information Technology evidenced substantial decreases in the satisfaction level for accommodation and timeliness over the two survey periods.

In their Fall 2015 comments, the respondents provided a mixture of positive and negative feedbacks for the 13 Service Centers. For accommodation and timeliness, positive feedbacks included "There have been many improvements...", "Outstanding staff, accessible Vice Chancellors good teamwork," and "Receive needed information in timely manner." However, a few of the Service Centers received a greater number of negative than positive feedback (e.g., Finance, General Service, HR, IT, and Risk Management). Some comments included, "It is very hard to get answers," "Request responses take too long," and "My issues have not been resolved yet."

Many of the Service Centers received negative feedback regarding communication: "It is difficult to communicate with staff as the phones are not answered," "So difficult to reach a real person for resolution;" technology-related issues: "The current system doesn't provide updated information...", "problems with Passport and its portals persist...;" policies and processes: "processes are unclear," "constant rule changes and procedural difficulties cause problems;" and student-related issues: "not given clear information to convey to students," "student issues take a long time to resolve."

The most positive feedback for all categories of responses involved the competency of staff. In general, staff in most Service Centers received more positive than negative evaluations. Comments included: “good competent staff” “...went out of her way to help me” or “the staff in Educational Services are amazing and responsive!”

Finally, the most common suggestion was the desire for additional staff in A&R, HR, and IT; the three most utilized Service Centers; comments included, for example, “HR needs additional staff and/or more active processes to handle hiring in a timely manner” and “IT is understaffed.”

Given the results of the 2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey, as compared to the results of the 2013 Survey, it seems that the District’s need for improvement centers on issues pertaining to clear and timely communication, the need to recruit staff in a more timely manner, and the desire to provide more staff in some Service Centers [\[DR6.14\]](#).

## **B. District Responses to Service Center Survey**

Since the District Service Center Survey was conducted, the District has taken steps to strengthen District Service Centers’ ability to meet the needs of the Colleges. Specific steps include the following:

1. The Chancellor in his December 9, 2015 C-Direct, stated:  
“...To address several issues, the service centers are going through a program review process. I encourage you to participate in these surveys. The qualitative will consist of focus groups to further understand what we should do to continue or improve services we receive...in terms of resource allocations and delineation of duties between the District and the Colleges. One step we will endeavor to take is to strengthen the relationships between like units at the District and the Colleges” [\[DR6.15\]](#).
2. Human Resources has designed a comprehensive Staffing Plan that was presented to the Presidents, Cabinet, and finally to the PBC. Included in the Plan was the recent

addition of the PBC approved Staffing Resources Staff Ad Hoc Taskforce, its purpose being to ensure that staffing needs are addressed and resources allocated equitably (See Recommendation 4).

3. The District, under its new Reorganization Plan, has added key leadership positions to provide better oversight and collaboration with the Colleges. For example, the newly appointed Assistant Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management, is leading the implementation of a more streamlined system to expedite enrollment and recruitment practices for all four Colleges. Similar outreach to the Colleges has been extended to the areas of IT, Finance, and Maintenance and Operations. The addition of key leadership positions and the reassignment of duties for some of the existing leadership include the following:

- A Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs has been added to provide District leadership in assisting the Colleges in fulfilling expectations of educational excellence.
- The Vice Chancellor of Student Services (a position that had been eliminated) was reestablished in order to provide continuous leadership to that Service Area.
- An Associate Vice Chancellor of Work Force Development and Continuing Education has been added to coordinate College CTE work and the business community.
- The Vice Chancellor of Educational Services has assumed the leadership of Distance Education (DE) to strengthen DE across the Colleges.
- The Chief of Staff (new) supports the Chancellor in recommending and maintaining effective organizational goals and objectives and oversees and coordinates Institutional Research.
- A Vice Chancellor of IT (new) will provide a much needed leadership role in IT to build an effective IT environment.
- An Executive Vice Chancellor of Strategic Partnerships and Advancement (new) works with community and educational entities to develop partnerships to improve services to the community and to students.

It is apparent that PCCD needs additional staff to better coordinate District/College functions and to enrich student education. To increase staffing requires either a

reallocation of resources or new funding, however, new staffing does not necessarily equate to better services. PCCD's ongoing plan to gain greater resources includes the following:

1. Work to increase enrollment and retention (Assistant V.C. of Enrollment Management)
2. Establish units to increase resources such as Workforce Development and Contract Education training and non credit courses (Associate V.C. for Workforce Development and Continuing Education)
3. Reallocation of resources for institutional effectiveness (EVC for Strategic Partnerships and Advancement and Associate V.C. for Workforce Development and Continuing Education). It is anticipated that WDCE, for example, will be self-supporting in two years and profitable thereafter to increase College revenue to support to a higher level student success, staffing needs, and professional development.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

By taking seriously the task of more clearly identifying the Delineation of Functions (District and Colleges) and by assessing the services provided by the District to the Colleges, PCCD has met Standards IV B.3. In 2016, the Chancellor's Management Leadership District Academy Peralta (MLDAP) was developed to enhance internal leadership skills and to encourage in-house managers to develop innovative programs to meet the needs of the District Service Centers as they strive to better serve the four Colleges and MLDAP is ongoing.

Another concerted effort to strengthen services provided by the District to the Colleges is the improvement of Program Review. The Program Review Task Force continues to refine Program Review, as discussed, and it is anticipated that these renewed efforts to make Program Review more meaningful will strengthen the reciprocal responsibilities between the District Service Centers and the Colleges. Additionally, new leadership positions within the District should enhance District support to the Colleges.



At the PBIM Summit in August 2016, the Executive Vice Chancellor of Strategic Partnership and Advancement described a new project that will be undertaken, under the direction of the Chancellor, that is, to evaluate all Program Review outcomes and resource requests from 2015-2016 by October 1, 2016, and to present the various requests to the Chancellor's Cabinet for review and action. Activities or recommendations that cannot be funded through the General Fund will be considered as outreach to corporate and governmental funding. The move to develop accountability for District Program Review outcomes aims to enrich support services to all four Colleges and to ensure that outcomes are more meaningful.

RECOMMENDATION 6: DISTRICT RESPONSES	
Evidence	Title of Evidence Document
DR6.1	PCCD 2015-2016 Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives
DR6.2	Education Services Action Plan
DR6.3	PR Task Force May 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes
DR6.4	2015 District Service Center Program Review Handbook
DR6.5	PR Task Force Meeting Notes Dec. 1, 2015
DR6.6	PBIM Presentation Nov. 19, 2015
DR6.7	PCCD PBC May 27, 2016 Minutes
DR6.8	Program Review Evaluation Summary, June 2016
DR6.9	E-mail - Revised Version of Functions Charts Aug. 22, 2016
DR6.10	District Organization Charts, Sept. 2016
DR6.11	PCCD Functions Matrix May 16, 2016 Revision
DR6.12	2013 Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary
DR6.13	District Service Centers Survey 2015
DR6.14	Peralta District Service Centers "Customer Satisfaction" 2015 Survey Report
DR6.15	C-DIRECT Dec. 9, 2015

## **Recommendation 7**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends the Governing Board adhere to its appropriate role. The Board must allow the Chancellor to take full responsibility and authority for the areas assigned to District oversight (IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.j).”**

### **I. Introduction**

When the visiting Team conducted its review of the Peralta Community College District in Spring 2015, there appeared to be a Chancellor and the Governing Board disagreement over the Board’s role, vis-à-vis the Chancellor’s role, pertaining to various governance matters, to include the hiring of District administrators, as well as other personnel concerns. While Peralta’s Board Policy 2200 [DR7.1] defines Board duties and responsibilities, some Team interviews at the District and Colleges suggested that members of the Governing Board had engaged in activities that did not always conform to the Trustees’ explicit roles. It appeared that there needed to be a clearer understanding of the Trustees’--as well as the Chancellor’s--governance roles.

### **II. Selection of a New Chancellor**

When the Chancellor announced his retirement in January 2015, the Governing Board initiated a recruitment for a new Chancellor; a key consideration was that the Contract would include provisions for the new Chancellor to assume more demonstrable responsibility and authority for the areas assigned to District oversight, thereby allowing for the Board to adhere more effectively to its appropriate role. The Governing Board then worked with a search consultant to begin the recruitment process and at the February 24, 2015 Special Workshop of the Governing Board, the Trustees discussed a District Survey which had solicited feedback from the community identifying desirable characteristics for the next Chancellor [DR7.2]. This information included an emphasis on Board/Chancellor roles, and was used to develop the new Chancellor’s job description. When the new Chancellor was selected, the Contract provisions clarified Chancellor/Board roles [DR7.3]. The new Chancellor assumed his position on July 1, 2015.

In his August 2015 Flex Address to all PCCD constituents, the Chancellor introduced what he called “The New Peralta Way,” an initiative intended to reform Peralta’s leadership through the strengthening of competence, passion, integrity, and intimacy—a leadership focused on enhancing student success. He stated: “We must commit to support an impeccable and dedicated Governing Board practicing trusteeship at its best...I am pleased to say it seems that we are working well from the same vibe.” At the Flex event, the Board President spoke of the confidence the Board has in its choice of the new Chancellor [DR7.4].

### **III. Renewed Collaboration between the Governing Board and the Chancellor in**

#### **Setting Goals:**

In September 2015, the Chancellor arranged a “Team Building” Retreat for the Governing Board. The purpose of the Retreat was to discuss the establishment of a new set of goals based on a foundation of trust and mutual support between Board and Chancellor [DR7.5]. At the Retreat, a performance evaluation process was created that included the formation of formal goals, expected outcomes, and timelines. The Governing Board and the Chancellor agreed that evaluations of both parties would be conducted in Summer 2016.

At the December 8, 2015 Board meeting, the Governing Board and the Chancellor formally adopted goals to support the effective operation of the District to ensure that their respective roles would be adhered to. These goals included:

1. Resolve District deficiencies affecting Colleges’ Accreditation status specified in Recommendation Seven.
2. Explore the role of Trustees in student achievement and closing the student achievement gap.
3. Review and approval of the College’s work in strengthening the financial structure of the District.
4. Review and sanction the technology evaluation and resulting action.
5. Review and accept the plan for improvement of Student Services.
6. Review and accept the Student governance review.

[DR7.6].

With the establishment of written goals to improve the respective performances of the Chancellor and the Governing Board, additional protocols were developed for sharpening clear communication between all parties based on a “no surprises” principle. Included in these protocols was the stipulation that the Chancellor writes a weekly report (C-GRAM) to keep the Governing Board informed of important District activities. This weekly communication vehicle diminishes the potential for unwelcome surprises and misunderstandings and helps to continue to build trust between the Chancellor and the Board. [DR7.7]. Furthermore, the Chancellor, the Governing Board President and Vice President, Legal Counsel, and the Chief of Staff meet one week prior to each regularly scheduled Board meeting, to ensure that all parties are fully aware of the business being presented at the Board. Finally, a weekly agenda review of the Chancellor’s activities invites Board members’ input and participation, thereby ensuring that the Board is fully informed of issues arising at the District level. In addition, the Chief of Staff supports the Chancellor in following up on outstanding items to ensure issues are addressed in a timely manner.

#### **IV. More Effective Handling of Citizens’ Complaints**

It should be noted that a particular difficulty regarding Board/Chancellor relations ensued when some community constituents, apparently frustrated over perceived College administrative inaction on certain issues, began to appeal directly to Trustees for redress. And with the advent of electronic communications, public access to individual Board members was only facilitated, threatening not only Board unity, but causing potential friction in Board/Chancellor functions.

In response to the perceived Board “extra-curricular” issue above, the new Chancellor has pledged that all public issues will be satisfactorily attended to so that constituents will not have to appeal to individual Trustees; most importantly, it is understood that each Trustee who is privately contacted on any issue will refer those individual issues first to the Chancellor’s Office and/or the Chancellor’s Chief of Staff.

## **V. Building Leadership Through Self-Assessment**

In December 2015, the Chancellor arranged for a joint retreat with the Governing Board, high level administrators, and student leaders to formally introduce his ideas to strengthen leadership. At this retreat, the participants were introduced to an improved leadership model—“the New Peralta Way”—to enhance educational governance. This leadership model embraced these values: competence, passion, integrity, intimacy, and democracy [DR7.8]. Participants engaged in a self- assessment of leadership competency and created an individual action plan committed to cultivate leadership skill [DR7.9].

In July 2016, another Board of Governor’s Retreat was held. At this retreat, the Governing Board discussed PCCD priorities such as the newly instituted efforts to refurbish IT Services, Enrollment Management Planning, a review of newly revised Master Plans for all Colleges, an Accreditation Progress Report, and an update on Financial Planning. Additionally, the Governing Board and PCCD Leadership, along with the Chancellor, engaged in the exchange of ideas led by a facilitator, to build on Trustee and Chancellor complementary goals and to evaluate their progress to date [DR7.10]. Following the July Governing Board Retreat, the Chancellor sent a Survey to the Trustees to evaluate the July Retreat. The Retreat facilitator reported:

“Board clearly recognizes the progress that the Chancellor has made and respects and supports his goals and objectives for the District under his leadership. The results of the self-evaluation of the Board--a good practice for all Boards to engage with--demonstrates that there is strong agreement on the Board that they are working well with one another and with Chancellor Laguerre and that there is consistent and constructive communication and coordination between the Chancellor and the Board. The Board feels appropriately engaged and supported and has a good working relationship with the Chancellor and his team” [DR7.11].

Prior to the July Retreat, the Governing Board and the Chancellor had evaluated the mutual goals that had been established in December 2015. The summary revealed that Board/Chancellor relations had definitely improved and that clearer avenues of communication are being established and respected [DR7.12].

Another Board Retreat is planned for October 2016. At this Retreat, the Governing Board, PCCD leadership, and the Chancellor will continue to build on their efforts to work collaboratively and to examine PCCD's desire to improve student success.

## **VI. Regular Review of All Board Policies and Procedures**

Board policies are reviewed and vetted through PBC and the Chancellor's Cabinet. To facilitate policy and procedure revisions, the District has given reassigned time to a faculty member over the past few years to create and/or revise Board policies and procedures. The faculty member reviews the Community College League of California (CCLC) updates. After policies are adopted, a PCCD announcement is electronically sent to all Peralta stakeholders so that everyone is aware of new policies [DR7.13].

At the time of the ACCJC Team visit, members of the Team noted that they could not locate a formal schedule for an ongoing, regular review of all Board policies and administrative regulations. In the past, PCCD has reviewed Board policies and administrative procedures, as needed, but beginning in Fall 2016, the District will publicize a calendar to ensure that all Governing Board policies are, in fact, scheduled for review and to ensure that the Colleges participate more routinely in expressing policy and procedure needs. The new schedule includes a timeline for reviewing all existing policies and continued attention to the CCLC policy review calendar, thereby ensuring that PCCD policies remain current.

The draft review schedule for 2016-2018 addresses a comprehensive review of policies. In Fall 2016, Board Policy series 1000, 2000, and 3000 are slated for review. The renewed focus on policy review is in keeping with the 2015-2016 Strategic objective: "D.2: Institutional Leadership and Governance: Evaluate and update policies and administrative procedures, the PCCD organizational structure, and functional responsibilities within the District."

One policy that pertains to Recommendation 7, is Board Policy 2715, Code of Ethics, which was revised in April 2015 [DR7.14]. The Governing Board and the new Chancellor will review BP 2715 in Fall 2016 semester pending CCLC's recommended revisions, as both

acknowledge that adhering to the Board’s Code of Ethics adds clarity and expectations for effective trusteeship. Furthermore, the Governing Board will engage in a Code of Ethics training session in Fall 2016 lead by Legal Counsel.

On August 17, 2016, the Chancellor addressed the PCCD community at Flex and reiterated that “many aspects of the District, including the Governing Board, are functioning well.” The emphasis on his newly launched PCCD Leadership Academy will further substantiate the goal to create a “New Peralta Way,” and to continue to build the strong working relationship between the Board, the Chancellor, and PCCD [\[DR7.15\]](#).

## **VII. Conclusion**

Recommendation 7 addressed a perceived governance issue that existed at the time of the former Team visit, one that has now been resolved with the hiring of a new Chancellor and the emergence of a more effective working relationship between Board and Chancellor, along with the adoption of more intensive leadership training. The Governing Board and the Chancellor have addressed Recommendation 7 by adhering to their clarified respective roles and Standards (IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.j) have been met.

With the arrival of a new Chancellor, the Peralta Community College District evinces a continued sense of optimism regarding Board/Chancellor leadership effectiveness based on:

1. The bona fides of the New Chancellor.
2. A renewed determination to focus on the good of the whole and not be caught up in the clamoring of special interests.
3. The agreement of a “no surprise” approach to Board and Chancellor relationships.
4. The adherence to Board policies, e.g., BP 2430 (Delegation of Authority to the Chancellor); BP 2715 (Code of Ethics and Standards and Practices); and BP 2200 (Board Duties and Responsibilities), policies that specify the collaborative relationship between Board and Chancellor.
5. The ongoing evaluation of the Governing Board and the Chancellor with the aim of clarifying roles and setting forth collaborative strategies to enhance the overall effectiveness of the District.

6. The Governing Board’s support of the shift to a “New Peralta Way” for the PCCD community. This “New Peralta Way” rests on a renewed commitment of the Governing Board and the Chancellor to provide more effective and accountable educational leadership for the District.
7. Broad inclusion of the College leadership in ongoing assessment and improvement of the PCCD and enhancement of student success.

<b>RECOMMENDATION 7: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR7.1	PCCD BP 2200 - Board Duties and Responsibilities
DR7.2	Development of Chancellor Profile Part I, Feb. 24, 2015, Governing Board meeting
DR7.3	Excerpt from 2015 Chancellor’s Contract, page 8
DR7.4	Chancellor’s 2015 Fall Flex Address
DR7.5	Board of Trustees Retreat Agenda, Building a New Team, Sept. 22, 2015
DR7.6	Governing Board Goals, 2015-2016: Dec. 8, 2015 Board meeting
DR7.7	July 3, 2016 C-GRAM
DR7.8	New Peralta Way Leadership Retreat Agenda, Dec. 13, 2015
DR7.9	New Peralta Way Leadership Action Plan
DR7.10	Governing Board Retreat Agenda, July 12, 2016
DR7.11	Peralta Board Report July 2016 from Facilitator
DR7.12	Board Retreat July 12, 2016 Survey Responses
DR7.13	Example Policy Update Announcement
DR7.14	PCCD BP 2715 Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
DR7.15	Chancellor’s Flex Speech, Aug. 17, 2016



## **Recommendation 8**

**“In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the District systematically evaluate the equitable distribution of resources and the sufficiency and effectiveness of District-provided services in supporting effective operations of the Colleges (IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.c, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.h).”**

### **I. Introduction**

Recommendation 8 addresses the need for the District to systematically evaluate: 1.) the equitable distribution of resources, and, 2.) the effectiveness of services provided in supporting the operations of the Colleges.

### **II. Equitable Distribution of Resources: PCCD’s Budget Allocation Model (BAM)**

Each year, the Peralta Community College District establishes Institutional Goals and Objectives that are assessed throughout the year. One of the five 2015-2016 Strategic Goals was: “Strengthen Accountability, Innovation and Collaboration.” Tied to this Institutional Goal was Objective D.3: Institutional Effectiveness: Evaluate and update the PBIM participatory governance structure and the Budget Allocation Model (BAM) [DR8.1]. The reason for updating BAM was due primarily to the need for the District to evaluate BAM’s system for the distributing resources equitably.

#### **A. Description of the PCCD Budget Allocation Model (BAM)**

Since 2011, when it was adopted by the District’s Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC), the District’s Budget Allocation Model (BAM) has functioned as the primary mechanism for determining equitable resource allocations for the District’s four College, and, indirectly, to the District Office for its Support Services [DR8.2]. The model has been revised four times, with the most current iteration approved by the PBC in December 2014 [DR8.3].

The core elements of the BAM are:

1. a demonstrative linkage between strategic planning and funding at all levels;
2. an allocation methodology that is equitable and clearly documented;
3. a model that closely tracks how revenues are received from the State of California.
4. a model based on the SB 361 State allocation model.

The BAM was designed to allocate fiscal resources (unrestricted revenues) in a transparent and equitable manner, i.e., treating similar things similarly, to the four Colleges and is comprised of state apportionment funds, non-state apportionment funds, and Parcel Tax proceeds. State apportionment funds represent approximately 70% of the District's unrestricted revenues. The remaining 30% of unrestricted revenues is comprised of Parcel Tax proceeds, state lottery funds, and non-resident tuition/fees.

The BAM provides each of the four Peralta Colleges with an allocation based on its *pro-rata* share of the credit FTES revenues generated by each College. In order to provide stability, to minimize the impacts of annual enrollment swings, and to assist in multi-year planning, these revenues are distributed based on a three-year rolling enrollment FTES average. These distributions are equitable given the *pro-rata* basis of FTES generation.

Additional growth funding, when provided by the State, is allocated to the Colleges based on incremental FTES generated, as well as on the achievement of certain productivity targets, i.e., productivity = FTES/ FTEF or a workload/ efficiency measure that determines full time equivalent faculty need to generate “x” amount of FTES (full time equivalent students) upon which our state funding is based. Moreover, the Model has a built-in ‘incentive program’ with respect to productivity levels, rewarding those Colleges that meet their productivity targets with additional resources. This incentive measure, however, was never implemented.

The BAM takes into account, albeit indirectly, relevant District responsibilities such as the 50% law, full-time/part-time faculty requirements, attendance accounting, audit requirements, fiscal accounting standards, procurement and contract law, employment relations and collective bargaining, OPEB debt, and payroll processing and related reporting requirements. The District Office—including Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Educational Services, Human Resources, Finance, IT, Maintenance and Operations—provides centralized support services that align with the District's Mission [DR8.4]. Subsequently, from the Total Revenue Allocation by College, the cost of District Office Support Services, as well as other centralized services, e.g., services for students with

disabilities or the payment of debt service on bonds, is deducted. What remains, then, is each College's Annual Budget Allocation.

The intent of the original BAM was that each College would develop its non-discretionary and discretionary budgets based upon its Annual Budget Allocation. Non-discretionary budgets consist of salaries of full-time and part-time faculty, full-time and part-time classified staff, administrators, and related benefits. These budgets approximate 90% of a College's Annual Budget Allocation. Discretionary budgets include supplies, equipment, utilities, and other miscellaneous expenditures, comprising approximately 10%.

In 2014, in order to achieve a more equitable allocation of resources, the BAM was revised twice to include, among other changes, allocating non-resident tuition revenues to those Colleges who were generating them (and, indeed, directly supporting the non-resident students) as opposed to distributing them on a pro rata share of total FTES generated by each College as the Model required. This change to the Model, while approved and documented, was not implemented as two Colleges would have benefited from the change and two would have suffered hardship.

In August 2015, a new Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration (VCFA) was hired. The VCFA quickly determined that, while the BAM had been partially implemented over the past few years from the revenue side, the District had yet to fully implement accountability on the expenditure side of the equation. Colleges had continued to underspend or overspend, compared with annual resource allocations, based on their respective situations. The VCFA then recommended to the Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) the establishment of a Task Force to evaluate and revise the existing BAM.

### **B. Establishment of a BAM Task Force**

The BAM Task Force was convened under the purview of the PBC and began its work in October 2015. The nine-member Task Force includes: representatives from each College (including faculty, staff, and administration), a Student Trustee, the District's Budget Director and the VCFA. The BAM Task Force was charged with reviewing the current

allocation Model and making recommendations to the PBC to enhance the equitable distribution of resources to all four Colleges. The following goals were established by the Task Force at its initial meeting: 1.) to become conversant with the current Budget Allocation Model; 2.) to possess an understanding of budgeting language; 3.) to determine if the Budget Allocation Model is the right model for the District; 4.) to identify disparities/inequities in the current model; and, 5.) to determine the level of understanding across the District of the BAM [DR8.5].

In addition to establishing the above goals, at its November 2015 meeting, the Task Force examined what was perceived to be inequities in the BAM having to do with the distribution of full-time faculty seniority. Another perceived inequity in the BAM had to do with the high-cost programs such as nursing (and their relation to productivity), non-resident enrollment distribution, and fixed costs [DR8.6].

The Task Force conducted a survey to solicit feedback regarding perceived strengths and shortcomings of the current BAM. Recurrent concerns included the need for: more education (training), CTE dialogue, accountability, alternative funding sources, inclusion of administrative costs, considerations for classified hiring, and the examination of fixed costs. Results were evaluated, further defining the work of the Task Force [DR8.7].

Meeting twice per month, on average, over the past year, the Task Force reported its progress monthly to the PBC, and Task Force minutes were posted on the District's Website [DR8.8].

### **C. Recommendations of the BAM Task Force**

Forums were held in Spring 2016 to allow the College and District constituents to discuss BAM Task Force findings [DR8.9] [DR8.10] [DR8.11].

In August 2016 the BAM Task Force presented its preliminary recommendations to the District during its annual Flex event [DR8.12]. Intended to enhance the equitable distribution of resources within the existing BAM, recommendations included:

1. Removing all full time faculty salary and benefits costs from each College's allocation. The FTF expense, then, will be accounted for "above the line" meaning that salary and benefits will be deducted from the pool of 'available funds' prior to applying the distribution formula and thereby reducing available revenues. Colleges will then be held "harmless" for the seniority of its faculty pool.
2. Maintaining the decentralized allocation of fixed costs and basing future allocations on prior year actuals. Further, centralizing all security costs under the District Office budget so that they are shared more equitably by all Colleges.
3. Making no changes with respect to resource allocations and capped courses. The Task Force concluded that CTE courses have no significant disproportionate impact on College productivity levels.
4. Forming a separate Task Force to review and assess service levels, efficacy, and reasonableness of costs associated with all District Office support services.
5. Allocating the appropriate level of Custodians based on Industry Best Practices and an acceptable standard of facility cleanliness.

A final Task Force Recommendations Report was presented to the District's PBIM Summit in August 2016 [\[DR8.13\]](#). The Task Force anticipates concluding its work in early Fall 2016 with final recommendations presented to the PBC in November. Upon adoption of the revised BAM, the District's goal is to approve a revised allocation model to be implemented in the development of the 2017-2018 budgets.

### **III. District Program Review and Resource Allocation Processes**

In addition to the BAM, there are four Planning and Budgeting Integration (PBI) resource allocation processes that pertain to the effectiveness of District Services and the operation of the Colleges. These processes are central to Program Review (College and District) and govern the distribution of:

- Faculty Resources
- Staff Resources
- Technology Resources
- Facilities Resources

The resource allocation processes begin with each College's respective governance committee prioritizing its resource needs as part of Program Review. The College resource requests, along with requests from the District Service Centers, are then moved forward to the appropriate District PBIM Committee, typically in the form of prioritized lists and without regard to budget considerations. The final requests are moved to PBC [DR8.14].

#### **IV. Faculty and Staff Resource Allocation**

The District Education Committee receives prioritized faculty and staff requests, the District Technology Committee receives prioritized technology requests, and the District Facilities Committee receives prioritized facilities requests from the Colleges. These requests are discussed in their respective PBIM Committees and forwarded to the District's Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) for deliberation and endorsement. The various resource requests, along with PBC recommendations, are then sent to the Cabinet for review and to the Chancellor for final approval.

The District Educational Service Committee reviews the prioritized requests for replacement and new faculty hires that are forwarded each year from the Colleges. This year, the PBC approved the development of a Resource Allocation Task Force for Classified Staffing (RATF-CS) that will prioritize College and District staff requests into a master list for PBC review [DR8.15]. The addition of this Task Force will aim to prioritize replacement and new staffing needs in the same way that new and replacement faculty needs are now currently ranked, i.e., each College creates a prioritized list which are reviewed by the appropriate District PBIM Committee and then forwarded to PBC for discussion and approval (contingent on funding). These resources allocations are explained in more detail in District Recommendation 4.

#### **V. District Technology Resource Allocation**

In the past few years, PCCD has not produced an effective technology environment, although the District has had some dedicated IT members. And although there exists an IT Plan to serve the District and the four Colleges, the District has faced unforeseen challenges in executing the IT Plan. Challenges include: turnover of key leadership, insufficient

knowledge of Best IT Practices and methodologies, lack of clearly defined business practices and funding models, and the lack of sound priorities. Additional challenges include the lack of District wide policies and procedures that align College IT support with District IT support, and inadequate human and capital resources to support the ever-changing IT environment. Nevertheless, the District has had a dedicated IT team doing their best with limited resources.

Because IT Planning has not always been acknowledged as a high priority, PCCD did not always appropriate adequate financial resources, nor display a commitment to assure the quality and continuity for District wide IT support. The four Colleges compensated by having to develop their own IT plans which have not been typically shared with District IT leadership, nor reviewed by District leadership. College IT related planning information has generally been secured on an “as needed” basis, or whenever the Colleges faced a crisis situation. What’s more, much equipment is approaching “end of life” or is at “end of life” condition, which has put additional strain on the limited staff resources and resulting in College projects not being addressed or taking too much time to implement.

In February 2016, the Chancellor recommended a major restructuring and change of leadership in the IT District Service Center owing primarily to security, safety, and student success considerations. A consultant firm had been brought in at the end of 2015, to conduct an IT assessment [DR8.16]. The consultant firm presented a draft five-year Tactical Plan to management, which will be presented to DTC in early Fall 2016. DTC will then make a recommendation to PBC regarding the adoption of the Plan. Furthermore, the Tactical Plan was reviewed and internally vetted by IT Leadership and the VP for Finance and Administration in March 2016. The consultant firm presented highlights of the Tactical Plan at the July Governing Board Retreat [DR8.17].

The change in IT leadership brought about a change in IT goals. Changes included plans to increase IT staffing and supplemental training for existing staff [DR8.18]. In May 2016, an interim Director of IT Services was appointed, an experienced IT Senior Analyst who had served Laney College for over 15 years. The Interim Director hired one new hourly Help

Desk Support Technician. It is anticipated that another Help Desk Support Technician will be hired in September 2016. These Technicians will be working alongside IT leadership in the creation of a comprehensive IT Service Center. The Service Center will include: helpdesk ticket prioritization, the upgrading of software, the creation of an Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), a Service Catalog, configuration management, call scripts, and Service Level Agreements.

In Summer 2016, the consultant firm conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of IT Staff which is scheduled to be completed in late August. A summary will go to DTC in early Fall. After DTC review, steps will be taken to make changes to the infrastructure and to enhance service-oriented processes [DR8.19]. Currently, the ITIL is being introduced to the IT department as a guide for the creation of processes that follow IT Best Practices [DR8.20]. IT has also contributed significantly to the design of the PCCD TCO Guidelines (See Recommendation 3, TCO Guidelines). Furthermore, PCCD has established an IT Steering Committee that provides oversight for the District Office of IT. This Steering Committee, comprised of Vice Chancellors, and IT Administration and Staff originally met monthly and is now moving to bi-weekly (every other week) meetings to prioritize the project work of IT and to review new IT requests [DR8.21].

The District Technology Committee (DTC) is the central body that reviews and recommends various IT Projects for the Colleges. At times, the DTC was hindered by lack of leadership which affected morale resulting in weakened oversight to the District and Colleges. Nevertheless, the DTC worked in collaboration with District General Services to develop the TCO Guidelines and to adopt better practices for addressing deferred maintenance and security needs. Finally, the DTC worked to complete a room scheduling software project, completion of a master map of IT infrastructure, and continues to make progress on other goals [DR8.22]. The DTC will be evaluating its 2015-2016 goals at its September 2016 meeting [DR8.23].



## **VI. District General Services (DGS) Resource Allocation**

The District General Service Center addresses the following prioritized requests: Daily Work order requests (to include emergencies), routine maintenance requests, deferred maintenance requests, and preventive maintenance requests. Since October 2015, the DFC has met with all the Colleges to determine their needs regarding the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) Guidelines that are being crafted by the District. These Guidelines were presented to the DFC and PBC at their May meeting, revised in Summer 2016, and presented at the District August 2016 Flex and District PBIM August 2016 Summit for discussion.

In Spring 2016, the number of outstanding facilities and maintenance requests has been significantly reduced and safety conditions addressed. In July 2016, a Director of Capital Projects was hired to address Bond projects such as new construction. A Staff Services Specialist, Project Manager for Maintenance and Operations, a Director of Facilities and Operations, among other staff, are expected to be hired by October 2016. The hiring of additional staff has enabled the Vice Chancellor of General Services to more effectively utilize his time to address critical facilities and maintenance operation needs (See Recommendation 3 for an extended discussion of DGS provided services for the Colleges and the revision and implementation of TCO Guidelines).

## **VII. Human Resources Staffing Plan**

As described in District Recommendation 5, in May 2016, the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources presented PCCD's Staffing Plan to the Presidents Council, Cabinet, and PBC [DR8.24]. This comprehensive Plan addresses the allocation of staffing resources and includes a new component, Resource Allocation Task Force-Classified Staffing (RATF-CS) wherein new staffing requests that are not addressed in Program Review will be included. (See Section IV. Faculty and Staff Resource Allocation).

During the District August 2016 Flex, the Staffing Plan was presented at a "Q and A" session [DR8.25]. College forums may be held in Fall 2016 to respond to questions and to elicit further suggestions. The Staffing Plan will be assessed in April 2017. (See Recommendation 5 for an extended discussion of Human Resources Services).

**VIII. Conclusion**

PCCD has a variety of resource allocation mechanisms in place that were revised this year. The 2015-2016 year was focused on revising and implementing plans to review and enhance the equitable distribution of resources. Most importantly, changes such as the revision of the BAM, the creation of a comprehensive Human Resources Staffing Plan, the creation of TCO Guidelines, the revision of the IT Plan, the refinement of Program Review, and the addition of much needed staffing in DGS, promise that the District will continue to ensure the sufficiency and effectiveness of District-provided services in supporting effective operations of the Colleges and continue to meet Standards IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.c, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.h. The continued evaluation of District support for the effective operations of the Colleges in 2016-2017, will serve to measure the District’s revised planning efforts.

<b>RECOMMENDATION 8: DISTRICT RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Title of Evidence Document</b>
DR8.1	PCCD 2015-2016 Strategic Goals and Institutional Objectives
DR8.2	PBC Meeting Minutes May 20, 2011 BAM Model
DR8.3	PBC Meeting Minutes, Dec. 12, 2014
DR8.4	BAM Power Point Presentation, Nov. 17, 2014
DR8.5	BAM Task Force Minutes, Oct. 16, 2015
DR8.6	BAM Task Force Minutes, Nov. 19, 2015 Inequities
DR8.7	BAM Opinion Survey Results
DR8.8	Screen Shot BAM Task Force Report of Progress to PBC
DR8.9	BAM Task Force Forum, Feb 29, 2016
DR8.10	Laney College BAM Forum
DR8.11	BCC BAM and Budget Forum
DR8.12	District Flex Agenda and Meeting Notice
DR8.13	PBIM Summit Agenda and BAM Task Force Recommendations
DR8.14	PBC Meeting Minutes, Dec. 18, 2015: College/District Resource Requests
DR8.15	PBC Meeting Minutes, Mar.18, 2016: Ad Hoc Committee-Classified Staffing
DR8.16	IT Assessment
DR8.17	July 12, 2016 Board Retreat agenda
DR8.18	IT Goals
DR8.19	SWOT Analysis Handout
DR8.20	ITIL Presentation & Service Training
DR8.21	IT Steering Committee Notes, Aug. 3, 2016
DR8.22	PCCD IT PMO Dashboard
DR8.23	DTC Goals and Objectives
DR8.24	PBC Meeting Minutes, May 27, 2016
DR8.25	District's Human Resource Staffing Plan

## INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A&R	Admissions and Records
ACCJC	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
ADA	American Disabilities Act
AP	Administrative Policy
APPA	Association of Physical Plant Administrators
APU	Annual Program Update
BAM	Budget Allocation Model
BAMTF	Budget Allocation Model Task Force
BCC	Berkeley City College
BEST	Building Environmental Sustainability for Tomorrow
BLVD	Boulevard
BP	Board Policy
C	Chancellor
C-DIRECT	Chancellor's Direct Communication
C-GRAM	Weekly report from Chancellor keep the Governing Board informed of important District activities
CAP	Compliance Assurance Program
CARS	Convertible Auction Rate Securities
CCCCO	California Community College Chancellor's Office
CCLC	Community College League of California
COA	College of Alameda
COD	Common Origination and Disbursement
CTE	Career Technical Education
DAC	District Administrative Center
DAS	District Academic Senate
DE	Distance Education

DEC	District Education Committee
DFC	District wide Facilities Committee
DGS	District General Services
DR	District Response
DSP	Disabled Service
DTC	District Technology Committee
DW	District Wide
EMP	Education Master Plan
EVC	Executive Vice Chancellor
FCA	Facility Conditions Assessment
FF&E	Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment
FTEF	Full Time Equivalent Faculty
FTES	Full Time Equivalent Student
FUSION	Facilities Utilization Space Inventory Options Net
FY	Fiscal Year
GASB	Governmental Accounting Standards Board
GAT	Grants Administration Team
HR	Human Resources
HVAC	Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning
IPB	Institutional Planning Budget
IR	Institutional Research
IT	Information Technology
ITIL	Information Technology Infrastructure Library
JD	Job Description
JPA	Joint Powers Agreement
LAO	Legislative Analyst Office
LC	Laney College

LED	Light Emitting Diode
LOC	Letter of Credit
LRC	Learning Resource Center
M&O	Maintenance and Operations
MEP	Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing
MIS	Management Information Systems
MLDAP	Management Leadership Development Academy Peralta
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
PBC	Planning and Budgeting Council
PBC	Planning Budget Committee
PBI	Planning and Budgeting Integration
PBIM	Planning and Budgeting Implementation Model
PCCD	Peralta Community College District
PFT	Peralta Federation of Teachers
PMO	Project Management Office
R2T4	Return to Title IV
RATF-CS	Resource Allocation Task Force—Classified Staff
RBC	Royal Bank of Canada
RBOA	Retirement Board of Authority
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Qualifications
SAS	School Account Statement
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TCO	Total Cost of Ownership
VC	Vice Chancellor
VCFA	Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration

VOIP	Voice Over IP
WAN	Wide Area Network
WDCE	Workforce Development and Continuing Education
WSCH	Weekly Student Contact Hours

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**SECTION II**

**RESPONSES TO**

**COLLEGE RECOMMENDATIONS**



## Statement on Report Preparation

Merritt College submitted an Institutional Self-Evaluation Report in Support of Reaffirmation of Accreditation Spring 2015 to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in January 2015. An ACCJC External Evaluation Team conducted a site visit March 9-12, 2015 and released the findings of the visiting team in a final External Evaluation Report dated May 8, 2015. In a June 29, 2015 ACCJC Action Letter, the College President was notified that “The Commission took action to **impose Probation** and require the College to submit a Follow-Up Report by October 1, 2016. The Report will be followed by a visit by an external evaluation team.” (ACCJC Action Letter, June 29, 2015, p. 1)

*“Probation is imposed due to District and College deficiencies.”* The ACCJC Action Letter also stated that *“...the Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the College has resolved the deficiencies which led to noncompliance and that it meets the Eligibility Requirements and Standards. The Report should address the College, District Recommendations and the Commission Concern...”* (ACCJC Action Letter, June 29, 2015, p.1.)

The Commission’s Action Letter to Merritt College specified responses to District Recommendations 1 through 8, College Recommendations 1 through 9, Eligibility Requirements 10, 18, and 19, and Commission Concern 1. [[SRP.1](#)]

Merritt College established an 18-month timeline for its Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR). The timeline includes the months following the October 2016 site visit through the Commission’s Action in January 2017. The 18-month timeline is made up of five action periods: 1) Pre-Planning; 2) Action Period (Response and Initial Drafting); 3) Refinement and Modifications; 4) Board Approval; and, 5) ACCJC Review.

The College was resolute and steadfast throughout all phases of the AFR timeline in its efforts to demonstrate how the College has addressed the concerns expressed in the ACCJC External Evaluation Report (5/8/2015), resolved deficiencies to meet the ACCJC Standards cited in the nine College Recommendations, and in outlining the actions taken to meet Eligibility Requirements 10, 18, 19, federal regulations regarding institution-set standards for student achievement, and Title IV compliance. [[SRP.2](#)]

### Pre-Planning: July to August 2015

July 2015, the College President initiated weekly pre-planning meetings with Merritt’s Leadership Group (College President, Academic Senate President, Classified Senate President, and the Associated Students of Merritt College President—who did not participate due to another commitment) and a Project Manager Consultant. The Leadership Group: 1) discussed actions needed to address deficiencies and concerns cited in the June 29, 2015 ACCJC Action Letter and the External Evaluation Team Report (5/8/2015); 2) proposed a process for identifying a faculty lead for the project; 3) drafted a proposed Accreditation

Follow-Up Report (AFR) Committee organizational structure; and 4) developed a recommended timeline for the preparation of the report. [[SRP.3](#)]

August 2015, the College President communicated via e-mail to the campus community the purpose of the Leadership Group preliminary planning meetings on accreditation and invited other faculty and staff to join the group. College constituencies were also invited to attend an August 6, 2015 meeting for an update on work completed to date. Eighteen faculty, administrators, and staff participated in the meeting. An overview of the preliminary plans was presented, a copy of the External Evaluation Team Report (5/8/2015) was circulated, and possible approaches to addressing the nine College Recommendations were discussed. [[SRP.4](#); [SRP.5](#)]

President Norma Ambriz-Galaviz presented the Leadership Groups planning efforts and accomplishments again at the opening of the Merritt College Flex Day professional development program on August 20, 2015. The president also introduced to the campus community Dr. Audrey Trotter as the lead faculty member who had accepted the Chair responsibilities for the Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) and Dinh Truong, who would be serving as the AFR Project Manager Consultant.

That same day, the President convened a follow-up Leadership Group meeting with the new AFR faculty Chair and other faculty and staff. Discussion at the meeting focused primarily on the need and importance of appointing a second faculty AFR Co-Chair. The appointment of a Co-Chair would ensure ongoing mentoring of faculty in accreditation leadership roles and maintain a pipeline for faculty to acquire ongoing experience in accreditation processes. The group also agreed upon the appointment of an AFR Writer/Editor.

By August 31, 2015, the Merritt College Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) Core Team was formed: Dr. Audrey Trotter, Co-Chair, Dr. Mia Kelly, Co-Chair, Dinh Truong, Project Manager Consultant and Jennifer Lough Kennedy Writer/Editor Consultant. The AFR Core Team reported to and met with the College President during bi-weekly meetings throughout the Accreditation Follow-Up Report process. [[SRP.6](#)]

#### Action Period (Response and Initial Drafting): September to December 2015

The AFR Core Team spent the month of September 2015 planning and developing an Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) Planning Framework designed to engage the campus community as a whole and specific faculty, administrators, and staff in the preparation of a successful accreditation report. The framework was designed with a two-fold purpose in mind. First, to engage a broad base of college constituencies in implementing institutional corrective actions to address noncompliant deficiencies in order to meet the College Recommendation ACCJC Standards. Second, to increase the knowledge base of a new cadre of college wide constituencies in accreditation policies, procedures, and guidelines.

As the AFR Core Team completed the design of the AFR Planning Framework the need for two additional Core Team positions was identified: an AFR Evidence Collection Coordinator position which was filled by Maril M. Bull, and an AFR Webpage Coordinator position filled

by Nghiem Thai. Written job descriptions were developed and approved by the College President for each of the four AFR Core Team members and the two AFR Coordinators, as well. [[SRP.7](#)]

The Accreditation Follow-Up Report Planning Framework developed by the AFR Core Team established an AFR Steering Committee comprised of a Faculty Co-Lead, Classified Co-Lead, an Administrator Liaison, and Sub-Committee Team Members for each of the nine College Recommendations. The AFR Core Team facilitated AFR Steering Committee meetings twice a month during the fall 2015 and the spring and fall 2016 semesters. [[SRP.8](#); [SRP.9](#)]

The AFR Core Team worked diligently to develop a specific Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) Response Framework tailored to guide the work of each of the College Recommendation Sub-Committees in drafting College Recommendation written narrative responses. The three sections of the AFR Response Framework are as follows:

- Section 1: College Recommendation language and related noncompliant standards and questions from the *ACCJC Guide to Evaluating Institutions, 2013* to support the investigation and gap analysis conducted by each Sub-Committee
- Section 2: Accreditation Report References (i.e. Merritt College External Evaluation Report (5/8/2015); Merritt College Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015, and examples of Sources of Evidence
- Section 3: Related College information such as Shared Governance Committees related to the College Recommendation and the names of the Sub-Committee Co-Leads, Administrator Co-Lead(s) and Sub-Committee Team Members. [[SRP.10](#)]

The AFR Core Team hosted a September 23, 2015 college wide meeting for the Merritt community to facilitate broad-based dialogue on the College's Accreditation Follow-Up Report processes and to disseminate resource information on the AFR Response Framework that would be used by the College Recommendation Sub-Committees in completing the AFR written narrative response drafts. More importantly, the AFR Core Team shared the guiding principles and core values that would serve as a foundation for all participating in the preparation of Merritt's Accreditation Follow-Up Report. [[SRP.11](#)]

On September 30, 2015, the AFR Core Team held a Work Group meeting with the AFR College Recommendation Sub-Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaisons. Required resource materials were disseminated and guidelines, instructions for conducting a gap analysis, expectations and timelines for convening Sub-Committee meetings, and due dates for the submission of the initial College Recommendation drafts were communicated. [[SRP.12](#)]

The first issue of the AFR monthly newsletter, *Accreditation Follow-Up Reports Updates!* which AFR Co-Chair, Dr. Mia Kelly volunteered to write, edit and disseminate, was distributed at this meeting and via e-mail to the campus community on this date, as well. The monthly AFR newsletter promoted AFR Core Team values of "Inspect What You Expect", transparency, and the positive trajectory for the College's Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

[\[SRP.13\]](#)

During the Work Group meeting, the AFR Webpage Coordinator, Nghiem Thai, shared the work he had commenced and accomplished in updating and restructuring the College's Accreditation web site, new links, the archiving of documents, the posting of new AFR resource materials, and specific links related to the new Accreditation Follow-Up Report planning framework. [\[SRP.14\]](#)

The AFR Core Team positively influenced College initiatives throughout the AFR planning periods, as well. For example, in September 2015, the AFR Core Team was successful in assuring the Radiologic Technology accreditation site visit team that the College had implemented satisfactory plans to address the nine ACCJC College Recommendations. In another instance, in October 2015, during the California Community College's Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI) Team visit to the College, the AFR Core Team was able to provide relevant information in support of future plans for the campus institutional effectiveness project. [\[SRP.15; SRP.16\]](#)

Furthermore, the AFR Core Team participated in Manager's meetings and collaborated with College administrators in implementing corrective actions needed to meet ACCJC College Recommendation Standards. The AFR Core Team also made a presentation to the Peralta Board of Trustees in November on the College's progress with its Accreditation Follow-Up Report. [\[SRP.17\]](#)

In November 2015, President Norma Ambriz-Galaviz introduced the consultant responsible for coordinating the written response to the District's eight Recommendations to the AFR Core Team. The AFR Core Team invited the District's consultant to participate in the AFR Steering Committee on December 2, 2015. [\[SRP.18\]](#)

At the close of the fall 2015 semester, the first AFR drafts were submitted to the AFR Core Team Writer/Editor. As each of the nine College Recommendation Sub-Committees completed initial drafts, the AFR Evidence Collection Coordinator, Maril Bull began the documentation and archival of College Recommendation evidence documents in a shared Dropbox.

Refinement and Modification (January to May 2016)

Spring 2016, the AFR Core Team continued its weekly planning meetings, bi-weekly meetings with the College president, twice monthly AFR Steering Committee meetings, dissemination of the AFR monthly newsletters, edits of the College Recommendation drafts, participation in College participatory governance committee meetings, and the documentation and archival of accreditation evidence documents.

During the January Flex Day professional development program, the AFR Core Team collaborated with the College Administrators in facilitating a presentation of the new, formalized written administrative procedures on: 1) Integrated Planning and Budgeting; 2) Educational Master Planning; 3) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment; and 4) Use of Data

in Planning and Decision Making. By request, a follow-up World Café Workshop was conducted on February 19, 2016. [[SRP.19](#)]

The AFR Core Team also continued its support of College initiatives during this period, as well. The Accreditation Follow-Up Report framework and Core Team Job Descriptions developed by the AFR Core Team were shared with the leads for the College Educational Master Plan committee and were utilized to formalize the structure and roles of Sub-Committee and team member roles for the College's Educational Master Plan 2015-2020 update project.

The Peralta Community College District Chancellor, Dr. Jowel C. Laguerre, participated in the AFR Steering Committee meeting on March 2, 2016. Dr. Laguerre commended the faculty, administrators, and staff for their engagement, commitment, and work in preparing the College's Accreditation Follow-Up Report and offered suggestions for strengthening the report and preparations for the October External Evaluation Team visit. [[SRP.20](#); [SRP.21](#)]

The Merritt AFR Co-Chairs, along with representatives of our sister colleges, participated in Accreditation Leads' Meetings led by the District Accreditation Consultant. Meeting participants shared strategies and reported on formatting guidelines, timelines, and updates on the written draft responses to the eight District Recommendations. [[SRP.22](#)]

In May 2016, the AFR Co-Chair and Project Manager Consultant participated in the College's End-of-the Year Planning Summit. The AFR Co-Chair's presentation provided participants with a snapshot of the work accomplished by faculty, administrators, staff, and students in support of the required Merritt College ACCJC Follow-Up Report over a 10-month period. In addition, an AFR progress report was presented at the last meeting of the District's Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC) meeting held on Friday, May 27, 2016. [[SRP. 23](#); [SRP.24](#)]

All in all, Merritt College faculty, administrators, staff, and students committed to and engaged in many Accreditation Follow-Up Report processes to implement the essential Corrective Actions required to meet ACCJC Standards and Eligibility Requirements. Throughout spring 2016, members of the AFR Core Team met with College Recommendation Co-Leads to refine drafts. Numerous versions edited versions of the written College Recommendation response narratives were completed. At the same time, other members of the AFR Core Team collaborated with the AFR Evidence Collection and Web Page Coordinators to accurately archive and hyperlink evidence documents.

A Merritt Accreditation Finalization and Validation (F&V) Team was convened at a meeting on June 7, 2016. The group was charged with reading, reviewing, and validating the accuracy of written content in the first collated draft of the College's AFR Recommendation response narratives. Anita M. Black, faculty emeritus, and Walter Johnson, classified staff, served as F&V Team Co-Chairs. Other team members included, faculty, administrators, and staff. [[SRP.25](#); [SRP.26](#)]

The F&V team forwarded recommended changes that were incorporated into a second draft that was disseminated at the next F&V meeting of the team June 20, 2016. At the end of the meeting, team members authenticated and signed off on the drafts of seven of the nine College Recommendations. The remaining two College Recommendation drafts underwent further editing and refinement during summer 2016. [[SRP.27](#); [SRP.28](#)]

#### Board Approval (June to September 2016)

Merritt's Accreditation and Follow-Up Report penultimate draft was completed at the end of July 2016. The District's Report was inserted into Section 1 of the College's AFR the last week of August. The complete report was proofread and finalized for an initial penultimate draft printing and dissemination during the August 2016 District and College Flex Day professional development programs. [[SRP.29](#)]

The Merritt College Accreditation Follow-Up Report was submitted to the Peralta Community College Board of Trustees in early September for final Board approval at their September 13, 2016 meeting. The Merritt College October 1, 2016 Accreditation Follow-Up Report was then printed, bound and prepared for submission to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges by Friday, September 30, 2016. [[SRP.30](#)]

#### ACCJC Review (October 2016)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team visit is scheduled for October 2016.



## Evidence for Statement on Report Preparation

Document Number	Document	Link
SRP.1	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Action Letter, June 29, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.1-Accrediting-Commission-for-Community-Junior-Colleges-ACCJC-Action-Letter-June-29-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.1-Accrediting-Commission-for-Community-Junior-Colleges-ACCJC-Action-Letter-June-29-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.2	Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) 18-Month Timeline, September 28, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.2-Accreditation-Follow-Up-Report-AFR-18-Month-Timeline-September-28-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.2-Accreditation-Follow-Up-Report-AFR-18-Month-Timeline-September-28-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.3	ACCJC Recommendation Preliminary Committee Meeting Notes, July 27, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.3-ACCJC-Recommendation-Preliminary-Committee-Meeting-Notes-July-27-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.3-ACCJC-Recommendation-Preliminary-Committee-Meeting-Notes-July-27-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.4	President's Email Invitation to Accreditation Meetings, August 4, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.4-Presidents-Email-Invitation-to-Accreditation-Meetings-August-4-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.4-Presidents-Email-Invitation-to-Accreditation-Meetings-August-4-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.5	ACCJC Recommendation Preliminary Workgroup Meeting Notes, August 6, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.5-ACCJC-Recommendation-Preliminary-Workgroup-Meeting-Notes-August-6-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.5-ACCJC-Recommendation-Preliminary-Workgroup-Meeting-Notes-August-6-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.6	President and AFR Core Team Meeting Agendas, September 2015-June 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/SRP.6-President-and-AFR-Core-Team-Meeting-Agendas-September-2015-June-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/SRP.6-President-and-AFR-Core-Team-Meeting-Agendas-September-2015-June-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.7	AFR Core Team Job Descriptions	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.7-AFR-Core-Team-Job-Descriptions.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.7-AFR-Core-Team-Job-Descriptions.pdf</a>
SRP.8	AFR Steering Committee Meeting Agendas, October 2015-May 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.8-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Agendas-October-2015-May-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.8-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Agendas-October-2015-May-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.9	AFR Steering Committee Meeting Presentations, October 2015-April 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.9-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Presentations-October-2015-April-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.9-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Presentations-October-2015-April-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.10	AFR Response and Writing Template, Sub-Committee for College Recommendation 1, September 28, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.10-AFR-Response-Writing-Template-Sub-Committee-for-College-Recommendation-1-September-28-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.10-AFR-Response-Writing-Template-Sub-Committee-for-College-Recommendation-1-September-28-2015.pdf</a>

SRP.11	AFR College Wide Meeting Agenda and Presentation, September 23, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.11-AFR-College-Wide-Meeting-Agenda-Presentation-September-23-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.11-AFR-College-Wide-Meeting-Agenda-Presentation-September-23-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.12	AFR Work Group Meeting Agenda and Presentation, September 30, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.12-AFR-Work-Group-Meeting-Agenda-Presentation-September-30-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.12-AFR-Work-Group-Meeting-Agenda-Presentation-September-30-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.13	AFR Newsletter, <i>Accreditation Follow-Up Report Updates</i> , v. 1, no. 1, September 30, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.13-AFR-Newsletter-Accreditation-Follow-Up-Report-Updates-v.-1-no.-1-September-30-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.13-AFR-Newsletter-Accreditation-Follow-Up-Report-Updates-v.-1-no.-1-September-30-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.14	AFR Website	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.14-AFR-Website.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.14-AFR-Website.pdf</a>
SRP.15	Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology Accreditation Site Visit Letter, August 31, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.15-Joint-Review-Committee-on-Education-in-Radiologic-Technology-Accreditation-Site-Visit-Letter-August-31-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.15-Joint-Review-Committee-on-Education-in-Radiologic-Technology-Accreditation-Site-Visit-Letter-August-31-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.16	Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative PRT Interview Schedule, AFR Summary, and AFR Timeline	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/SRP.16-Institutional-Effectiveness-Partnership-Initiative-PRT-Interview-Schedule-AFR-Summary-AFR-Timeline.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/SRP.16-Institutional-Effectiveness-Partnership-Initiative-PRT-Interview-Schedule-AFR-Summary-AFR-Timeline.pdf</a>
SRP.17	AFR Board of Trustees Meeting Presentation, November 10, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.17-AFR-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Presentation-November-10-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.17-AFR-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Presentation-November-10-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.18	AFR Steering Committee Meeting Agenda and Presentation, December 2, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.18-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Agenda-Presentation-December-2-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.18-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Agenda-Presentation-December-2-2015.pdf</a>
SRP.19	AFR Flex Day Workshop Presentation, January 22, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.19-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-January-22-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.19-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-January-22-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.20	AFR Steering Committee Meeting Agenda and Minutes, March 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.20-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-March-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.20-AFR-Steering-Committee-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-March-2-2016.pdf</a>
SRP. 21	AFR Newsletter, <i>Accreditation Follow-Up Report Updates</i> , v. 1, no. 7, March 31, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.21-AFR-Newsletter-Accreditation-Follow-Up-Report-Updates-v.-1-no.-7-March-31-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.21-AFR-Newsletter-Accreditation-Follow-Up-Report-Updates-v.-1-no.-7-March-31-2016.pdf</a>

SRP.22	PCCD Accreditation Leads' Meeting Minutes, March-May 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.22-PCCD-Accreditation-Leads-Meeting-Minutes-March-May-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.22-PCCD-Accreditation-Leads-Meeting-Minutes-March-May-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.23	AFR Year-End Spring 2016 Planning Summit Presentation, May 13, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.23-AFR-Year-End-Spring-2016-Planning-Summit-Presentation-May-13-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.23-AFR-Year-End-Spring-2016-Planning-Summit-Presentation-May-13-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.24	PCCD Planning and Budgeting Council Meeting Agenda and MC AFR Presentation, May 27, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/SRP.24-PCCD-Planning-Budgeting-Council-Meeting-Agenda-MC-AFR-Presentation-May-27-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/SRP.24-PCCD-Planning-Budgeting-Council-Meeting-Agenda-MC-AFR-Presentation-May-27-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.25	AFR Finalization and Validation Team Meeting Agenda, June 7, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.25-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Agenda-June-7-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.25-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Agenda-June-7-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.26	AFR Finalization and Validation Team Meeting Notes, June 7, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.26-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Notes-June-7-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.26-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Notes-June-7-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.27	AFR Finalization and Validation Team Meeting Agenda, June 20, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.27-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Agenda-June-20-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/SRP.27-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Agenda-June-20-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.28	AFR Finalization and Validation Team Meeting Notes, June 20, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.28-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Notes-June-20-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.28-AFR-Finalization-Validation-Team-Meeting-Notes-June-20-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.29	AFR Flex Day Workshop Agenda, August 19, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.29-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Agenda-August-19-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.29-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Agenda-August-19-2016.pdf</a>
SRP.30	PCCD Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda and Minutes, September 13, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.30-PCCD-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-September-13-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/SRP.30-PCCD-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-September-13-2016.pdf</a>

## **List of Key Individuals Involved in Report Preparation**

### **Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) Core Team and Coordinators**

#### AFR Core Team

**Audrey Trotter, Ph.D.**, Faculty, AFR Co-Chair & Co-Editor (through June 2016), Director, Learning Center, Academic Senate, College Council

**Mia Kelly, Ed.D.**, Faculty, AFR Co-Chair, A.D. Nursing, Tenure Track Faculty Facilitator

**Dinh Truong**, AFR Project Manager Consultant

**Jennifer Lough Kennedy**, AFR Writer/Editor Consultant

#### AFR Coordinators

**Maril M. Bull**, Classified Staff, Staff Assistant, Landscape Horticulture, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC), Classified Senate Public Information Officer

**Nghiem Thai**, Librarian, AFR Website Coordinator, Chair, Library, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD)

### **Merritt College Accreditation Liaison Officer**

**Jeffrey Lamb, Ph.D.**, Vice President of Instruction (April 2016 to present)

**Wise Allen, Ph.D.**, Interim Vice President of Instruction (October 2015 - February 2016)

### **Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) College Recommendation Steering Committee Co-Leads, Administrator Liaisons and Sub-Committee Team Members**

#### **College Recommendation 1**

##### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaison

**Christopher Grampp**, Faculty, Co-Lead, Chair, Landscape Horticulture

**Kinga Sidzinska**, Classified Staff, Co-Lead, Science Lab Coordinator/Biology & Microbiology, Classified Senate, College Budget Committee (CBC)

**Lilia Chavez, Ed.D.**, Administrator Liaison, Dean of Special Programs and Grants (Effective April 2016); as the Director of Student Activities and Campus Life (through March 2016)

##### AFR Sub-Committee Team Members

**Tanya Ilarde**, Transfer Counselor, Co-Chair, Counseling, Academic Senate, College Budget Committee (CBC), College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)

**Lawrence Lee**, Faculty, Landscape Horticulture, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

**Steve Pantell, Ph.D.**, Counselor/Articulation Officer, Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC)

**Juana Martinez-Rodriguez**, Adjunct

**Anthony Powell**, Faculty, Psychology, Chair, Social Sciences

**Thomas Renbarger, Ph.D.**, Faculty, Physics, Anatomy, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)

**Elaine Wallace**, Faculty, Administration of Justice, Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC)

## **College Recommendation 2**

### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaison

**Sheila Metcalf-Tobin**, Faculty, Co-Lead, Co-Chair, Arts, Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC)

**Doris Hankins**, Classified Staff, Co-Lead, Staff Assistant, Office of Instruction, College Council, District Education Committee (DEC)

**Rachel Antrobus**, Administrator Liaison, Interim Dean of Academic Pathways and Success (through April 2016)

### AFR Sub-Committee Team Members

**Maril M. Bull**, Classified Staff, Staff Assistant, Landscape Horticulture, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC), Classified Senate Public Information Officer

**Jon Murphy**, Ed.D., College Nurse

## **College Recommendation 3**

### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaisons

**Anita M. Black**, Adjunct Faculty, Faculty Emeritus, Co-Lead, Business & CIS/Cyber Security, Academic Senate

**Walter Johnson Jr.**, Classified Staff, Co-Lead, Instructional Assistant, Learning Center CAI Lab/Electronic Classroom, Classified Senate, Merritt Technology Committee (MTC)

**Dativa Del Rosario, Ed.D.**, Administrator Liaison, Director of Business and Administrative Services, College Budget Committee (CBC) Co-Chair, College Facilities Committee (CFC) Co-Chair, District Facilities Committee (DFC)

**Tina Vasconcellos, Ph.D.**, Administrator Liaison, Dean of Academic Pathways and Student Success, Division I, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

### AFR Sub-Committee Team Members

**Alexis Alexander**, Faculty, Learning Resources (Disability Services Program) and Distance Education Coordinator

**Cie-Jae (Rose) Allen**, EOPS Counselor, Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC), College Council

**Ray Chamberlain III Ph.D.**, Faculty, Chemistry

**Adolfo (Mario) Rivas**, Ph.D., Faculty, Psychology, Academic Senate President, College Budget Committee (CBC), College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

**Nghiem Thai**, Librarian, AFR Website Coordinator, Chair, Library, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD)

**Charlotte Victorian**, Classified Staff, Bursar, Business Office, Classified Senate, College Budget Committee (CBC)

**Mary Louise Zernicke**, Faculty, Director, Nutrition and Dietetics Program, Merritt Technology Committee (MTC) Chair, College Council, District Technology Committee (DTC)

#### **College Recommendation 4**

##### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaisons

**Siri Brown, Ph.D.**, Faculty, Co-Lead, Chair, Ethnic Studies and Africana Center, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD)

**Samantha Kessler**, Classified Staff, Co-Lead, Research and Planning Officer, Classified Senate, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

**Tina Vasconcellos, Ph.D.**, Administrator Liaison, Dean of Academic Pathways and Student Success, Division I, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

**Rosemary Delia, Ed.D.**, Administrator Liaison, Dean of Workforce Development and Applied Sciences, Division II, Merritt Technology Committee (MTC), District Technology Committee (DTC)

##### AFR Sub-Committee Team Members

**Jennifer Briffa**, Faculty, Child Development

**Mary Ciddio**, DSPS Counselor

**Charity Clay, Ph.D.**, Faculty, Sociology, Coordinator, Sankofa Program

**Isela Gonzalez-Santana**, Faculty, Co-Chair, English, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), Coordinator, Puente Program

**Jayi Thompson**, Faculty, Communications, Co-Chair, Arts

#### **College Recommendation 5**

##### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaisons

**Ann Elliott**, Faculty, Co-Lead, English, Learning Center Writing Across the Curriculum, (WRAC), Co-Chair, Basic Skills Initiative, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), Co-Chair, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), Academic Senate

**Frances Moy**, DSPS Counselor/Coordinator, Co-Lead

**Romeo Garcia**, Administrator Liaison, Interim Dean, Grants and Special Programs (through March 2016)

##### AFR Sub-Committee Team Members

**Samantha Kessler**, Classified Staff, Co-Lead, Research and Planning Officer, Classified Senate, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

**Arja McCray, Ph.D.**, Faculty, Chair, Biology, Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) Chair, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

**Maria Perez**, Classified Staff, Staff Assistant, Division II, Classified Senate, College Budget Committee (CBC)

**Thomas Renbarger, Ph.D.**, Faculty, Physics, Anatomy, Academic Senate, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)

### **College Recommendation 6**

#### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaisons

**Tina Vasconcellos, Ph.D.**, Administrator Liaison, Dean of Academic Pathways and Student Success, Division I, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

#### AFR Sub-Committee Team Members

**Susan Andrien**, Adjunct Faculty, English, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

**Clifton Coleman**, Classified Staff, Curriculum and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Specialist, Office of Instruction, Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC), Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

**Samantha Kessler**, Classified Staff, Research and Planning Officer, Classified Senate, College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council

### **College Recommendation 7**

#### AFR Steering Committee Co-Leads and Administrator Liaisons

**Christine Olsen**, Faculty, Co-Lead, Chair, Child Development, Chair, Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD)

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**Tae-Soon Park, Ph.D.**, Faculty, Chair, Mathematics, Academic Senate, College Budget Committee (CBC)

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College Recommendation 9

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## Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) Finalization & Validation Team

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## Response to College Recommendation 1

### College Recommendation 1

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standard, the Team recommends that the College develop and implement policy and procedures for systematically reviewing the college mission statement. (I.A.3)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

College Recommendation 1 centered on the importance of having systematic policies and procedures in place for the regular review of the college mission statement. This is critical in order to meet the requirements of ACCJC Standard I.A.3, which states: "...the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary."

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team stated that it was unable to find sufficient evidence that the College was adhering to its stated policy of reviewing its mission statement every six years. The Team "...found no evidence to indicate that such a cycle has been codified." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 29)

Although the College Council recommended changes to the mission statement in 2009, those changes were never formally adopted and approved by the Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees, as is the College's stated policy. Therefore, the Team concluded that prior to the most recent update of the mission statement (June 2014), the mission statement had not been updated since 2004. (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 29)

In addition to questioning the systematic review of the College's mission statement, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team also questioned whether or not a specific policy was in place to drive mission statement review, observing: "Based on the interviews and evidence provided, there is no specific policy or codified systematic process in place." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 30)

### **Response**

Merritt College recognizes the central importance of maintaining a relevant and vital mission statement that reflects the interests and needs of the community it serves and is broadly disseminated to and understood by all college constituencies. To this end, the AFR College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee conducted a gap analysis to investigate the policies and procedures that the College has historically used to review and revise the mission statement.

The AFR College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee's first task was to investigate the ACCJC External Evaluation Team's concerns that the College had not engaged in regular mission statement review. The following summarizes the Sub-Committee's findings

regarding the College’s mission statement review processes conducted between 2009 and 2014:

- In 2009, the College Council approved minor edits (e.g., a comma was added; the word “and” was added; and a sentence was rephrased). [CR1.1]
- In 2011-2012, the Accreditation Committee established a Mission Statement Sub-Committee, which, in turn, conducted a campus wide six-question survey on the Merritt College mission statement in September 2011. [CR1.2]
- In October 2011, the Mission Statement Sub-Committee disseminated the survey results to the Accreditation Committee and college wide community. The survey results revealed the following:
  - 65 percent of survey respondents felt that the current mission statement should remain the same or reformatted with bullet points
  - 90 percent of the respondents reported that their daily roles and responsibilities supported the current mission statement [CR1.3]
- In March 2012, the College Council approved the Accreditation Committee’s recommendation that based on the 2011-2012 survey results the mission statement remain “as is,” and that the mission statement be printed on the agenda of all governance committees. [CR1.4]
- In November 2013, the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) drafted a resolution to the College Council recommending a revision to the College’s mission statement. As a result, the College Council approved and submitted to the College President recommended minor changes to the Merritt College mission statement. [CR1.5; CR1.6]
- At the June 24, 2014 meeting of the Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees, the Board formally adopted the College’s new mission statement. [CR1.7]

The historical analysis conducted by the AFR College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee revealed that actions were taken between 2009 and 2014 to review the College mission statement. During this time period, the mission statement review process was initiated by one of several shared governance committees, including the College Council, the College Educational Planning Committee (CEMPC), or the Accreditation Committee, which is a standing committee. There was no single starting point or formalized procedure for initiating and implementing the mission statement review process.

Therefore, the Sub-Committee recommended one corrective action designed to solidify specific policies and codify systematic procedures for the College’s mission statement review process. The recommendation was also designed to meet the concerns of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and the ACCJC Standard cited. The corrective action recommended was as follows: Corrective Action 1: Formalizing Policies and Procedures for Systematically Reviewing the College Mission Statement. (I.A.3)

## **Corrective Action 1: Formalizing Policies and Procedures for Systematically Reviewing the College Mission Statement**

In order to address the deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and ACCJC Standard I.A.3, the AFR College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee developed and recommended a new revised structure and cycle for mission statement review. The new mission statement review process is based on the following four criteria:

- The mission statement review will be conducted every five (5) years in the spring of the academic year in which the Educational Master Plan (EMP) is updated
- The mission statement review will be conducted according to a clearly defined calendar and schedule
- The mission statement review will be initiated and coordinated by the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)
- The results of the mission statement review process will be broadly disseminated to all college constituencies and the community

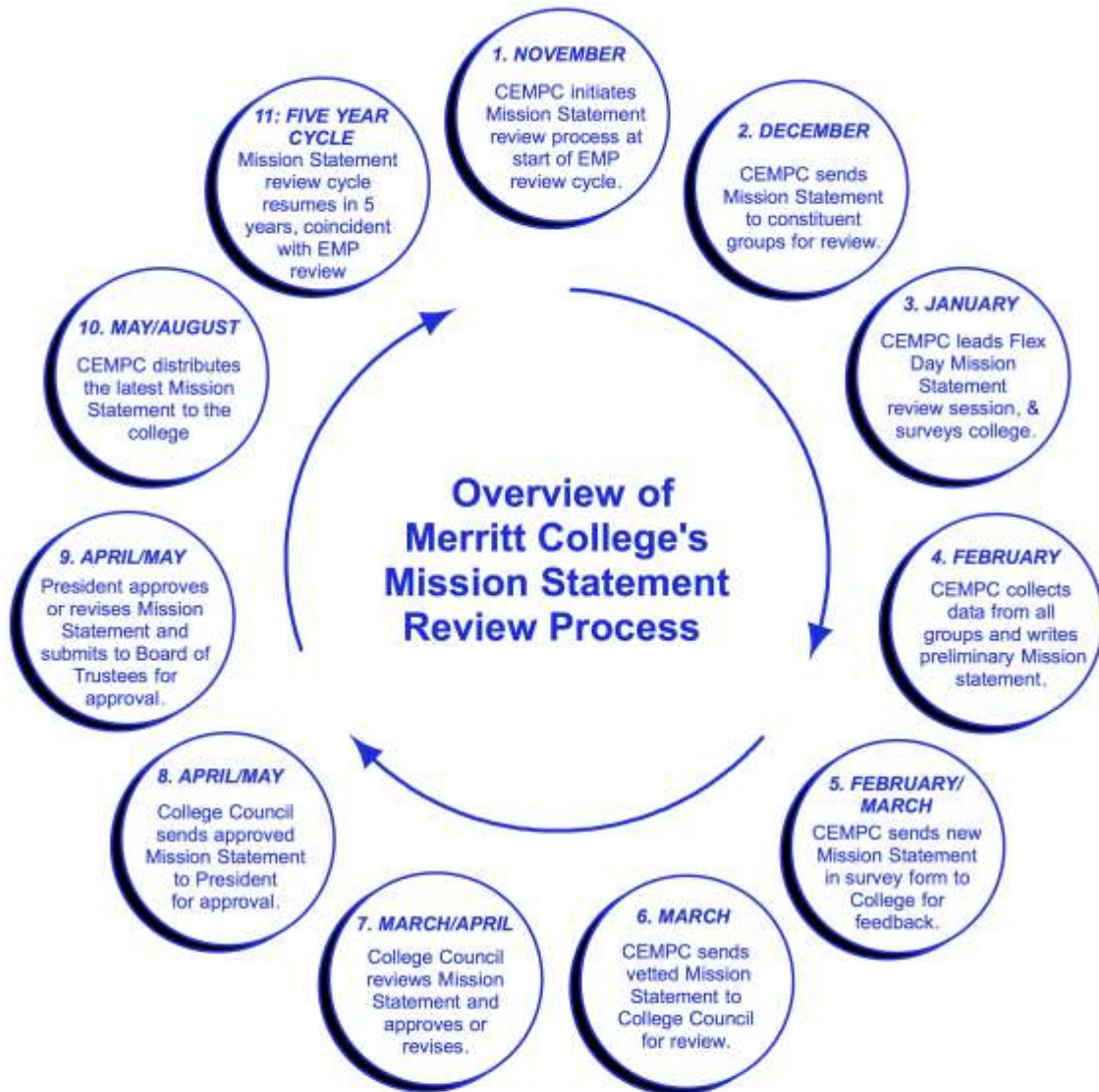
Initially, the College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee also recommended that the review and update of the mission statement coincide with the Program Review cycle, which takes place every three years. This recommendation was reflected in the by-laws of the College Education Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) and published in the College's newly adopted Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, which was approved by the College Council on February 2, 2016. The by-laws read as follows:

“Review and update the mission statement, in conjunction with the program review cycle (every three years), with college wide participation.” (p. 46) [[CR1.8](#)]

Upon further discussion and due to the spring 2016 update of the College's Educational Master Plan (EMP), a decision was made by CEMPC to shift the mission statement review process from a three-year cycle, coinciding with Program Review, to a five-year cycle, coinciding with the update of the College's Educational Master Plan (EMP). The Educational Master Plan (EMP) update provides an excellent opportunity for the College to review its core mission statement and to validate its continued relevance in light of ongoing and emerging student and community needs.

As a last measure, at the March 9, 2016 CEMPC meeting, the AFR College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee presented a flow-chart illustrating a 10-step process for mission review, from initiation to final approval and distribution, which will be conducted on a five-year cycle aligned to the College's EMP update. CEMPC approved the new procedures and five-year cycle and voted to adjust the committee's by-laws at the combined College Council and CEMPC meeting held on May 18, 2016. The revised by-laws will be published in the next update of Merritt's *Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*. [[CR1.9](#); [CR1.10](#)]

## Merritt College Mission Statement Review Flow Chart



Approved by CEMPC, March 9, 2016

## **Conclusion**

Merritt College meets the ACCJC Standard I.A.3 for College Recommendation 1, which calls for the College to review its mission statement on a regular basis and revise it as necessary, and has fully addressed the deficiencies and concerns of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team.

Merritt College developed and implemented a new, revised structure and five-year cycle which drives the review of the College mission statement and aligns with the update of the College's Educational Master Plan. The review of the mission statement is a 10-step process that is initiated by the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). This 10-step process was approved by CEMPC in March 2016 and adopted by the College Council in May 2016. This will serve as a formal and codified system for the review of the College mission statement going forward.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 1

Document Number	Document	Link
CR1.1	College Council Meeting Notes, March 11, 2009	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.1-College-Council-Meeting-Notes-March-11-2009.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.1-College-Council-Meeting-Notes-March-11-2009.pdf</a>
CR1.2	Mission Statement Survey, September 2011	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.2-Mission-Statement-Survey-September-2011.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.2-Mission-Statement-Survey-September-2011.pdf</a>
CR1.3	Mission Statement Survey Results, October 2011	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.3-Mission-Statement-Survey-Results-October-2011.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.3-Mission-Statement-Survey-Results-October-2011.pdf</a>
CR1.4	College Council Meeting Minutes, March 28, 2012	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR1.4-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-March-28-2012.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR1.4-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-March-28-2012.pdf</a>
CR1.5	CEMPC Resolution, November 4, 2013, and College Council Meeting Minutes, November 27, 2013	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.5-CEMPC-Resolution-November-4-2013-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-November-27-2013.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.5-CEMPC-Resolution-November-4-2013-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-November-27-2013.pdf</a>
CR1.6	College Council Meeting Minutes, March 26, 2014	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.6-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-March-26-2014.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.6-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-March-26-2014.pdf</a>
CR1.7	PCCD Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, June 24, 2014, item 20	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.7-PCCD-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Minutes-June-24-2014-item-20.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.7-PCCD-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Minutes-June-24-2014-item-20.pdf</a>
CR1.8	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016, p. 46	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.8-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-p.-46.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR1.8-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-p.-46.pdf</a>
CR1.9	CEMPC Meeting Minutes, March 9, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR1.9-CEMPC-Meeting-Minutes-March-9-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR1.9-CEMPC-Meeting-Minutes-March-9-2016.pdf</a>
CR1.10	College Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes, May 18, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR1.10-College-Council-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-May-18-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR1.10-College-Council-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-May-18-2016.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 2

### College Recommendation 2

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to increase institutional effectiveness, the Team recommends that the College implement an evidence-based process that links institutional planning and decision-making to the College mission. (I.A.4)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

In College Recommendation 2, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team focused on the importance of linking the College mission to institutional planning and decision-making processes, to ensure overall institutional effectiveness. The ACCJC External Evaluation Team stated that “The 2010 Merritt College Integrated Planning and Budgeting flow chart clearly shows...the college mission at the top of the hierarchy, suggesting that the college mission drives the planning process. A review of the Comprehensive Instructional Program Review (CIPR) template [previous Program Review template], however, does not show any linkages between planning and college mission.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 29)

Furthermore, evidence “...examined by the Team suggests that while some of the instructional programs may discuss their program mission during the planning process, the link between planning and the college mission is not clearly established.” The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also “...found other discrepancies and inconsistencies regarding the implementation of the CIPR and APU with integrated planning, and the budget allocation processes in relation to the centrality of the college mission.” (External Evaluation Report, pp. 29-30)

### **Response**

The College Mission is central to institutional planning, decision making, and resource allocation at Merritt College and, historically, has driven both annual and long-term planning. In response to the concerns and deficiencies identified by the External Evaluation Team, as well as ACCJC Standard I.A.4, the AFR College Recommendation 2 Sub-Committee conducted a gap analysis.

The purpose of the gap analysis was to determine the degree to which the mission drives institutional planning at Merritt, as well as the centrality of the mission’s role in influencing the choices the college makes. Furthermore, the Sub-Committee made it a priority to improve mechanisms for using the mission statement to foster a cohesive vision and sense of community among all stakeholders at Merritt.

Following this investigation, the AFR College Recommendation 2 Sub-Committee acknowledged that, in the College’s Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015, the College could have made a better case as to how mission is linked to overall college wide planning,



decision-making, and resource allocation. Subsequently, the Sub-Committee identified several areas for improvement. These include the need to:

- Reaffirm the central role of the mission in institutional planning
- Document the ways in which the mission is consistently used in College planning, decision-making, and resource allocation
- Increase the visibility of the mission statement campus wide to foster a cohesive vision and sense of community

The AFR College Recommendation 2 Sub-Committee's investigation and its identified areas of improvement lead to two recommendations for corrective actions, which are mapped to ACCJC Standard I.A.4: 1) Corrective Action 1: Reaffirm and Document the Central Role of the Mission in Planning, Decision-Making, and Resource Allocation; and 2) Corrective Action 2: Increase the Visibility of the Mission Statement College Wide. The two corrective actions are described below:

### **Corrective Action 1: Reaffirm and Document the Central Role of the Mission in Planning, Decision-Making, and Resource Allocation**

Merritt College has taken a number of important steps since the ACCJC External Evaluation Team visit in March 2015 to reaffirm and document the ways in which the mission plays a central role in institutional planning and decision making. First, as outlined in the College's written response to College Recommendation 1, the College took steps to investigate its recent and current practice, policies, and procedures for reviewing the College mission statement. As a result, the College created a new, systematic, and scheduled cycle for the review of the College mission that is aligned with the five-year update cycle of the Merritt College Educational Master Plan.

Secondly, the College mission statement served as a guide during the Annual College Planning Summit in September 2015. During the Summit, Merritt faculty, administrators and staff evaluated the institution's progress in meeting its goals from the previous year and set mission-based college strategic goals for the upcoming 2015-2016 academic year. [[CR2.1](#)]

In another instance, the College mission served as a launching point for the update of two key College planning and decision-making documents: 1) the *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*, adopted by the College Council on February 2, 2016; and 2) the *Merritt College Educational Master Plan 2015-2020*, adopted and approved at a combined meeting of the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), the key shared governance group at Merritt charged with overseeing strategic planning, and the College Council on May 18, 2016. [[CR2.2](#); [CR2.3](#)]

Most importantly, the reaffirmation of the central role of the mission in institutional planning, decision-making, and resource allocation occurred during the 2015-2016 Program Review cycle. For this cycle, the District updated its Program Review template. The new Program Review template explicitly requires College instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units to justify how their programs and budgetary

requests link to the college mission. The Program Review narrative description section now requires one to include “a description of how the department, program or administrative unit aligns with the college mission statement. [[CR2.4](#)]

All instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units at the College completed a Program Review in 2015-2016, using this mission-centered planning document. The mission statement will continue to play a central role in integrated planning, decision making and resource allocation when the College conducts its Annual Program Updates (APUs) in non-Program Review years. [[CR2.5](#)]

### **Corrective Action 2: Increase the Visibility of the Mission Statement College Wide**

Historically, Merritt College has made concerted efforts to increase the visibility and awareness of the College mission statement among all constituencies in the community. The College has and continues to promote the visibility of the mission in several ways:

- Merritt’s goal of including the College mission statement in all college publications (e.g., the college catalog, class schedule, and college brochures) and will continue to ensure that the mission is included on printed college materials. [[CR2.6](#)]
- In March 2012, the College Council approved a recommendation to print the College mission statement on all participatory governance committee meeting agendas. While several governance committees adhered to this recommended guideline, overall the new guideline was not consistently followed.
- In 2015-2016, therefore, as a result of the efforts of the AFR College Recommendation 1 Sub-Committee and AFR College Recommendation 2 Sub-Committee, the request for all college participatory governance committees to include the mission on their meeting agendas was reiterated. [[CR2.7](#); [CR2.8](#)]
- In fall 2015, the College Recommendation 2 Sub-Committee ensured that the mission statement was placed in the footer of the College’s website. [[CR2.9](#)]
- The new *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*, approved by the College Council in February 2016, requests that participatory governance committees utilize a standard template for meeting agendas and minutes, and include the College mission statement on meeting agendas. [[CR2.10](#)]

As a result of these combined efforts, the College mission statement is visible and documented in Merritt’s publications, the College’s website, and on the meeting agendas of participatory governance committees. In this way, the mission is consistently and systematically made available to college constituencies and the general public.

### **Conclusion**

Merritt College meets the ACCJC Standard I.A.4 and has fully addressed the concerns of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team. The College has documented policies, procedures, and guidelines that clearly link institutional planning, decision-making, and resource allocation to the College mission. In addition, the College has established viable practices to ensure the

ongoing visibility of the mission in its printed and online publications and on all participatory governance meeting agendas, as well.

Lastly, the College's efforts to respond to College Recommendation 2 served as an impetus for institutionalizing procedures and practices that demonstrate how the College mission plays a central role in shaping institutional effectiveness.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 2

Document Number	Document	Link
CR2.1	College Assessment and Strategic Planning Session, September 18, 2015, and Strategic Goals & Objectives, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR2.1-College-Assessment-Strategic-Planning-Session-September-18-2015-Strategic-Goals-Objectives-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR2.1-College-Assessment-Strategic-Planning-Session-September-18-2015-Strategic-Goals-Objectives-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR2.2	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.2-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.2-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf</a>
CR2.3	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR2.3-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR2.3-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf</a>
CR2.4	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.4-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.4-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR2.5	2015-2016 Completed Program Reviews	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR2.5-2015-2016-Completed-Program-Reviews.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR2.5-2015-2016-Completed-Program-Reviews.pdf</a>
CR2.6	College Catalog, p. 15, and Brochure	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.6-College-Catalog-p.-15-Brochure.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.6-College-Catalog-p.-15-Brochure.pdf</a>
CR2.7	College Council Minutes, March 28, 2012	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.7-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-March-28-2012.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.7-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-March-28-2012.pdf</a>
CR2.8	Mission Statement on Agendas	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.8-Mission-Statement-on-Agendas.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.8-Mission-Statement-on-Agendas.pdf</a>
CR2.9	Mission Statement on Website	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.9-Mission-Statement-on-Website.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.9-Mission-Statement-on-Website.pdf</a>
CR2.10	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016, p. 27	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.10-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-p.-27.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR2.10-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-p.-27.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 3

### College Recommendation 3

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standards, the Team recommends that the College implement systematic and evidence-based integrated planning processes that show clear linkages between planning, program review, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment, and resource allocations; delineates the role of faculty, staff, administrators, and students participating in the process; and “closes the loop” through ongoing evaluation of the processes and the impact on student learning and achievement. The Team further recommends that the College put in place institutional structures that can sustain and stabilize the planning process. (I.B.1-6; II.A.2.a; II.B.3.c; II.B.4; II.C.2; III.A.6; III.B.2.b; III.C.2; III.D.4; IV.A.2.a-b)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

In College Recommendation 3, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team found insufficient evidence of systematic integrated planning processes at Merritt College, at the institution, department, and program levels. According to the Team, “...there is not clear evidence of an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation and integrated planning...” (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 31) The Team said that it “...was not provided clear evidence that the steps outlined in the planning flow chart [presented in Merritt’s Self Evaluation Report, Spring 2015, p. 93] are followed on a regular basis.” (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 32)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also found that key institutional planning documents had not been updated and certain core planning processes had only recently been implemented. The College’s Self Evaluation Report Spring 2015 specified that the Educational Master Plan (EMP) would be updated by June 2015, “...however, no evidence was provided of any ongoing activities to support this initiative. Additionally, no evidence was provided to show that the College conducted the annual EMP reviews or any progress made on the [EMP 2009-2015] strategies.” (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 31)

Furthermore, in its examination of the College’s comprehensive program review processes, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team stated that “No evidence was provided to demonstrate that the College has fully completed a systematic and comprehensive assessment of all instructional and non-instructional programs... Though the evidence provided during the visit brought clarity to the process, it did not suggest a level of proficiency throughout the College.” (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 32)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also expressed concerns about the linkages between integrated planning, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment, and resource allocation. According to the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), “Merritt College provided limited evidence that engagement in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to ensure the currency and measurement of student learning outcomes is taking place.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 42)

The Team went on to say, "...the evidence provided regarding (SLOs) partially supports the statement [in the College's Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015] that 'The College regularly assesses SLO and institutional processes.'" However, the SLO information found in Taskstream "...revealed limited participation across all courses and programs..." (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 33) Additionally, the Team stated that there is no "...clear link between the assessment of progress...and the resource allocation process for the college." (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 31)

An additional area of concern was the need to demonstrate the role of key stakeholders (faculty, administrators, staff and students) in systematic integrated planning, assessment, prioritization of resource allocation requests, and ongoing evaluation of institutional processes. The ACCJC External Evaluation Team concluded that "Although there is some dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes...such dialogue is not widespread or ongoing." The Team also noted that "Interviews with key individuals on campus indicated that dialogue regarding data and institutional improvement occurs, but the College has not adequately or intentionally documented these dialogues." (External Evaluation Report 5/8/15, p. 34)

Moreover, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team did not find adequate evidence to show that the College does due diligence in terms of evaluating its integrated planning processes and the impact of those integrated planning processes on student learning and achievement. According to the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15) (p. 73):

*"After the Team reviewed all College documents, results of interviews with a variety of college personnel, and the review of statements made by the college in the college Self-Evaluation Report, the Team concluded that all departments have not yet conducted comprehensive reviews and planning activities, which includes assessment of identified improvement. As well, an overall evaluation of the College's integrated planning process has not yet been conducted."*

Finally, College Recommendation 3 and the ACCJC External Evaluation Report (5/8/15) both accentuate the point that "...the College was not able to provide adequate and convincing evidence that it has completed a full cycle of planning and has 'closed the loop' by evaluating and re-evaluating its planning processes, ensuring that planning is integrated with resource allocation, is systematic, evidence-based, and has led to institutional improvements." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 32) Above all, the deficiencies cited in College Recommendation 3 and the ACCJC External Evaluation Report (5/8/15) underscore the need for Merritt to demonstrate that institutional structures are in place to stabilize and sustain integrated planning and budgeting processes that impact overall institutional effectiveness and student achievement.

## Response

Merritt College is fully committed to employing an effective evidence-based institutional planning model that is integrated, systematic, and responsive to the educational needs of its students and the surrounding community. Over the last year, Merritt has consistently and actively worked to re-establish, reconstitute, and formalize its core operational policies, procedures, and guidelines to meet the concerns expressed in the ACCJC External Evaluation Report (5/8/15) and the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 3.

In reviewing the concerns and deficiencies outlined in College Recommendation 3 and in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), the AFR College Recommendation 3 Sub-Committee conducted an extensive gap analysis. As part of this process, the Sub-Committee mapped the cited ACCJC Standards to key issues raised.

As a result of this research and analysis, the Sub-Committee recommended two major corrective actions, encompassing four important and interrelated areas of concern. The corrective actions were: 1) Corrective Action 1: Re-Establishing Systematic and Evidence-Based Integrated Planning and Budgeting Processes; and 2) Corrective Action 2: “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” by Evaluating Integrated Planning and Budgeting Processes.

The four interrelated areas of concern have been mapped to the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 3, as well as to those areas of concern identified in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), in order to ensure that the College has adequately addressed the primary issues and concerns raised by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team. These four areas of concerns are:

1. Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model—the need to re-establish systematic and evidence-based planning and budgeting processes (I.B.1, I.B.6, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.4)
2. Linkages to the IPB Model—the need to show clear linkages between planning, Program Review, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment and resource allocation (I.B.2, I.B.4, I.B.5, II.A.2.a, II.B.3.c)
3. Roles of Key Stakeholders in the IPB Processes—the need to delineate and document the role of faculty, administrators, staff and students participating in the IPB processes (I.B.1, II.A.2.a, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.2.b)
4. “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop”—the need to conduct ongoing evaluation of the College’s planning processes and institutional structures to improve student learning and achievement (I.B.3, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.4)

Over the last year, the Merritt College community has worked steadfastly to implement substantive changes related to the two broad corrective actions and the four interrelated areas of concern. The following sections describe major institutional improvements that have been made by the College in response to College Recommendation 3 and the related deficiencies cited in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15).

## **Corrective Action 1: Re-Establishing Systematic and Evidence-Based Integrated Planning and Budgeting Processes**

Merritt College's Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) College Recommendation 3 Sub-Committee accepted the challenge of investigating ACCJC concerns about the College's institutional planning processes. As part of this investigation, the Sub-Committee conducted a thorough analysis of Merritt's past and current practices regarding evidence-based integrated planning and budgeting and the related documentation of these efforts.

The AFR College Recommendation 3 Sub-Committee's gap analysis revealed that, while integrated planning and budgeting processes existed, there were gaps and inconsistencies in the use of these institutional processes and structures. In some cases, the Sub-Committee found that the annual integrated planning processes and calendar had simply not been followed. In other cases, as changes occurred in the College's administrative leadership team and shared governance committee chairs, new planning processes were sometimes introduced and implemented prior to establishing a clear understanding, assessment or use of the College's existing planning and budgeting processes. As a result, in some instances, certain planning processes remained dormant for periods of time and may not have been reviewed and updated. [[CR3.1](#)]

At the same time as the Sub-Committee was conducting its gap analysis, in fall 2015, the AFR Core Team recommended to the College president that Merritt re-establish, reconstitute, or, in other instances, create new formal written policies and administrative procedures related to four critical institutional issues: 1) Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB); 2) Educational Master Plan (EMP); 3) Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment; and 4) Use of Data in Planning and Decision-Making. [[CR3.2](#); [CR3.3](#)]

The joint efforts of the College president, AFR College Recommendation 3 Sub-Committee, administrators, and the AFR Core Team led to the undertaking of a major initiative to create formal, documented College administrative procedures documents to provide written guidelines for the four critical institutional issues. As part of this effort, Merritt College administrative procedures for integrated planning and budgeting structures and processes were developed by December 2015, establishing a renewed Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) model, aligned with the District's annual planning and budgeting calendar.

The new IPB model, along with the written administrative procedures for the other three areas, was presented to the campus wide community at the College's January 2016 Flex Day program, for the purposes of informing and gathering feedback from faculty, administrators, and staff. The four written administrative procedures documents were also presented again at a follow-up AFR workshop on February 19, 2016. [[CR3.4](#); [CR3.5](#)]

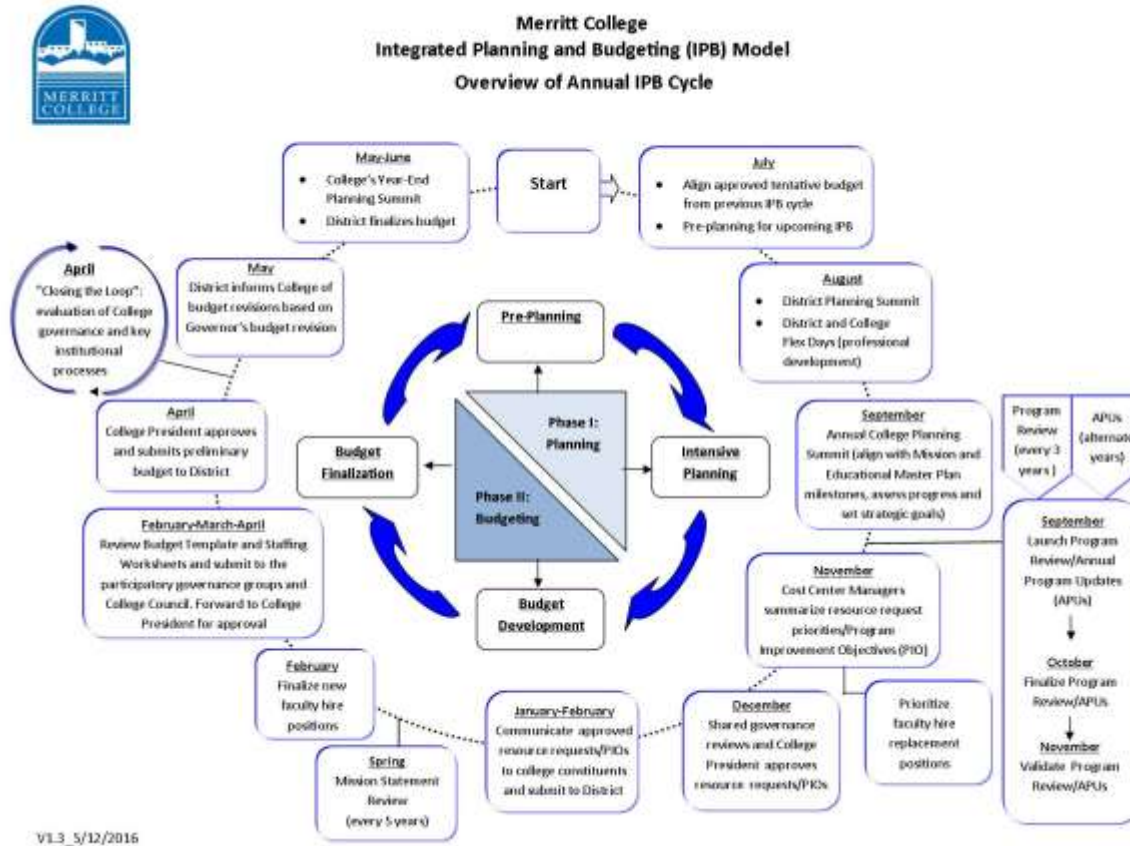
In addition to the four new College Administrative Procedures documents, to support the College's new, systematic, evidence-based IPB model, several other related improvement measures were also implemented during 2015-2016, including:

- Implementation of a new Program Review Template district wide (September 2015)



- Adoption of an updated Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook (February 2016)
- Completion of the update of the Merritt College Educational Master Plan 2015-2020 (April 2016)

The graphic on the following page provides an overview of the College’s IPB annual cycle:



### Interrelated Area of Concern 1: Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model

#### Systematic, Evidence-Based Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model:

Historically, Merritt College has followed an integrated planning and budgeting process, known as the Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model, with direct linkages to the District’s Planning and Budgeting Integrated Model (PBIM). The College introduced its first version of the IPB Model in the 2005-2006 academic year. [CR3.6]

The College refined and introduced an improved IPB model linked to the District PBIM in 2009-2010. During that same year, the College adapted the State Academic Senate’s evaluation survey on planning and budgeting processes. This survey was administered college wide in 2010 to assess and evaluate Merritt’s existing planning and budgeting processes and to support improvements in overall institutional planning. [CR3.7]

In June 2012, a Sub-Committee of the College Council, comprised of classified staff, faculty and administrators, was established to review Merritt’s IPB model, in order to clarify steps in the planning process and assure synchronization of the College and District calendars for planning and budgeting. The revised IPB model was presented during the College’s August 2012 Flex Day and presented to the College Council in September 2012. However, the 2012 IPB model was not voted upon or formally adopted by the College Council and forwarded as a recommendation to the College president, as required by College Council by-laws.

[\[CR3.8; CR3.9\]](#)

Unfortunately, in the years that followed, adherence to these integrated planning and budgeting processes was inconsistent, fragmented, and poorly documented. ACCJC College Recommendation 3 served as a catalyst, spurring the College to take a new look at how to stabilize institutional structures necessary to sustain integrated planning and budgeting processes and ongoing evaluation of those processes to support institutional effectiveness and student learning.

The newly adopted 2015-2016 Merritt College IPB Model provides a blueprint for a timely, evidence-based and systematic structure for planning and budgeting, with clear linkages, delineation of roles and “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” evaluation activities. The model also responds to the concerns expressed in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 3, and, more importantly, the needs of the faculty, administrators, staff, and students served by the College. The new planning framework is clear, current, user-friendly, and linked to a specific cycle and calendar, for easier implementation.

One of the key accomplishments of the 2015-2016 Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) effort was the adoption of a formal written integrated planning and budgeting administrative procedures document. The College’s Director of Business and Administrative Services was charged by the College president in November 2015 with the task of developing this IPB administrative procedures document, which was built upon the College’s 2012-2013 planning model, which was in use, but not formally approved by the College Council.

In January 2016, the first draft of the IPB written administrative procedures was refined by the Director of Business and Administrative Services, in collaboration with members of the AFR Core Team. Together, they clarified the College’s current practices and confirmed the college-level IPB calendar linkages to the District’s current annual IPB calendar.

The written 2016 Integrated Planning and Budgeting Administrative Procedures document included: 1) the expected outcome and rationale for the annual IPB cycle; 2) the intended participants; 3) an overview of the IPB cycle; 4) a detailed description of the IPB process; 5) references to related Board Administrative Procedures; and 6) references to Title 5 and ACCJC Standards. An annual calendar and a one-page graphic of the annual IPB cycle also accompanied this document. [\[CR3.10\]](#)

IPB Annual Planning and Budgeting Cycle:

Merritt College’s annual integrated planning and budgeting (IPB) cycle takes place within the larger context of the College and District Educational Master Plan (EMP) and is driven by the mission of the College, Program Review, SLO assessment, and resource allocation processes. Merritt’s annual IPB calendar follows the District’s July-to-June fiscal year and is intricately aligned to the District’s month-to-month calendar for planning and budgeting.

The new IPB annual cycle and calendar are divided into two phases of activities: 1) Phase I—Planning (July-December), which includes Pre-Planning and Intensive Planning; and 2) Phase 2—Budgeting (January-June), which includes Budget Development and Budget Finalization. A brief summary of the activities in each phase is provided below:

<b>Merritt College Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model Phases of the Annual Cycle and Calendar</b>
<b>Phase I—Planning (July-December)</b>
<p><u>Pre-Planning (July-August):</u> Pre-planning is the primary focus for the College during the first two months of the fiscal year. During this time the College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receives, distributes, reviews and aligns the tentative approved budget from the District</li><li>• Plans for the implementation of the priorities identified in the previous IPB cycle and funded in the current year’s budget</li><li>• Begins planning for the upcoming IPB cycle for the next fiscal year (e.g., Program Review or Annual Program Updates)</li></ul>
<p><u>Intensive Planning (September-December):</u> During the fall semester, the College enters the intensive planning phase. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Annual College Planning Summit, held in September, to align planning to the College mission and EMP milestones, assess institutional performance, and set strategic goals for the upcoming year</li><li>• College conducts Program Review (every three years) or Annual Program Update (APU) cycle for instructional and non-instruction programs and administrative services units (September/October)</li><li>• Director of Business and Administrative Services provides an update on the current year budget expenditures for all Cost Center Managers (November)</li><li>• Cost Center Managers summarize prioritized resource allocation request lists generated by the Program Review or APU process (November)</li><li>• Shared governance committees (CEMPC, Technology, Budget, Facilities), the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD) consider each Cost Center Manager’s relevant prioritized resource allocation requests (November/December)</li><li>• The summarized list is then reviewed at a joint meeting of the College Budget Committee (CBC) and the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), who forward the finalized recommended priorities to the College Council for approval</li></ul>

- The College finalizes the list of proposed faculty hires (note: these are not new faculty positions but, instead, represent positions that are now open due to retirements and resignations).
- The College Council, in turn, forwards prioritized recommendations to the College president for final approval
- The College president synthesizes and summarizes the College recommendations, which, at the beginning of the spring semester, are shared with the College community and submitted to the District for approval through the District’s planning and budgeting processes

**Phase II—Budgeting (January-June)**

*Budget Development (January-April):* In January, the College moves into the budgeting phase of the annual IPB cycle, beginning with budget development (January-April), and ending with budget finalization (May-June). During the budget development period:

- The College president and the Cost Center Managers present the prioritized resource requests to the college constituencies (January)
- The District communicates the Governor’s January Budget Proposal and the Chancellor provides guidance on annual priorities for planning and budgeting for the next fiscal year (January)
- The College president finalizes any new faculty hire positions in January (budget previously did not exist for these faculty positions)
- The College submits its final prioritized resource requests to the District (February)
- The College provides the Budget Template and Staffing Worksheets to all Cost Center Managers (February)
- The College’s Director of Business and Administrative Services summarizes all budget requests and presents the preliminary budget to the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD) (February)
- Shared governance committees review Budget Templates and Staffing Worksheets; Cost Center Managers present budget priorities to the College Budget Committee (CBC) (February/March/April)
- Priorities are forward to the College Council, which makes recommendations to the College president (March/April)
- Merritt’s president submits the final approved budget worksheets to the District Office of Finance (April)
- “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” Assessment Week activities, in which the College evaluates its college wide processes, including participatory governance groups and the IPB processes (April)

*Budget Finalization (May-June):* The last quarter of the fiscal year focuses on budget revision and finalization, in preparation for the adoption of the tentative approved budget by the District’s Board of Trustees in July.

- District informs College of budget revisions based on the Governor’s May budget revise (May)

- President’s Year-End Planning Summit (May/June) to provide a platform for broad-based dialogue on college wide assessment results and recommendations for changes that will lead to improvements in the College’s participatory governance structures and IPB processes.

The revised College budget is ultimately approved through the District budgeting process, outlined in the District’s Planning and Budgeting Integration Model (PBIM). The approved budget, developed directly out of the IPB process, provides the foundation for the College’s programs, services, and operations in the next fiscal year, beginning July 1.

*Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook:*

Merritt’s updated College Governance and Decision-Making Handbook (2016) is a key planning document that supports the College’s institutional planning and budgeting processes and guides college operations, planning and decision-making. The handbook provides an overview of the College’s Mission, Vision and Values Statements, District and College strategic goals, and planning priorities.

The handbook also outlines the purpose of the College’s participatory governance structure, which interfaces with the IPB model. In addition, the handbook describes the roles and responsibilities of the participatory governance committees in the resource allocation process and defines how these committees interact with their counterparts at the District. Finally, it contains a Collegial Decision-Making Process Flow Chart, which portrays all facets of the College’s decision-making processes, and linkages to District processes. [[CR3.11](#); [CR3.12](#)]

The handbook was updated by a key staff member in the President’s Office, with input from the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) in January 2016. The updated handbook was unanimously approved by the College Council on February 2, 2016, and forwarded to the College president for final approval. The handbook was posted on the College’s website and disseminated to the College community. [[CR3.13](#)]

*Merritt College Educational Master Plan (EMP):*

Merritt College’s Educational Master Plan (EMP) is a five-year master planning document that outlines the institution’s long-term vision and strategic goals. As stated in a recent Merritt College EMP Newsletter, the EMP is: [[CR3.14](#)]

“...a comprehensive planning document, which shall serve as an organizational blueprint for the next five years. The goals established in the EMP will provide strategic direction for institutional and programmatic development in support of the College’s mission and fulfillment of its vision...Informed by both qualitative and quantitative data from internal and external environmental scans, the EMP aligns with the Peralta Community College District’s 2015 Strategic Plan, as well as the California Community Colleges’ educational priorities. These priorities (namely, career technical education, foundational skills, and transfer) provide the plan’s framework.”  
(Merritt College EMP Newsletter, March 28, 2016)

Traditionally, the EMP update is scheduled every five years, in preparation for the College's Accreditation Self-Evaluation, which occurs on a six-year cycle. The EMP update provides an opportunity for the College's constituent groups to engage, assess, and dialogue on suggestions for the long-term improvement of student learning at Merritt. More importantly, the EMP serves as the cornerstone for integrated planning and budgeting at the College.

Due to changes in College leadership at both the administrative and shared governance committee leadership levels, Merritt was unable to conduct a timely update of its EMP prior to completion of its Accreditation Self-Evaluation Report (Spring 2015). In spring 2016, the District hired a consulting firm to facilitate, standardize and coordinate the update of the EMP at all four Peralta Colleges. As part of this effort, the consulting firm conducted an external environmental scan for District and College service areas.

Prior to the convening of the college level EMP work teams, the consultants held an orientation at each of the colleges. The Merritt College EMP team adopted the 2016 Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) framework as a structure for organizing work groups to update the EMP.

The EMP update process was launched at a half-day Town Hall meeting on February 26, 2016. At this meeting, the EMP team developed a more focused vision statement for the College and assessed the following College core values:

- Student Success
- Caring Spirit
- Teamwork and Inclusion
- Campus Climate
- Diversity

During spring 2016, the District and Peralta Colleges fast tracked the timeline for completing the update of the EMPs by April 30, 2016. Merritt College EMP Town Hall meetings and EMP workgroup meetings were held between February and April 2016 to ensure the participation of a broad spectrum of college constituents and stakeholders, to review and analyze the external environmental scan data, and to solicit feedback and input on the working draft.

In order to ensure that the next update of the EMP aligns with the 2021 Self-Evaluation Report, the current EMP covers five years. The final version of the EMP was approved by the Merritt College Council on May 18, 2016 and recommended to the College president for final approval. The Board approved the EMP 2015-2020 on June 14, 2016. [[CR3.15](#); [CR3.16](#); [CR3.17](#)]

Merritt's 2015-2020 EMP is now an active document that will guide the College's integrated planning and budgeting processes for the next four years. The EMP was available to the college wide community on the Merritt website in August 2016. In addition, the EMP strategic goals guided the discussion at the September 2016 Annual College Planning

Summit, where the College set its institutional goals for the upcoming year and launched the fall 2016 Annual Program Updates (APUs). [\[CR3.18\]](#)

### Interrelated Area of Concern 2: Linkages to the IPB Model

Over the 2015-2016 academic year, the work of the faculty, administrators, and staff brought to fruition written procedures for a systematic evidence-based integrated planning and budgeting process. The 2016 IPB model has clearly identified linkages to planning and Program Review, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment and resource allocation.

#### *Linkages Between Planning and Program Review:*

The College's comprehensive Program Review is described in detail in the response to College Recommendation 4 in Merritt's Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR). This includes a description of the new district wide Program Review Template and process, implemented in the 2015-2016 academic year. Program Review (conducted every three years) and Annual Program Updates (APUs) are a critical part of the College's annual integrated planning and budgeting cycle. All instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units are required to complete Program Reviews and APUs.

Program Review enables college units to assess the performance of their particular area, to set goals, to identify recommended program changes, and to determine short and long-term budgetary priorities, based on outcomes assessment. As part of this review process, units are required to fill out the Alignment of Goals Template (Appendix B of the Program Review Report) to demonstrate linkages between each department, program, or administrative unit goal, a specific College goal, and a District goal and objective. [\[CR3.19\]](#)

During the most recent Program Review year (2015-2106), with the support of the College's new Research and Planning Officer, there was a campus wide effort to achieve a 100 percent level of proficiency in completing Program Reviews by the end of December 2015. Although the College did not complete all of the Program Reviews by December 2015, the College did reach its target in February 2016, with full participation from all instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units. [\[CR3.20\]](#)

The College's updated IPB model places the Program Review/APU process in the first half of the annual integrated planning and budgeting cycle, with specific related tasks tied to a month-by-month timeline. These specific calendared tasks ensure that Program Review is linked to the annual integrated planning and budgeting process. According to the IPB model and written College administrative procedures, all College units must complete Program Review in order to apply for funding for their department, program or service area. [\[CR3.21\]](#)

#### *Linkages Between Planning and Outcomes Assessment:*

Outcomes assessment is a key component of the institutional planning process. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are used by the College to assess the effectiveness of its instruction and curriculum. Similarly, Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) are used by the College to assess the effectiveness of its non-instructional

programs and administrative services units. Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are designed to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness. The new District Program Review template, introduced in fall 2015, requires all instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units to conduct outcomes assessment. In the assessment section of the Program Review report, responses to questions on assessment must be answered and the Taskstream “At-a-Glance” Report must be attached, as evidence that the program or unit completed assessment.

During the Program Review validation process, each Program Review is examined for completion. The Program Review is accepted for validation if all areas are complete, including the outcomes assessment portion of the report. Otherwise, it may be conditionally accepted and returned to the program or unit with a timeline for resubmission, or, not accepted and returned with instructions indicating areas that require improvement. In this case, the dean and vice president must be notified.

Again, no instructional or non-instructional program or administrative services unit is eligible to apply for additional funding over the previous year’s base budget allocation if they fail to conduct outcomes assessment, which is required for the completion of Program Review. The purpose of this requirement is to link assessment to planning and budgeting, which, in turn, leads to improvements in curriculum, instruction, programs, and the delivery of services to foster student achievement.

*Linkages Between Planning and Resource Allocation:*

Merritt’s new 2016 IPB model contains specific guidelines that link planning to the College’s resource allocation process. The pre-planning and intensive planning stages that are part of Phase I of the annual IPB cycle directly feed into to Phase II of the cycle, involving budget development and budget finalization. [[CR3.22](#)]

Budgeting and resource allocation processes are clearly articulated in the College’s new administrative procedures document (IPB) and related annual calendar. These written formalized procedures have helped to demystify the linkages between planning and resource allocation for faculty, administrators, staff and students. To facilitate college wide dialogue, the written IPB administrative procedures were presented at the January and February 2016 AFR workshops, along with the College’s other three administrative procedures documents.

At the workshops, participants were able to ask questions about the 2016 IPB model, give feedback, and share reflections prior to the finalization of these documents. A pre- and post-survey was administered during each workshop to assess the knowledge gained by participants. Survey results showed that participants left with a better understanding of the institution’s integrated planning and budgeting processes. [[CR3.23](#)]

Another way that planning is linked to resource allocation is through the new District Program Review template, which requires instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units to justify budget requests using the Program Review Prioritized New Resource Requests Summary form (Appendix A). The resource request categories are as follows:



- Human Resources: Faculty
- Human Resources: Classified
- Human Resources: Student Workers
- Technology
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Facilities
- Professional Development
- Other (Specify)

In all of the above categories, resource requests must be linked to information provided in the Program Review narrative of the report. In this way, resource allocation requests are directly tied to planning and outcomes assessment, and support department, program and administrative services unit goals, which are aligned to College and District Goals, as shown in Appendix B of the Program Review template. [[CR3.24](#); [CR3.25](#)]

### Interrelated Area of Concern 3: Roles of Key Stakeholders in the IPB Processes

The IPB model promotes a range of opportunities for faculty, administrators, staff, and students to engage in ongoing integrated planning and budgeting activities and participatory governance processes throughout the year. Over the last year, Merritt College has taken steps to clarify the roles of key stakeholders in integrated planning and budgeting by clearly delineating these roles and the various opportunities for participation in its newly updated Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook and its Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) administrative procedures document, both completed, approved, and introduced in the second half of FY 2015-2016. [[CR3.26](#); [CR3.27](#)]

The College’s IPB model provides several mechanisms for broad-based, ongoing, and consistent participation of all college constituency groups—faculty, administrators, staff, and student representatives—in integrated planning and budgeting. These mechanisms include:

- Annual College Planning Summit (September)
- Program Review or APU process
- Annual budget development process
- President’s Year-End Planning Summit (May/June)
- Shared governance committee processes
- College shared governance committee work aligned with the District PBIM
- Collegial governance and decision-making processes and stakeholder roles

The Annual College Planning Summit, held in September of each year, kicks off the College’s annual institutional planning and budgeting cycle for the year. The September Summit provides a forum for evaluating successes and challenges in reaching established institutional goals from the previous academic year. The key constituency groups also work together to formulate new strategic goals for the College’s upcoming year, which are reviewed, revised, and adopted through Merritt’s shared governance system.

The September Summit occurs just prior to the launching of the Program Review or APU process, which takes place in the fall. Program Reviews and APUs provide another mechanism to maximize college wide participation in integrated planning and budgeting as all instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services units are required to complete Program Reviews and APUs.

All college departments, programs, and administrative services units must also participate in the annual budget development process each spring, adjusting their budgets based on the final programmatic and budgetary priorities approved by the College and the District. The annual IPB cycle closes with the President’s Year-End Planning Summit (May/June), in which the key constituency groups assess the College’s progress over the last year, review institutional and student learning data, and begin the conversation about possible goals and directions for the next academic year. [[CR3.28](#)]

The priorities identified through the Program Review or APU and annual budget development process provide yet another opportunity for engagement, as these priorities are refined through the College’s various participatory governance committees and constituency groups, which include:

<b>Participatory Governance Committees</b>	<b>Constituency Groups</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ College Budget Committee (CBC)</li> <li>▪ College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)</li> <li>▪ College Facilities Committee (CFC)</li> <li>▪ Merritt Technology Committee (MTC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Academic Senate (AS)</li> <li>▪ Administration</li> <li>▪ Merritt College Classified Senate (MCCS)</li> <li>▪ Assoc. Students of Merritt College (ASMC)</li> </ul>

The purpose, roles, and responsibilities for each participatory governance committee and constituency group are outlined in Merritt’s Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, updated in 2016. The participatory governance committee and constituency group by-laws and procedures outline the qualifications for participation and the selection process for representatives. Each committee and group is well-balanced, with participation by faculty, administrators, staff, and student representatives. Meetings are held on a regularly-scheduled basis, which allows for discussion by, and feedback to, all segments of the college community. [[CR3.29](#)]

A variety of College documents provide further evidence of the broad participation of key stakeholders in the College’s shared governance and integrated planning and budgeting processes. These evidence documents may include, but are not limited to: College Council minutes, CEMPC minutes, annual planning summit documents, shared governance committee, departmental, program, and administrative unit agendas and meeting minutes, and Program Review and APUs reports. [[CR3.30](#)]

The District and College shared governance committee structures also enhance opportunities for faculty, administrators, staff, and student representatives to participate in significant decisions concerning the operations of the institution. According to Merritt’s Collegial

Governance and Decision-Making Handbook (p. 15), “The [participatory governance] committees provide the foundation of communication, collaboration and the integration of institutional planning, budgeting and decision-making.” [\[CR3.31\]](#)

The Peralta Community College District Planning and Budgeting Integration Model (PBIM) is posted on the District website. The District’s PBIM and the College’s IPB model have built-in opportunities for the work of the College’s participatory governance committees to feed into the following PBIM committees at the district level:

- District Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC)
- District Education Committee (DEC)
- District Technology Committee (DTC)
- District Facilities Committee (DFC)

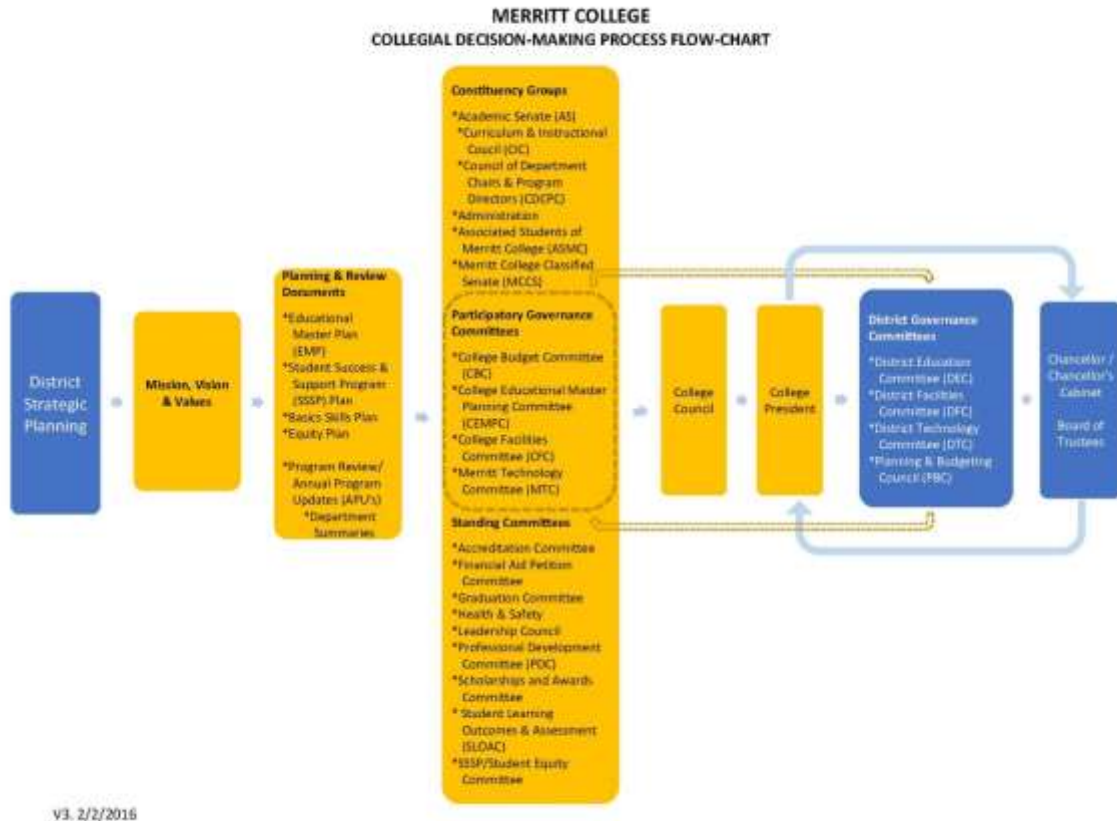
The planning and budgeting decisions made through the College’s participatory governance processes flow to the College Council for approval and recommendation to the College president. The president carries them forth as College priorities to the District governance committees listed above (which include as members, key stakeholders from Merritt College) for review and approval. Once approved at the district level, the College priorities are forwarded for review and approval by the Chancellor and Board of Trustees. Approved planning priorities and resource allocations are then forwarded back to the College, through the College president, for implementation at the College level. [\[CR3.32\]](#)

In addition to the constituent roles and shared governance processes outlined above, Merritt also recognizes the central role of faculty in establishing and improving quality educational programs and services. Curricular matters are under the purview of the Academic Senate, as defined in AB 1725, BP 2510, and AP 2511, as published on the District website. AB 1725, BP 2510, and AP 2511 authorize the faculty to have oversight and primary responsibility for such college processes as “curriculum, educational program development, standards or policies regarding student preparation and success, processes for program review, and processes for institutional planning and budget development.” [\[CR3.33; CR3.34\]](#)

Faculty, along with administrators, staff, and students also participate in institutional improvement projects, such as multi-year federal grants and state planning initiatives. Recent examples include the statewide Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), the College’s Equity Plan, Student Success PASS Fund, and other categorically funded grants. Additionally, stakeholders contribute to ongoing accreditation efforts and collaborate with external community partners and educational institutions.

These institutional projects and initiatives provide numerous opportunities for all college constituencies to gain a wider perspective beyond their specialized area and to develop skills related to organizational leadership, planning and budgeting. These diverse opportunities for the engagement of faculty, administrators, staff, and students in Merritt’s IPB processes demonstrate how the College encourages a culture of dialogue and promotes continuous institutional improvement.

In Merritt’s Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, the Merritt College Collegial Decision-Making Flow-Chart shows how District strategic planning drives the College planning and budgeting decision-making processes and graphically depicts the approvals process as described above. The chart also depicts the steps in the integrated planning and budgeting decision-making processes at the college level.



## **Corrective Action 2: “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” by Evaluating Integrated Planning and Budgeting Processes**

### **Area of Concern 4: “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” through Evaluation of Institutional Processes**

Merritt College uses systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key institutional processes in order to improve student learning and success. To this end, the College evaluates the effectiveness of the following four institutional processes:

- Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB)
- Collegial Decision-Making and Participatory Governance Committees
- Assessment Processes and Program Review
- Administrative Services Units

Between 2010 and 2015, the College evaluated the delivery of instruction and services to students through the administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) surveys. [[CR3.35](#); [CR3.36](#)]

In 2011, the College lost its Research and Planning Officer position due to the economic downturn and cuts to staffing across the district. As a result, the last formal college wide Assessment Week activity to evaluate the effectiveness of the College’s decision-making processes, governance structures, and services was conducted in 2010.

In 2015, the College was approved for a new Research and Planning Officer position, which was filled in summer 2015. The roles and responsibilities carried out by the new Research and Planning Officer have positioned the College to re-establish formalized, systematic ongoing evaluation of its key institutional processes once again.

In spring 2016, the College reinstated its annual “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” Assessment Week, facilitated by the new Research and Planning Officer. A Survey Monkey instrument was administered to all college constituencies (faculty, administrators, and staff) to evaluate integrated planning and budgeting, collegial decision-making and participatory governance, assessment process and Program Review, and some administrative services units. A total of 88 faculty, administrators, and staff responded to the survey. [[CR3.37](#); [CR3.38](#); [CR3.39](#)]

In addition to the survey, during the spring 2016 Assessment Week, all college units were encouraged to focus on their Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), Program Learning Outcome (PLOs), and Service Learning Outcomes (SAOs). This was promoted as college wide effort to increase the level of proficiency in outcomes assessment at Merritt College.

In addition to organizing the annual Assessment Week activities, the Research and Planning Officer is working to make sure that data collection and analysis across the College is

conducted in a coordinated fashion and that all of institutional planning processes are data-driven and evidence-based. To guide this effort, in December 2015, at the request of the College president, the researcher drafted new written College administrative procedures, outlining the use of data in planning and decision-making. The new administrative procedures document was presented to the college wide community, along with the College's other three written administrative procedures documents, at the January 2016 Flex Day and February 19, 2016 workshop, to inform and solicit feedback from key stakeholders.

Through its current systematic data-driven institutional planning and assessment practices, Merritt has succeeded in moving to a stable, sustainable and evidence-based model for integrated planning and budgeting, informed by institutional data and assessment. As a result, the College has re-established a *“systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation...”* in which evaluation is *“...based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.”* (ACCJC Guide to Evaluating Institutions, July 2013, pp. 10-11)

## **Conclusion**

Merritt College worked steadfastly over a 10-month period during the 2015-2016 academic year to resolve College Recommendation 3 and has implemented institutional policies, procedures, and guidelines to ensure sustainability. The College meets the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 3 and has fully addressed the deficiencies and concerns identified by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team.

The College has re-established formalized systematic and evidence-based planning processes with clear linkages to planning, program review, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment, and resources allocations. The College's Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model, along with the IPB calendar, clearly outlines the planning and budgeting processes and the multiple opportunities for faculty, staff, administrators, and students to participate in the processes.

Another important development has been the reintroduction of the College's Assessment Week, held in April of each year to conduct evaluation of all College processes and the participatory governance structures, through “Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop” activities. Lastly, the College conducted its annual Year-End Planning Summit to review the year's activities, benchmark achievements, and set goals for the future.

### Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 3

Document Number	Document	Link
CR3.1	Title III Leadership Planning Summit Presentation, October 24, 2014	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.1-Title-III-Leadership-Planning-Summit-Presentation-October-24-2014.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.1-Title-III-Leadership-Planning-Summit-Presentation-October-24-2014.pdf</a>
CR3.2	AFR Core Team Meeting with President Agenda, December 14, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.2-AFR-Core-Team-Meeting-with-President-Agenda-December-14-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.2-AFR-Core-Team-Meeting-with-President-Agenda-December-14-2015.pdf</a>
CR3.3	Managers Meeting Agenda, December 9, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.3-Managers-Meeting-Agenda-December-9-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.3-Managers-Meeting-Agenda-December-9-2015.pdf</a>
CR3.4	AFR Flex Day Workshop Presentation, January 22, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.4-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-January-22-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.4-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-January-22-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.5	AFR Flex Day Workshop Presentation, February 19, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.5-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-February-19-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.5-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-February-19-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.6	Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model, 2005-2006	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.6-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-Model-2005-2006.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.6-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-Model-2005-2006.pdf</a>
CR3.7	Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model, 2009-2010	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.7-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-Model-2009-2010.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.7-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-Model-2009-2010.pdf</a>
CR3.8	Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process Presentation, August 16, 2012	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.8-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-Presentation-August-16-2012.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.8-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-Presentation-August-16-2012.pdf</a>
CR3.9	College Council Minutes, September 26, 2012	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.9-College-Council-Minutes-September-26-2012.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.9-College-Council-Minutes-September-26-2012.pdf</a>
CR3.10	Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model—Annual Calendar and Overview of Annual IPB Cycle	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.10-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar-Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.10-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar-Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle.pdf</a>

CR3.11	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.11-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.11-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.12	Collegial Decision-Making Process Flow Chart	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.12-Collegial-Decision-Making-Process-Flow-Chart.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.12-Collegial-Decision-Making-Process-Flow-Chart.pdf</a>
CR3.13	College Council Meeting Minutes, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.13-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-February-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.13-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-February-2-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.14	Educational Master Plan Newsletter, April 1, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.14-Educational-Master-Plan-Newsletter-April-1-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.14-Educational-Master-Plan-Newsletter-April-1-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.15	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.15-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.15-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf</a>
CR3.16	College Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes, May 18, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.16-College-Council-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-May-18-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.16-College-Council-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-May-18-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.17	PCCD Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, June 14, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.17-PCCD-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Minutes-June-14-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.17-PCCD-Board-of-Trustees-Meeting-Minutes-June-14-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.18	Fall Planning Summit, September 23, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.18-Fall-Planning-Summit-Agenda-September-23-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.18-Fall-Planning-Summit-Agenda-September-23-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.19	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, Appendix B	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.19-Program-Review-Template-Appendix-B-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.19-Program-Review-Template-Appendix-B-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR3.20	2015-2016 Completed Program Reviews	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR3.20-2015-2016-Completed-Program-Reviews.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR3.20-2015-2016-Completed-Program-Reviews.pdf</a>
CR3.21	Administrative Procedures—Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.21-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.21-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf</a>



CR3.22	Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model— Overview of Annual IPB Cycle	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.22-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle-May-12-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.22-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle-May-12-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.23	AFR Flex Day Workshop Pre- and Post-Survey Results, January 22 and February 19, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.23-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Pre-Post-Survey-Results-January-22-February-19-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.23-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Pre-Post-Survey-Results-January-22-February-19-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.24	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, Appendix A	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.24-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-21015-Appendix-A.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.24-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-21015-Appendix-A.pdf</a>
CR3.25	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, Appendix B	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.25-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-B.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.25-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-B.pdf</a>
CR3.26	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.26-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.26-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.27	Administrative Procedures— Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.27-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.27-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf</a>
CR3.28	Bi-Annual Spring Planning Summit Agenda, May 13, 2016, and 2016 Assessment of College Process Presentation, Spring 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.28-Bi-Annual-Spring-Planning-Summit-Agenda-May-13-2016-2016-Assessment-of-College-Process-Spring-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.28-Bi-Annual-Spring-Planning-Summit-Agenda-May-13-2016-2016-Assessment-of-College-Process-Spring-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.29	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016, pp. 25-29	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.29-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-pp.-25-29.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.29-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-pp.-25-29.pdf</a>
CR3.30	Broad Participation of Key Stakeholders	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.30-Broad-Participation-of-Key-Stakeholders.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR3.30-Broad-Participation-of-Key-Stakeholders.pdf</a>
CR3.31	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016, p. 15	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.31-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-p.-15.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.31-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016-p.-15.pdf</a>
CR3.32	PCCD Planning and Budgeting Integrated Model (PBIM)	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.32-PCCD-Planning-Budgeting-Integrated-Model-PBIM.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.32-PCCD-Planning-Budgeting-Integrated-Model-PBIM.pdf</a>

CR3.33	Brief History of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, AB 1725	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.33-Brief-History-of-the-Academic-Senate-for-California-Community-Colleges-AB-1725.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.33-Brief-History-of-the-Academic-Senate-for-California-Community-Colleges-AB-1725.pdf</a>
CR3.34	PCCD Administrative Procedure 2511 Roles of Academic Senates in District and College Governance	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.34-PCCD-Administrative-Procedure-2511-Roles-of-Academic-Senates-in-District-College-Governance.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.34-PCCD-Administrative-Procedure-2511-Roles-of-Academic-Senates-in-District-College-Governance.pdf</a>
CR3.35	Community College Survey of Student Engagement Survey Results, 2011 and 2014	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.35-Community-College-Survey-of-Student-Engagement-Survey-Results-2011-2014.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.35-Community-College-Survey-of-Student-Engagement-Survey-Results-2011-2014.pdf</a>
CR3.36	Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory Survey Results, 2011 and 2014	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.36-Noel-Levitz-Student-Satisfaction-Inventory-Survey-Results-2011-2014.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.36-Noel-Levitz-Student-Satisfaction-Inventory-Survey-Results-2011-2014.pdf</a>
CR3.37	Assessment Week Faculty, Administrator and Staff Survey, April 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.37-Assessment-Week-Faculty-Administrator-Staff-Survey-April-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.37-Assessment-Week-Faculty-Administrator-Staff-Survey-April-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.38	Assessment Week Student Survey, April 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.38-Assessment-Week-Student-Survey-April-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.38-Assessment-Week-Student-Survey-April-2016.pdf</a>
CR3.39	2016 Assessment of College Processes, May 1, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.39-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR3.39-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 4

### College Recommendation 4

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standards, the Team recommends that the College accelerate the completion of comprehensive program reviews and Annual Program Updates (APUs) for all instruction, student services, learning resources, and administrative services; to ensure that the process is systematic, integrated into college planning and resource allocation, and utilized for continuous program improvement. (I.B, I.B.1, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, II.A, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.A.6.b, II.B, II.B.3.c, II.B.4, II.C, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.C.2, III.D.4, IV.A.2.a-b, IV.B.2.b)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

In College Recommendation 4, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team cited a number of ACCJC Standards that are also cross-referenced in other Recommendations, particularly in College Recommendations 3 and 5. While the College has addressed these overlapping Standards throughout the Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR), the AFR College Recommendation 4 Sub-Committee chose to examine these Standards through the lens of the specific issues raised in College Recommendation 4 and in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15).

In College Recommendation 4, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team identified the following deficiencies requiring corrective actions: 1) the need to accelerate the completion of comprehensive Program Reviews and Annual Program Updates (APUs) for all instructional, student services, learning resources and administrative services; 2) the need to demonstrate that the comprehensive Program Review and Annual Program Update (APU) processes are systematic and integrated into the College's integrated planning and budgeting model, and 3) the need to demonstrate that Program Reviews and APUs are regularly assessed and used for continuous program and institutional improvement.

While the ACCJC External Evaluation Team found evidence to show that the College has a Program Review process that is broad-based, with ample opportunity for input from College constituencies, the Team found that "...no evidence was provided to demonstrate the College has fully completed a systematic and comprehensive assessment of all instructional and non-instructional programs." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 32) In particular, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team "did not find evidence of comprehensive reviews for all student services areas." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 48)

In addition, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team stated "the mission and college wide plans are not directly incorporated into the program review process..." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 35) Furthermore, "...a review of the evidence indicates that the College has not conducted regular evaluations of its planning and resource allocation processes." The Team also asserted "...no evidence was provided to demonstrate that the college has

developed a systematic means to evaluate these processes” or that “...these processes have ever been assessed for their effectiveness in leading to improvement in programs and services.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 36)

## Response

To ensure that Merritt College effectively responded to the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 4, the College Recommendation 4 Sub-Committee conducted a gap analysis. In the process, it systematically mapped cited Standards to the areas of concern identified in both College Recommendation 4 and the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15).

Merritt has made significant progress in conducting and completing comprehensive Program Reviews for all instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services since the 2015 Accreditation Self Study and External Evaluation Team site visit. The 2015-2016 academic year was a designated year for Program Review, which occurs on a scheduled three-year cycle. In alternate years, the College conducts APUs.

Merritt fully embraced this as an opportunity to improve implementation of a comprehensive Program Review process, in response to the specific recommendations of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and to meet ACCJC Standards related to academic quality and institutional effectiveness. In doing so, the College successfully accelerated the completion of Program Reviews for all instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services.

In fall 2015, based on its gap analysis, the College Recommendation 4 Sub-Committee recommended three Corrective Actions: 1) Corrective Action 1: Accelerate Comprehensive Program Review and APUs for All Instructional and Non-Instructional Programs and Administrative Services; 2) Corrective Action 2: Systematically Integrate Program Review and Annual Program Updates (APUs) with Integrated Planning and Budgeting; and 3) Corrective Action 3: Assess the Effectiveness of Program Review and APU Processes for Continuous Program and Institutional Improvement.

Four interrelated areas of concern are addressed within these three Corrective Actions. Each area of concern has been mapped to the Standards cited in College Recommendation 4. These four areas of concerns are:

1. Acceleration—the need to accelerate the timely completion of all comprehensive Program Reviews and APUs (I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6)
2. 100% Completion—the need to make sure that Program Reviews and APUs are completed for *all* college programs and services, including instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services (I.B.1, I.B.5, II.A, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e, II.A.6.b, II.B.3.c, II.B.4, II.C, III.C.2, IV.A.2.b)
3. Systematic Integration into the College’s Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model—the need to make sure that the Program Review and APU process is systematic and integrated into the annual institutional planning and budgeting process (I.B, I.B.1, I.B.6, II.A.2 f, III.D.4, IV.A.2.a, IV.B.2.b)

4. Continuous Improvement—the need to ensure that Program Reviews and APUs are assessed and utilized for continuous program and institutional improvement (I.B, 1.B.3, I.B.4, II.A.2, II.A.2.f, II.B, II.B.3.c, II.B.4, II.C.2)

### **Corrective Action 1: Accelerate Comprehensive Program Review and APUs for All Instructional and Non-Instructional Programs and Administrative Services**

The deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and the ACCJC Standards referenced in College Recommendation 4, called for the College to accelerate completion of Program Review and APU processes for all instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative services. The College implemented an accelerated Program Review cycle in September 2015, utilizing new District Program Review templates in five different categories: 1) Instructional; 2) Non-Instructional; 3) Career Technical Education (CTE); 4) Counseling; and 5) Library. [[CR4.1](#); [CR4.2](#); [CR4.3](#); [CR4.4](#); [CR4.5](#)]

#### Acceleration:

The College worked diligently to address the issue of acceleration by initiating the Program Review process in the month of September, rather than October, as has been done in the past. Going forward, departments and college service units will continue to begin the Program Review or APU process in September as specified in the College's annual Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) calendar published in the updated Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook (February 2016). [[CR4.6](#)]

#### Completion:

The College continued its tradition of providing opportunities for broad-based input from all constituencies into the Program Review process. The goal was for the College to achieve a 100 percent completion rate of Program Reviews by December 2015. Instead, the College achieved its goal of 100 percent completion by February 2016 because some units of the College needed additional time to complete the Program Review process and to complete the new validation step included in the new District Program Review template.

All instructional and non-instructional programs and administrative units participated in and completed the Program Review and validation process. This includes programs and services in the five categories prioritized for Program Review by the District (Instructional; Non-Instructional; Career Technical Education; Counseling; and Library).

The new Program Review template validation process supports Merritt's goal of completing 100 percent of its Program Reviews. The template now includes a Validation Form and Signature Page, requiring the signatures of the Validation Team Chair, the Department/Program/Unit Chair, and the Vice President of Instruction or Vice President of Student Services. [[CR4.7](#)]

The Program Review validation process ensures that all Program Reviews reach the final approval step of being signed, dated, and completed. All of Merritt's Program Reviews for 2015-2016 are posted on the College's website. Hard copies are available in the office of the particular administrator assigned to each of the College's program or service areas. [[CR4.8](#)]

## **Corrective Action 2: Systematically Integrate Program Review and Annual Program Updates (APUs) with Integrated Planning and Budgeting**

In December 2015, the College’s administrative leadership team drafted a written administrative procedures document, entitled *Administrative Procedures—Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model*. The IPB model was a direct outgrowth of discussions regarding corrective actions needed to improve institutional Program Review and integrated planning and budgeting processes. The purpose of the IPB model was to provide a blueprint for ongoing planning and continuous institutional improvement. [[CR4.9](#)]

Merritt’s new IPB model was introduced to the college wide community at the January 22, 2016 Flex Day professional development program. An annual calendar and one-page graphic depiction of the College’s integrated planning and budgeting cycle was added to the administrative procedures document on January 31, 2016. The revised IPB model was then presented again at an Accreditation Steering Committee follow-up workshop on February 19, 2016. [[CR4.10](#); [CR4.11](#); [CR4.12](#)]

The updated IPB model clarifies and formalizes the mechanisms needed to ensure systematic integration of Program Reviews and APUs into the annual IPB cycle. The Program Review and APU processes are now firmly grounded in the Phase I (July-December) portion of the IPB cycle, which focuses on planning. Phase II (January-June) of the cycle focuses on budgeting and resource allocations.

The Program Review cycle, or, in alternate years from Program Review, the Annual Program Update (APU) is launched each year just prior to the College’s Annual Planning Summit, held in September. The Summit brings together key college constituencies to engage in institutional self-reflection and planning within the context of the College’s mission, Educational Master Plan (EMP), and College and District strategic goals and directions. The data for Program Reviews or APUs are also disseminated in September.

The District’s new Program Review template also directly links the Program Review process to institutional planning by systematically requiring all departments, programs, and administrative services units to:

1. Align their plans with the College’s mission and College and District goals
  2. Align their plans with the long-range strategic goals in the Educational Master Plan
  3. Review and report on institutional data related to their area for the last three years
  4. Specify and justify their goals and objectives for the next three years
  5. Conduct an analysis of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), Program Learning Outcome (PLOs), Service Area Outcomes (SAOs), and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), as related to their area
  6. Identify specific resource needs (human, technological, equipment, facilities) and list these needs in prioritized order with estimated costs attached
- [[CR4.13](#); [CR14](#); [CR4.15](#); [CR4.16](#)]

The Program Review process is data-driven and has built-in features that rely on and foster ongoing institutional assessment and improvement at the course, program, department, and overall college level. Program Reviews are required to include a detailed analysis of outcomes assessment, e.g., SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs.

All Program Reviews or APUs must include a description of how the results of assessment lead to any recommended improvements and changes to programs and services. In addition, departments, programs, and administrative services units must provide specific examples and evidence to support proposed resource allocation requests. [[CR4.17](#)]

For example, the most recent Program Review cycle resulted in a prioritized summary of new resource requests that ultimately served as the basis for the College's FY 2016-2017 budget. Final recommendations for resource allocation requests, including faculty and classified staff prioritization resulting from these Program Reviews, were refined through the College's shared governance structure in accordance with the policies and practices set forth in the Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook. [[CR4.18](#); [CR4.19](#)]

Following approval by the shared governance committees, the College's prioritized lists of new resource needs are approved by the College Council and forwarded as a recommendation to the College president. The College president, in turn, reviews and approves the recommended Prioritized Summary of New Resource Needs and presents the College's priorities to the District Planning and Budgeting Council (PBC). [[CR4.20](#)]

In the spring, the College continues to fine-tune its budgetary priorities and proposed resource allocations for the upcoming year. For example, the College Budget Committee (CBC) held a special meeting on April 12, 2016 to hear presentations from the president, vice presidents, deans, and other administrators regarding proposed budgets for all programs, units, and departments. Questions were asked to ensure that the budgets presented were fair and aligned with Program Review requests and outcomes assessment data. The CBC then forwarded priorities to the College Council, for recommendation to the president for final approval. The College president then submitted the final list of budgetary priorities to the relevant District committees and, finally, to the Board of Trustees for approval. [[CR4.21](#); [CR4.22](#)]

Program Review and APUs are not only relevant to the annual IPB and resource allocation process, but are also part of a larger multi-faceted integrated planning and budgeting framework for the College, as indicated by the integrated planning and budgeting initiatives in the following table:

<b>Merritt College Integrated Planning and Budgeting Initiatives</b>		
<b>Planning Initiatives</b>	<b>Cycle</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Accreditation Self Evaluation	6-Year Cycle	2015, 2021
Accreditation Mid-Term Report	3-Year Cycle	2018
Educational Master Plan (EMP) Institution-Set Standards	5-Year Cycle	2016, 2020
Mission Statement Review	5-Year Cycle	2016, 2020
Program Review	3-Year Cycle	2015, 2018
Annual Program Updates (APUs)	Alternate years	2016, 2017
Outcomes Assessment: SLO, PLO, SAO and ILO	3-Year Cycle	Ongoing
Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model	Annual	Ongoing
Educational Master Plan Milestone Review	Annual	Ongoing
Student Equity Plan	Annual	Ongoing
Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) Report	Annual	Ongoing
Multi-Year Grant Initiatives and Reports	Annual	Ongoing
<i>“Closing the Loop”/“Continuous Loop”</i> — Evaluation of College Governance Processes	Annual	April
Fall College Planning Summit	Annual	September
Spring College President’s Year-End Leadership Summit/Planning Retreat	Annual	June

These multiple planning and budgeting initiatives both inform and build upon one another. For example, the Educational Master Plan sets the institution’s strategic goals and guides all college planning efforts, including the preparation of Program Reviews and APUs. The Program Review process, conducted on a three-year cycle, also influences the development of the periodic update of the Educational Master Plan, along with the analysis of institutional quantitative and qualitative data. These formal institutional structures strengthen the ties of Program Review and APUs to the annual and strategic planning and budgeting processes.

**Corrective Action 3: Assess the Effectiveness of Program Review and APU Processes for Continuous Program and Institutional Improvement**

The College’s mission drives integrated planning and budgeting processes, including the EMP and various other college wide planning initiatives. The Program Review and APU processes are the foundation for institutional planning initiatives and play a crucial role in supporting and sustaining the delivery of quality educational programs and services.

In April 2016, the College introduced a revised Assessment Week activity. In the past, Assessment Week was conducted strictly as a “Closing the Loop/Continuous Loop” tool for evaluating the College’s participatory governance processes. The new Assessment Week format has been expanded to encourage all instructional, non-instructional, and administrative services units to assess SLOs, PLOs, or SAOs.



The expanded 2016 Assessment Week format enabled the College to evaluate the effectiveness of outcomes assessment processes, Program Review, integrated planning and budgeting, participatory governance structure, and the services provided by campus administrative service units. More importantly, the Assessment Week survey encouraged faculty, staff, and administrators to offer specific suggestions for improving institutional processes in the above areas. [[CR4.23](#)]

The results of the Assessment Week survey were disseminated to faculty, administrators, and staff prior to the end of the spring 2016 semester. Survey results on program review indicated that a majority of respondents felt that program review is data driven with resource requests linked to program review. At the same time, respondents pointed to the need to improve linkages between program review and assessment, and more opportunities for training. Survey results were used to inform the agenda for the President's Year-End Planning Summit in May 2016 and will guide improvements during the Annual Program Update (APU) process in fall 2016. [[CR4.24](#)]

In recent years, Program Reviews, APUs, and institutional assessment efforts have led to a number of constructive changes in the delivery of programs and services at Merritt. The following are a few examples of how the College used assessment results from the Program Review and APU process to improve programs and services:

- Admissions and Records (A&R): In 2014-2015, A&R identified an SAO pertaining to student ability to independently complete the online admissions process. A survey was administered by staff at the A&R counter in November and December 2015. While results indicated that 90 percent of the students were able to complete the online application process, the survey showed that students still needed and requested assistance from A&R staff in navigating the student Passport registration system. Therefore, the department requested funds to hire student ambassadors to work one-on-one with students, assisting them with registration and use of multiple screens within the student Passport system. [[CR4.25](#)]
- English Department: As a result of the FY 2014-2015 assessment cycle, in spring 2015 the English Department implemented new Friday Writing Workshops in Reading and Writing across the Curriculum (WRAC). Held at the Learning Center, these mini-workshops “attacked” specific writing areas, such as thesis development and essay and sentence structures. [[CR4.26](#)]
- Library: The Library uses three different kinds of survey instruments to aid in the assessment process, including an in-house and online user survey, a perceived teaching effectiveness assessment (PTEA) survey (for its workshops) and a library instruction assessment survey. As a result of student feedback regarding library lectures, these types of events are now given in the Computer Information Sciences laboratory to provide a more “hands-on” approach for students learning library skills. [[CR4.27](#)]

The College now has formal systems in place to assess Program Review and institutional processes. Going forward, Merritt will continue to use these formal systems and the resulting assessment data for the improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness.

## **Conclusion**

Merritt College meets the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 4 and has fully addressed the deficiencies and concerns of the External Evaluation Team. The College accelerated the completion of comprehensive program reviews, conducted on a three-year cycle, utilizing a new program review template for all instructional, non-instructional, and administrative services units. Merritt achieved a 100 percent Program Review completion rate for all programs and services during the 2015-16 academic year.

The College developed administrative procedures for a systematic Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) model which includes an annual planning and budgeting cycle and calendar linked to the District. More importantly, Program Review and Annual Program Update (APU) processes are integrated into the College's IPB model for planning, assessment, and resource allocation.

Lastly, the Program Review process was evaluated as a "Closing the Loop"/"Continuous Loop" assessment activity during the annual college wide Assessment Week held in April. A summary of the survey results were disseminated to faculty, administrators, staff, and students at the Year-End Planning Summit.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 4

Document Number	Document	Link
CR4.1	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.1-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.1-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.2	PCCD Non-Instructional Program Review, Fall 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.2-PCCD-Non-Instructional-Program-Review-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.2-PCCD-Non-Instructional-Program-Review-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.3	PCCD Career Technical Education (CTE) Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.3-PCCD-Career-Technical-Education-CTE-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.3-PCCD-Career-Technical-Education-CTE-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.4	PCCD Counseling Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.4-PCCD-Counseling-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.4-PCCD-Counseling-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.5	PCCD Library Services Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.5-PCCD-Library-Services-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.5-PCCD-Library-Services-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.6	Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model—Annual Calendar	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.6-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.6-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar.pdf</a>
CR4.7	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, Appendix C	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.7-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-C.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.7-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-C.pdf</a>
CR4.8	2015-2016 Validation Teams	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.8-2015-2016-Validation-Teams.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.8-2015-2016-Validation-Teams.pdf</a>
CR4.9	Administrative Procedures—Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.9-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.9-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf</a>
CR4.10	AFR Flex Day Workshop Agenda and Presentation, January 22, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.10-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Agenda-Presentation-January-22-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.10-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Agenda-Presentation-January-22-2016.pdf</a>

CR4.11	Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model— Annual Calendar and Overview of Annual IPB Cycle, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.11-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar-Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.11-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar-Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle.pdf</a>
CR4.12	AFR Flex Day Workshop Presentation, February 19, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.12-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-February-19-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.12-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Presentation-February-19-2016.pdf</a>
CR4.13	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, Appendix B	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.13-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-B.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.13-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-B.pdf</a>
CR4.14	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, p. 4	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.14-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-p.-4.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.14-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-p.-4.pdf</a>
CR4.15	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, pp. 15-16	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.15-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-15-16.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.15-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-15-16.pdf</a>
CR4.16	PCCD Instruction Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, Appendix A	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.16-PCCD-Instruction-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-A.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.16-PCCD-Instruction-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-Appendix-A.pdf</a>
CR4.17	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, pp. 8-9	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.17-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-8-9.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.17-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-8-9.pdf</a>
CR4.18	Academic Senate President’s Faculty Prioritization List 2015-16 Memorandum, December 3, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.18-Academic-Senate-Presidents-Faculty-Prioritization-List-2015-16-Memorandum-December-3-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.18-Academic-Senate-Presidents-Faculty-Prioritization-List-2015-16-Memorandum-December-3-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.19	Classified Senate President’s Classified Staff 2015-16 Hiring Prioritization Recommendation Memorandum, February 24, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.19-Classified-Senate-Presidents-Classified-Staff-2015-16-Hiring-Prioritization-Recommendation-Memorandum-February-24.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR4.19-Classified-Senate-Presidents-Classified-Staff-2015-16-Hiring-Prioritization-Recommendation-Memorandum-February-24.pdf</a>
CR4.20	Prioritized Summary of New Resource Needs for 2016-2017	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.20-Prioritized-Summary-of-New-Resource-Needs-for-2016-2017.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.20-Prioritized-Summary-of-New-Resource-Needs-for-2016-2017.pdf</a>

CR4.21	College Budget Committee Meeting Minutes, April 12, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR4.21-College-Budget-Committee-Meeting-Minutes-April-12-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR4.21-College-Budget-Committee-Meeting-Minutes-April-12-2016.pdf</a>
CR4.22	College Council Meeting Minutes, April 20, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.22-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-April-20-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.22-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-April-20-2016.pdf</a>
CR4.23	Assessment Week Faculty, Administrator and Staff Survey, April 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.23-Assessment-Week-Faculty-Administrator-Staff-Survey-April-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.23-Assessment-Week-Faculty-Administrator-Staff-Survey-April-2016.pdf</a>
CR4.24	2016 Assessment of College Processes, May 1, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.24-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.24-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016.pdf</a>
CR4.25	Admissions Assessment Findings and Action Plan for SLO #1, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.25-Admissions-Assessment-Findings-Action-Plan-for-SLO-1-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.25-Admissions-Assessment-Findings-Action-Plan-for-SLO-1-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR4.26	English Annual Program Update, 2014-2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.26-English-Annual-Program-Update-2014-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.26-English-Annual-Program-Update-2014-2015.pdf</a>
CR4.27	Library Annual Program Update, 2014-2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.27-Library-Annual-Program-Update-2014-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR4.27-Library-Annual-Program-Update-2014-2015.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 5

### College Recommendation 5

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standards, the Team recommends that the College establish institution set standards for student achievement and systematically assesses the institution's progress in meeting or exceeding these standards. (1.B, 1.B.1-6, II.A, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, b, f, g, h, II.A.5, II.A.6)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

College Recommendation 5 addresses the requirement for Merritt College to establish institution-set standards for student achievement and to conduct systematic assessment of the institution's progress in meeting or exceeding these standards. After reviewing the evidence presented in Merritt's Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015 and conducting interviews on campus, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team determined that, "...the college has not yet established measurable institution-set standards for improving effectiveness consistent with the College Mission." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 35)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also made reference to the institution-set standards previously submitted by the College in its 2014 Annual Report to the Accrediting Commission. The Team referred to these figures in two separate places [pp. 34-35; pp. 83-84] in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), stating:

*"Merritt College's 2014 Annual Report to ACCJC indicated that the College has set institution-set standards that include: 69 percent for successful course completion, student completion of degrees and certificates per year (500), and the number of students who transfer per year (300). The team found that the above are college goals relative to the District's strategic initiatives, as opposed to performance thresholds. This finding was affirmed through multiple interviews, which indicated that no formal process has occurred to establish baseline performance metrics. In a draft document entitled Merritt College FY 14-17 Strategic Goals and Objectives dated July 18 and August 12, 2014, the College appears to be establishing measurable goals for student engagement and success. However, the Team did not find a final version of the document. Likewise, the Team did not find institution-set standards for student achievement." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, pp. 83-84)*

In its report, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team also commented on the issue of institution-set standards in the *Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement* section of the Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with Federal Regulations and Commission Policies. (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, pp. 83-84) Ultimately, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team indicated in the conclusion check-off that "...The Team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 83)

## Response

Merritt College is committed to using measurable institution-set standards for improving effectiveness consistent with the College mission, and systematically assessing the institution's progress in meeting or exceeding these standards. Merritt acknowledges institution-set standards as a valuable tool, one that enables the College to set its own thresholds for acceptable performance in key areas of student achievement. The College also concurs with the widely held definition of institution-set standards (referenced by the U.S. Department of Education in its directive to the Accrediting Commission) that views these metrics as a tool to standardize practices for measuring the quality of an institution with respect to student achievement.

In order to respond to the ACCJC External Evaluation Team's concerns regarding institution-set standards at Merritt, the AFR College Recommendation 5 Sub-Committee conducted a gap analysis. This gap analysis revealed that, historically, Merritt has reported institution-set standards as required in its Annual Report to the ACCJC, submitted in the spring of each year. However, the AFR College Recommendation 5 Sub-Committee also concluded that in Merritt's Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015, the College could have provided a more detailed description on the process used by the College to establish these institution-set standards and performance thresholds. [\[CR5.1\]](#)

Furthermore, the Sub-Committee noted an important omission in the section of the College's Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015 on setting institution-set standards. Specifically, the College could have provided information on priority areas included in Merritt's Title III grant project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, in which the College assessed its annual progress on core academic performance indicators from 2008 to 2014.

The six-year Title III grant project, *Strengthening Pathways, Systems and Services to Maximize Student Success*, focused on activities to strengthen the institution's core academic performance indicators in four key areas: retention, drop rate, successful course completion, and transfer. Several of the College's ongoing institution-set standards align with these four measures. However, whereas the College's institution-set standards serve as minimum thresholds for student achievement, the Title III metrics serve as institutional goals. [\[CR5.2\]](#)

In order to assess the Title III core academic performance indicators, the College prepared a yearly progress report, entitled the *Title III Annual Report of Student Outcomes*. The report was designed to demonstrate progress not only in the four core academic performance indicators, but, also, in other measures of student achievement, such as basic skills student retention, average drop rate, drop rate for basic skills English students, drop rate for basic skills mathematics students, and basic skills successful course completion.

In addition, the annual report included data disaggregated by ethnicity and gender. Therefore, over a six-year period, from 2008 to 2014, the College consistently analyzed student performance and academic achievement data in the above areas, creating longitudinal data to drive planning and decision-making at the College, consistent with the institution's educational mission.

More importantly, over the course of the Title III project, the College demonstrated that it actually met or exceeded certain targets for student achievement in basic skills student retention, average drop rate, drop rate for basic skills English students, drop rate for basic skills mathematics students, basic skills successful course completion, actual transfer rate, and transfer-ready student data. This data was broadly disseminated and discussed at key participatory governance group meetings, at college Flex Days, and at other college events. The analysis of the data, as well as the findings, was used to inform improvements in curriculum, instruction, and the delivery of services to students. [[CR5.3](#); [CR5.4](#)]

Following the completion of the gap analysis by the AFR College Recommendation 5 Sub-Committee, three Corrective Actions were recommended. However, upon further review, the Sub-Committee consolidated these into two Corrective Actions, which, combined, address the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 5 and the concerns of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team.

These two Corrective Actions formalize the College's practices for establishing institution-set standards and systematically assessing the institution's progress in meeting or exceeding these standards. The ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 5 are mapped to the two Corrective Actions, which are as follows:

- 1) Corrective Action 1: Practices for Establishing Institution-Set Standards (I.B.2, I.B.3, II.A.5)
- 2) Corrective Action 2: Practices to Systematically Assess the Institution's Progress in Meeting or Exceeding Institution-Set Standards (I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, II.A, II.A.1.C, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.f, II.A.2.g, II.A.2.h, II.A.6)

### **Corrective Action 1: Practices for Establishing Institution-Set Standards**

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team expressed concerns that the institution-set standards reported in Merritt's 2014 ACCJC Annual Report represented District and College strategic goals rather than actual performance thresholds for student achievement. Moreover, it was unclear to the Team whether these institution-set standards had been developed through a formal process involving broad-based dialogue with faculty, administrators, staff, and students, and with input from Merritt's participatory governance groups.

The AFR College Recommendation 5 Sub-Committee was able to confirm that the former Vice President of Instruction was responsible for submitting the institution-set standards in the College's 2014 ACCJC Annual Report. However, the Sub-Committee was unable to verify the source(s) of the figures reported or confirm if those figures were intended to serve as institution-set standards performance thresholds or as institutional goals.

To correct this situation, the College's Research and Planning Officer collaborated with the AFR College Recommendation 5 Sub-Committee and College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) to research best practices in setting institution-set standards. Through



this process, a consensus was formed on the definition of institution-set standards to be used by Merritt College going forward. The agreed-upon definition of institution-set standards is as follows: an institution-set standard indicates the minimum level of performance, as set by the institution, which is required to meet the institution's expectations (i.e., standards) for educational quality and effectiveness in a particular area, such as successful course or degree completion. [[CR5.5](#)]

Based on this dialogue, the College Research and Planning Officer drafted a one-page document, entitled *Merritt College Institution-Set Standards 2015-2016*, presenting the College's minimum performance thresholds for student achievement in the four metrics required for the ACCJC Annual Report, along with one additional metric. The new Merritt College institution-set standards minimum performance thresholds are as follows:

- Course Completion—67%
- Student Retention—44% (optional)
- Associate Degree Completion—312 degrees
- Certificate Completion—222 certificates
- Transfer to 4-year college or university—175 transfers

Initial discussion on the new institution-set standards took place between the College Research and Planning Officer and the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) Co-Chair. The proposed *Merritt College Institution-Set Standards 2015-2016* were then presented, discussed and approved at the December 16, 2015 CEMPC meeting. [[CR5.6](#); [CR5.7](#)]

In spring 2016, the institution-set standards were disseminated by the College president to constituencies at the College Flex Day program (January 2016). The institution-set standards were officially adopted by the College Council on February 24, 2016. The newly established institution-set standards were also submitted as performance threshold measures in the College's 2016 ACCJC Annual Report (March 2016) and included in the updated Educational Master Plan (May 2016). [[CR5.8](#); [CR5.9](#); [CR5.10](#); [CR5.11](#)]

### **Corrective Action 2: Practices to Systematically Assess the Institution's Progress in Meeting or Exceeding Institution-Set Standards**

Merritt College recognizes that, in order to meet ACCJC Standards, the College must establish institution-set standards and assess the progress of the institution in meeting or exceeding these standards. Therefore, during the 2015-2016 academic year the College not only clarified the purpose and methods of establishing institution-set standards, but also put into place practices to ensure the ongoing assessment of institution-set standards as a part of the annual integrated planning and budgeting cycle.

Starting in spring 2016, the College began the practice of systematically evaluating progress in meeting institution-set standards. This now will take place in two ways: 1) integration of institution-set standards into the two annual planning summits; and 2) integration of institution-set standards into the new district Annual Program Update (APU) template.

First, institution-set standards are now integrated into the College's two yearly planning summits. The summits are attended by faculty, administrators, staff, and student representatives. At the Year-End Planning Summit (May/June), dialogue on progress in meeting the institution-set standards takes place. At the September Annual Planning Summit, the College finalizes its strategic goals for the upcoming year. In addition, the previous year's institution-set standards are also assessed at the September summit, to determine whether the College met or exceeded—or fell below—stated performance thresholds. Based on this assessment, the College may revise its institution-set standards and identify strategies and activities that the College may undertake to improve institutional progress in reaching or surpassing established performance thresholds. [[CR5.12](#); [CR5.13](#); [CR5.14](#)]

The second practice the College has put into place to support the assessment of institution-set standards is the use of the District's new Annual Program Update (APU) template. As of fall 2016, the new APU template requires that all college programs and units incorporate strategies and activities to assist the College in meeting or exceeding institution-set standard performance thresholds for student achievement. [[CR5.15](#)]

The College researcher plays a pivotal role in presenting summary institutional data for the annual planning summits and the related APU processes. As part of the APU process, student performance data is provided for the previous academic year, along one-year trend data obtained from the District Office of Institutional Research. Additional disaggregated data may also be reviewed as part of the APU analysis process. These data figures will be used to analyze whether or not the College is meeting its basic thresholds (i.e., institution-set standards) for student achievement.

Merritt's institution-set standards are also included in the College's Educational Master Plan (EMP), which serves as the primary guide for institutional planning and decision-making. The inclusion of institution-set standards in the EMP and the integration of the standards into the annual integrated planning and budgeting cycle is a demonstration of the conscious effort on the part of the College to "Build a strong culture of data-based decision-making and evaluation." (Merritt College's Administrative Procedures: Data, Planning and Decision Making, February 2016)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 5 and has fully addressed the deficiencies and concerns expressed by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team. Consistent with its mission, Merritt has established institution-set standards as thresholds for student performance and achievement. The College has also developed and implemented formal and sustainable practices to establish institution-set standards and to systematically assess the College's progress in meeting or exceeding its institution-set standards performance thresholds. Institution-set standards are now part of the agenda and dialogue by faculty, administrators, staff, and students at the two yearly planning summits. In addition, student performance data from the previous year has been integrated into the District's new APU template.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 5

Document Number	Document	Link
CR5.1	ACCJC Annual Reports, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016, pp. 2-3	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.1-ACCJC-Annual-Reports-2013-2014-2014-2015-2015-2016-pp.-2-3.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.1-ACCJC-Annual-Reports-2013-2014-2014-2015-2015-2016-pp.-2-3.pdf</a>
CR5.2	Title III Grant Narrative, pp. 21-23	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.2-Title-III-Grant-Narrative-pp.-21-23.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.2-Title-III-Grant-Narrative-pp.-21-23.pdf</a>
CR5.3	Title III Annual Report of Student Outcomes Year 5 Findings (2012-2013), pp. 6-9	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.3-Title-III-Annual-Report-of-Student-Outcomes-Year-5-Findings-2012-2013-pp.-6-9.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.3-Title-III-Annual-Report-of-Student-Outcomes-Year-5-Findings-2012-2013-pp.-6-9.pdf</a>
CR5.4	Title III Grant Project Year 5 Mid-Year Formative Evaluation Report, May 2013	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.4-Title-III-Grant-Project-Year-5-Mid-Year-Formative-Evaluation-Report-May-2013.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.4-Title-III-Grant-Project-Year-5-Mid-Year-Formative-Evaluation-Report-May-2013.pdf</a>
CR5.5	AFR College Recommendation 5 Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes, February 24, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.5-AFR-College-Recommendation-5-Sub-Committee-Meeting-Minutes-February-24-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.5-AFR-College-Recommendation-5-Sub-Committee-Meeting-Minutes-February-24-2016.pdf</a>
CR5.6	Institution-Set Standards, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR5.6-Institution-Set-Standards-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR5.6-Institution-Set-Standards-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR5.7	CEMPC Meeting Minutes, December 16, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.7-CEMPC-Meeting-Minutes-December-16-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.7-CEMPC-Meeting-Minutes-December-16-2015.pdf</a>
CR5.8	College Council Meeting Minutes, February 24, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.8-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-February-24-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.8-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-February-24-2016.pdf</a>

CR5.9	Professional Development Days Program, January 21-22, 2016, and Institution-Set Standards, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.9-Professional-Development-Days-Program-January-21-22-2016-Institution-Set-Standards-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.9-Professional-Development-Days-Program-January-21-22-2016-Institution-Set-Standards-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR5.10	ACCJC Annual Report, 2015-2016, pp. 2-3	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.10-ACCJC-Annual-Report-2015-2016-pp.-2-3.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.10-ACCJC-Annual-Report-2015-2016-pp.-2-3.pdf</a>
CR5.11	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR5.11-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR5.11-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf</a>
CR5.12	Bi-Annual Spring Planning Summit Agenda, May 13, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.12-Bi-Annual-Spring-Planning-Summit-Agenda-May-13-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.12-Bi-Annual-Spring-Planning-Summit-Agenda-May-13-2016.pdf</a>
CR5.13	2016 Assessment of College Processes Presentation, Spring 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.13-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-Presentation-Spring-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.13-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-Presentation-Spring-2016.pdf</a>
CR5.14	ACCJC Annual Report, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.14-ACCJC-Annual-Report-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR5.14-ACCJC-Annual-Report-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR5.15	Annual Program Update Template, August 15, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR5.15-Annual-Program-Update-Template-August-15-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR5.15-Annual-Program-Update-Template-August-15-2016.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 6

### College Recommendation 6

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standards, the Team recommends that the College accelerate the identification and documentation of student learning outcomes for all courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assess student attainment of those outcomes to ensure that all of its instructional courses and programs are of high quality and to make improvements. (I.B.1, I.B.3, I.B.5, I.B.6, II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

In College Recommendation 6, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team focused on inconsistencies in the College's review and assessment of outcomes for courses, programs, and services, as well as a lack of consistency in the use of assessment results on a cyclical basis to make institutional improvements. College Recommendation 6 also focused on the need for the College to take significant steps to accelerate identification and assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Service Area Outcomes (SAOs), and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 39 and p. 45)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also observed that the College's system for developing, using, and evaluating SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs appeared to be still in the nascent stages of development. The Team was unconvinced from the evidence presented that the College was taking a systematic and consistent approach to outcomes assessment, particularly SLO and PLO identification and assessment. Based on its overall review of the College's efforts, the Team concluded that "...*instructional programs are not systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes.*" (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 38)

Another key issue raised by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team was that the College did not adequately show that data drives assessment of learning outcomes, particularly SLOs and PLOs. The Team found that the "...*institution does not make significant use of internal and external data, across all instructional programs, to identify comprehensive student learning outcomes.*" (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 38)

An additional area of concern cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team was the apparent lack of evidence about adequate dialogue related to learning outcomes. Interviews with Merritt employees indicated a "...*limited understanding of timeframes for outcome assessment and data reporting periods.*" (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 33) While the Team conceded that, according to its interviews, it seemed dialogue about outcomes was happening, it found that "...*the College has not adequately or intentionally documented these dialogues.*" (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 34) The Team cited lack of concrete evidence (e.g., meeting minutes, event rosters) to support claims of widespread dialogue.

Finally, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team did not find adequate evidence linking SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs to institutional planning and budgeting. It noted that “...*there was no documented evidence showing the utilization of data reports (from outcomes assessment) in institutional planning.*” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 38) It concluded that, overall, “*Merritt College provided limited evidence that engagement in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to ensure the currency and measurements of SLOs is taking place.*” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 42)

Overall, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team cited deficiencies related to 11 ACCJC Standards. Four of the ACCJC Standards fell under Standard I.B, which focuses on institutional effectiveness. Seven ACCJC Standards fell under Standard II.A, which focuses on instructional programs.

## **RESPONSE**

The AFR College Recommendation 6 Sub-Committee was charged with conducting a thorough investigation of the College’s policies and practices in the areas of SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs. Once the nine AFR Sub-Committees were established, members of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC) were identified as AFR College Recommendation 6 Sub-Committee members.

However, in fall 2015, SLOAC was reorganized to expand its leadership and workload capacity in order to support the College’s goals for acceleration and proficiency in SLO assessment. The reorganization moved SLOAC from a committee structure with one chairperson to a new framework with five lead coordinators: two Division I SLO Assessment Coordinators, one Division II SLO Assessment Coordinator, one Student Services SLO Coordinator, and one ILO Coordinator.

Due to the level of work required of SLOAC in 2015-2016, SLOAC decided to focus its energy and efforts on addressing the deficiencies cited in College Recommendation 6 through regularly scheduled SLOAC meetings and activities, rather than participating in a separate AFR Sub-Committee. In addition, a dean of instruction was identified to serve as an administrative lead, responsible for working with SLOAC to research and prepare a written response to College Recommendation 6. Therefore, no official AFR Sub-Committee for College Recommendation 6 was convened.

To support this process, the AFR Core Team conducted a gap analysis, which resulted in two recommended corrective actions to address the deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and to help the College meet the 11 ACCJC Standards referenced in College Recommendation 6. The corrective actions are: Corrective Action 1: Accelerating Learning Outcomes Identification and Assessment; and Corrective Action 2: Using Assessment Results on a Systematic and Cyclical Basis to Improve Institutional Effectiveness.

**Corrective Action 1: Accelerating Learning Outcomes Identification and Assessment**

Merritt College’s most urgent task related to College Recommendation 6, was to show substantive progress in achieving proficiency in outcomes assessment for SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs. In March 2016, the Dean of Academic Pathways and Student Success, in collaboration with SLOAC, prepared the College’s *Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan*. The report outlines the College’s acceleration plan toward sustainability and proficiency in course, program, service area and institutional learning outcomes assessment. The plan provides an update on the College’s progress in SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs and details a three-year acceleration plan (2015-2018), timelines and activities with benchmarks for demonstrating proficiency and sustainability by June 2018. [\[CR6.1\]](#)

The *Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan* was disseminated college wide to all faculty, staff, and administrators in August 2016 during Flex Days. It was also presented at the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), the Curriculum and Instruction Committee (CIC), College Council, and to all managers at an administrative managers meeting in fall 2016. The Plan is currently posted for all to access on the College’s website on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment homepage. [\[CR6.2\]](#)

**Three-Year Learning Assessment Acceleration Plan:**

The *Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan* builds on lessons learned from SLOAC’s ongoing work to help the College reach proficiency in outcomes assessment. For the report, SLOAC identified 2014-2015 as the baseline year for the three-year learning assessment acceleration plan. This was the year of the Merritt College Self Evaluation Report (Spring 2015) and the date of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team’s site visit (March 2015). The baseline analysis revealed gaps in both learning outcomes identification and assessment completion numbers and rates, as shown in the table below:

<b>Merritt College Baseline Learning Outcomes Identification and Assessment Numbers and Rates (as of June 2015)</b>								
<b>Tasks</b>	<b>SLOs</b>		<b>PLOs</b>		<b>SAOs</b>		<b>ILOs</b>	
Learning Outcomes Identification	421	100%	27	61%	20	91%	6	100%
Assessment	211	48%	4	9%	16	73%	0	0%

As of June 2015, SLOs were identified in all active courses (421) and for all ILOs (6). However, in that same time period, the College was unsuccessful in reaching a100 percent identification completion rate for PLOs and SAOs. For example, of the 44 state-approved programs at Merritt, only 27 programs successfully identified PLOs. In the SAO category, 20 out of 22 service areas and administrative units identified service area outcomes. [\[CR6.3\]](#)

Overall, assessment rates were dramatically lower than learning outcomes identification rates. As of June 2015, only 211 of the 421 active courses completed assessment—a rate of 48 percent. Of the 27 programs with identified learning outcomes, only four (9%) had completed assessment. For SAOs, of the 20 service areas and administrative units in the College that had identified SAOs, only 16 (73%) had completed assessment. Finally, while the College made initial attempts to assess at least one or two of its six identified ILOs in 2014-2015, ultimately, no ILOs were fully assessed during this academic year. [[CR6.4](#)]

Low performance rates in outcomes assessment underscored the need for the College to undertake radically different approaches and strategies to motivate faculty and staff in completing required outcomes assessment. Starting in fall 2015, the newly reorganized SLOAC structure was implemented with the goal of improving and increasing college wide engagement in and dialogue about assessment. Other acceleration strategies included:

- Specific work plans for each of the five lead SLO and ILO Assessment Coordinators
- Increased role of classified staff to support management of Taskstream, the online database where assessment data is housed and maintained
- More frequent data reporting
- Additional time for coordinators to focus on one-on-one assessment support and group workshops on SLOs
- Coordinators and deans to plan proactive and personalized interventions, along with follow-up individual meetings with faculty, administrators, and staff as needed
- Joint division PLO assessment sessions (for faculty, dept. chairs, program directors)
- SAO assessment work sessions for College service and administrative units
- Two luncheons for faculty to dialogue on ILOs and to learn how to use a rubric to align programs/courses with the target ILO; results were discussed in two follow-up events
- Course inventory cleanup in CurricUNET META [[CR6.5](#); [CR6.6](#); [CR6.7](#); [CR6.8](#); [CR6.9](#)]

Over the last year, from June 2015 to June 2016, these acceleration strategies and the new SLOAC coordinator structure have resulted in expanded engagement and dialogue about assessment. More importantly, there has been an increase in the rates of both learning outcomes identification and assessment for SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs.



Merritt College SLOs and PLOs: Learning Outcomes Identification and Assessment Rates (June 2015 to June 2016)								
Tasks	SLOs				PLOs			
	June 2015		June 2016		June 2015		June 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Learning Outcomes Identification	421	100%	443	100%	27	61%	44	100%
Assessment	211	48%	313	71%	4	9%	26	59%

As indicated in the table above, in fall 2015, Merritt added 22 additional active courses. This increased the total number of active courses from 421 to 443. SLOs were identified for all of these additional active courses. Therefore, the learning outcomes identification rate stayed the same at 100 percent.

In spite of the increase in the number of active courses with SLOs, there was still a 12 percentage point increase in rate of completing assessment for these courses. As of June 2016, 313 courses with SLOs had completed assessment.

More importantly, tremendous progress has been made in the area of PLO identification and assessment. In terms of PLO identification, as of June 2016, all 44 state-approved programs at the College had identified PLOs. The College also moved from a nine percent assessment completion rate for PLOs in June 2015 to a 59 percent assessment completion rate in June 2016, with assessment completed for 26 of the 44 state-approved programs. [\[CR6.10\]](#)

Merritt College SAOs and ILOs: Learning Outcomes Identification and Assessment Rates (June 2015 to June 2016)								
Tasks	SAOs				ILOs			
	June 2015		June 2016		June 2015		June 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Learning Outcomes Identification	20	91%	25	100%	6	100%	6	100%
Assessment	16	73%	25	100%	0	0%	2	33%

In June 2015, 20 out of 22 service and administrative units had identified SAOs. The College added 3 additional service areas to incorporate learning communities for a total of 25 programs. By June 2016, all 25 service and administrative units had identified SAOs and were assessed.

During the same time period, as of June 2015, six ILOs had been identified, but none had been assessed. The new SLOAC acceleration plan calls for the assessment of two ILOs on an annual basis. As of June 2016, the College had assessed two ILOs and, therefore, is on target with ILO assessment as planned. [[CR6.11](#)]

In addition to reaching proficiency in terms of the percentage of courses, programs, and ILOS assessed, meaningful assessment in all areas has been a primary goal. SLO Assessment Coordinators have worked closely with faculty and staff to ensure that meaningful assessment is being done in courses, programs, and service areas. This is done by ensuring that the assessment is tied to the identified outcomes, that budgetary, curricular, and staffing requests are tied to assessment work, and that results are analyzed with an eye toward constant improvement.

The coordinators use a rubric developed at the College to facilitate discussions and provide a framework for faculty work. Assessment work is reviewed by the coordinators and feedback is provided on an ongoing basis; assessment work is also considered in program reviews and annual program updates.

Moving forward, in the *Merritt College Learning Report & Acceleration Plan: Accelerating Towards Sustainability 2015-2018* (June 2016), SLOAC has identified the following timelines, with anticipated benchmarks for course level, program level, service area, and institutional level assessment, to guide the College towards proficiency and sustainability in learning outcomes assessment. The ultimate plan is to achieve and institutionalize sustained, meaningful assessment by June 2018.

As of spring 2016, data for the College's SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs show that the College is on track with its three-year acceleration plan to achieve assessment proficiency and sustainability. The three-year timeline and benchmarks for assessment are presented below:

## Merritt College Learning Assessment Timelines and Benchmarks

### SLO Assessment Timelines and Benchmarks



*\* Timeline and benchmarks refer to active course offering changes based on curriculum updates and revisions.*  
\*

### Program Learning Assessment (Instruction) Timelines and Benchmarks



*\* Timeline and benchmarks refer to active program offering changes based on curriculum updates and revisions. \**

### Program Learning Assessment (Student Services and Administrative Services) Timelines and Benchmarks



### Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Timelines and Benchmarks



With the creation of the new SLOAC assessment coordinator structure with detailed activities and roles, the Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan (2015-2018) with timelines, activities, and benchmarks, and the other new acceleration strategies outlined above, the College has now moved out of the nascent stages of learning outcomes development. The College's detailed plan for developing, using, and evaluating learning outcomes has formalized processes and procedures to ensure quality instructional programs and improved institutional effectiveness.

### **Corrective Action 2: Using Assessment Results on a Systematic and Cyclical Basis to Improve Institutional Effectiveness**

The ability of the College to use assessment results in a systematic manner and on a cyclical basis to improve institutional effectiveness was another important focus area for College Recommendation 6. There were several deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team that the College needs to address in order to be in compliance with the ACCJC Standards referenced in College Recommendation 6. Areas of concern include:

- College must demonstrate a systematic and consistent approach to using assessment to make institutional improvements (II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.c, II.A.2.e)
- Insufficient evidence to document college wide dialogue on assessment (I.B.1)
- Constituents show only limited understanding of timeframes for outcomes assessment and data reporting periods (II.A.2.f)
- Need to demonstrate use of data-driven assessment strategies (I.B.5, II.A.2.b)
- Inconsistency in using assessment results to improve student learning (I.B.3)
- Limited evidence of linkages between outcomes assessment and integrated planning and budgeting (I.B.6, II.A.2.f)

To address these concerns, the AFR Core Team collaborated with the College administrative leadership team to standardize written administrative procedures for student learning outcomes and assessment, in a document entitled *Administrative Procedures—Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment* (January 2016). The purpose of these written procedures was to improve the systematic and consistent processes used by the College for outcomes assessment. Formal written administrative procedures were also crafted to address three other critical and related institutional issues: 1) integrated planning and budgeting; 2) the Educational Master Plan; and 3) use of data in planning and decision making.

The AFR Core Team and College administrative leadership team presented the administrative procedures for all four of these critical institutional issues at an AFR workshop during the January 2016 Flex Day. By demand, this workshop was repeated again for faculty, administrators, and staff on February 19, 2016. This enabled the AFR Core Team and the College administrative leadership team to gather input from key constituencies and to work together in broadly disseminating and communicating these new formalized guidelines. [[CR6.12](#); [CR6.13](#); [CR6.14](#)]

The following sections address the six areas of concern listed above, as presented in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/2015), and describe the processes and policies set forth in the new *Administrative Procedures—Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment* document. These sections also demonstrate the ways in which the College has corrected deficiencies to meet ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 6.

Need to Demonstrate a Systematic and Consistent Approach to Using Assessment to Make Institutional Improvements: Over the last year, Merritt has formalized its outcomes assessment processes to ensure that the College addresses the deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team, and to meet ACCJC Standards. The rationale for creating the new *Administrative Procedures—Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment* document was to “to meet the ACCJC standard of proficiency across the college in ongoing assessment, dialogue, and integrated planning and budgeting.” The ultimate goal is to encourage “campus wide learning outcomes assessment engagement with persistent and ongoing assessment cycles enriched with widespread dialogue integrated in planning and budgeting cycles.” [[CR6.15](#)]

As outlined in the administrative procedures overview, Merritt establishes and assesses outcomes in four areas:

- 1) SLOs for all college courses
- 2) PLOs for instructional programs
- 3) SAOs for service area and administrative units
- 4) ILOs for skills students will acquire during their experience at Merritt

The College assesses all courses, programs and services, and ILOs on a three-year cycle, according to set schedules for each category. In the process, outcomes for all three of the College's operational units (i.e., instructional programs, student services, and administrative services) are reviewed and measured and these outcomes are aligned with ILOs.

*Brief Description of the SLO Process:* The College's SLO Assessment Coordinators and SLOAC are responsible for establishing the calendar for college wide SLO identification and assessment. Each department establishes timelines for assessment completion, as documented in the Timeline section of the assessment plans entered into Taskstream, with the recommendation that at least one SLO in every course be assessed each semester to ensure ongoing dialogue regarding student learning. The SLO Assessment Coordinators work with individual departments to ensure that this timeline is appropriate, reasonable, followed, and amended as needed. There are four steps in the SLO assessment cycle:

- 1) Assessment planning
- 2) Assessment results (e.g., collecting student outcomes data and reflecting upon it)
- 3) Action planning (e.g., developing an improvement plan based on outcomes data)
- 4) Assessment status update

In addition, all faculty members enter assessment information in the Update section of the assessment plans in Taskstream. The four steps of the SLO assessment cycle and the online assessment plan template, along with other helpful information, continue to remain available for faculty reference on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment web page, linked to the College's website. [[CR6.16](#)]

*Brief Description of the PLO Process:* All instructional programs are required to participate in the assessment of PLOs, by selecting at least one PLO to assess each semester. PLOs are assessed using capstone courses, licensing and culminating exams, portfolio development, summit meetings, and/or student surveys. The type of program assessment used is identified by the program faculty and depends on what is most appropriate or connected to the program. All PLOs are aligned with both course-level SLOs, and ILOs.

*Brief Description of the SAO Process:* All non-instructional programs and service area and administrative units are required to assess an SAO every fall and spring, so that all SAOs are assessed at least once in every three-year cycle and so that all areas of the College are engaged in an ongoing dialogue regarding their outcomes. SAOs are also aligned with ILOs.

*Brief Description of the ILO Assessment Process:* Merritt College currently has six ILOs: 1) Communication; 2) Critical Thinking; 3) Quantitative Reasoning; 4) Cultural Awareness; 5) Civic Engagement and Ethics; and 6) Information and Computer Literacy. These ILOs are posted on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment web page of the College's website. Developed as part of the planning process for the College's Educational Master Plan, the ILOs are intended to set standards for the various skills that all students will acquire during their experience at Merritt. The ILOS are mapped on a three-year cycle with one of the six ILOS assessed each year. All other outcomes (SLOs, PLOs, and SAOs) are mapped to one or more ILOs. [[CR6.17](#)]

All departments are required to engage in ongoing mapping activities that determine the level at which their course, program, and service area outcomes align with the College's ILOs. All faculty and staff teaching a course or leading a service mapped at the "Advancing" level are invited to participate in the semester's ILO assessment. A luncheon is held for all participants where assignments are discussed and a common rubric is developed.

At the end of each semester, participants bring samples of student work, a completed rubric of one's class work and the answers to reflection questions. As a group, faculty and staff brainstorm to identify successes and areas needing improvement. Together, the group identifies an action plan for the College at large, to be implemented the following year. A report is generated upon completion of each ILO assessment and is posted on the College website, as well as shared with the College at its Fall Flex Day event. [[CR6.18](#)]

*Brief Description of Outcomes Assessment for CTE and DE Courses:* The administrative procedures for outcomes assessment are comprehensive and applicable to all courses, programs, and services, including Career Technical Education (CTE) and Distance Education courses. CTE courses and programs, for example, follow the same assessment steps as other programs. Certain CTE programs are also subject to rigorous and regular external review by profession-specific oversight and licensing boards. Online Distance Education (DE) courses follow the same SLO assessment procedures as face-to-face courses, ensuring that the quality of instruction in DE courses meets the same standard of instruction as in non-DE courses.

*Brief Description of the Related Curriculum Review Process:* In addition to the SLO and PLO assessment process, another important way that Merritt guarantees the quality of its courses and programs is through the curriculum review process. The College's Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) has established procedures for approving proposed new curriculum, to make sure that curriculum additions are based on data re: student interests, as well as external factors such as labor market data and current and emerging industry needs.

During 2015-2016, the CIC worked to cull and update the active course roster. The CIC reviewed and updated its procedures for assessing existing curriculum. According to the CIC web page, developments include:

- Course SLOs that are part of a degree or certificate are now mapped to PLOs.
- If updating SLOs in courses that are part of a degree or certificate, faculty should use the SLO-PLO Mapping Worksheet provided on the CIC web page.

- Courses that are not part of a degree or certificate are still mapped directly to ILOs. [\[CR6.19\]](#)

*Delineating Roles for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators in the Outcomes Process:* The roles of Merritt faculty, staff, and administrators in the outcomes assessment process are outlined in the sections below:

Role of SLOAC: SLOAC is charged with keeping track of assessment work, organizing assessment-related professional development activities, reviewing assessment data, and educating the college about institutional assessment trends, issues, and resources. SLOAC membership consists of seven faculty (including one counselor) and two classified professionals, including a library resources representative. Deans and vice presidents are non-voting members and are expected to attend SLOAC meetings to participate in discussion. The committee meets monthly and extra meetings may be called as needed. SLOAC works with administrators and department chairs to plan and track outcomes assessments in their various areas.

Role of Faculty, Staff, and Administrators: Assessment is a college wide task. It involves responsible individuals from each of the three operational units at the College—Instruction, Student Services, and Administrative Services.

For instructional programs, faculty plan SLO assessments and assessment instruments. In an effort to ensure quality instruction across disciplines, full-time faculty conduct course assessment as part of their professional duties. Part-time faculty are provided a stipend to conduct assessments. Faculty members, led by department chairs or a designated assessment coordinator, also plan PLO assessment and assessment instruments. Department chairs create a department course and program assessment schedule for each term.

For non-instructional programs and services, service area managers plan SAO assessments and assessment instruments. Members of the College’s administrative leadership team also plan SAO assessments and assessment instruments for all administrative service units on campus.

With regard to ILO assessment, SLOAC, with the assistance of department chairs, determines which courses are at the advancing level for the ILO being assessed that term. Faculty and staff participate in ILO assessment each semester, according to the schedule set by SLOAC and the department chairs.

Insufficient Evidence to Document College Wide Dialogue on Assessment:

Merritt College has administrative procedures in place to support and encourage broad-based dialogue and communication about outcomes assessment. Dialogue and communication about outcomes assessment happens at both the department and division level, as well as on a college wide level. SLOAC ensures that the following forums facilitate dialogue on assessment:

*Department and Division-Level Dialogue:* Dialogue about SLOs and PLOs occurs primarily within individual departments and divisions. This includes formal discussions at department and division meetings and informal conversations among faculty within various departments. Discussion of SLOs and PLOs is also a required part of the College's Program Review and APU process, in which assessment data is used to inform program planning and resource requests.

Departments discuss challenges in student learning at the course, textbook, and conceptual level. As part of this discussion, they discuss the need for more scaffolding in difficult areas or new approaches to material that have shown to be useful in helping students improve understanding and application of concepts. Evaluation of SLO data is central to this process. Faculty members for each program determine the need for specific course levels (developmental; transfer-level) and discuss the effectiveness of a tiered approach. [\[CR6.20\]](#)

For non-instructional program and services, dialogue about SAOs occurs between student services faculty and staff in formal discussions at department and division meetings and in informal discussions between colleagues. Student services holds a dialogue session as part of a division wide meeting each September and February. In terms of administrative services assessment, dialogue about SAOs occurs within monthly management meetings. [\[CR6.21\]](#)

*College Wide Dialogue and Communication:* In addition to dialogue at the department and division level, dialogue also occurs at the college level. SLOAC members regularly attend and present at division meetings and shared governance meetings and facilitate, dialogue, and communicate assessment updates across the College. Discussion about assessment data occurs in multiple shared governance and other college committee meetings, including meetings of the College's Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC), the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), and the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC). [\[CR6.22\]](#)

Dialogue about assessment data also occurs in a variety of college wide forums, including the annual College Planning Summit in September and fall and spring Flex Days (professional development days). For example, SLOAC sponsored a widely attended fall 2015 college wide event entitled *Making Assessment Meaningful*. At this workshop, SLOAC members provided faculty with five examples of assessment and asked them to evaluate these examples using the assessment rubric developed by the College; prizes were awarded to the group that completed the task most thoroughly. In fall 2015 and spring 2016, SLOAC held several joint division workshops on ILO assessment, with related presentations on SLO, PLO, and ILO outcomes assessment at the January 2016 Flex Day. [\[CR6.23\]](#)

SLOAC also fosters discussion and dialogue about outcomes assessment through weekly assessment announcements, assessment assistance sessions, and incorporation of assessment updates into the College newsletter. The College maintains a website with public information regarding institutional quality, including accreditation and assessment information. [\[CR6.24\]](#)

Finally, SLOs for individual courses are available to the wider campus community. Faculty members within the same program have access to Taskstream to view their program's



assessments. Programs may allot time during program/department meetings to discuss SLOs and course-specific SLOs are included in syllabi distributed to students. [[CR6.25](#)]

Limited Understanding of Timeframes for Outcomes Assessment and Data Reporting Periods by All Constituencies:

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the College has taken specific steps to increase the understanding and knowledge of faculty and staff regarding the specific guidelines for student learning outcomes and assessment. The creation of the *Administrative Procedures: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment* document was another step in increasing the understanding of outcomes assessment by all constituencies.

The AFR Core Team and the College administration also facilitated two workshops, one in January and one in February 2016, to increase the knowledge base of faculty and staff in outcomes assessment and the related timeframes and data reporting periods. As part of this effort, a pre- and post-survey was administered at both workshops to assess the knowledge gained by participants. This was also an opportunity for the AFR Core Team and College administration to gather input prior to finalizing the written College administrative procedures document. The final College administrative procedures document is published on the College website and is available for all constituencies to view and use.

Lastly, the SLO Assessment Coordinators facilitated individual and departmental contacts by e-mail and in-person meetings to ensure that faculty and staff members were aware of upcoming deadlines. They also provide support faculty and staff with support, as needed, in meeting these deadlines for outcomes assessment process. [[CR6.26](#)]

Use of Data-Driven Assessment Strategies:

The College systematically gathers, analyzes, and interprets data to determine how well the institution is doing in achieving expected outcomes. Data for outcomes assessment are entered into Taskstream. Regular reports are generated to enable the College to continuously assess its progress towards outcomes identification and assessment targets.

The College uses a variety of different types of data for outcomes assessment. For SLO assessment, for example, faculty may choose to use data from one or more sources to assess the effectiveness of the individual course SLOs on student learning. Examples of data sources include: student completion data, portfolios, final papers, student surveys, student focus group feedback, etc. Sample assessments with data points are available for view on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment web page. [[CR6.27](#)]

Data analysis is also an integral part of the Annual Program Update (APU) and Program Review processes. The new Program Review template created by the District in 2015, for example, requires managers to provide detail analysis of student performance indicators for their area, including SLO and PLO assessment data. [[CR6.28](#)]

In July 2015, the College increased its capacity to use data when it was approved to hire a Research and Planning Officer. The Research and Planning Officer works with the division deans, department chairs, program coordinators, and faculty to identify data needs and to

obtain data from the District Office of Institutional Research for Annual Program Updates (APUs) and Program Reviews. The Research and Planning Officer position has greatly enhanced the institution's ability to use data for course, program, and institutional improvement.

Inconsistency in Using Assessment Results to Improve Student Learning:

The entire college community also regularly reviews student outcomes data through the APU and Program Review process. This data analysis is used to plan improvements at the course, program, department, and institutional level.

Departments utilize learning assessment to evaluate teaching and learning and to improve course and program outcomes for students. Departments engage in dialogue and determine next steps to increase efficacy and effectiveness of assignments. Two examples include Nutrition and English. In Nutrition 12, assessments were conducted to assess student learning and ability regarding major dietary restrictions and nutritional interventions. Students were to describe and rationalize the major dietary restrictions and nutritional interventions associated with common and uncommon medical disorders and diseases. The instructor used a group assignment as the assessment method and results were below expected in both group work as well as content presented. As a result, the instructor changed the assignment and teaching method to increase student learning. The English department also utilized learning assessments over the past two years along with department dialogue that led to planned curricular changes and new courses. A new course will be added to the curriculum to improve student writing and overall completion rates in pre-transfer level English courses. The goal is to accelerate the flow through from pre-transfer to transfer. [\[CR6.29\]](#)

Integration of Outcomes Assessment with Institutional Planning and Budgeting:

The College has developed a detailed written annual integrated planning and budgeting procedure, published January 2016. This College administrative procedure is accompanied by an annual planning calendar and a one-page graphic that provides a snapshot of the overall planning process.

The integrated planning calendar and graphic were published in the Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, adopted February 2016. The handbook also includes a related chart depicting steps in the College's decision-making processes. [\[CR6.30\]](#)

All Merritt College programs and service and administrative units (instructional and non-instructional) are required to undergo a comprehensive Program Review every three years and to complete an APU in alternate years from Program Review. During the 2015-2016 Program Review cycle, 100 percent of programs and service and administrative units completed Program Reviews, which were validated by a campus Validation Team for accuracy and completion. These Program Reviews served as the foundation for linking outcomes assessment to planning and resource allocation for the next fiscal year. [\[CR6.31\]](#)

## **Conclusion**

Merritt College has made significant progress during the 2016-2017 academic year in all aspects of learning assessment. Through the development and implementation of the Acceleration Plan, SLO assessment increased by 23 percentage points with 71 percent of the College's active courses assessed as of June 2016. Program learning assessment increased by 50 percentage points with 59 percent of the active state-approved instructional programs assessed as of June 2016. Service area assessment increased by 27 percentage points with 100 percent of the Service area units assessed in the College as of June 2016. Several disciplines are now engaging in ILO assessment, with two of the College's six ILOs assessed as of June 2016. The College maintains its commitment to accelerated outcomes assessment with a goal of complete and continuous assessment in all areas by the end of fall 2018.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 6

Document Number	Document	Link
CR6.1	<i>Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan: Accelerating Towards Sustainability 2015-2018</i> , June 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.1-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.1-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.2	Learning Assessment Report on Website	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.2-Learning-Assessment-Report-on-Website.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.2-Learning-Assessment-Report-on-Website.pdf</a>
CR6.3	<i>Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan: Accelerating Towards Sustainability 2015-2018</i> , June 2016, pp. 3-4	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.3-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016-pp.-3-4.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.3-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016-pp.-3-4.pdf</a>
CR6.4	<i>Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan: Accelerating Towards Sustainability 2015-2018</i> , June 2016, pp. 3-4	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.4-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016-pp.-3-4.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.4-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016-pp.-3-4.pdf</a>
CR6.5	<i>Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan: Accelerating Towards Sustainability 2015-2018</i> , June 2016, pp. 6-8 & 12-22	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.5-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016-pp.-6-8-12-22.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.5-Learning-Assessment-Report-Acceleration-Plan-Accelerating-Towards-Sustainability-2015-2018-June-2016-pp.-6-8-12-22.pdf</a>
CR6.6	Joint Division PLO Assessment Workshops, January and February 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.6-Joint-Division-PLO-Assessment-Workshops-January-February-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.6-Joint-Division-PLO-Assessment-Workshops-January-February-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.7	SAO Assessment Sessions, Spring 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.7-SAO-Assessment-Sessions-Spring-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.7-SAO-Assessment-Sessions-Spring-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.8	Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Luncheons, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.8-Institutional-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment-Luncheons-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.8-Institutional-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment-Luncheons-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.9	CurricUNET Course Clean-Up, Fall 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.9-CurricUNET-Course-Clean-Up-Fall-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.9-CurricUNET-Course-Clean-Up-Fall-2016.pdf</a>

CR6.10	Taskstream At-a-Glance Report for Program Assessment, July 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.10-Taskstream-At-a-Glance-Report-for-Program-Assessment-July-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.10-Taskstream-At-a-Glance-Report-for-Program-Assessment-July-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.11	Taskstream At-a-Glance Report for Support Program Assessment, July 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.11-Taskstream-At-a-Glance-Report-for-Support-Program-Assessment-July-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.11-Taskstream-At-a-Glance-Report-for-Support-Program-Assessment-July-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.12	Administrative Procedures— Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.12-Administrative-Procedures—Student-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.12-Administrative-Procedures—Student-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment.pdf</a>
CR6.13	Administrative Procedures— Data, Planning and Decision Making and Administrative Procedures—Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.13-Administrative-Procedures—Data-Planning-Decision-Making-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-and-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.13-Administrative-Procedures—Data-Planning-Decision-Making-Administrative-Procedures—Integrated-Planning-and-Budgeting-IPB-Model.pdf</a>
CR6.14	AFR Flex Day Workshop Goals/Objectives, January 22 and February 19, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.14-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Goals-Objectives-January-22-February-19-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.14-AFR-Flex-Day-Workshop-Goals-Objectives-January-22-February-19-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.15	Administrative Procedures— Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.15-Administrative-Procedures—Student-Learning-Outcomes-and-Assessment.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.15-Administrative-Procedures—Student-Learning-Outcomes-and-Assessment.pdf</a>
CR6.16	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Rubric and Template	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.16-Student-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment-Rubric-and-Template.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.16-Student-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment-Rubric-and-Template.pdf</a>
CR6.17	Institutional Learning Outcomes on Website	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.17-Institutional-Learning-Outcomes-on-Website.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.17-Institutional-Learning-Outcomes-on-Website.pdf</a>
CR6.18	ILO Assessment on SLOAC Website	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.18-ILO-Assessment-on-SLOAC-Website.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.18-ILO-Assessment-on-SLOAC-Website.pdf</a>
CR6.19	Course Proposal Components Quick Guide	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.19-Course-Proposal-Components-Quick-Guide.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.19-Course-Proposal-Components-Quick-Guide.pdf</a>
CR6.20	Departmental Dialogue on Assessment	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.20-Departmental-Dialogue-on-Assessment.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.20-Departmental-Dialogue-on-Assessment.pdf</a>

CR6.21	SAO Assessment Sessions, Spring 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.21-SA0-Assessment-Sessions-Spring-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.21-SA0-Assessment-Sessions-Spring-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.22	Assessment Discussions at Governance Meetings	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.22-Assessment-Discussions-at-Governance-Meetings.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.22-Assessment-Discussions-at-Governance-Meetings.pdf</a>
CR6.23	Assessment Presentation and Workshop Activities, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.23-Assessment-Presentation-and-Workshop-Activities-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.23-Assessment-Presentation-and-Workshop-Activities-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR6.24	Assessment Update in <i>Merritt Connection</i> Newsletters	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.24-Assessment-Update-in-Merritt-Connection-Newsletters.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.24-Assessment-Update-in-Merritt-Connection-Newsletters.pdf</a>
CR6.25	Assessment Discussions at Department Meetings and SLOs in Syllabi	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.25-Assessment-Discussions-at-Department-Meetings-SLOs-in-Syllabi.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.25-Assessment-Discussions-at-Department-Meetings-SLOs-in-Syllabi.pdf</a>
CR6.26	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Coordinators Outreach	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.26-Student-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment-Coordinators-Outreach.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.26-Student-Learning-Outcomes-Assessment-Coordinators-Outreach.pdf</a>
CR6.27	Sample Assessments on SLOAC Website	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.27-Sample-Assessments-on-SLOAC-Website.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.27-Sample-Assessments-on-SLOAC-Website.pdf</a>
CR6.28	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, pp. 8-14	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.28-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-8-14.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.28-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-8-14.pdf</a>
CR6.29	Using Assessment Results to Improve Student Learning	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.29-Using-Assessment-Results-to-Improve-Student-Learning.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.29-Using-Assessment-Results-to-Improve-Student-Learning.pdf</a>
CR6.30	Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) Model—Annual Calendar and Overview of Annual IPB Cycle	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.30-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar-Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR6.30-Integrated-Planning-Budgeting-IPB-Model—Annual-Calendar-Overview-of-Annual-IPB-Cycle.pdf</a>
CR6.31	2015-2016 Completed Program Reviews	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.31-2015-2016-Completed-Program-Reviews.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR6.31-2015-2016-Completed-Program-Reviews.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 7

### College Recommendation 7

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standard, the Team recommends that the College work with the District Human Resources Department and follow its policy to systematically complete all personnel evaluations. (III.A.1.b)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

College Recommendation 7 focused on the issue of timely completion of personnel evaluations. According to the ACCJC External Evaluation Team:

*“Though the employee evaluation process is well documented, the College was unable to provide quantitative evidence to demonstrate that employee performance evaluations were being completed on a timely basis. Results from a variety of college personnel indicate that performance evaluations were not being completed in a timely manner.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 56)*

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team reiterated this observation later in the report, stating: *“Performance evaluations of College personnel are not completed on a regular and timely basis.” (p. 59)*

For College Recommendation 7, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team cited only one Accreditation Standard (Accreditation Standard III.A.1.b), which states:

*“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 the 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.”*

The District and the College meet the Standard, in terms of having established written criteria for systematically evaluating all personnel at stated intervals. However, as noted by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team, the College needs to take actions to ensure that all personnel evaluations are conducted in timely manner.

### Response

Merritt College is committed to adhering to all District and College personnel evaluation policies and procedures. To address the deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and to meet Accreditation Standard III.A.1.b, the AFR College Recommendation 7

Sub-Committee conducted a gap analysis to investigate issues related to the timely completion of all College personnel evaluations.

First, the Sub-Committee reviewed the descriptive summary for ACCJC Standard III.A.1.b in the Accreditation Self Evaluation Report Spring 2015. From this review, the Sub-Committee concluded that the Accreditation Self Evaluation Report Spring 2015 descriptive summary adequately described the processes and schedules for evaluating all personnel classifications at the College, as set forth in the following District procedural documents:

- Faculty Evaluations: *Peralta Community College District (PCCD) Faculty Evaluation Policies & Procedures Handbook 2015-2016* (updated annually) [[CR7.1](#)]
- Faculty and Classified Staff Evaluation: *Peralta Community College District (PCCD) Collective Bargaining Agreements* [[CR7.2](#)]
- Classified Staff Evaluations: *Merritt College Classified Evaluation Schedule, 2015-2016* (updated annually by the District Office of Human Resources) [[CR7.3](#)]
- Management Performance Evaluation: *Board Administrative Policy (AP7126)* [[CR7.4](#)]

However, although District and College policies for the timely completion of personnel evaluations were in place at the time of ACCJC External Evaluation Team site visit, the Sub-Committee determined that the College could have provided more detailed evidence on the completion of personnel evaluations in its Accreditation Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015.

In response, the Sub-Committee coordinated with the District Office of Human Resources and Merritt's Office of the President, as well as the College's Faculty Evaluation Facilitator, and Tenure Facilitator to document personnel evaluation completion rates for the three-year period between 2013 and 2015. The Sub-Committee examined documentation of the College's personnel evaluation practices in three categories:

- Faculty (Tenure Track, Full-Time Contract Faculty, and Part-Time Faculty, Counselors, and Librarians)
- Administrators (Academic Administrators and Classified Managers)
- Classified Staff

The following charts accurately depict the number of faculty, administrator, and classified staff evaluations completed in academic years 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016.



Merritt College Faculty Evaluations Required vs. Completed 2013-2014 to 2015-2016						
Personnel	Academic Years					
Type of Faculty	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016	
	Number Required	Number Completed	Number Required	Number Completed	Number Required	Number Completed
Tenure Track	5	5	11	11	13	13
Full-Time Contract	31	20	15	11	16	16
Part-Time Faculty, Counselors and Librarians	108	87	72	67	84	84

As indicated by the data on faculty evaluations in the chart above, the College has made tremendous progress toward the timely completion of personnel evaluations of all tenure track, full-time contract, part-time faculty, counselors, and librarians over the last three years. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the College successfully achieved 100 percent completion of faculty evaluations in all faculty personnel categories within the required timeframe. [\[CR7.5\]](#)

Merritt College Administrator Evaluations Required vs. Completed 2013-2014 to 2015-2016						
Personnel	Academic Years					
Administrators	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016	
	Number Required	Number Completed	Number Required	Number Completed	Number Required	Number Completed
Academic Administrators	6	4	6	3	8	6
Classified Managers	1	1	1	1	2	2

In accordance with Board policies and schedules, as of the 2015-2016 academic year the College achieved 100 percent completion of administrator evaluations. In the 2015-2016, six out of eight academic administrator evaluations were completed. For two of the eight administrators, it was not possible to conduct a personnel evaluation due to staffing changes. The permanent Vice President of Instruction went on leave from the College in August 2015. An Interim Vice President of Instruction filled the position between October 2015 and February 2016. A permanent Vice President of Instruction was appointed in April 2016 and will be evaluated in the upcoming 2016-2017 academic year. As a result, only six academic administrator personnel evaluations were completed.

In 2014-2015, only three of six academic administrator evaluations were completed. The other three were incomplete due to non-continuance, resignation, and new hire status of personnel in those positions. In 2013-2014, four of six academic administrator evaluations were completed. As for the other two academic administrator position evaluations, one evaluation was not conducted due to resignation and the other due to a new hire status.

Finally, over the last three years, all Classified Manager evaluations were completed in a timely manner. The College maintained 100 percent completion in this category. [\[CR7.6\]](#)

Merritt College Classified Staff Evaluations Required vs. Completed 2013-2014 to 2015-2016						
Personnel	Academic Years					
Classified Staff	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016	
	Number Required	Number Completed	Number Required	Number Completed	Number Required	Number Completed
Classified Staff	45	11	47	38	58	58

In the case of Classified Staff personnel evaluations, the Sub-Committee’s gap analysis of the data revealed that the College was not in compliance. Unlike faculty and administrator personnel evaluations, Classified Staff personnel evaluations are conducted by the administrator supervisor and are due for completion by the anniversary of the employee’s hire date each year. Although the administrative turnover at the College has stabilized, in the years examined administrative turnover may have played a role in the College’s ability to complete 100 percent of its Classified Staff personnel evaluations. [\[CR7.7\]](#)

The College has made progress in the timely completion of personnel evaluations in the faculty and administrator categories. However, the data examined during the gap analysis conducted by the AFR College Recommendation 7 Sub-Committee pointed to the need for the College to put in place some type of mechanism to ensure the timely completion of Classified Staff personnel evaluations.

Therefore, the Sub-Committee looked at mechanisms that are in place to support the timely completion of faculty personnel evaluations, as compared to the mechanisms to support classified staff personnel evaluations. At one time, only one Faculty Evaluation Facilitator was assigned to monitor all faculty evaluations, including tenure track faculty, full-time contract faculty, part-time faculty, counselors, and librarians. During this time, the non-tenure track faculty evaluation completion rate hovered around 25 percent.

Now, faculty personnel evaluation processes are supported by two separate positions, a Tenure Facilitator and a Faculty Evaluation Facilitator. The Tenure Facilitator monitors and maintains the records for all tenure track faculty. As a result, the tenure track faculty personnel evaluations have always been at 100 percent completion rate. [\[CR7.8\]](#)

The Faculty Evaluation Facilitator monitors and maintains the records for full-time contract faculty, part-time faculty, counselors, and librarians. Since the establishment of the Faculty Evaluation Facilitator assignment, the non-tenure track faculty evaluations have moved from a 25 percent to a 100 percent completion rate. [\[CR7.9\]](#)

The AFR College Recommendation 7 Sub-Committee concluded that the College’s personnel evaluation processes appear to work best when a designated individual is assigned time to monitor and coordinate the completion of evaluations throughout the year. These findings lead the Sub-Committee to recommend one corrective action mapped to ACCJC Standard III.A.1.b. The corrective action is as follows: Corrective Action 1: Designate a Classified Staff Personnel Evaluation Coordinator.

### **Corrective Action 1: Designate a Classified Staff Person to Consistently Monitor, Coordinate, and Document the Completion of all Classified Evaluations**

Although a system has been in place for several years to monitor the completion of Classified staff evaluations, the process has undergone several transitions. In 2014, the previous Executive Assistant to the President was assigned to monitor and coordinate the completion of the Classified evaluations. A systematic template and structure was subsequently created to maximize efficiency that included, reformatting the District Human Resources Classified evaluation spreadsheets and then organizing the evaluations according to the responsible manager.

Most importantly, the current Executive Assistant to the President was assigned the duties and responsibilities of monitoring and coordinating the completion of the Classified staff evaluations in alignment with the present job description. The expectation was that, with a dedicated individual assigned to this coordinating function, the classified staff evaluation rate would significantly improve and reach compliance in the 2016-2017 academic years. To this end, beginning in October 2015, the current Executive Assistant continued to improve the process of monitoring and completing Classified evaluations. With the improved process, Merritt College reached compliance with 100% of the classified evaluations completed as of June 2016. [CR7.10]. The plan for the 2016-2017 academic year is to monitor this process to ensure that it continues to be effective in monitoring and completing Classified evaluations. [CR7.11]

### **Conclusion**

Merritt College meets the ACCJC Standard III.A.1.b for College Recommendation 7, which calls for the College to assure the effectiveness of its human resources by maintaining the systematic evaluation of its personnel at stated intervals and in a timely manner and has fully addressed the deficiencies identified by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team.

As of the 2015-2016 academic year, the College is in compliance with the timely completion of personnel evaluations for tenure track faculty, full-time contract faculty, part-time faculty, counselors, librarians, and administrators. More importantly, the College has identified a corrective action and solid resolution, which will be implemented in 2016-2017, to bring the institution into compliance with timely completion of Classified Staff personnel evaluations.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 7

Document Number	Document	Link
CR7.1	PCCD Faculty Evaluations Policies and Procedures Handbook, August 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.1-PCCD-Faculty-Evaluations-Policies-Procedures-Handbook-August-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.1-PCCD-Faculty-Evaluations-Policies-Procedures-Handbook-August-2015.pdf</a>
CR7.2	PCCD and SEIU, Local 1021, Permanent Employees Contract—Tentative Agreement, September 2013	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.2-PCCD-SEIU-Local-1021-Permanent-Employees-Contract—Tentative-Agreement-September-2013.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.2-PCCD-SEIU-Local-1021-Permanent-Employees-Contract—Tentative-Agreement-September-2013.pdf</a>
CR7.3	Classified Evaluation Schedule, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.3-Classified-Evaluation-Schedule-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.3-Classified-Evaluation-Schedule-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR7.4	PCCD Administrative Procedure 7126 Management Performance Evaluations	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.4-PCCD-Administrative-Procedure-7126-Management-Performance-Evaluations.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.4-PCCD-Administrative-Procedure-7126-Management-Performance-Evaluations.pdf</a>
CR7.5	Faculty Evaluations, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR7.5-Faculty-Evaluations-2013-2014-2014-2015-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR7.5-Faculty-Evaluations-2013-2014-2014-2015-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR7.6	Management Evaluations, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.6-Management-Evaluations-2013-2014-2014-2015-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.6-Management-Evaluations-2013-2014-2014-2015-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR7.7	Classified Evaluations, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.7-Classified-Evaluations-2014-2015-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.7-Classified-Evaluations-2014-2015-2015-2016.pdf</a>
CR7.8	PCCD Faculty Evaluations Policies and Procedures Handbook, August 2015, pp. 14-15	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.8-PCCD-Faculty-Evaluations-Policies-Procedures-Handbook-August-2015-pp.-14-15.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR7.8-PCCD-Faculty-Evaluations-Policies-Procedures-Handbook-August-2015-pp.-14-15.pdf</a>
CR7.9	Faculty Evaluation Facilitator Job Description	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR7.9-Faculty-Evaluation-Facilitator-Job-Description.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/07/CR7.9-Faculty-Evaluation-Facilitator-Job-Description.pdf</a>
CR7.10	Classified Evaluations, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.10-Classified-Evaluations-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.10-Classified-Evaluations-2015-2016.pdf</a>

CR7.11	Classified Evaluations Procedures, 2015-2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.11-Classified-Evaluations-Procedures-2015-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR7.11-Classified-Evaluations-Procedures-2015-2016.pdf</a>
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## Response to College Recommendation 8

### College Recommendation 8

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standard, the Team recommends that the College assess and determine the adequate number of qualified faculty and staff to support the College's mission. (III.A.2)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

In College Recommendation 8, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team raised concerns about the adequacy of personnel to support College programs, services, and the mission. In the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), the ACCJC External Evaluation Team observed:

*“For the past few years, the adequacy of personnel to support college programs, services, and mission has been in question. The staffing level at the College has decreased significantly, due in large part to drastic reductions in funding from the state and other funding sources, as well as the exceptionally high turnover of personnel in key administrative positions.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 55)*

During their visit, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team noted that “Recent staff hiring, including the recent appointments of two vice presidents, has improved the human resources situation at the college and has provided some stability in improving morale overall. Nonetheless, vacancies and turnover in college staffing persist.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 55) Furthermore, the Team was unable to find evidence to support the College’s claims that it makes “...strategic new hiring decisions based on student demand and operational effectiveness.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 59)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also commented that “...the human resources planning process from the college level seems to be disconnected from the prioritization and budgeting processes at the District level.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 59) In addition, the Team urged the College “...to implement a systematic and evidence-based integrated planning process in human resources...for assessing and determining the staffing level and configuration it needs to support the College’s mission, plans, and students.” (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 60)

### Response

Merritt College is committed to maintaining an adequate number of faculty, administrators, and staff to support the College’s mission, plans, and the delivery of high-quality educational programs and services designed to meet the needs of its students. To address the concerns raised by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and to meet the standard cited, ACCJC Standard III.A.2, the AFR College Recommendation 8 Sub-Committee conducted a thorough gap analysis of permanent full-time staffing trends in all three personnel categories (faculty, administrators, and staff) to assess whether or not the College’s staffing levels are adequate

to meet its mission. (Note: The College also hires temporary hourly classified personnel and student workers; these categories are not included in this analysis, but certainly support the College in the delivery of services to students and the community.)

The gap analysis revealed that, at the time of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team's site visit, many of Merritt's faculty and staff members were still reacting to the effects of the drastic state budget cuts experienced by the College between 2008 and 2013. Therefore, when some faculty and staff were interviewed by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team about the adequacy of staffing, their responses may have been anecdotal rather than based on actual College permanent full-time staffing data. At the same time, the College acknowledges that it could have done a better job in describing the ways in which Merritt meets ACCJC Standard III.A.2 and in providing adequate data and evidence to document permanent full-time staffing levels.

Therefore, the AFR College Recommendation 8 Sub-Committee could see how the ACCJC External Evaluation Team concluded that: 1) there was insufficient evidence to determine the adequacy of permanent full-time staffing levels; 2) there was not enough evidence to confirm the linkages between evidence-based integrated planning processes and human resources; and 3) given the evidence provided, it was not possible to ascertain whether or not human resources planning processes were linked to District planning and resource allocation.

In order to address the deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and to demonstrate that Merritt meets ACCJC Standard III.A.2, the AFR College Recommendation 8 Sub-Committee initially set out to review the College's total FTE staffing levels between 2013 and 2015. However, while the Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR) was being prepared, the College was also engaged in updating its Educational Master Plan 2015-2020 (EMP), which included an internal scan and analysis of permanent employee data. Therefore, the AFR College Recommendation 8 Sub-Committee utilized the more extensive EMP permanent employee data, which covered a five-year period, from 2011 to 2015. [\[CR8.1\]](#)

The following three charts show employee data from the EMP. This includes summary overviews and five-year trend data charts on: 1) Merritt College Permanent Employees by Category; 2) Merritt College Full-Time to Part-Time Faculty FTEF Ratio; and 3) Merritt College Permanent Employees by Ethnicity.

Employee Data from the Merritt College Educational Master Plan 2015-2020:

Permanent Employee Counts by Category

“Merritt College employed 145 permanent staff in fall 2015. Overall, the number of employees has increased by four people, or 3% in recent years, mainly due to a doubling of administrators from four to nine. It is important to note that all deans were laid off in 2011 due to State and District budget fiscal crisis. The College has been restoring dean positions over the past three years to ensure institutional stability and viability. The number of classified staff remained constant at 65, while the number of permanent faculty decreased by one over the past five years.” (EMP 2015-2020, p. 17) [CR8.2]

<b>Merritt College Permanent Employees by Category</b>					
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Administrator</b>	4	5	7	8	9
<b>Faculty</b>	72	62	68	71	71
<b>Classified Staff</b>	65	61	61	59	65
<b>Total</b>	141	128	136	138	145

Full-Time to Part-Time Faculty FTEF Ratio

“The FTEF of permanent faculty decreased by 7% over the past five years while the FTEF of part-time faculty increased by 43%. The table also displays the ratio between the FTEF of the permanent faculty and that of the part-time faculty. The ratio has been declining for permanent faculty due to their loss of FTEF growth and the high growth of part-time faculty FTEF.” (EMP 2015-2020, p. 18) [CR8.3]

<b>Merritt College</b>					
<b>Employee Type</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
FT Faculty	73.6	67.5	69.9	69.9	68.1
PT Faculty	45.5	41.1	53.2	59.8	64.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>119.1</b>	<b>108.6</b>	<b>123.1</b>	<b>129.7</b>	<b>133.0</b>
FT Faculty	62%	62%	57%	54%	51%
PT Faculty	38%	38%	43%	46%	49%
<b>District</b>					
FT Faculty	49%	49%	47%	48%	50%
PT Faculty	51%	51%	53%	52%	50%



Permanent Employees by Ethnicity

“Over the past five years, there has been an increase in Latino faculty and a decrease in White faculty. In addition, there has been an increase in Asian/Pacific Islander and Latino classified and a decrease in Mixed/Other classified.” (EMP 2015-2020, p. 18) [As shown below, African American administrators declined from four to one and African American faculty and classified staff numbers remained level between 2011 and 2015.] [[CR8.4](#)]

Employee Type	Ethnicity	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Admin</b>	African American	4	3	3	4	1
	Asian/PI	0	1	2	1	1
	Latino	0	0	1	3	4
	White	0	1	1	0	2
	Other/Unknown	0	0	0	0	1
	<b>Total</b>		4	5	7	8
<b>Faculty</b>	African-American	26	23	26	26	24
	Asian/PI	5	5	6	6	7
	Filipino	1	0	0	0	0
	Latino	7	7	8	8	7
	Other/Unknown	1	1	0	1	5
	White	32	26	28	30	28
	<b>Total</b>		72	62	68	71
<b>Classified Staff</b>	African-American	25	23	23	23	25
	Asian/PI	6	13	12	11	12
	Filipino	4	0	0	0	0
	Latino	5	4	4	5	7
	Other/Unknown	10	8	9	8	7
	White	15	13	13	12	14
	<b>Total</b>		65	61	61	59

The chart above shows that the College is committed to maintaining a diverse workforce reflective of its student population and complies with state laws regarding equal opportunity recruitment and hiring. Further evidence of this commitment can be found in the fact that the College follows the Peralta Community Colleges District (PCCD) Equal Opportunity (EEO) Plan, which was adopted June 1, 2013 and updated for the years 2016 through 2019, as required by the State California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. [[CR8.5](#)]

Overall, the analysis of the permanent staffing data highlighted in the EMP demonstrates that the College has sufficient permanent faculty, administrators, and classified staff to support the mission and quality educational programs and services. In addition, although the College has experienced administrator turnover in recent years, the College has now stabilized permanent administrator hires since the 2015 ACCJC External Evaluation Visit. In fact, with one exception, all of the administrator positions have now been filled with permanent hires. The one remaining opening exists due to a promotion and will be filled by fall 2016. [[CR8.6](#)]

Although the College has addressed the deficiencies cited by the AACJC External Evaluation Team and reversed the trend in administrator turnover, the AFR College Recommendation 8

Sub-Committee identified two corrective actions for the College. These corrective actions map to ACCJC Standard III.A.2 and read as follows:

- 1) Corrective Action 1: Disseminate Permanent Staffing Data at the September College Planning Summit
- 2) Corrective Action 2: Strengthen Evidence-Based College Human Resources Planning and Assessment Processes Linked to the District

### **Corrective Action 1: Disseminate Permanent Staffing Data at the September College Planning Summit**

After reviewing the ACCJC External Evaluation Team's concerns in the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15), the AFR College Recommendation 8 Sub-Committee recognized the importance of establishing a formalized process for disseminating annual permanent full-time staffing data to all College constituencies. The Sub-Committee, therefore, recommended that, as a part of the agenda of the annual College Planning Summit held every year in September, the College administrative leadership team will report on permanent full-time staffing data. This will be implemented beginning fall 2016.

The staffing data presented at this time will correlate with the FTE figures in the College's current fiscal year budget. This information is critical at the launch of the Program Review and Annual Program Update (APU) process as programs and services prioritize their human resource needs in the next fiscal year. More importantly, the timing of this communication on College permanent staffing levels will be formally integrated into the College's annual integrated planning and budgeting cycle. [[CR8.7](#); [CR8.8](#)]

### **Corrective Action 2: Strengthen Evidence-Based College Human Resources Planning and Assessment Processes Linked to the District**

Over the last year, the College and the District have made significant progress in addressing the ACCJC External Evaluation Team's concerns over the disconnection between human resources planning and the integrated planning and budgeting processes at both levels. The College developed and implemented a set of College Administrative Procedures and an annual calendar linking College and District integrated planning and budgeting processes.

In the 2015-2016 academic year, the College also utilized a new Program Review template developed by the District, with 100 percent of all College programs and services completing Program Review, which entailed the analysis of current staffing levels and the prioritization of human resource needs for the next three years. The College's human resource priorities list was discussed, revised, and approved in preparation for the finalization of the budget through the participatory governance process. [[CR8.9](#); [CR8.10](#); [CR8.11](#)]

In spring 2016, the District developed a draft of its first ever Human Resources Staffing Plan 2016-2019, which was presented at the District Planning and Budgeting Council meeting held on May 27, 2016. The goal of the staffing plan is to assist the District Office and the

four Peralta colleges in systematically identifying and prioritizing their staffing needs. The plan is scheduled for implementation in 2016-2017 and will be updated every two years. [\[CR8.12\]](#)

The Peralta staffing plan will require the District and the colleges to use a gap analysis to ensure sufficient human resources staffing. This will be "...informed by data, assumptions, and known constraints, inclusive of estimated growth and attrition rates, as well as a variety of other factors." (Peralta Community College District Human Resources Staffing Plan 2016-2019, Executive Summary, p. 3) [\[CR8.13\]](#)

Metrics by employee sub-groups will also be used to evaluate new position requests and assist in the gap analysis. To ensure sufficient staffing, the gap analysis will compare current staffing levels to optimal staffing levels for each employee sub-group. The District Office of Human Resources will provide the data and assist the colleges in formulating their yearly hiring proposals. As an added measure, the staffing plan contains a section describing procedures that will be used for evaluating overall hiring processes and staffing needs district wide. [\[CR8.14\]](#)

## **Conclusion**

Merritt College meets the ACCJC Standard III.A.2 for College Recommendation 8, which called for the College to maintain an adequate number of faculty and staff to meet its mission and has fully addressed the deficiencies and concerns of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team.

The College's updated Educational Master Plan (EMP) 2015-2020 five-year employee trend data demonstrates that the College has adequate permanent full-time staffing positions in all three personnel categories (faculty, administrators, and staff).

Finally, the College and the District now have several processes in place to systematically prioritize staffing needs and assess the adequacy of its human resources. These processes are integrally linked with the College and District level integrated planning and budgeting processes and annual planning cycles. In conclusion, Merritt College has sufficient levels of faculty, administrators, and classified staff to meet its mission and to support the effective delivery of high-quality educational programs and services.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 8

Document Number	Document	Link
CR8.1	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR8.1-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR8.1-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020.pdf</a>
CR8.2	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020, p. 17	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.2-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-17.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.2-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-17.pdf</a>
CR8.3	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020, p. 18	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.3-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-18.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.3-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-18.pdf</a>
CR8.4	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020, p. 18	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.4-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-18.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.4-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-18.pdf</a>
CR8.5	PCCD Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (Draft), 2016-2019	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.5-PCCD-Equal-Employment-Opportunity-Plan-Draft-2016-2019.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.5-PCCD-Equal-Employment-Opportunity-Plan-Draft-2016-2019.pdf</a>
CR8.6	Educational Master Plan, 2015-2020, p. 17	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.6-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-17.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR8.6-Educational-Master-Plan-2015-2020-p.-17.pdf</a>
CR8.7	PCCD Instructional Program Review Handbook, Fall 2015, pp. 13 & 18	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.7-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-13-18.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.7-PCCD-Instructional-Program-Review-Handbook-Fall-2015-pp.-13-18.pdf</a>
CR8.8	Annual Program Update Template, August 15, 2016, p. 27	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR8.8-Annual-Program-Update-Template-August-15-2016-p.-27.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR8.8-Annual-Program-Update-Template-August-15-2016-p.-27.pdf</a>
CR8.9	Prioritized Summary of New Resource Needs for 2016-2017	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.9-Prioritized-Summary-of-New-Resource-Needs-for-2016-2017.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.9-Prioritized-Summary-of-New-Resource-Needs-for-2016-2017.pdf</a>
CR8.10	College Budget Committee Special Meeting Agenda, April 12, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.10-College-Budget-Committee-Special-Meeting-Agenda-April-12-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.10-College-Budget-Committee-Special-Meeting-Agenda-April-12-2016.pdf</a>

CR8.11	College Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes, May 18, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR8.11-College-Council-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-May-18-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR8.11-College-Council-Meeting-Agenda-Minutes-May-18-2016.pdf</a>
CR8.12	PCCD Human Resources Staffing Plan (Draft), 2016-2019	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.12-PCCD-Human-Resources-Staffing-Plan-Draft-2016-2019.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.12-PCCD-Human-Resources-Staffing-Plan-Draft-2016-2019.pdf</a>
CR8.13	PCCD Human Resources Staffing Plan (Draft), 2016- 2019, p. 3	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.13-PCCD-Human-Resources-Staffing-Plan-Draft-2016-2019-p.-3.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.13-PCCD-Human-Resources-Staffing-Plan-Draft-2016-2019-p.-3.pdf</a>
CR8.14	PCCD Human Resources Staffing Plan (Draft), 2016- 2019, pp. 6-10	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.14-PCCD-Human-Resources-Staffing-Plan-Draft-2016-2019-pp.-6-10.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/CR8.14-PCCD-Human-Resources-Staffing-Plan-Draft-2016-2019-pp.-6-10.pdf</a>

## Response to College Recommendation 9

### College Recommendation 9

#### **Official Recommendation (from ACCJC letter to Merritt College President, 6/29/15):**

*In order to meet the Standard, the Team recommends the College establish and implement a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes which specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and implementation. (IV.A.2.a, IV.A.2.b, IV.A.3)*

#### **Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15):**

In College Recommendation 9, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team found that "...institutional leaders have created components for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence for faculty and staff." However, it appeared to the ACCJC External Evaluation Team that "...faculty and staff are currently re-learning how to take the initiative to improve practices, programs, and services for which they are involved." Nevertheless, it was the Team's opinion that "It would be erroneous to conclude that systematic participative processes are ensuring effective discussion, planning, and implementation." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, p. 74) (Note: In the External Evaluation Report, the Team actually cited ACCJC Standard IV.A.1 for the above deficiencies, even though Standard IV.A.1 was not referenced as one of the three Standards cited for College Recommendation 9 in the Action Letter. To assure compliance, Merritt has chosen to address deficiencies related to Standard IV.A.1 in its written response to College Recommendation 9.)

The ACCJC External Evaluation Team also noted "The College has established a written policy for providing faculty, staff, administrators and students for participation in decision-making processes, but what is written remains in draft form and not fully implemented." The Team also stated "...the linkages between the various elements of the leadership and governance structure are not sufficiently cemented in place for this to occur consistently." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, pp. 74-75)

Finally, the ACCJC External Evaluation Team found that there was "...some evidence that suggest that certain constituent groups evaluate their processes." On the other hand, the Team observed that, overall, there was insufficient "...evidence that the leadership and governance structure are uniformly evaluated across the college." (External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15, pp. 75) (Note: In the External Evaluation Report, the Team actually cited ACCJC Standard IV.A.5 for the above deficiencies, even though Standard IV.A.5 was not referenced as one of the three Standards cited for College Recommendation 9 in the Action Letter. However, to assure compliance, Merritt College has chosen to address the deficiencies related to Standard IV.A.5 in its written response to College Recommendation 9.)

## Response

Merritt College has a long and proud tradition of shared governance. In fact, Merritt College professor emeritus, Norbert Bischoff, Ph.D., lead the movement for the statewide initiative in California, which resulted in the passage of State Assembly Bill AB1725 in 1988. This new legislation gave faculty authority over academic and professional matters, introduced the community college shared governance model, and formalized decision making between the Board, management, and faculty. As a result of AB1725, Merritt was the first California community college to establish a local Academic Senate, with 10+1 roles and responsibilities, which has operated as the basis for planning and decision-making at Merritt for nearly 30 years. [[CR9.1](#)]

During the preparation of Merritt's 2016 Accreditation Follow-Up Report (AFR), the AFR Core Team worked with the AFR College Recommendation 9 Sub-Committee to analyze the deficiencies and concerns cited in College Recommendation 9 and the External Evaluation Report (5/8/15). The AFR Core Team and AFR College Recommendation 9 Sub-Committee discovered that despite Merritt's long tradition of successfully practicing shared governance, the College could have more thoroughly described the workings of its established governance structures and processes in the Self-Evaluation Report Spring 2015.

Furthermore, the AFR Core Team and Sub-Committee found that while the College had updated its shared governance and decision-making framework, the final step of approving and adopting the formal written document had not been taken. This delay in finalization may have been due in part to ongoing changes in the College's administrative leadership team and changes in leadership in certain key college participatory committees as well.

In spite of these challenges during this time period, the College continued its use of the established framework for participatory governance, planning, and decision making. In addition, some individual shared governance committees set and evaluated annual goals. However, for several years the College did not utilize an overarching and formal instrument to evaluate all of the College's participatory governance structures and processes. Therefore, the College was unable to benefit from "Closing the Loop" activities and to identify and communicate strategies for institutional improvement.

In 2015, Merritt College was selected by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) to participate in the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI). The IEPI is a collaborative effort to advance the effectiveness of California Community Colleges, reduce accreditation sanctions and audit issues, and enhance a college's ability to effectively serve students.

The IEPI Team conducted its initial site visit in October 2015 to interview faculty, administrators, staff, and students about key areas identified by the College. During this site visit, the IEPI Team recommended that Merritt faculty and staff, rather than administrators, maintain the College's structure for participatory governance and planning and decision making, and ensure the consistent and ongoing evaluation of those processes. [[CR9.2](#)]

Merritt faculty and staff enthusiastically embraced this insight and agreed to take immediate ownership for maintaining key institutional processes going forward. For example, during the preparation of the 2016 Accreditation Follow-Up Report, faculty and classified staff played a central role in formalizing policies and College administrative procedures for integrated planning and budgeting, educational master planning, Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment and the use of data in planning and decision making. This, in turn, created the momentum needed to finalize the approval of a new *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* in February 2016. [[CR9.3](#)]

Merritt College fully commits to maintaining a thriving and effective shared governance model, which documents, evaluates and communicates its ongoing participatory governance and decision-making processes. During the AFR process, the College worked earnestly to address the deficiencies cited by the ACCJC External Evaluation Team and to meet the ACCJC Standards referenced in College Recommendation 9.

As an outgrowth of this work, the AFR Core Team recommended two corrective actions to address the deficiencies and the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 9. To comply with ACCJC requirements, the College mapped the ACCJC Standards cited to the two corrective actions identified. The two corrective actions and related ACCJC Standards are as follows:

- 1) Corrective Action 1: Establish and Implement a Written Policy for College Stakeholder Participation in Decision-Making (IV.A.1; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b; IV.A.3)
- 2) Corrective Action 2: “Closing the Loop” to Evaluate the College Governance Structure and Communicate Improvements (IV.A.3; IV.A.5)

### **Corrective Action 1: Establish and Implement a Written Policy for College Stakeholder Participation in Decision-Making**

A top priority during the 2015-2016 academic year was for Merritt College to establish and implement a new written policy manual for college stakeholder involvement in decision-making and governance. During fall 2015, the Office of the President and the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) worked together to develop and finalize the *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*, which built upon a previous version of the College Council’s governance handbook. [[CR9.4](#)]

The *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* was vetted through several shared governance groups and constituency groups, including the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), College Council, the Academic Senate, and the Classified Senate. In addition, all shared governance groups on campus were notified to update their committee by-laws as part of the publication process. The updated handbook was approved at the February 2, 2016 meeting of the College Council and forwarded to the College president as a recommendation for final adoption. [[CR9.5](#)]



The *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* provides an overview of participatory governance, including the constituent groups that contribute to the College's collegial decision-making process. These committees are the:

- Academic Senate
- Administration
- Associated Students
- Classified Senate

There are three types of committees that are a part of Merritt's governance structure: participatory, standing, and ad hoc. The participatory committees are formed to do assigned work on an ongoing basis. These committees are the:

- College Council
- College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)
- College Budget Committee (CBC)
- College Facilities Committee (CFC)
- Merritt Technology Committee (MTC)

These participatory governance groups "...facilitate communication throughout the campus, develop strategic and operational plans, and provide input for the collegial decision-making process." (*Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*, p. 18)

Standing committees provide a recommendation to one or more constituent groups (i.e., Academic Senate, Administration, Associated Students, and Classified Senate). Merritt's standing committees are as follows:

- Accreditation
- Financial Aid Petition
- Graduation
- Health and Safety
- Leadership Council
- Professional Development
- Scholarships and Awards
- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOAC)
- Student Success and Support Programs (SSSP/Student Equity)

Ad hoc committees are formed for a specific task and dissolved after the completion of the task. Some examples are:

- Accreditation Follow-Up
- Student Grievance
- Others as assigned and developed

The *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* also outlines the roles and responsibilities of the:

- Chairs and Co-Chairs of Participatory Committees
- Committee Membership

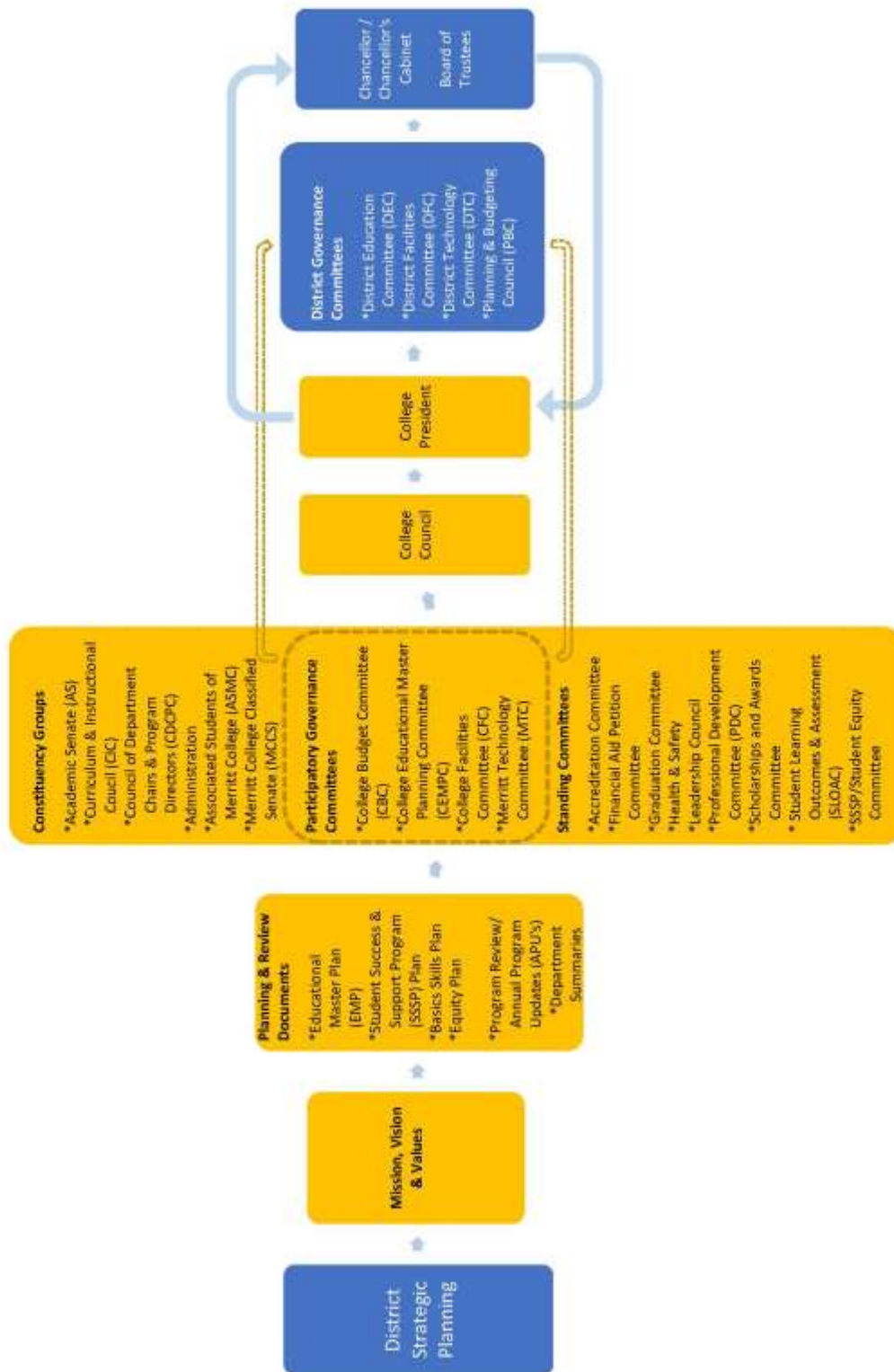
The expectation is for the Chairs and Co-Chairs to ensure transparency in the collegial governance decision-making processes while the committee members are responsible for the broad participation of the campus community and college wide discussion on issues. (p. 25)

Merritt’s governance structure utilizes a participatory governance and decision-making process, which is clearly outlined in the *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*. The purpose of the participatory governance process is defined on Merritt College’s participatory governance web page as “...the set of practices under which college faculty and staff participate in significant decisions concerning the operation of their institutions.” This process includes representation from all college constituencies (i.e., faculty, administrators, classified staff, and students).

The handbook goes on to describe the charge of the College’s various participatory governance committees and their role in the decision-making process, as well as their intended interface with District governance committees. The handbook provides formal written policies and procedures to specify the methods by which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on policy, planning, and implementation.

The decision-making process, which was adopted by the College Council on February 2, 2016, is outlined in a flow-chart on page 24 of the *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* and includes: District strategic planning linked to College mission, vision and values; College planning and Program Review documents; and the constituency groups, participatory governance, and standing committees. The flowchart illustrates how the decision-making process is linked to the College Council, College President, District governance committees, the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees.

**MERRITT COLLEGE  
COLLEGIAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FLOW-CHART**



V3. 2/2/2016

## **Corrective Action 2: “Closing the Loop” to Evaluate the College Governance Structure and Communicate Improvements**

A second important priority for Merritt College over the last year was to reintroduce formal mechanisms for measuring the functionality and effectiveness of the College’s major institutional processes, including its participatory governance and decision-making processes. To this end, the College revived its annual Assessment Week activity in April 2016, which had not been held since 2011. An Assessment Week survey enabled College constituencies to evaluate institutional processes such as outcomes assessment, Program Review, integrated planning and budgeting and collegial decision making conducted through the College’s governance committees. In addition, some campus offices undertook assessment of their service areas. [\[CR9.6\]](#)

The College’s Research and Planning Officer developed and distributed campus wide a Survey Monkey the week of April 11 through April 15, 2016. A total of 82 responses were collected, including responses from six administrators, 23 classified staff, and 53 faculty members. The results of the survey were shared with the campus community, participatory governance committees, and the College leadership. [\[CR9.7\]](#)

The following is a summary of the Survey Monkey results:

- Overall, the survey respondents feel that campus wide efforts at improvement are working toward the betterment of the institution
- Increasing the number of faculty, administrators, and staff (FAS) engaged in institutional processes and participatory governance is imperative to institutional effectiveness
- The survey revealed that engagement in college wide processes increases stakeholder awareness, understanding and perspective, whereas the lack of stakeholder engagement in college wide processes negatively impacts their perspective and results in lower ratings
- There is an overall consensus for the need to increase training related to the College institutional improvement and participatory governance processes
- Across the board, areas in need of improvement commonly cited were: the need to increase participation and collaboration; transparency; and sustainability
- Respondents also indicated the need to benchmark direct measures of effectiveness for all of these processes

A more detailed overview and summary of the survey findings can be found on page 1 of the *2016 Assessment of College Processes* survey report cited above. The report details the findings related to outcomes assessment, program review, integrated planning and budgeting, collegial decision-making, participatory governance, and committee evaluation. Furthermore, the report outlined positive findings, common recommendations for improvements, and recurring themes. Recurrent themes revealed the need to: 1) provide training; 2) streamline processes and develop reasonable timelines for these processes; and 3) provide clarity about processes and timelines. [\[CR9.8\]](#)

In the Integrated Planning and Budgeting section, respondents rated the effectiveness of the College's IPB process favorably, despite challenges in transparency and sustainability. Under the Collegial Decision-Making section, survey responses underscored the need for leadership accountability and ensuring that the stated decision-making processes are maintained and sustained. [[CR9.9](#); [CR9.10](#)]

Lastly, the survey findings from the Participatory Governance Committee Assessment section showed that engaged stakeholders understand participatory governance processes and mechanisms for planning and decision-making. Conversely, survey respondents who were less engaged indicated less understanding of participatory governance committee and decision-making processes. [[CR9.11](#)]

All in all, in the 2015-2016 academic year, the College closed the loop by evaluating its planning, participatory governance structure, and decision-making processes. Assessment Week Survey findings were shared with and discussed by faculty, administrators, staff, and students at the Merritt College Year-End Planning Summit held on May 13, 2016. [[CR9.12](#)]

These survey results will provide a blueprint for setting goals in the coming academic year and establish momentum for increased engagement in collegial decision-making and participatory governance committee processes. The Merritt College Assessment Week "Closing the Loop"/"Continuous Loop" assessment activity results will also serve as a foundation for planning and benchmarking strategies for improving institutional effectiveness, beginning at the College's annual planning summit in September 2016.

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the ACCJC Standards cited in College Recommendation 9 and has fully addressed the deficiencies and concerns of the ACCJC External Evaluation Team. Merritt College formally adopted and implemented written policies, structures, and procedures for faculty, administrators, staff, and students to participate in decision making.

The *Merritt College Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*, approved by the College Council in February 2016, identifies how ideas come forth from all constituencies, ensures consistency in governance and leadership, planning, and implementation, and outlines linkages to District shared governance structures, as well.

Lastly, in spring 2016, the College evaluated its institutional, participatory governance, and decision-making processes. The College's Assessment Week activity, held in April of each year, was reconstituted and will be conducted on an annual basis as a "Closing the Loop"/"Continuous Loop" institutional effectiveness evaluation process.

## Evidence for Response to College Recommendation 9

Document Number	Document	Link
CR9.1	Peralta Bulletin, "Views on the Faculty Senate," January 8, 1965	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR9.1-Peralta-Bulletin-Views-on-the-Faculty-Senate-January-8-1965.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/09/CR9.1-Peralta-Bulletin-Views-on-the-Faculty-Senate-January-8-1965.pdf</a>
CR9.2	Institution Effectiveness Partnership Initiative PRT Interview Schedule, October 28, 2015	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.2-Institutional-Effectiveness-Partnership-Initiative-PRT-Interview-Schedule-October-28-2015.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.2-Institutional-Effectiveness-Partnership-Initiative-PRT-Interview-Schedule-October-28-2015.pdf</a>
CR9.3	AFR World Cafe Breakout Session Notes, January 22 and February 19, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.3-AFR-World-Cafe-Breakout-Session-Notes-January-22-February-19-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.3-AFR-World-Cafe-Breakout-Session-Notes-January-22-February-19-2016.pdf</a>
CR9.4	Collegial Governance and Decision-Making Handbook, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.4-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.4-Collegial-Governance-Decision-Making-Handbook-February-2-2016.pdf</a>
CR9.5	College Council Meeting Minutes, February 2, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.5-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-February-2-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.5-College-Council-Meeting-Minutes-February-2-2016.pdf</a>
CR9.6	Assessment Week Announcement, April 11, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.6-Assessment-Week-Announcement-April-11-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.6-Assessment-Week-Announcement-April-11-2016.pdf</a>
CR9.7	Assessment Week Faculty, Administrator and Staff Survey, April 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.7-Assessment-Week-Faculty-Administrator-Staff-Survey-April-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.7-Assessment-Week-Faculty-Administrator-Staff-Survey-April-2016.pdf</a>
CR9.8	2016 Assessment of College Processes, May 1, 2016, p. 1	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.8-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-p.-1.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.8-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-p.-1.pdf</a>
CR9.9	2016 Assessment of College Processes, May 1, 2016, pp. 4-5	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.9-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-pp.-4-5.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.9-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-pp.-4-5.pdf</a>
CR9.10	2016 Assessment of College Processes, May 1, 2016, pp. 5-6	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.10-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-pp.-5-6.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.10-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-pp.-5-6.pdf</a>

CR9.11	2016 Assessment of College Processes, May 1, 2016, pp. 7-8	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.11-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-pp.-7-8.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.11-2016-Assessment-of-College-Processes-May-1-2016-pp.-7-8.pdf</a>
CR9.12	Bi-Annual Spring Planning Summit Agenda, May 13, 2016	<a href="http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.12-Bi-Annual-Spring-Planning-Summit-Agenda-May-13-2016.pdf">http://www.merritt.edu/wp/accreditation/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/08/CR9.12-Bi-Annual-Spring-Planning-Summit-Agenda-May-13-2016.pdf</a>





**SECTION III**

**COLLEGE RESPONSE TO ISSUES**

**RELATED TO COMPLIANCE**

**WITH**

**FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND**

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT**



## Compliance with Commission Policies

The Commission further noted deficiencies with federal regulations regarding institution-set standards for student achievement, and Title IV.

### Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

#### Evaluation Items:

- The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution's mission.
- The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers.
- The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements.
- The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level.

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

#### Conclusion Check-Off:

- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the

institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

  x   The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

### **Response**

Merritt College's Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process (IPB) incorporates and aligns the critical institutional processes of planning, assessment and evaluation to ensure fulfillment of the College mission and institutional excellence. The process directs a continuous and systematic cycle, and guides the campus in structured activities to ensure evidence based planning and improvement. The College documents the major administrative procedures, Integrated Planning and Budgeting, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, Educational Master Planning and the Use of Data in Planning and Decision Making, and publishes them online. The following components of the IPB Process are evidence of the College's actions for continuous evaluation and improvement:

College-wide participation in goal setting and evaluation. The College dedicates time each fall to evaluate and reflect on the achievement of goals from the prior academic year. During the Fall Summit, as part of the *Intensive Planning* phase of the IPB Process, College constituents discuss the outcomes of the goals and objectives of the prior year. The College then utilizes action plans to reaffirm prior goals or establish new goals or updated objectives, with measurable outcomes and targets, for the upcoming academic year.

College-wide participation in evaluation of College processes. The college evaluates its processes in the spring, as part of the *closing the loop* activities. The College distributes an evaluation survey of the major college processes including assessment, program review, integrated planning and budgeting and collegial governance processes. The data is collected, analyzed and shared at the Spring Summit, as well as on the College website. During the Spring Summit, the College drafts plans of action to address the results and improving the processes. Analysis and reflections of the results, and action plan drafts, are brought forward the following fall, during the Fall Summit.

Institution-set Standards. The College establishes and analyzes institution-set standards in order to measure achievement of the mission, college-wide educational goals, and student achievement. These standards are established by the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), using longitudinal college data, and approved by the College Council. The Institution-set Standards are reported annually via the ACCJC Annual Report, posted on the College website, and also distributed to the departments with the Annual Planning Update (APU) or the Program Review template. During annual unit planning, programs and departments will analyze how they contribute to the achievement of these standards. During the Fall Summit, as part of the college-wide evaluation of the prior academic year, the College will assess the standards. College goals and objectives will incorporate strategies for

achieving these standards. At this time, the College will also determine if CEMPC needs to revise the standards for the upcoming year.

### **The visiting team assessment of Title IV Compliance**

#### **Evaluation Items:**

- The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the USDE.
- The institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements.
- The institution's student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range.
- Contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required.
- The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations and the Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV.

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

#### **Conclusion Check-Off:**

- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

## **Response**

The College follows the federal regulations that require first-time borrowers of Direct Loans to receive entrance counseling which is available at [studentloans.gov](http://studentloans.gov). The College directs students to the appropriate loan site. All Title IV and State student eligibility requirements and policies are stated in the Financial Aid Handbook and available on the College website. The Handbook is updated every new award year to remain compliant with regulatory changes. A financial aid manual of policies and procedures is also updated annually.

The College assists students who are in need of funding to meet college costs by providing information and accessing an array of federal (Title IV) and state student financial aid programs and scholarships for successful college completion. The College provides a variety of workshops throughout the year. All workshops are listed on the Department's calendar on the college website, as well as advertised throughout the campus's announcement boards. One-on-one appointments are available to students who cannot make workshop times for financial aid assistance and financial literacy coaching. Training sessions are also conducted for other service providers within Student Services so faculty and staff are aware of the Federal and State changes that may affect their student population.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

Merritt College is in compliance with Eligibility Requirements 10, 18 and 19.

### **Eligibility Requirement 10: Student Learning and Achievement**

The institution defines and publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and achievement outcomes. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes.

### **ER 10: Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15)**

“...the Team was unable to find conclusive evidence that the identification and the assessment of learning outcomes have occurred in non-instructional areas (i.e. student services, learning support services, and administrative services). Further, the Team was not able to find evidence that institutional learning outcomes have been assessed and that broad dialogue have occurred and have been documented.” (p. 21 External Evaluation Report, May 8, 2015)

### **Response**

The College relies on the guidance and leadership of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC) in its efforts to accelerate and achieve proficiency in the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessment and to define and publish student learning and achievement outcomes. The team of five faculty, one classified, plus an instructional dean completed a Learning Assessment Report and Acceleration Plan in June of 2016. The Acceleration Plan identified a three-year cycle to achieve completion and the academic year of 2014-15 was used as the baseline for the plan since the ACCJC External Evaluation Team visit occurred March 2015. The three-year plan included an analysis of outcome assessment required by courses (SLO), programs (PLO), service (SAO) and institutional (ILO). We are pleased to report that by July 30, 2016, SLO assessment is at 71 percent, PLO assessment is at 59 percent, and ILO assessment is at 33 percent and administrative offices, student services and non-instructional areas are at 100 percent.

### **Eligibility Requirement 18: Financial Accountability**

The institution annually undergoes and makes available an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or an audit by an appropriate public agency. The institution shall submit with its eligibility application a copy of the budget and institutional financial audits and management letters prepared by an outside certified public accountant or by an appropriate public agency, who has no other relationship to the institution for its two most recent fiscal years, including the fiscal year ending immediately prior to the date of the submission of the application. The audits must be certified and any exceptions explained. It is recommended that the auditor employ as a guide Audits of Colleges and Universities, published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. An applicant institution

must not show an annual or cumulative operating deficit at any time during the eligibility application process.

**ER 18: Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15)**

“...Multiple year external Audit Reports for the College in connection to Financial Aid... The 2014 Corrective Action Matrix provided subsequent to the visit indicates that procedures are in the implementation stage. While these procedures are in progress, there is no evidence since the last Audit report of 2014 or the last Department of Education Program Review that the deficiencies are fully resolved. Both the college and district Visiting Teams found that the District and the College have not fully resolved all of the 2012-13 and 2013-14 audit findings. Therefore, the College does not meet this Eligibility Requirement.” (pp. 23-24 External Evaluation Report, May 8, 2015)

**Response**

The PCCD Office of Finance and Administration has reworked its organizational structure to include two critical positions: a senior accountant and a payroll manager. These positions will provide additional support and guidance to the Colleges as well as to provide for enhanced internal controls monitoring and continued improvement. The District’s commitment to strengthening its internal controls and enhancing its business processes is evidenced by the marked decrease of audit findings over the past three years. Given the work of the Audit Resolution Work Team and other collaborative District efforts in collaboration with the College Business Managers, the District has reduced completely its number of findings.

The District tracks its progress in resolving audit findings on its Corrective Action Matrix. This document is adapted regularly to reflect the status of progress in correcting gaps in District business processes, reporting processes, etc. that may result in inadequate internal controls. In addition to monitoring progress, the Corrective Action Matrix also enhances accountability and responsibility by assigning the implementation of corrective actions to specific District and College managers.

As is indicated in the District’s response, “[T]he ongoing deficiencies have been resolved and the non-recurrent audit findings... have been addressed, the District now focuses its attention on other business processes identified as needing improvement... thereby ensuring a model for ongoing improvement.”

**Eligibility Requirement 19: Institutional Planning and Evaluation**

The institution systematically evaluates and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning outcomes. The institution provides evidence of planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation.



### **ER 19: Related Concerns and Deficiencies Cited (from External Evaluation Report, 5/8/15)**

“...The Visiting Team confirmed that the College is in the nascent stages of systematically evaluating how well it is accomplishing its purposes. ...Before and during the visit, however, the Team was not able to find conclusive evidence that the program review process is systematic, complete, nor inclusive of all instructional programs, student services, and administrative services. In its Self-Evaluation Report, the College states that it is following the 2010 planning and budgeting flow chart. The Team did not find sufficient evidence to validate this assertion. The evidence provided to the Team did not clearly establish linkages between the college mission, the college-wide plans, and the resource allocation process. Additionally, the Team did not find evidence that the relatively new integrated planning process has gone through a complete cycle that includes comprehensive implementation, broad-based dialogue, evaluation, and re-evaluation.” (p. 24 External Evaluation Report, May 8, 2015)

### **Response**

Merritt College’s Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process (IPB) incorporates and aligns the critical institutional processes of planning, assessment and evaluation to ensure fulfillment of the College mission and institutional excellence. The process directs a continuous and systematic cycle, and guides the campus in structured activities to ensure evidence based planning and improvement. The College documents the major administrative procedures, Integrated Planning and Budgeting, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, Educational Master Planning and the Use of Data in Planning and Decision Making, and publishes them online. Program Planning, Assessment and Resource Allocation. The College assesses course student learning outcomes (SLO’s), Program Learning Outcomes (PLO’s), Service Area Outcomes (SAO’s), and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO’S) on a three-year cycle. Facilitated by the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), all outcomes are assessed at least once within any three-year period. Assessment results are documented in Taskstream, and incorporated into program and department planning reports, the Annual Program Update (APU), completed annually, or the Program Review, completed every three years. These program planning reports are due in the Fall during the Intensive Planning phase of the IPB process. Within these reports, departments and programs discuss the status of their goals and alignment to the College goals, evidence based changes or improvements to the program, program activities and the alignment with College-wide efforts, and evidence-based new resource requests. The complete APU and Program Review reports are published on the District/College website. The requests from these program and department planning documents are summarized, prioritized, and vetted through departments, deans, and then through the Participatory Governance structure during the Budget Development phase.

The following components of the IPB Process are evidence of the College’s actions for continuous evaluation and improvement:

*College-wide participation in goal setting and evaluation.* The College dedicates time each fall to evaluate and reflect on the achievement of goals from the prior academic year. During

the Fall Planning Summit, as part of the *Intensive Planning* phase of the IPB Process, College constituents discuss the outcomes of the goals and objectives of the prior year. The College then utilizes action plans to reaffirm prior goals or establish new goals or updated objectives, with measurable outcomes and targets, for the upcoming academic year.

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*Institution-set Standards.* The College establishes and analyzes institution-set standards in order to measure achievement of the mission, college-wide educational goals, and student achievement. These standards are established by the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC), using longitudinal college data, and approved by the College Council. The Institution-set Standards are reported annually via the ACCJC Annual Report, posted on the College website, and also distributed to the departments with the Annual Planning Update (APU) template. During annual unit planning, programs and departments will analyze how they contribute to the achievement of these standards. During the Fall Planning Summit, as part of the college-wide evaluation of the prior academic year, the College will assess the standards. College goals and objectives will incorporate strategies for achieving these standards. At this time, the College will also determine if CEMPC needs to revise the standards for the upcoming year.