



MERRITT COLLEGE
SELF STUDY
for
REAFFIRMATION OF
ACCREDITATION
December 9, 2008

Organization for the Self Study

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

Overview

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

Initial Planning and Organization

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

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

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

Reorganization

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

Communication with the College Community

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

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

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

ACCREDITATION TIMELINE

SPRING 2007

- Training begins
- Develop budget

FALL 2007

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

SPRING 2008

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

SUMMER 2008

- Initial editing

FALL 2008

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

SPRING 2009

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

MEMBERS OF MERRITT COLLEGE ACCREDITATION SELF STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE

Self-Study Steering Committee co-chairpersons:

Dr. Stacy Thompson (faculty)

Dera Williams (classified)

AnikaToussant-Jackson (Research and Planning Officer)

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

Editors: Jon Drinnon, Siri Brown (faculty)

Standard One: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Chair: Anthony Powell (Administrator)

Cie-Jae Allen (Faculty); Susana de la Torre (Classified Staff); Stacy Thompson (Faculty); Anika Toussant-Jackson (Classified Staff); Yawo Tekpa (Classified Staff)

Standard Two: Student Learning Programs and Services

Hector Cordova (Administrator)

Standard II A: Instructional Programs

Chair: Siri Brown (Faculty)

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

Standard II B: Student Support Services

Co-Chairs: Steven Pantell (Faculty); Judy Adams (Classified Staff)

Minh Dao (Classified Staff); Cie-Jae Allen (Faculty); Marty Zielke (Faculty); Susana de la Torre (Classified Staff); LaShawn Brumfield (Classified Staff)

Standard II C: Library and Learning Support Services

Co-Chairs: Timothy Hackett (Faculty); Nghiem Thai (Classified Staff)

Audrey Trotter (Faculty)

Standard Three: Resources

Jacquelin Bell (Administrator)

Co-Chairs: Hank Fabian (Faculty); Lorna Pascual (Classified Staff)

Patricia Rom (Classified); Gisele Giorgi (Faculty); Tom Branca (Faculty); Arja McCray (Faculty)

Standard Four: Leadership and Governance

Rebecca Kenney (Administrator)

Co-chairs: Hilary Altman (Faculty); Doris Hankins (Classified Staff)

Fereshteh Mofidifemofi (Faculty); Shirley Mack (Faculty); Juana Martinez-Rodriguez (Faculty)

PROFILE OF MERRITT COLLEGE STUDENT BODY

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

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Service Area

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

Student Enrollments

Continuing students comprise the largest share of enrolled students at Merritt College. The table below delineates the enrollment status of students at Merritt College.

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

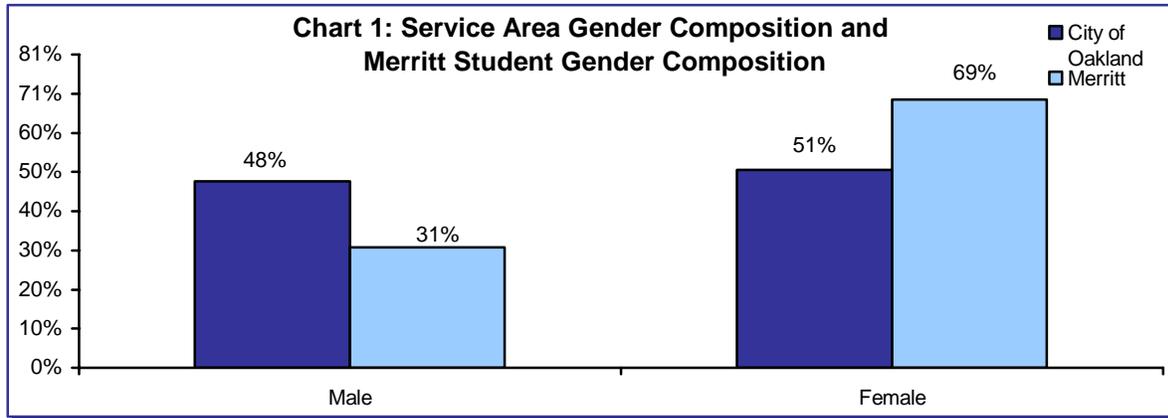
Feeder High Schools

The top feeder schools that send students to Merritt College are described in Table 3 below.

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

Gender

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



The data described above are for the time period 2000 -2006. Source: American Community Survey 2006 and Peralta Institutional Research Office.

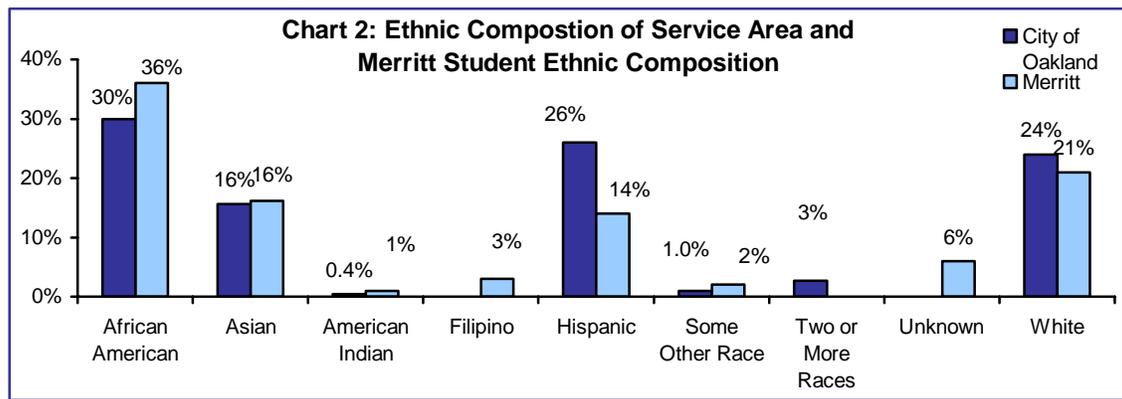
Race/ Ethnicity

Merritt College students are primarily from the following ethnic groups:

- African-American 36%,
- Asian 16%,
- American Indian .4%,
- Filipino 3%,
- Hispanic/ Latino Americans 14%,
- Other 2%,
- Unknown 6%, and
- White 21%

The bar graph below shows the Merritt Colleges student ethnic composition as well as the city of Oakland's ethnic composition of persons over 18 years of age. Please note the following disparities:

- When compared to the city of Oakland population, Hispanic students are underrepresented.
- Of city of Oakland residents 26% of the population identify as Hispanic, whereas at Merritt approximately 14% of students identify as Hispanic.



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Student Age Categories

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

Student Age Categories Fall 2000-2006 Table 4		
Age Groups	Total	Percentage
Under 16	47	1%
16-18	526	7%
19-24	2079	27%
25-29	1203	16%
30-34	836	11%
35-54	2289	30%
55-64	545	7%
Over 65	184	2%
Unknown	7	0%
Total Students	7716	100%

Citizenship Status

A relatively small percentage of Merritt College students are non US citizens. Table 5 below outlines the citizenship status of Merritt College students.

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

Special Populations

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

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

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

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

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

STUDENT OUTCOMES: GRADUATION/ TRANSFER

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

Associate of Arts Degree

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

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

Associate of Science Degree

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

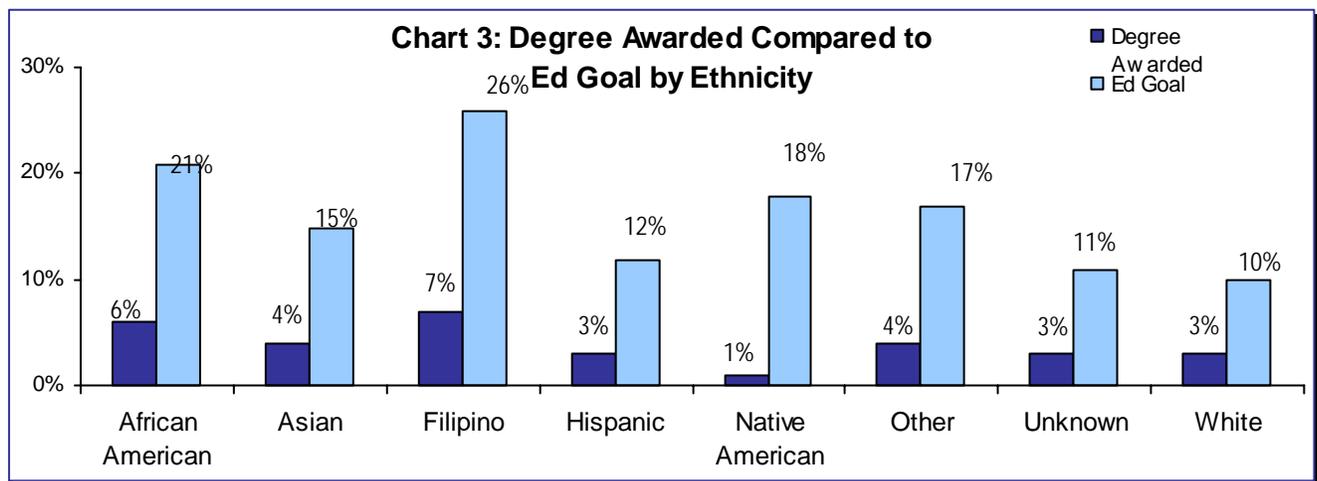
Merritt College Degree by Major Top 10 Programs Awarding Associate of Science Degrees Average for 2004-2007 Table 7	
Major	Number
1. Health Sciences	48
2. Nursing	29
3. Radiologic Science	15
4. Natural Sciences	7
5. Mathematics	6
6. NUTR/Dietetic Tech	5

7. Vocational Nursing	5
8. CIS/Comp Netwks/Comm	2
9. CIS Software Speclst	2
10. LANHT/LAN Design/CON	2
Total Average AS awards	13

Degree Awarded Compared to Ed Goal

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

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



Certificates Awarded

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

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

Transfer

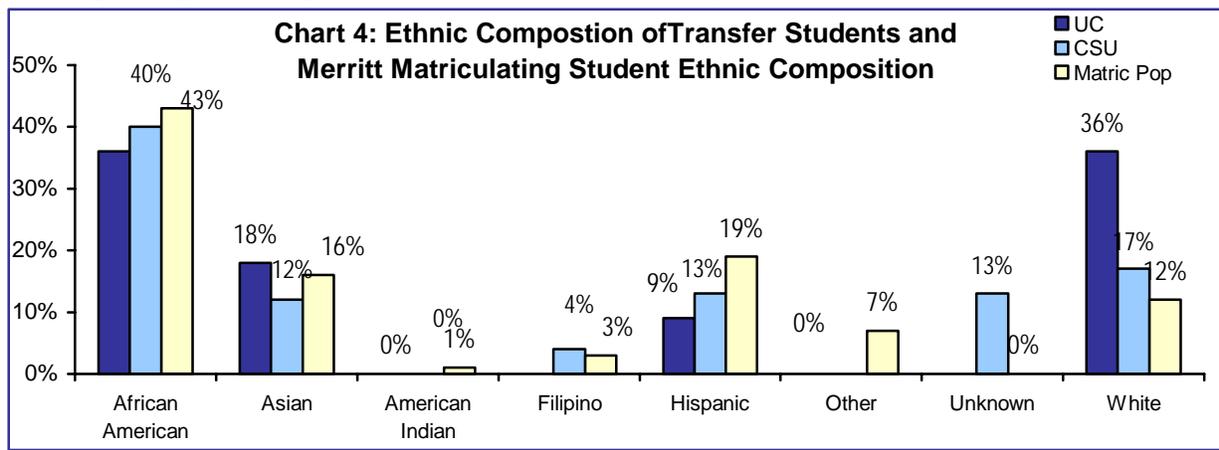
Table 9 and Table 10 delineate transfers to University of California and University of California.

Top Ten Transfer Public Universities University of California Average for Academic Years 2004-2007 Table 9	
College	Number of Transfers
1. University of California, Berkeley	14
2. University of California, Davis	6
3. University of California, San Diego	2
4. University of California, Santa Cruz	2
5. University of California, Los Angeles	1
Total Average for Top 5 UC's	5
Total Average for all UC's	26

Top Ten Transfer Public Universities California State University Average for Academic Years 2003-2006 Table 10	
College	Number of Transfers
1. California State University, East Bay	69
2. San Francisco State University	32
3. California State University Sacramento	5
4. San Jose State University	4
5. Humboldt State University	2
Total Average for Top 5 CSU's	23
Total Average for all CSU's	120

Transfers Compared to Educational Goal

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



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

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

STUDENT OUTCOMES: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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

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

Sources

Peralta Institutional Research Office
 UC data-California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC)
 US Census
 American Community Survey 2006

STANDARD I INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

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

A: MISSION

The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purpose, it's committed to student success, it's fostering of a caring spirit, it's dedication toward teamwork and inclusion, it's student centered learning environment and it's respect for different background, experiences, languages, values and cultures represented within the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Consistent with the institutional mission the institution is committed to helping students attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society. In recognition of the changing climates in which community college operate, the content of the institutions strategic documents as they relate to the organizational mission, undergo an ongoing and systematic cycle of quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to verify that the institution's mission maintain its relevance and is responding to changing learning needs of the community.

Merritt College is committed to providing students with outstanding institutional programs and comprehensive support services, in a culturally-rich, caring and supportive learning environment. This commitment is demonstrated in the college's mission statement.

Self Evaluation

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

The College Council represents the main governance group which serves as a planning body that identifies strategies and processes the college will use to fulfill its mission. The mission is re-evaluated as needed by the College Council. Recommendations regarding the mission statement will be forwarded to the President, with the recommendations from the College Council being the primary source of college wide input in the decision-making process.

Descriptive Summary

The mission demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning, a contribute to the economic growth of the local community, a commitment to assisting students to attain degrees and certificates earn transfer credit and develop skills necessary to complete their educational goals.

The missions statement is included on page 13 of college catalog; it is posted in the student services R-Building, appears on the college website, in the student handbook and is included in all appropriate publications and publicity of the college.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Presently the Merritt College mission adheres to the Peralta Community College District missions statement which states "...to provide accessible, high-quality adult learning opportunities to meet the educational needs of the multicultural East Bay community.

Merritt College continues to successfully build upon the District wide mission statement, which serves as a foundation for our mission, core values and vision.

To successfully meet the educational needs of the multicultural East Bay community we offer a comprehensive two-year curriculum, day and evening programs of transfer, technical, occupational and basic skills education. We provide a wide range of support services in order to enable students to meet their educational and personal goals. The college recognizes the diverse student needs and changing climates in which community colleges operates, and makes every effort to be responsive. This responsiveness to changing climates in the community can be evidenced through, the introduction of the Merritt microscopy, program (MMP). This program was developed by Merritt College and an Advisory Board of local scientist and microscopy experts and makes Merritt College one of the top ten genome centers in the world with advanced student training. The program was developed to meet the strong demand for microscopists in biotech companies and academic research lab. This program represents one of a wide range of educational programs that speaks to our mission statement, by helping students to attain knowledge and master skills, needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society, by providing technicians, core directors and imaging specialists that are rigorously trained in the art and science of microscopy.

Merritt College meets the needs of its community and student populations by offering a wide range of educational programs and services, provided by distinguished faculty and staff who are widely known and well respected scholars in their respective disciplines. Some of the Educational programs and services include, but not limited to:

- AA Degree Program
- Transfer opportunities to four year Colleges and Universities
- Career explanations and Workforce Training
- Honors Program
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Athletics
- Health Center
- Transfer Center
- Disabled Students Programs and Services
- Veterans Programs
- Extended Opportunities Program and Services (EOPS)
- Assessment

Self Evaluation

This standard has been met. Merritt College programs reflect the needs of students and the community.

Planning Agenda

The college will continue to analyze and remain aware of the needs of the community and students, and will add/upgrade/delete programs and services as needed.

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

Descriptive Summary

The Merritt College mission statement is endorsed by college governance groups and approved by the Peralta Board of Trustees.

Any recommendations for changes to the Merritt College mission statement will be discussed by representatives from all campus constituent groups and reviewed by the College Council. Any recommended changes will be forwarded to the president of the college. The mission statement as well as any revisions that are adopted is widely distributed to the campus and local community through a wide variety of vehicles which include, but are not limited to:

- Merritt College websites
- Marketing Material
- Student handbook
- Schedule

- On campus posting

Self Evaluation

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

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

Descriptive Summary

The review of Merritt's mission statement includes a college wide dialogue involving all constituencies who are represented in College Counsel.

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

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

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The process for analyzing the Merritt College mission statement and the procedure for recommending changes and gaining Council and Board approval are not in need of revision.

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

Descriptive Summary

At Merritt College the mission statement is central to the institutional decision making process and figures prominently in the 2008-10 Merritt College Educational Master Plan, which is one of the primary planning documents that will be used to guide resource allocations.

In the Merritt College Educational Master Plan, the planning goals and resource needs can be found of every department, discipline and program at Merritt College, as well as their individual mission statements that are based on the college's mission statement.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The Merritt College mission statement is the foundation from which all unit, discipline, and program mission derive from. Each decision at the unit, discipline and program level in turn validates our committee to the College mission and District mission.

The Educational Master Plan is the primary planning document that serves to make staff and faculty aware of their ongoing goals and resource needs, as well as their offering an ongoing opportunity to reflect on their individual mission and their role in the campus community.

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

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

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

Descriptive Summary

At Merritt College, it is through an ongoing collegial, self-reflective dialogue through its various councils, committees, administrative meetings and department meetings that a continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes has been developed.

Activities at Merritt Community College which improve student learning and institutional processes are as follows:

Educational Master Plan

Development of the educational master plan, has the purpose to present a shared educational “road map” for the Colleges and district service centers for the next several years. This shared district-wide road map is made up of the agreed-upon educational principles, goals, and integrated planning and budgeting processes that provide both a clear future direction and a set of adaptive mechanisms to ensure the plan is a living document. The *District Wide EMP* is an umbrella statement of direction for the four *College Educational Master Plans*, and documents the common planning criteria, methodologies, and agreements that bring consistency to and provide a context for the *College Educational Master Plan*. The district-wide plan’s road map is composed of several specific elements:

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

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Student learning Outcome at Merritt College have been identified for Instruction and Student Services. The highlights of SLOs for the college are as follows:

- As an institution, we must continually evaluate our own effectiveness in our primary mission: to educate students who have entrusted their future to us. By establishing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at the Student Support Services level, we aspire to be able to assess student achievement of those outcomes and use the results to make improvements in our student support programs and services.
- The Student Support Services Division at Merritt College has engaged each unit within its area to identify Student Learning Outcomes pertinent to their individual service units. This process began in September of 2004 by selection of the first cluster group to be tasked with answering the question as to how their individual program, policy, or practice improve or expand student learning and how can that learning be assessed?

Student Support Services SLO Milestones

The Vice President of Student Services conducted workshops with staff, students and faculty to facilitate in the initial identification of student outcomes within student services during her presentation and discussion, which took place at the Student Services Council meeting.

- The first cluster within Student Support Services to participate in student learning outcomes assessments. The first cluster consisted of four departments *EOPS, Financial Aid, Student Activities and DSPS*.
- A meeting was held with the staff and management responsible for the areas be assessed, The agenda of the first meeting included a discussion of learning outcomes pertinent to each area, a discussion of ways to achieve the outcomes, possible ways to evaluate the degree to which outcomes have been achieved and ways to implement outcomes and evaluations.
- The initial phases of Student Learning Outcomes involving *DSPS, EOPS, Student Activities and Financial* were completed on Tuesday January 4th, 2005 and each unit designated implementation dates.

- Student Support Services **second cluster**, composed of *Health Services, Transfer, Counseling and Puente* were identified in **September 2005** and subsequently have identified their SLOs.
- Student Support Services **third cluster**, composed of *Puente, Assessment, Orientation, and CalWORKs* began work identifying 5 SLOs in **December of 2005** and have subsequently identified their SLOs.
- **Cluster four** composed of *Athletic, Job Placement and Veterans* began working on SLO's in **2006-2007** and have subsequently identified their SLOs.

Instructional Student Learning Outcomes

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

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

In 2003, the Landscape Horticulture and Child Development departments were led by the Vice President of Instruction in a pilot project to identify program SLOs and to create a program map in order to elucidate a student's progress through the program. In succeeding years, Dr. Ruth Stiehl has been invited to present workshops on identification and assessment of learning outcomes as measurements of student learning and success in the institution. In Fall 2007, a Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) was created, and the SLOAC Coordinator was given .5 release time to work with faculty and staff on developing program outcomes and drafting program maps.

To date, most of Merritt College's programs have identified program outcomes and created program maps. In 2008-09, instructional and student services faculty and staff will create rubrics as assessment tools, and will continue to articulate outcomes at the

course level, communicate those outcomes through course syllabi, and begin the work of aligning course outcomes with program outcomes and ILOs. The following tools and processes have been developed to help facilitate the SLO process:

- SLO Template
- Institutional Learning Outcomes
- Learning Outcomes Manual
- An SLO coordinator has been hired.
- Additional funding and resources have been investigated to assist faculty to develop student outcome assessment tools.

Self Evaluation

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

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

- The Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors: Established in 2001 by the Academic Senate President and Vice President of Instruction, the Council is responsible for making recommendations regarding budget allocations and faculty hires, and they participate in peer evaluations, unit planning, program review, accreditation self study, and so on.
- Basic Skills Task Force: The Basic Skills Task Force works with faculty and staff on planning for enhanced academic success of basic skills students. Several projects have been selected for funding for 2008-09 with the expressed intent to increase retention, persistence, and success of basic skills students.
- College Facilities and Budget Committees: The college's facilities and budget committees play an integral role in planning and implementation of the college's

ongoing Educational Master Plan. The college has completed a major renovation of its Student Center, and next plans to relocate the Learning Center programs and to design a new Allied Health/Sciences building.

- The College Council provides input and insight into college issues, and ultimately sends a recommendation to the college President.
- The President's Three Initiatives are an integral part of planning at the college. Led by his senior administrative staff, they focus on Recruitment, Retention, and Resource Development (the college's 3 R's).

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

Self Evaluation

This standard has been met. The Merritt College Educational Master Plan and the District Wide Educational Master Plan were developed collaboratively to create an integrated planning framework linking program review, educational planning, facilities improvement and resource allocation. This integrated planning approach achieves one of the major goals of the District Wide Strategic Plan and fulfills a major district-level accreditation recommendation.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has established an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation and planning that assist the college in using its limited resources effectively and efficiently. The Educational Master Plan represents a key planning tool used by the college which is updated every five years, in the year preceding the accreditation self-study. This will allow the district to comprehensively review its programs and services and to address many of the issues required for the accreditation self study.

The on-going and systematic cycle of evaluation involved in the development of the Educational Master Plan includes and is derived from an iterative process of district-wide planning discussions integrated with college-based discussions. The district-wide foundational planning began with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, was guided in the process by the Strategic Management Team and District-Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC), and received input from faculty

and deans via program review, members of the Committee for Strategic Education Planning (CSEP), Academic Senate Presidents and Vice Presidents of Instruction, student services planning staff, faculty input at the District August 2007 and College spring 2008 Flex Days, unit and college planning 2007-2008, the college educational master planning committee, department chair planning sessions, and district-wide plan integration in spring, 2008.

In addition to the Educational Master Plan, the college Unit Plans are updated annually, program review is conducted every three years, and an Environmental Scan is conducted every two years.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The systematic cycle of evaluation at Merritt College is effective and efficient.

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

Descriptive Summary

The College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) which is charged with assessing the success of all units on campus, is a primary decision making body made up of representatives of all constituencies of the college, including students, administrators, staff and faculty.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College is committed to maintaining a current, Educational master Plan that is structured by inclusive feedback and participation.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

- Scorecard Report
- Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Action plans
- Student Equity Plan

- Transfer Report
- Program Review
- Student needs Survey

Through these various reports, appropriate constituencies receive documented assessment of Merritt College's effectiveness, the information is communicated to the appropriate constituencies through the following:

- President's Address
- Merritt College Reporter
- Accreditation Survey
- Program Review
- College Council

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College, through its effective communication and information network is able to keep college and community constituencies informed about its ongoing effectiveness.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

The College Educational Master Plans is a living document, systematically reviewed and modifying, as appropriate. All parts of the cycle take place with the annual reviews of the implementation milestones listed for each strategy, in addition to the five-year regular update. Input from the college on attainment of its planning goals will be used as a basis for compiling the information on the progress in implementing each of the strategies of the District Wide EMP. This information will be presented to SMT and college and district wide educational master planning committees at the start of the fall term to inform development of annual educational planning priorities. Through this process the ongoing planning and resource allocation process can be systematically reviewed and modified as appropriate.

Self Evaluation

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

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

Descriptive Summary

The Educational Master Plan is comprised of a number of effective systems to review its educational competence and improve services and educational offerings at Merritt College. Below are just a few of the process that Merritt uses to assess its evaluation mechanisms:

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

Five-Year Educational Master Plans Cycle & Milestone Progress Review

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

Three-Year Program Review Cycle

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

Annual Unit Plan Updates

Each year, all instructional and student service unit plans will be updated based on an assessment of issues and completion of prior year initiatives. This will form the foundation of an integrated planning and budgeting process. Annual updates are also needed to provide continuity to multi-year improvement efforts, especially where emerging programs are being piloted or watch programs are being revitalized. Ultimately, the College Educational Master Plan is a living document. All parts of the cycle take place with the annual reviews of the implementation milestones listed for each strategy, and modifications are made as appropriate.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The process associated with the Educational Master Plan provides an efficient system for college constituent groups to annually survey their

respective vision, mission, goals and evaluate their respective success in meeting those objectives.

STANDARD II STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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

II.A INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

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

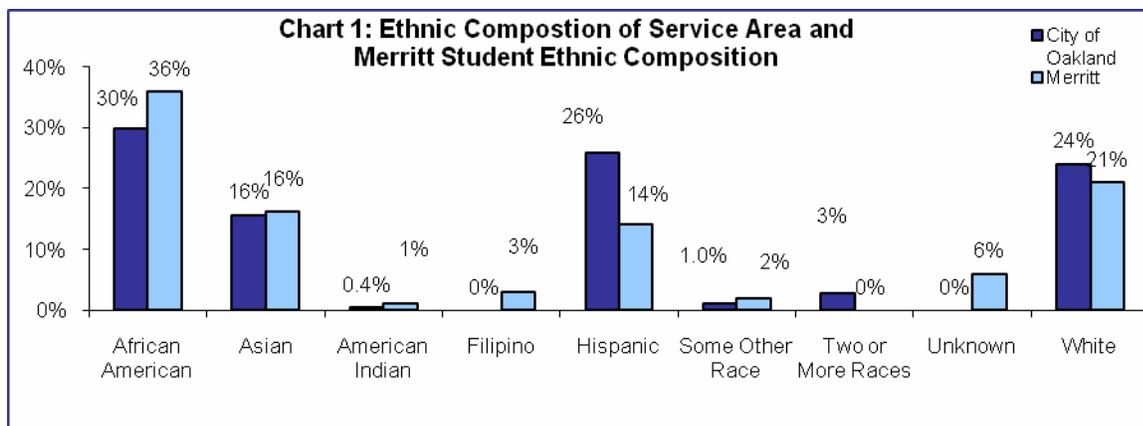
II.A.1 The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Institutional Research Officer and VP of Student Services has stated that, “Latino/ Hispanic under representation may reflect some barriers to access. Latino/ Hispanic under enrollment must be explored through community surveys and focus groups to determine the reason/s for under enrollment.”



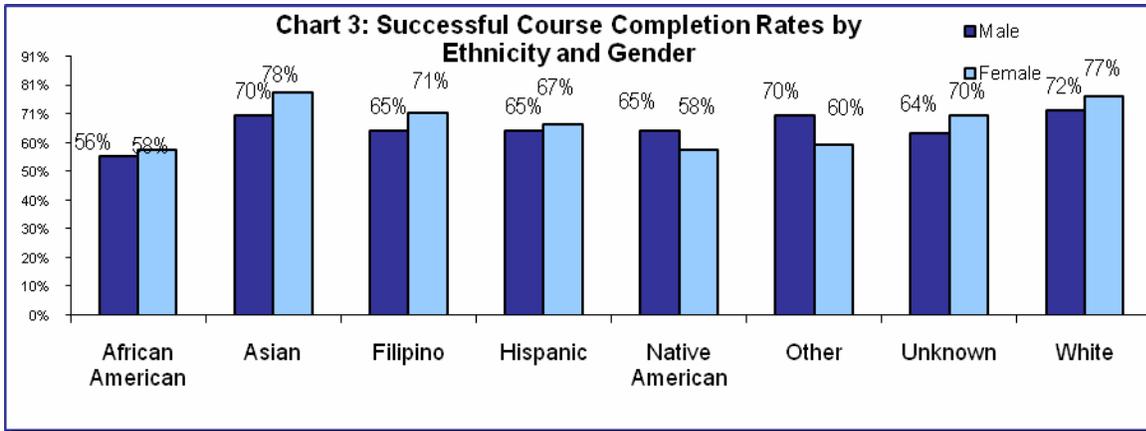
Source: American Community Survey 2006 and Peralta Institutional Research Office

How to read this chart:

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

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

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

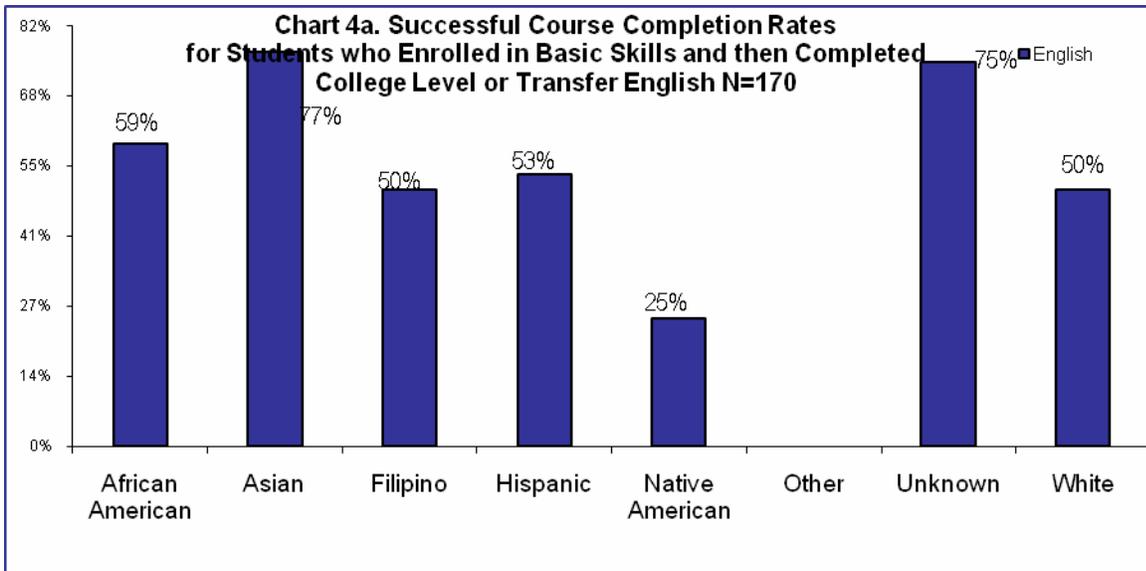


Source: Peralta Institutional Research Office

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

Data Description

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



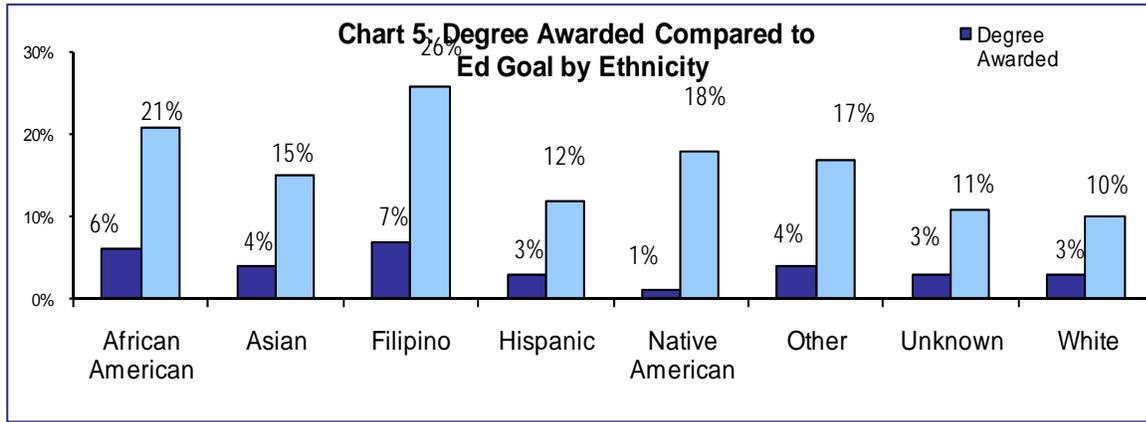
Source: Peralta Institutional Research Office

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

How to read this chart:

Data Description

- Approximately 65% of students successfully completed college level or transfer level English after having enrolled in Basic Skills. Note in this analysis students are defined as unsuccessful if they choose not enroll in the subsequent year.
- The following students performed beneath the college average for students: Filipino, Hispanic, Native American and White students.

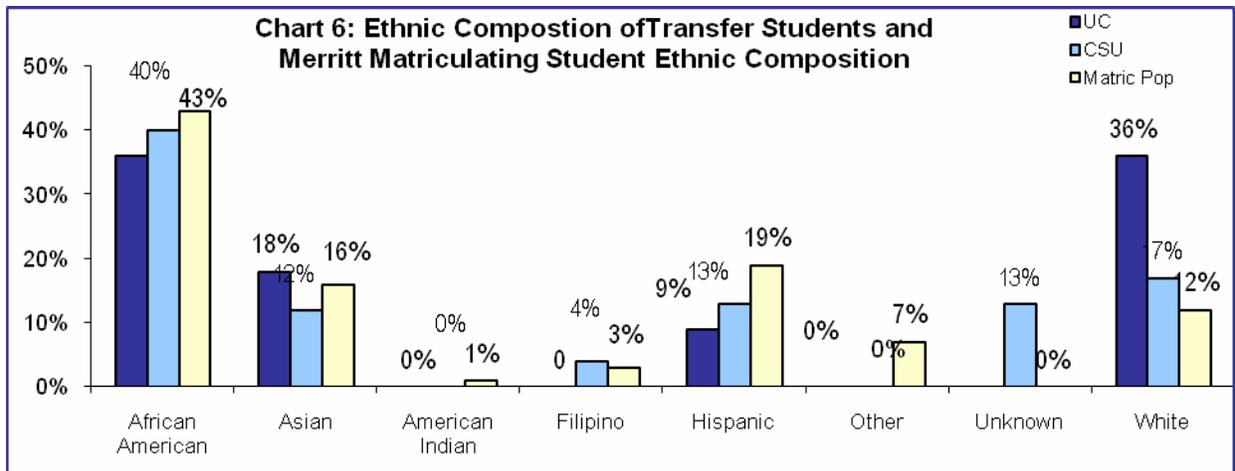


Source: Peralta Institutional Research Office

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

Data Description

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



Source: UC data-California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), CSU² data-CSU Statistical Reports

How to read this chart:

Data Description

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

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

These processes and procedures include:

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

Since the last accreditation visit the district and the college have engaged in a committed process of master planning and program reviews. Each department

² CSU- does not report an "Other" category.

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

Since the last accreditation visit all academic departments have initiated faculty evaluations for tenure track, full-, and part-time instructors. A total of 52 plus pt evaluations have been completed and/05are currently in process which makes up over 70% of those needing evaluation. Working with the union, the district implemented a new set of evaluation procedures for part-time faculty to ensure that instructional quality is maintained, and that faculty and administration engage in a systematic, fair review of the significant number of part-time instructors that teach at Merritt College.

Through the hiring of an institutional researcher, Merritt College has been able to gather and utilize research data to inform our planning processes. This includes the Student Equity Plan, Student Needs Survey, Scorecard Report, all unit and master plans and grants including the MAP grant and Title III. ***(input Anika's paragraph—waiting for it as of 11/24)***

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

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

An SLO committee was created in 2007 with .5 release time provided to the Chair to ensure that progress was made. The SLO committee currently meets twice per month and has taken the lead in working with individual faculty and whole departments to develop their program maps and SLO's. For two successive summers the college sent teams of faculty, staff, and administrators to Oregon to Ruth Stiehl's White Water Institute to study program mapping and assessment of student learning outcomes through development of assessment tools. Ruth Stiehl also came to the college for a two day intensive workshop in October, 2007 on the same topic. To date, ___ programs have completed this goal and ___ are currently in the process of doing so. In addition, the campus participated in the development of college wide SLO's during the Spring, 2008 SD training. This continuous training has been extremely beneficial to faculty and department chairs to assess student and program outcomes and delineate and evaluate the paths students take within the various disciplines and the campus generally.

For example:

- Nursing "Bridge to Success"
- Bridge Academy for Student Success
- Basic Skills
- Title III
- The Puente Program
- COSER
- Medical Assistant and Health Care Interpreter
- Developing Paramedic
- Public Safety/Pre-Academy for Fire and Police
- Concurrent Enrollment

Self Evaluation

The college meets the standard. Merritt College has made extensive use of research and analysis to identify student and campus wide needs and for the purpose of identifying funds and writing grants. The use of this research has been invaluable in assessing Merritt College's aims with results particularly as is it relates to student success and the areas that we can strengthen in order to improve the student experience.

In addition, the use of research and analysis has enabled us to effectively seek funds for the Basic Skills Initiatives, MAP grant and the Federal Title III grant.

Merritt College is particularly effective in addressing our commitment to diversity. Our community and student body is very diverse and our curriculum and efforts to increase awareness and consideration of diversity are consistent and effective.

Merritt College is effectively engaged in developing SLOs in all areas of the institution and also developing strategies to assess those outcomes and make adjustments to better our delivery methods.

Planning Agenda

Continue fulfilling our mission to complete all planning, reviews and progress towards completing SLO's for every area of instruction of campus. With the master planning completed Merritt College will continue to implement the timeline process and achieve the completion of these areas by spring 2009.

II.A.1.

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

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

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

Distance Education: Our on-line course offerings are growing and include varying degrees of time spent face-to-face in combination with on-line instruction. The Distance Education Committee and the Curriculum Instruction Committee have worked during the 2007-2008 academic year to create policy, training and approval process to create a model for high standards and effective delivery for students. The courses offered are of the same quality as face-to-face instruction but offer more flexibility to student who are balancing the demands of family and work with school. (see CIC minutes and DE resolutions)

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

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

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

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

Technical/Skilled Education: Merritt College offers certificates and degrees that seek to serve the career goals of students and the demands of the employment sector. Our nursing program is highly successful and has recently expanded offerings to various local hospitals. Our Administration of Justice program trains all new-recruits to the Oakland Police department. Our new Fire Technology program trains students interested in careers with the fire department. Child Development offers degrees and certificates for the growing demand for licensed childcare. We offer Drug and Alcohol counseling certification to prepare numerous students for this growing field. We are currently offering Genomics and Microscopy to train students in high paying careers as research technicians.

Learning/Tutoring Center: The Learning Center on campus offers free tutoring in all subjects to students, assistance with term papers and extensive computer labs.

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

Self Evaluation

Merritt College meets the standard. The variety of modes of delivery and the connections Merritt College make with the employment sector are all areas we have enhanced and developed in recent years. The success of these programs has encouraged our future planning for means of offering more courses in these and other

areas. Each offering is integrated into college and district planning so that we can prepare for the areas open to further development and areas that we have not accessed.

On-going reviews of the courses and programs discussed occurs where we are able to evaluate the effectiveness and of these areas.

Planning Agenda

Through Basic Skills proposals, Title III and MAP grants Merritt College has committed to creating more learning communities and extending service learning opportunities.

II.A.1.

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

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

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Merritt College has actively worked to incorporate for courses, programs, certificated and degrees. The majority of the progress has been made in this area of the standard. **Of the ____ number of programs and certificates offered on campus ____ have completed the program level SLO formation and mapping.** Once exception is the Nursing Department which ahs completed all phases of the SLO process due to the requirements of state certification.

Planning Agenda

During the 2008-9 academic year the aim is to complete all mapping and SLO formation for all degree and certificate programs. In addition those who have already completed this phase of the process will be completing the assessment of student achievement so that they are able to begin making improvements in curriculum and instruction. In addition, funds have been allocated by the district for during the summer 2008 to support SLO formation by adjunct faculty members. Again these efforts demonstrate the commitment by Merritt College to fully integrate SLO formation and processes into all areas of instruction.

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

II.A.2.

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

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

- Faculty are self motivated and encouraged to design new courses and update existing ones. They initiate new ideas by working with other faculty in their areas and at times in other departments to create learning communities and/or cross listed courses.
- Department Chairs assist faculty when needed on ideas and procedures for approval. Additionally all Chairs meet monthly and are given data by the office of the VP of instruction and/or the Peralta District office regarding course enrollment patters, student retention and success for individual courses and programs. This information is discussed with faculty and Deans to determine viability of new ideas and areas that are in need of improvement.
- Curriculum Committee (CIC) assists in all areas of developing and updating courses. Faculty have easy access to CIC members to get input on draft course proposals and are given suggestions and procedural information. Of particular importance on the committee is the Articulation Officer who provides faculty with advice on submitting courses for degree and transferability and contacting

faculty/chairs to inform them that courses are in need of review by the CSU and UC systems..

- Administration particularly Deans and the VP of instruction assist faculty by administering evaluations of instruction that are done with other faculty to provide suggestions for improving teaching techniques and syllabi formation. New evaluation procedures have been approved by the District and Union (2008) and ongoing efforts occur to evaluate all adjunct and full-time faculty. The tenure process particularly gives consistent feedback to newly hired faculty.

The above entities work collaboratively to encourage new ideas and quality by utilizing a clearly defined procedural process. Evidence of the effectiveness of the procedures is demonstrated in the high number of CIC new course approvals and updates during the past 2 academic years (see attached).

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Curricunet has been implemented by the Office of Instruction and Curriculum Committee to utilize the most current methods of evaluating curriculum across the state.

Merritt College has included each of the areas of concern and those that are functioning well into the Master Planning process. Reviews and formation of new programs and initiatives is ongoing.

II.A.2.

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

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

- An active faculty participation in the completion of program reviews and formation of program SLO's.
- Administrative support of revisiting program reviews to facilitate clarity about the needs or various areas.
- Adherence to all state mandated career technical licensing and community organization relationships. Faculty serve on career technical discipline area boards and committees
- Curriculum that is competency based and updated to include new paradigms. Curriculum review that includes ensuring transferability to CSU/UC's.
- Certification and licensing that complies with the rigors of state mandates.
- An SLO committee that is chaired by a faculty member and works in concert with programs, curriculum committee and administration.
- Assessment of student progress towards achieving outcomes for the nursing and Administration of Justice departments.

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Merritt College is in the process of completing each area of this standard. The college and district master planning process includes the completion of all SLO's.

II.A.2.

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

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

Internally:

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Merritt College will continue to follow its master planning process which includes improvements in these areas.

II.A.2.

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

Merritt College recognizes that diversity is a critical faculty to consider in the delivery modes and teaching methodologies offered to students. 50% of Merritt College

students are first generation college students, the majority come from communities of color, many balance the demands of school with work and family and many enter basic skill level classes and the tutoring program at Merritt College in order to achieve their academic goals. Importantly, Merritt College recognizes that students learn in different ways and are in need of modes of delivery that allow them to express their ability to perform.

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

During the 2008-9 academic year faculty plan to update, create and hire PT faculty areas related to women, GLBT communities, and Latino Americans to offer more courses that teach to the experiences of diverse groups. On-line instruction and

purchasing more classroom technology are in process and are included in the college master plan.

II.A.2.

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

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

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

The review and planning process occur with the input and direction of faculty in conjunction with administration. Faculty review their programs and courses to ensure that text and teaching methods are the most current and effective. Within the last 2 academic years every program on campus has undergone review and planning.

Self Evaluation

This standard is partially met. Although program review has been completed and integrated into the master plan, course review needs to occur in most areas. This is particularly to integrate SLO formation on the course level in relation to the program and college SLO's.

Planning Agenda

SLO's formation courses are currently underway but few courses have been completed. The SLO committee however is in process to assisting faculty and chairs in this process.

II.A.2.

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

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

As previously described Merritt College is actively engaged in the process of formulating SLO's for all areas of instruction. Program reviews and unit planning have occurred during the past two academic years and have been placed into the college master plan. The following processes add to the systematic evaluation and planning process:

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

SLO formation will continue. Once completed achievement and dissemination will occur.

II.A.2.

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

None.

II.A.2.

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Completion of the SLO process in all areas of instruction as described in the planning process.

II.A.2.

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

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

II. A. 3.

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

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Our vision is to:

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

As a means of accomplishing the mission and vision of our College, courses and degree programs are offered in five (5) areas; the natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, language and rationality, and ethnic studies. The variety of courses within each area cover basic academic content and methodology by discipline trained faculty. All courses included in the general education requirements are approved by the college's Curriculum and Instruction Committee. In the general education requirements course offerings there are 42+ classes in the natural sciences, 93+ classes in the social and behavioral sciences, in the humanities there are 72+ offerings, in the Language and rationality area there are 36+ course offerings, and in ethnic studies there are 46+ offerings. Thus Merritt offers students a variety of options in high quality general education curriculum.

Self Evaluation

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

expanded by providing course offerings that include new thinking and methodology in the appropriate fields of study.

Planning Agenda

None

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

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

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

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

Planning Agenda

None

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

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

Ethnic studies courses foster cross-cultural understanding and personal awareness about history and civic responsibility. Environmental studies courses offer hands on training in community gardens and environmental advocacy. Political science and student government/club encourage and develop student/collective responsibility in local and national participation in governance and community building. Study abroad programs increase global awareness, global connection and responsibility. Communication and psychology courses develop effective interpersonal

communication. Ethical principles and standards are modeled by faculty, staff and administration and developed inside the classroom with policies about behavior and professionalism, and outside the classroom with workshops and trainings offered through the transfer and job placement center.

The courses and on campus activities described are supported by our stated Core Values:

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

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

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

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

None.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College offers 28 degrees in General Education fields and 20 degrees in Vocational/Technical programs. All of the VT programs offer one or more areas of inquiry. For example Child Development offers three pathways; Assistant teacher, Associate teacher and Teacher and certificates in early Intervention or Violence Intervention and Counseling. Of the 28 degrees in General education fields all but one (Anthropology) offer areas of concentration or established interdisciplinary cores. For example, Administration of Justice offers two areas of focus; Police Science and Corrections both for degree and/or certificate of completion. African American studies offers one degree path but with four (4) established areas of focus; Family/Society, History/Economics. Africa and the Diaspora, Culture/Creativity. AA degrees in general areas of study such as Social and Behavioral Sciences require students to select from

an established core of interdisciplinary courses such as Business, Political Science and Psychology.

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Evaluate and rewrite the Anthropology degree. Write degree requirements for subjects that do not currently offer degrees such as Ethnic Studies and Psychology.

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has 20 vocational and occupational certificates and degrees. The largest of which include; Administration of Justice, Child Development, Environmental Management and Technology, Landscape Horticulture, Community Social Services, and Nursing. Each of the programs requires rigorous standards established by state guidelines and or outside Boards. Coursework is centered in the training of students to meet the levels of knowledge competency and skill level required for certification/degree. Some of the programs such as Nursing are audited by the California Board of Registered Nursing to ensure that standards are being met. Merritt's Nursing program is considered one of the best in the area and the demand for training is always increasing. To meet the employment demand the program has expanded into area hospitals to offer additional access and has hired additional instructors for the same purpose.

The Child Development program conforms to regulatory agency guidelines and has expanded course offerings to include topics covering diversity, infants/toddlers, and home based care to add to the body of knowledge required by the state. The Child Development Program is committed to quality training. Classes prepare students to function in a variety of early childhood programs. Perspectives on maturation, developmentally appropriate practices, and professional advancement within the childcare field receive primary concentration. Current theory and research, cultural influences, practical applications and a supervised laboratory preschool experience are connected so students will discover their most effective and unique role with children. The program enjoys the reputation of graduating sensitive, knowledgeable, caring

individuals who are assets to their community make positive contributions to the well being of children and families.

The purpose of the Merritt College Radiologic Science Program is to prepare qualified practitioners who are competent in the art and science of medical imaging. Radiologic Technologists manipulate sophisticated technical equipment and computers to obtain detailed images of the human body. These images assist physicians in the diagnosis of injury and disease in the clinical environment. Radiologic Technologists work in hospitals, clinics, imaging centers, and physician's offices. A successful and competent Radiologic Technologist is one who thinks critically, solves problems creatively, possesses strong technical skills, and cares for patients with sensitivity and compassion. The technologist must be flexible and able to work with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds with various needs, abilities, injuries, and disease processes. The program's mission focuses on developing these important characteristics in program graduates.

The program seeks to:

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

The AS degree and the Certificate in Radiologic Science will be awarded upon satisfactory completion of the Prerequisite requirements, the General Education requirements, and the Major course requirements. The certificate-only option is available only to those who have already earned an Associate degree or higher.

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

None.

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Preparing to Transfer

Information on Concurrent Enrollment

Transfer Center

California Articulation Number System (CAN)

Intersegmental General Education transfer Curriculum (IGETC)

University of California System

Berkeley Cooperative Admission Program (CAP)

Impacted Programs

Transfer Admissions Requirements

High School Proficiency Examination

General Requirements

Requirements for Nonresidents

General Education/Breadth Requirements

University Requirements for the Baccalaureate Degree

California State University System

Transfer Admissions Requirements

Making up Missing College Preparatory Subject Reqs

U.S. History, Constitution, and American Ideals

General Education and Course Reqs

General Education Breadth Reqs

Certification or General Ed.

Each of the above areas contains descriptions and encourages students to seek advice from academic counselors. A fulltime transfer counselor offers one-on-one assistance for students along with numerous workshops, campus visits and college transfer fairs.

Transfer policies are reviewed annually by the articulation officer and the curriculum committee in concert with the Office of Instruction.

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

None.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

None.

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

Description

Merritt College represents itself to the public and prospective and current students through the course catalog, student hand book, high school visitation day/outreach, public information officer (PIO) and the college website. The course catalog communicates degree and transfer information, college mission, vision and values, student service programs, safety, student rights and complaint processes and course descriptions and degree requirements. The catalog is updated every two years to ensure that any changes that have occurred are reflected in the catalog. The student handbook is an academic calendar with important dates for students, includes degree and transfer information and college policies, mission, vision and values. The hand book is given to student at no cost as a means of increasing use. High school visitation day occurs every year where area high schools are invited to come to Merritt for a day to encourage their attendance at Merritt College. In addition, Merritt College office of the President, Vice President, Division Deans and individual instructors develop relationships with area high schools and teach college courses on site at the high schools. The PIO regularly communicates college initiatives, awards and informational programs to the media to encourage attendance to events and communicate the many innovative programs happening at Merritt College to the public. The college website details many aspects of the institution including course offerings, calendars, athletic events, degree/transfer information, departments particularities, governance, contact information and Passport registration for students. The newly implemented Passport system makes accessing grades, transcripts, fees and other relevant areas easier for students. The system is new and being introduced in stages but one critical aspect of Passport is the creation of merritt.edu email address for all students upon registration. This will allow students to receive constant information about events, deadlines and programs on campus and increase the way that Merritt is able to represent its mission, programs and services. Both the Merritt website and Passport are under construction/in process which has caused delays. The new website has not completely been installed

due to technical problems. Once completed the website and Passport will more effectively communicate to the public and students.

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Complete Passport email system for students by spring 2009. Complete and install new college website by spring 2009.

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

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

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

The Faculty Handbook contains the Student Grievance Policy (Board Policy 4.43) and Student Academic Grievance Hearing (Board Policy 4.43.A.). This is also delineated in the college catalog where it is intended to provide recourse to students for perceived violations of their academic and civil rights.

Objectivity in the presentation of classroom information is assessed through regular peer review as well as tenure review agreed by the contract between the District and the Peralta Federation of Teachers. This contract is consistent with the requirement that the College Mission be in agreement with the California Educational Code (Section 87663). The basis for peer review of tenured and non-tenured faculty involves four categories containing a total of 24 criteria. Among the criteria are 4 that address academic freedom and the unbiased presentation of information: Faculty members are required to 1. Provide perspectives that influence a respect for diverse views; 2. Continually assess the teaching-learning process and modify starves as necessary to retain student interest, stimulate independent thinking, and

encourage students to be analytical in their thinking; 3. Create a climate conducive to learning; and 4. Display behavior consistent with professional ethics listed in the Code of Ethics. Part time faculty are evaluated in a similar four-part process.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

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

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

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

In addition, instructors are requested to repeat this information in their course syllabi by college administrators and department chairs. A more detailed description of what plagiarism is would be beneficial to our students given today's access to on-line papers and information and the need to teach students about proper citation.

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

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

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

Description

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

Student Code of Conduct
Unlawful Discrimination
Sexual Harassment

Self Evaluation

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

II.B STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Quality Assurance Plans, Surveys and Program Reviews

Matriculation Plan

Transfer Center Plan

Student Services Educational Plan - 2001 to 2017

Merritt College Career Center/One-Stop Shop Client Satisfaction Survey

Student Needs Survey Findings: Follow Up to the Equity for All Report to the President

Categorical Program Plans

- CARE Year End Report
- MerrittWORKS Program Plan
- EOPS Plan and Year End Report
- DSPS Plan

Program Reviews

- Financial Aid
- Transfer Center
- Articulation
- Matriculation
- Health Services (College Nurse)

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

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

- Matriculation Plan

When last updated October 31, 2005, the Matriculation Plan noted activities and goals for the standards that make up the eight components of the Matriculation Program: Admissions, Orientation, Counseling/Advisement, Student Follow-up, Coordination and Training, Research and Evaluation, and Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation.

- Merritt College Career Center/One-Stop Shop Client Satisfaction Survey

In Spring 2007, the umbrella organization EASTBAY Works conducted a client satisfaction survey of all their regional centers, including the one located at Merritt College. Using a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest degree of satisfaction,

the survey results showed that clients reported satisfaction rates of between 8.7 and 9.5 on the satisfaction indicators of overall satisfaction, meeting expectations, comparison with ideal service, likelihood of recommending services, willingness to reuse services, accessibility, knowledge and helpfulness of staff, timeliness of services.

- Equity for All Scorecard Project Report

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

- Transfer Center Program Review

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

- Matriculation Program Review

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

- Health Services Program Review

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

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

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

| Student Services Educational Plan - 2001 to 2017

The Student Services Educational Plan outlines the status and needs of the different units within Student Services for the years 2001 to 2017. The report covered the

present and future staffing, equipment, and facilities needs of each unit. The campus made a major commitment to address these needs by undertaking and completing the renovation of the R Building in 2006-2007. Although some needs have not yet been addressed, the majority have been resolved.

Planning Agenda

1. Address the recommendations of the Scorecard Report
2. Track more effectively student progress toward transfer, comparing students' initial stated goal of transfer on applications with progress toward transfer as their academic journey unfolds.
3. Enhance counseling department services through increased staffing, particularly by hiring bi-lingual counselors.
4. Expand EOPS services by developing guidance courses and other curricula, community activities and mental health services for students.
5. Expand tutoring services for learning disabled students.
6. Ensure that all students who are veterans have SEPs. Create an informational FAQ link on the Merritt web site for student veterans.

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

a. General Information

Page

Accreditation Statement

1

Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Website Address of the Institution

1

Educational Mission

13

Curriculum Patterns and Courses

95-248

Academic Calendar

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Statements	54
Available Student Financial Aid	
Learning Resources	25-27
Names & Degrees of College Staff (Administration, Faculty, Classified)	249-56
Names of Governing Board Members	Inside Front
Cover	

b. Requirements

Admissions Requirements and Procedures	
Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations	19-25
Transfer Information	23-25
Degree, Certificate, and Major Requirements	83-94
	75-81

c. Major Policies Affecting Students

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

The Merritt College catalog is available for purchase in the book store or accessed by students in the Library, Admissions and Records Office, the Counseling Center or the Career and Transfer Center free of charge. The catalog can also be accessed by students online at the Merritt College website <<http://merritt.peralta.edu>>

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Self-Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

The catalog is reviewed and reprinted bi-annually. A curriculum specialist compiles the results of actions of the college curriculum committee and CIPD in keeping with the district approval process. The current curriculum specialist should record the steps she takes to compile and organize catalog information, where critical information is kept (hard-copy or electronic files) and those sources where additional information may be found so that others will be able to review and compile the catalog in the future should she no longer be available.

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

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

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College makes services accessible to all its students. Student Services programs reach out to underserved populations to encourage them to attend community college. These programs provide peer tutoring and peer advising to first generation college students, hire bilingual staff, provide financial aid and other information in various languages, provide book vouchers for EOPS students, and arrange individual tutoring and disability accommodations to students served by DSP&S.

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

Assessment

Merritt College makes assessment services available to all students by hiring bi-lingual staff and consulting with DSP&S coordinators to provide testing accommodations to persons with disabilities. The college has its own web page where the assessment schedule is kept up to date. The web page also contains a direct link to sample questions from the assessment publishers.

Basic Skills Initiative

CalWorks/MerrittWORKS

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

CARE

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

Counseling - Matriculation

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

DSP&S

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

EOPS

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

Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid at Merritt College provides equity of access through the following: hiring bilingual staff and student assistants; translating fliers about services into at least two languages; attending College Nights at local high schools; participating in on-campus student activities; and visiting classrooms to explain services.

Fruitvale Education Center

High Tech Center (HTC)

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

Learning Opportunity Program (LOP)

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

Latino Center

Equity for All Scorecard Project Report

Scorecard Project reported the following:

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

Career Center (Merritt College One-Stop Shop Client Satisfaction Survey)

The Career Center offers the following career and job-search/referral services to students: career and job information; computers for online career and job search; job-search assistance; job referral; information on volunteer and internship positions, apprenticeships, and scholarships; presentations and workshops, and job fairs. The Career Center extended its hours until 7pm twice a week to become accessible to evening students.

Transfer Center

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

Puente Program

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

Technology

Veterans Services

Merritt College offers educational assistance to eligible active-duty military, retired, and reserve personnel and their dependents. The Veterans program, in place since 1969, is responsible for certifying students who are entitled to benefits from the Veterans Affairs Department. A staff person assists with students' paperwork and communication between the VA Department and the college.

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Merritt College seeks to improve equity of access and student success by doing the following:

1. Hire an Outreach Developer
2. Ensure visibility in feeder high schools by Counselor and Student Ambassadors participation in Career and College Day Activities, paying attention particularly to those schools in which the number of under-represented students are the highest. Highlight High school concurrent enrollment.
3. Increase outreach to agencies within the community, such as the YMCA. Focus on organizations where current staff must increase educational experience in order to continue working in their fields, such as substance abuse and child development.
4. Ensure marketing and registration materials are available in Spanish.
5. Improve physical and electronic access for students with disabilities.
6. Develop community alliances with community agencies that serve Latinos, males, disabled people, and other agencies such as Chamber of Commerce, and cultural centers to increase the awareness of higher education, retention in high school, and career goal setting.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Self Evaluation

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

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

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

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

On campus, there are numerous activities for students to participate in throughout the school year that include, but are not limited to the following: Unity Day (a celebration of various cultures that make up the student body), Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month, Women's History Month, and the regional Tae-Kwon-Do championship. At various times throughout the year, guest speakers are invited to present on varying subjects. Students have taken a lead in promoting the conversion to the new computer system, Passport, that will be in place for all users as of April 2008. Last but not least, students are afforded the opportunity to participate on various hiring committees and have an equal vote when decisions/recommendations are made.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

The evaluation policies and procedures for tenure-track, tenured and part-time counselors are described in the Peralta Community College District Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Handbook, 2005. One of the primary objectives of the tenure track evaluation policy is the evaluation of the faculty (counselor) member's effectiveness in terms of providing effective services to students. Part-time counselors are also evaluated out of a concern for improving and maintaining excellence in performance and professionalism. According to board policy 3.30B, tenured counselors are evaluated once every three years. Part-time staff is evaluated within the first year of employment. Subsequent evaluations for part-time counselors are once every six semesters. The evaluation process consists of student, peer, and administrative evaluations.

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

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

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

Recent training:

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

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

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

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

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

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

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

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

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

New major

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

women and gender, race and ethnicity, regional and national identities, and cultural expression.

Ethnic studies

Merritt College proudly offers many courses which seek to offer students information about ethnicity and culture, both in the United States and beyond. In this regard, our largest academic department is African American Studies. Courses are also offered in

Asian American Studies, Mexican/Latin American Studies, and Native American Studies. Not only are courses offered in the standard lecture format, there are also opportunities to study abroad. Excursions have been offered to the following:

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

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

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

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

- Asian Cultural Club
- Black Student Union
- M.E.C.H.A.
- Puente Club
- C.O.S.E.R. Club
- Queer Club

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

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

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

The Executive Summary states

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

Self Evaluation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Descriptive Summary

The assessment instruments utilized by the Peralta Colleges are listed on the Chancellor’s Office approved list. All tests approved by the Chancellor’s office must present evidence that the tests are valid and minimize biases. According to the PCCD

Assessment Handbook, 5th Edition, March 2002, validation studies are performed by the District Office of Research and Institutional Development on all assessment instruments currently in use by the college.” The district office also conducts studies to ensure that the placement instruments used by the college are free of or minimize cultural and linguistic bias. Data is gathered and analyzed for any disproportionate impact on a particular group of students. Studies may also be requested by the campus researcher officer.

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

Self Evaluation

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

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

Descriptive Summary

Release of student records

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

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

Maintenance of Student Records

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

The following campus programs/departments maintain student records:

Department/Program	Records kept?	Paper/Electronic	How protected?
Admissions & Records	Yes	Both	Paper files stored in secured, locked cabinets in storage area behind A&R office; only accessible to A&R staff. Password required to access electronic data. Paper files are kept on campus for current term and forwarded to the District A&R office the following term.
Assessment	Yes	Both	Stored in secured, locked cabinets; password required to access electronic data
DSPS	Yes	Both	Maintained in locked file cabinets
EOPS	Yes	Both	Password required to access electronic data; paper files in secured area of office
General Counseling	Yes	Both	Password required to access electronic data; paper files in secured area of office
Health Services	Yes	Paper	Locked cabinets; confidentiality stmt signed by all Health Center staff
Financial Aid	Yes	Both	Files stored in a locked room
Puente	Yes	Both	Paper files kept by Puente counselor in secured, locked office in cabinet which is only accessible to Puente staff. Password required to access electronic files
Veterans	Yes	Both	Paper files stored in locked office in secure, locked cabinets. Accessible to VA certifying officer only. Password required to access electronic records
Student Activities		Electronic	Authorized access; only IT personnel can delete records
Transfer Center	Yes	Both	Stored in locked office; password required to access electronic records

Self Evaluation

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

A relatively large proportion of student support service units created student learning outcomes. The units also created or identified assessment tools to measure the department's progress towards the outcome. The achievements of student learning outcomes are assessed through pre/post surveys, post surveys, and performance surveys. This information has been used to modify activities and programs. [add chart detailing student services SLO, and the regularity of SLO assessment and change in activities as a result of SLO assessment]

Student Exit Surveys

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

Unit Action Plans

Units chart a course for the direction of their program through annual unit plans.

Program Review

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

Self Evaluation

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

References

Resources handout

- 2 Health Services Student Needs Surveys (1)
- Old MerrittWORKS surveys
- Merritt College Midterm Report,
- PFT Faculty Contract,
- Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Handbook (revised 2008)
- New Part-time Evaluation Process implemented 2007-08
- Part-time Counselor Observation Evaluation Form
- Equity for All/Scorecard report
- Merritt College Catalog
- Merritt Class Schedule
- Merritt College Campus Resources Guide
- ASMC List of Merritt College Clubs
- PCCD Assessment Handbook, 5th Edition, March 2002
- PCCD Multiple Measures Checklist
- PCCD 2005-06 Validation Statistics for the Academic Year ...
- PCCD Spring 2006 Cumulative Validation Statistics through Spring 2006 ...

Standard IIC

Library and Learning Support Services

- 1. *The institution supports quality of instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.***
 - a. *Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.***

Descriptive Summary

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

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

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

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

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

resources available at CSU and UC libraries. Print periodicals currently number about xxx titles.

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

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

Print Collections

Holdings are approximate 50,000 circulating volumes

Includes Dewey Collection Integration Project

Reserves holdings are approximately 450 titles per semester; instructional faculty put textbooks/supporting materials on reserve for student use.

Active print periodicals holdings approximately 100 titles

Active periodical databases approximately 30

Archives holdings for Campus, Governance documents, and Black Panther Collection

Committee Memberships (Library and LRC)

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

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

Library Budget(s) 05-06/06-07/07-08

Budgets remained inconsistent, viz. usually year-end, unallocated/unspent funds from the other academic departments. During 07-08 fiscal year the Library benefited from the efforts of the District Library/IT Committee which placed a successful proposal for \$100,000 per campus per year for the life of the Measure A bond. This will insure the rebuilding and currency of the print collection. A one-time grant of \$25,000 was given in FY 06-07 from the Chancellor's Office to the individual campuses in order to help modernize and expand the four college campus libraries.

Descriptive Summary

LEARNING CENTER

The Learning Center provides learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth and variety to facilitate educational offerings. The center is staffed by teaching faculty, classified staff, and student peer advisors. The mission of the Learning Center is to assist students in becoming more efficient, effective, and independent learners. Services are primarily focused on supplemental instructional support to help students in reinforcing and mastering concepts in courses across the curriculum. (II.C.1)

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

the English tutors and training of tutors in Mathematics and other disciplines will be implemented in Spring 2009. (II.C.1 (a), II.C.1(c))

The college utilizes general fund and ongoing block grant allocations to purchase materials and equipment and to support free drop-in tutorial services. Special grant program funds such as the Basic Skills Initiative, a five-year Title III grant, and two-year Maximum Achievement Program grant focused on African American males and other low-income students will be used to expand the current number of peer advisors providing tutorial services and to purchase additional educational equipment and resource materials. (II.C.1 (a))

Supervised tutoring is offered in English in a Writing Across the Curriculum program, ESL, in Mathematics, Sciences, Business, and Social Sciences. In addition, the Center serves students, faculty, and staff in an Open Computer Lab and in an Electronic Classroom used to facilitate instruction and course offerings, as appropriate. The Learning Center also offers credit/no credit English and Learning Resources courses. (II.C.1(c))

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

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

Prior to the move of the Learning Center to the new facilities in the lower level of Building L, the Learning Center will be relocated to Swing Space in Building A in June 2009. The swing space has less square footage, but will be remodeled and accommodate the current operations of the Learning Center. The new Swing Space Project will also include the installation of new heating and air conditioning, and carpeting.

The Learning Center uses a variety of tools to identify service gaps, to improve services, and to set priorities to ensure that services are meet identified student needs.

The Center conducts periodic student surveys, student evaluations of tutors, and workshop evaluations. Learning Center faculty and staff participate in departmental meetings and other college committees to obtain feedback and use the unit planning process to set priorities services, needs for equipment and resource materials. (II.C.1 (a), II.C.1 (e), II.C.2)

Self Evaluation

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

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

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

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

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

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

Descriptive Summary

Bibliographic Instruction

The Library provides bibliographic instruction to faculty upon request; these have occurred primarily in the humanities and social sciences areas. The library offers bibliographic instruction, primarily in humanities and social sciences courses, in the access and use of library materials, services, and remote resources. The Department

currently has four course offerings, but has not offered for-credit instruction due to low enrollment/funding.

Reference

The Library provides certificated reference librarians for all open building hours; these provide one-on-one instruction and service to students and faculty in support of their academic needs. In addition, the library provides research guides and library handouts in both print and web-based forms in order to provide for student learning and support. Currently the Library has 3.0 FTEF and .6 FTEF part-time certificated librarians. There are currently 3.5 FTE classified to support non-certificated areas.

Webpage

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

<http://www.merritt.edu/apps/comm.asp?Q=40013>

Self Evaluation

Bibliographic Instruction

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

Reference

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

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

District Library/IT Committee

This Committee has been the interface between the Campus Library Department Chairs and the district. The Committee has been instrumental in allowing resource planning and sharing within and between the four campus libraries. Currently, the district supports the online union catalog, its user support group, the CalRen network, the GoPrint contracts (3 campuses), webpage CMS, webpage CMS training, distribution of

TTIP funding, online catalog server and maintenance, library book bond allocations, Passport access profiles, Passport training sessions. This committee has taken on the role of library/technology information/lobbying group in order to provide the funding, training, network access, and technology resources and support that allow the individual libraries to deliver their instruction and services.

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

Descriptive Summary

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

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

District/Campus/Departmental Webpages

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

Databases

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

Electronic books

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

Self Evaluation

Building hours have been increased by ten hours per week since the last review; during Spring 2008, a permanent, part-time evening technician was hired to support increased

student access to the library. The department successfully completed a search and placement of a part-time evening library technician which permitted the library's opening in compliance with Education Code and bargaining unit agreements. Two upgrades to the online catalog Horizon system have been successfully implemented and integrated into operations. The Department is currently involved in the redesign and content-management system of the new web-pages slated to roll out in June 2008.

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

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

Website (current)

Website (reconfigured)

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

Descriptive Summary

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

Self Evaluation

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

Security of the library collection remains an issue; funding provided for a second security gate (to cover "first floor shrinkage" of materials) was allocated and then rescinded. Due to the design defect of the existing building, full security for library

personnel and materials will not be achieved until the remodeling recommendations are completed.

The Library Department needs to be more fully integrated into the campus-wide disaster plan. Equipment, procedures, and personnel training are needed in preparation for a predicted 6.0+ earthquake for the region; the campus' adjacency to the Hayward Fault makes this planning most essential. The library faculty and staff, through the District Library/IT Committee, requested and received Passport System training relevant to the areas of student personnel information needed in order to support the circulation and reserves areas; this mitigated an oversight that would have left library personnel without appropriate permissions to verify student information and to initiate registration blocks for overdue materials.

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

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

Self Evaluation

The Library/Learning Center has a number of agreements that support learning resources on the Merritt campus. The Horizon online union catalog is currently provided through a district agreement with Sirsi/Dynix. Through the Community College League, the Library has purchased the CQ Researcher, EBSCO Premier, Encyclopedia Britannica, Expanded Academic, Literature Resource Center, Lexis-Nexis, Proquest Career and Technical Education, Rand California databases. The pay-per-use format (GoPrint) for printing has worked well for the Library; the Learning Center is considering its adoption as part of the architectural renovation project.

Summary of library/learning resource vendor agreements:

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

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

NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) Survey

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Faculty Self-Study Survey

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

Internal Self-Study—Library

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

Campus Survey

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

NCES Survey

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

Standard IIIA Human Resources

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

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

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

Descriptive Summary

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

The Peralta Community College District has developed policies for ensuring that all personnel are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide

and support all programs and services. The policies are in the Board Policy Manual: B.P. 1.18 and 1.18b for administrative hires; B.P. 1.20 for selection of a chancellor; B.P. 3.18 for certificated and classified hiring; and B.P. 3.26 for faculty hiring. These policies were developed in consultation with the District Academic Senate and the Peralta Federation of Teachers, Operating Engineers, and Service Employees International unions. These policies are accessible to all via the Peralta website. Further the governing board ratifies union contracts which also address hiring.

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

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

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

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

The process for classified staff and managers are created based on the needs of the college and edited by the Human Resources department so that the job announcement states the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position in an effective manner.

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

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

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

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

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

The Tenure Review Committee is also appointed by the College President at the time the recommendation for employment is made.

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

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

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

This standard is met.

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

Descriptive Summary

All personnel are evaluated systematically and at stated intervals as outlined in the Local 1021 and Local 39 Collective Bargaining Agreements (Article V. SEIU and Article 19) and the Peralta Federation of Teachers “Faculty Evaluation Guidelines”, Appendix A20.

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

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

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

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

Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years. Comparable to the tenure-track process, the evaluation process includes peer observation (for instructional and non-instructional faculty), student surveys, an administrator evaluation, the faculty member’s self-evaluation, and a portfolio. The evaluation process provides opportunity to give

commendations and recommendations for improvement. If a rating below satisfactory is assigned, a plan for improvement is developed and a re-evaluation is scheduled for the next academic year.

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

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

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

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

Self Evaluation

The standard is partially met. Evaluation of administration and faculty undergoing the tenure process has been consistent, ongoing and in alignment with policy; however, the evaluation of tenured and adjunct faculty is in process. The main reason for this is the demanding work load of deans, the large number of adjunct faculty in each division, and the continuing negotiation between the district and PFT regarding evaluation of part-time faculty. The stated goal of the PFT is to evaluate one-third of adjunct faculty in each department every year, and department chairs are expected to assist in the evaluation process.

There are approximately 30 tenured faculty in each instructional division, and evaluation cycles have been established each year. Efforts are currently underway facilitate the regular evaluation of tenure faculty.

Planning Agenda

The evaluation process for part time faculty is currently being addressed in that Chairs have been notified regarding their responsibility to continue and complete adjunct evaluations. Evaluations of part time faculty will be completed by the end of Spring 2009 which will then allow the evaluation process to focus on tenured faculty. Classified evaluations are in process and nearing completion.

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

Descriptive Summary

During the 2006-7 and 2007-8 academic years Merritt College has placed creating SLO's for courses, programs, certificated and degrees as a top institutional priority. Faculty have received training as a whole and individually by department on what SLO's are, their importance to student success and to the integration of SLO's into our overall thinking about how Merritt College ensures effective instruction. During those same academic years every staff development training that occurred before each semester and during the spring semester was dedicated to SLO training and cooperative activities. Experts in the field were brought to campus to assist Merritt College in the understanding and development of institutional and program level SLO's. Each of these trainings was coupled with trainings and updates to department chairs and members of the academic senate.

The effectiveness and commitment of these efforts has culminated in the formation of the fall 2007 SLOA committee in which an SLO-trained faculty member was given release time to form a committee that would assist in the ongoing process of SLO formation. The committee has been very productive and has worked with CIC to train and institute SLO's into departments and courses. SLO's are not currently a part of faculty evaluation as this is a union contract issue. An MOU was written by the senate and union that states that SLO's are not a part of faculty evaluations. Faculty evaluation is negotiated by the Peralta Federation of Teachers, including procedures and the forms. Neither allows or recognizes SLO's to be part of faculty evaluations. This however has not halted the formation and implementation of SLO's for the campus in fact, the entire campus community including faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have embraced the concepts and process of forming SLO's.

Self Evaluation

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

Planning Agenda

Completion of course and program SLO's with appropriate assessment tools will be accomplished by 2010.

d. The Institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 5.15, Code of Instructional Standards, makes the "Ethical Standards of the American Personnel and Guidance Association" and the "Code of Ethics of Ethics for Librarians of the American Library Association" policy for the Peralta Community College District. These administrative procedures for B.P. 5.15 provide the full text for each. The AAUP agreement was adopted years ago and is part of BP 5.15, Code of Instructional Standards.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met.

2. The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.

Descriptive Summary

Similar to other colleges in the the CCC system, Merritt College has a sufficient number of full time (FT) faculty but is always seeking to hire additional full time faculty to improve the ratio of FT to PT (part time/adjunct) faculty. As of October 2008, Merritt College has ----- Ft and _____ actively teaching PT faculty. In addition, Merritt has advocated for and been able to hire seven new full time faculty in the last two academic years. The priority in hiring is in filling positions that are state mandated to have a specific number of full time faculty such as Nursing, filling highly enrolled disciplines that have a vacancy due to retirement such as History, supporting the growth of new programs in demand that are based on community labor needs, such as Administration of Justice. The process for determining new hires is a shared governance process in which faculty who serve as chairs submit proposals for hire that include enrolment and other discipline statistics that aid the decision process. The ultimate decisions are made by the VP of Instruction, President and the Chancellor and are based on the financial recourses available and the proposed need.

Faculty, staff and administration are all hired upon review of their credentials and the requirements for the position. All hires meet and/or exceed the stated requirements and

were selected through a rigorous hiring process that ensures equal access, shared governance and scrutiny of the backgrounds and qualifications of those hired. The hiring procedures are detailed in board policy and checked in process by the Human Resources department. Internal/Interim administration positions are advertised throughout the District to ensure equal access and opportunity. Minimum qualifications and hiring policies are adhered to for these and all hires for all staff, faculty and administration.

Merritt College has a sufficient number of staff and administration with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the services and support needed to fulfill our institutional mission. Merritt College is however always seeking new positions particularly support staff and faculty to increase services and maintain a high ration of counselors and FT faculty. Because state finances and the hiring demands of a multi-college district place budgetary constraints upon our hiring aims, Merritt College's and Development officer along with faculty and administrative support have successfully received over 5 million dollars in grant monies (2008-2013) that include new counseling and support positions, numerous tutors and teacher training.

Self Evaluation

The standard is met.

3. The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.

a. The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

Descriptive Summary

The Peralta Community College District has established policies and procedures via its Human Resources Department. While there are policies in place, for example, "Board Policy 1.18 and 3.26", the HR Department also provides detailed guidelines to all hiring committee members which speak to non-discrimination, equity and fairness in the process. These guidelines are:

- Board Policy 3.1 prohibits Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment toward employees.
- The Peralta Community College District has established policies and procedures via its Human Resource Department. Board Policy 1.18 and 3.26 provides guidelines to all committee members which speaks to non-discrimination, equity and fairness in the process.

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. The written policies and procedures have been developed and refined adequately to ensure fairness in employment procedures. Administration faculty and staff are aware of each of these policies and work to ensure that they are followed. These policies are also reiterated consistently through human recourses especially in hiring processes and by the faculty and classified senates and union representatives who at times are approached with issues related to fairness and equity. In the Faculty Survey Results: Question 19: Faculty are fairly evaluated. Responses were 62.5 +3.6 agreed or; 3.6% + 5.4% disagree or SD; 25% are uncertain.

b. The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.

Descriptive Summary

All employees have access through the new PROMPT system to the contents of their own personnel files. All information is held in confidentiality by the Human Resources Department at the district office. The process for reviewing personnel files may be located in the various collective bargaining agreements and Education Code. The release of personnel records (outside of public information) must be approved by the employee through a signed statement. Employees are encouraged to add to their personnel file additional training and other supplementary documents to complement their records.

- Any employee may request to review his/her personnel file in the presence of Human Resources staff.
- All employees have access to the contents of their own personnel files. All information is held in confidentiality by the Human Resources Department at the district office. The release of personnel records must be approved by the employee through a signed statement.
- Any employee may request to review his/ her personnel file in the presence of Human Resources staff.

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. Personnel files are held in confidence and are filed in a new secure system at the district office. Managers and confidential employees have access to personnel information on a need-to-know basis only. While the new PROMPT/PeopleSoft system is overly complex and hard to access, this system does make the information more secure and access to that system is more restricted than it was previously. While training on this and the accompanying Passport student

registration system has been better than previous district-wide installations and training, the need of ongoing workshops and other related training for current and new faculty and staff is crucial.

4. *The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.*

a. *The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.*

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has a very diverse faculty in comparison to the community that surrounds us and other colleges in the California Community College system. Diversity is considered to be an important strength of the institution and is stated as part of our college mission and Institutional Learning Outcomes. Hiring policies ensure equal access, diversity is honored, celebrated and discussed in campus programming, staff development training and throughout the hiring practice. Consistently throughout each academic year faculty, staff, students and administration hold campus wide events such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month and Women's History Month. Programs are supported through district and student life funds.

Students are encouraged to organize cultural awareness clubs and events such as the LGBT club and the Puente club. The budget for the ASMC (Associated Students of Merritt College) comes from bookstore funds and other funds allocated by the district office. They are able to fund student events and club projects. They are advised by a classified staff member who assures that they adhere to college and student government regulations. Staff development trainings such as the "Success of African American Male Students" and collaborations with community organizations like the Native American Indian School and the Bay Area chapter of 100 Black Men are supported and encouraged by administration and are often initiated by administration. In addition, Merritt College has a strong history of creating and supporting Ethnic Studies as course options and degree attainment which enables faculty and students to explore issues of race and ethnicity in more depth. The courses for this program are degree applicable and are accepted for transfer to the CSU and UC systems.

Various workshops are provided for classified and academic employees at both the college and District level. These include training in the following:

- Sexual harassment
- Technology
- Hiring practices
- Leadership
- Management

When surveyed, faculty were asked the following question: “Through staffing and promotions, the institution effectively seeks diversity in the following areas: Staffing.” 84.6% faculty respondents stated “yes.”

Self Evaluation

The standard is met.

- b. The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.***

Descriptive Summary

The district follows Equal Employment Opportunity policy in all its hiring procedures, including a commitment that successful candidates demonstrate sensitivity to and ability to work with the diverse academic socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of students, faculty, staff, including ethnic minority group identification, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, or physical or mental ability. Board policy in hiring ensures that committees are diverse and procedures are checked throughout the hiring process to ensure that policy is met. The College maintains a standard for hiring members of the community that are reflective of the diversity of our student body.

Diversity training assists Merritt College in ensuring that its equality policies and diversity missions are reiterated and actualized on campus.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. Merritt College should maintain its efforts towards reflecting diversity in all areas of campus life.

- c. The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.***

Descriptive Summary

Through its representative bodies, Merritt College has established avenues for advocacy for administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The advocacy groups are the Peralta Federation of Teachers Local 1603 and the Academic Senate for faculty; SEIU Local 1021, I.U.O.E Local 39, and the Classified Senate for classified staff; and the Associated Students for students. District-wide policies assure integrity in the treatment of administrators and non-represented employees.

In addition to advocacy groups, the institution is guided by policies, procedures, and statutes, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, in its treatment of all constituencies. The district has specific policies which are published in the college catalog and include the following:

- Policy Prohibiting Discrimination;
- Implementing Procedures Prohibiting Sexual, Racial, and Disability Harassment and Discrimination toward Students;
- Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures;
- Student Grievance Procedures;
- Student Conduct, Discipline, and Due Process Rights;

Merritt College's treatment of its administration, faculty, classified staff, and students is guided by advocacy groups and district-wide policy and procedures, which are clear and consistently followed. Furthermore, the District has a Director of Employee Relations to provide oversight in non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

The Associated Students of Merritt College is organized according to their constitution and bylaws. The ASMC president meets regularly with college administration and sits on all shared governance bodies.

Self Evaluation

The standard has been met. Merritt College consistently promotes equality and diversity through policies and practices.

5. *The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.*

a. *The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.*

Descriptive Summary

In 2005-06, the Peralta Board of Trustees developed several directions and priorities for district strategic planning. One of these priorities is Human Resource Development: to "provide training and professional development for all employees." (D6 of Strategic Planning Document) The Peralta Community College District currently provides training for all. Faculty training is by far the most comprehensive. Current training efforts will be discussed at length below.

- **Manager's College**
PCCD has implemented ongoing management training in the spring of 2007. The manager's college meets one time during the winter and 2-3 times per year though the academic year. The Manager's College has covered strategic

planning issues, team building and leadership training, as well as “Nuts and Bolts” training, with an overview of the budget, union contracts, facilities planning and purchasing procedures, and an introduction to the new district Student Passport System. Additional sessions covered Reasonable Accommodations, Employee Productivity, Effective Meetings, Enrollment Management, and Negotiating and Developing Contracts.

- **Leadership Succession Program**
In fall 2007, the Peralta district has started a new management mentoring program to help develop leadership and possible succession planning. Participants in the program are currently meeting once a month and members include classified staff, Faculty and administrators.
- **Title III Staff Training**
As the recipient of the 2008-13 Title II grant, Merritt College was approved to use some of the funds to establish a teacher training recourse center and offer additional training to enhance and promote excellence in instruction.
- **Selected Topics Managers Training**
In addition to the Manager’s College and the Leadership Succession Program, the District has held training on selected topics, as needed, including Student Grievance and Discipline Procedures, Contract Negotiations, Sexual Harassment, and Reasonable Accommodation, to name a few.
- **Classified Training Program**
Classified Handbook (located at [http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=264](http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=264)) has been written by Employee Relations. A formal employee orientation program for new employees is currently being developed.
- **Faculty Training**
Currently most of the training activities are scheduled for faculty; most of which provided for under Staff Development. Started in 1989 with a mandate from SB1725, the faculty gave up a raise and the district implemented Flex Day training for faculty using these monies. The Peralta Community College District Staff Development Office runs six flex days per year, and a host of varied training and staff development projects.
- **Individual Projects**
Currently faculty may earn up to 60% of their obligation through Individual Projects. These projects are good for a project that would require individual participation or would not adapt itself to a workshop format and/or would take more time than a workshop. In 2006-07, the district staff development office supported 30 Individual Projects.
- **Miscellaneous Hourly Accrual**

Currently faculty may earn a total of up to five hours towards their yearly staff development obligation by attending district-wide and campus-based meetings, trainings, workshops, and concerts. There is no doubt that this form of participation is very popular, since most of campus governance, department meetings, assessment, discipline currency, technological training, and strategic planning is part of staff development but does not happen during Flex Days, but rather on a periodic basis throughout the semester. The District Staff Development Office has given staff development credit for 126 meetings, trainings, workshops, and speakers during the 2006-07 academic year.

- **Tuition Fee Waiver**
The District has implemented tuition waiver reimbursement for faculty and classified staff who takes classes within Peralta to further professional development.
- **Conference Clearinghouse**
The District Staff Development Office sends out electronic notices of professional conferences or workshops that are not held at Peralta throughout both the fall and spring semesters through the Peralta e-mail system.
- **Staff Development and Faculty Diversity Internship Program Workshops**
The District Staff Development Office and the Faculty Diversity Internship Program partnered and sponsored the six workshops on the Multicultural Classroom in 2007-08, and five other trainings including working with “Asian and Asian American Students,” “Working with African American Students,” “Getting Past the Gate Keepers: Tips for you Cover Letter, CV, and Interview.” The Diversity Program in 2008-09 includes “Becoming an Educator in a Multicultural Context,” “Exploring Special Populations,” “Developing Race Relations in the Classroom,” “Designing Multicultural Curriculum,” and others.

Additional Training

Employee Relations has run a series of workshops on *Employee Benefits*. *Outside of Staff Development period, the Office has provided training sessions for managers on Employee-Employer Relation matters, Sexual Harassment, Union Grievances and Contract Compliance, Evaluations, and Employee Discipline.*

- Since fall 2006, Employee Relations has been sending out Employee Relations Bulletins via email to all employees related to equal opportunity and workplace issues and employment laws. ([http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=402](http://www.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=402)). An additional publication presents information for managers (Manager’s Journal).
- Risk Management has run a series of workshops on: *Emergency Preparedness, CPR Training, Forklift Training, Smoking Cessation, and Handling Blood Products*. We are currently attempting to do some scheduling on Flex days for these workshops.
- Human Resources has provided various training topics include contract negotiations, hiring of classified and academic personnel.

- Last year, the District Academic Senate provided one or two workshops during the year on technology.
- *New faculty orientations* (for both contract and adjunct faculty) usually take place on each campus during the second flex day of each semester.
- *Sustainable Peralta* runs workshops during Flex Days and has a grant that faculty may apply for to develop Sustainable curriculum units in their existing classes. They also host their own workshops and conferences in the district. Need insert on college staff development

Faculty surveyed were asked, “Do faculty have adequate opportunities for professional development.” Responses were as follows: 58.2% agree; 20.5%+ 5.5% disagree or strongly disagree; 12.5% are uncertain

b. With assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

At every Staff Development training evaluations are given to each participant to assist in improving offerings. The evaluations are anonymous and once they are collected the results are evaluated by the Staff Development committee and utilized for future programming.

The Title III grant activities will be evaluated by an external evaluator who will assist in ensuring that the staff training offered by this grant addresses the needs of the campus community.

Self Evaluation

The standard is met. PCCD and Merritt College plan to continue providing appropriate opportunities for professional development that is consistent with the mission of the college and is informed by the needs of faculty and students.

6. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement. The development of Unit Plans by department chairs is the first level Merritt uses to identify long term staffing needs. UP's are integrated into the College Master Plan after evaluation from the VPI. The College

Master Plans which include staffing needs are then integrated into the District Wide Master Plan upon consultation with the VC of instruction and the Chancellor.

Peralta Community College District regularly assesses its human resources needs in a number of ways which integrate human resources planning with institutional planning. Levels of staffing are reviewed by managers through information generated in discussions at the various constituent levels, faculty, classified, and managers; through the college faculty prioritization process, through College Budget Committee discussions and recommendations and through consideration of college mission and goals.

The process for hiring new faculty starts with a request prepared by division deans, based on consultation with the department. This request will most likely now be initiated by the department chair. The deans prioritize hiring requests based on program reviews, program growth and need, enrollment projections, retirements and the (college master plan?). The division's request is forwarded their supervisor, usually the Vice President of Instruction and the President. List of potential new hires are reviewed by the Academic Senate and the College Council, who make recommendations to the College President. College requests for new positions are then presented at the District Academic Senate for further recommendations. The college president then presents these recommendations to the Chancellor and the Board for approval.

In the case of new classified positions, proposals are developed at the department level. The request is ultimately reviewed by the College President or District Vice Chancellor, and subject to Chancellor's approval and funding. The College works with Human Resources concerning college needs and the appropriateness of the classifications.

Additionally, Desk Audits are available to classified staff to determine the scope of duties and functions as performed.

Hiring decisions for replacing administrators are made by the College President or District Vice Chancellor, which is then brought to the Chancellor for approval. There is consultation with the local classified senates pursuant to Board Policy 1.18 and Its Implementing Procedures concerning the job announcements.

Standard IIIB Physical Resources

Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

Overview

Merritt College is comprised of a main campus located on 125 acres in the hills of East Oakland, California, and an outreach site, the Fruitvale Education Center, located in the Fruitvale area of Oakland.

The main campus consists of seven buildings completed in 1971: Building R, the Student Center, which houses all of Student Services, including the Bookstore; Building L, the Library; Building Q, which houses the administrative offices; Building P, which houses the Community Social Services program, the High Tech lab for DSPS, the Learning Opportunities Program, CIS and Business; Building D, the largest classroom building in the district which accommodates the college's Allied Health programs [Nursing, Radiologic Technology, Nutrition & Dietetics], science programs, the college Learning Center, and instructional offices; Building E/F, which houses the Gym, men and women's locker rooms, and faculty offices; and Building A, which houses the Art programs, Child Development (including the Lab School for Preschoolers), African American Studies, Anthropology, Music, Administration of Justice, Communications, and the college's Fitness Center.

The college has a district-run Childcare Center, 6 tennis courts, 4 soccer fields, and an all-weather track renovated in 2005. Up the hill from the tennis courts is the 7.5 acre Landscape Horticulture facility. Completed in 1980 the facility consists of 3 classrooms, a small office space, tool room, a 5,000 sq. ft. lath house and 5,000 sq. ft. of greenhouses. The grounds, which have been developed by the students during class projects, include a California native plant garden, fruit tree orchard, permaculture hillside, vegetable gardens, Mediterranean plants area, natural building site, a meadow area and a redwood deck overlooking the bay.

Adjacent to the college's track is the Environmental Science Center, where most of the Environmental Studies classes are held. This structure was begun in 1987 as a student-instructor project, and was occupied in 1998. It was designed to be a model of sustainability and energy efficiency, and has undergone many design changes as technology evolves.

Merritt College has **XX** classrooms including lecture rooms, laboratories, allied health skills labs, computer labs, the Fitness Center, and the Gym. There are **XX** restrooms on campus, and the Student Center was completely renovated in 2005-06. The

purpose of the renovation was to locate all student services under one roof for the convenience of students and enhanced collaboration among student services units.

The Fruitvale Education Center is located on the premises of the Unity Council at 1900 Fruitvale Avenue in Oakland. This site has been affiliated with Merritt College since the 1980s, with citizenship classes as initial course offerings in a non-credit mode. Eventually Merritt developed credit course offerings in English as a Second Language, and currently those are the only classes offered at the site.

Equipment replacement and maintenance are determined by the college at the department and division levels. Equipment needs are annually evaluated. Instructional equipment needs are reviewed by each department, and requests are brought to the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD). These requests are prioritized, and instructional equipment funds are allocated by the CDCPD with the actual distribution finalized by the Business Office. Faculty, staff, students and administration provide input that addresses equipment and replacement needs on an ongoing basis. Recently, the college went through an extensive review of equipment needs based on the Measure A bond funding allocation for facilities and equipment improvement.

- 1. *The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.***
 - a. *The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.***

Descriptive Summary

The College Facilities Committee, management team, faculty and staff are all involved in the evaluation process to improve and update facilities. In June 2006 Measure A, a \$390 million bond, was approved by Alameda County voters for the Peralta Community College District. The college evaluation process included each department identifying facility and equipment needs. Currently, equipment needs at the college have been identified, prioritized and many of the items purchased. Faculty and staff have collaborated on the following building projects since the passage of Measure A:

- Complete renovation of the Student Center
- Renovation of the top floor of Building P
- Design for renovation of Building D, the allied health and science building
- Design for a new child development center
- Design for relocating the college Learning Center
- Plans to upgrade the Library

The Director of Facilities and Operations for the Peralta District has administrative responsibility for maintenance and grounds at Merritt College. The college has been assigned two full-time and one part-time engineers and two groundskeepers. The Business and Administrative Services Manager (BAS) at the college coordinates the physical needs of the institution with the District office and/or college staff.

The establishment of a District electronic work order system helps Business and Administrative Services staff to send and monitor all college requests for repairs and maintenance services. Merritt College's online work order system has been vastly improved in the last two years. Previously, when staff submitted work orders, there was no feedback to the requestor. The current system provides a work order number which is then given to the requestor, enabling the requestor to reference the request to check the status of the work. This number can also be used to resubmit the request, should assignment of the work be lagging. All work order requests are prioritized, with safety-related issues given top priority, followed by issues preventing faculty and staff from fully executing their duties and responsibilities. The system assigns the lowest priority to non-essential upgrades. In addition, staff maintain a spreadsheet of work orders to provide a record of all maintenance issues, which can be analyzed to identify the types of maintenance challenges Merritt faces, building by building as well as campus-wide.

The BAS Manager, in coordination with the District, arranges for delivery and receipt of supplies, pest control, garbage collections, disposal of hazardous materials and processing of utility bills. The BAS Manager also oversees facilities use, safety coordination, communication services, duplication services, telephone and voice mail procedures, and postal and internal mail. In addition, the BAS Manager supervises Custodial Services, whose staff consists of one head custodian, one lead custodian, and 9 approved custodial positions. The engineers assigned to the college perform work orders under the supervision and direction of the Business and Administrative Services Manager, and they attend to the mechanical and utilities systems repair and maintenance.

College facility requests are generally addressed at the College Facility Committee with recommendations to the College Council and ultimately to the President, who then gets input from college administrators before forwarding requests to the district. The college unit plans are consulted during planning processes, and once a project has been given district approval for funding, faculty are asked to participate with architects and district project managers in the design phase of the project.

Infrequently the above process is circumvented in special circumstances forwarded by the college and approved at the district level. Generally, working outside the normal shared governance process is only warranted when there are safety issues, or when a program's continuation is in jeopardy if facility issues are not immediately addressed. District personnel and consultants work in collaboration with the college to review existing facility conditions. This evaluation process includes surveying faculty and staff about facility concerns that may impact the district's decisions on future repairs and upgrades.

Self Evaluation

The college is in the process of meeting this standard through a capital improvement plan made possible through Measure A bond funds. Merritt College has excellent programs that provide quality instruction in spite of the aging facilities; however, the planned upgrades will address necessary repairs and improved technology in most of the college's instructional programs, such as essential upgrades to the organic chemistry laboratory, and state of the art laboratories for the radiologic science program.

Annual planning is documented in unit plans that provide program data on ftes generation, productivity, student success, progress on student learning outcomes, equipment and facility needs, and plans of action. The unit plans comprise the college Educational Master Plan, which in turn informs the district Educational Master Plan. The district facility resource and technology plans capture needs documented in the college's unit plans.

A challenge that Merritt faces is hiring and keeping competent and committed custodial staff, and there are five vacant positions that are back-filled with hourly custodians. It is an added challenge to recruit applicants with the required experience who will clear background investigations. The current custodial staff attend to the essential needs of the campus as well as provide services for campus events. On the Faculty survey, only 24% of respondents agreed that "Routine maintenance to ensure cleanliness in offices, program areas, and classrooms is adequate." In addition, the college's 125 acres need more care than two groundskeepers can manage, and the 37-year-old buildings require more maintenance than 2.5 engineers can provide. This is compounded by a significant accumulation of deferred maintenance items and an inadequate preventative maintenance program.

The Environmental Science Center, started in 1982 and inhabited in 1994, needs numerous upgrades and repairs. The construction of the new track and field removed easy access to the Center, and students and staff must now trek up a path in order to gain access.

b. The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.

The college's Business and Administrative Services office continually evaluates the college facilities, particularly when concerns are raised about health or safety issues. When warranted, the college Business Manager consults with the district Risk Management Director to assess a potentially hazardous condition and facilitate repair. For example, a one-floor renovation project in Building P in 2007 necessitated closing of

the three-story building after staff complaints that the air quality was adversely affected by the construction. The Risk Management Director assessed the air quality and recommended that the building be closed to students and staff.

The College Health and Safety Committee is a governance committee with faculty, staff, and administrators, and it makes recommendations to the College Council on policies and regulations that concern health and safety issues. The committee also reviews disaster/emergency preparedness and response, fire and earthquake information, American with Disabilities Act compliance, and campus signage. The Oakland Fire Department conducts regular inspections, and district conducts spot safety inspections and notifies Merritt and the district of unsafe conditions.

Since 1996, the Peralta District has contracted with the Alameda County Sheriff's Department for policing of Peralta campuses. In addition to sheriffs, the college provides Safety Aides to assist in maintaining a safe campus. Approximately ten to twelve Safety Aides patrol the campus in late afternoons, and early evenings. They wear Safety Aide jackets and have equipment that provides immediate contact with the sheriffs.

Board Policy 6.62 governs hazardous materials management. Several instructional programs have to contend with hazardous material handling. These include biology, chemistry, nursing, and landscape horticulture. There is a plan in place, developed jointly by the College Business Office and The District Office of Risk Management, for disposing of hazardous materials from these instructional programs.

Disaster planning for Merritt College is being coordinated through a district-wide effort that involves disaster planning at all four colleges and the district office. Evacuation routes have been posted in every classroom, and college disaster plan will be presented to the college in spring of 2009.

The Fruitvale Education Center has recently been evaluated regarding the functionality, health and safety of its classrooms. A recommendation has been made to replace the carpeting in one of the classrooms, and the college is in the process of finding funding to complete this project. In addition, the evaluation revealed that computers in one of the classrooms were too old to work effectively and efficiently. Therefore, twenty-five new computers have replaced the old ones, and a class in computer technology is scheduled for Spring 2009.

Self Evaluation

The physical plant is almost 38 years old, and most of the buildings at Merritt College are in need of renovation or repair due, in part, to the deferred maintenance common among California community colleges. The Student Center, Building R, underwent a complete renovation in 2005-06, and all of student services are now housed in this building. Measure A and Measure E funding (an earlier bond measure) have made possible many short term repair projects: upgrading restrooms throughout the campus, upgrading classroom lighting, asbestos abatement, upgrade and replacement of floor

tile in various classrooms, window tinting and coverings, handrail replacements, Gymnasium roof replacement, roof repair to Building D, painting in Building A, as well as provided funding for equipment, furniture, and larger construction projects such as the installation of a new track and field and the renovation of the top floor of Building P.

Merritt College is actively engaged in assessing its facilities and in making recommendations for renovations in Building D to accommodate the Genomics program; Building A to create swing space for the Learning Center; and Building L to create a new, permanent space for the Learning Center and to provide necessary upgrades for the Library; and Building Q to provide more effective working spaces for Administrative Services. In spring of 2008, the Peralta Board of Trustees approved allocation of funds to engage an architectural firm for a new allied health and sciences building for Merritt College, contingent upon the completion of a district wide facilities master plan. The facilities plan is scheduled for completion in December of 2008.

Disaster planning needs broader engagement and communication at the college level, as well as more frequent drills that require evacuation and shelter in place.

2. To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

a. Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.

Descriptive Summary

The college engages in a shared governance process to determine equipment and facility needs. Instructional equipment funds are allocated to the college and a prioritized list is developed for instructional programs by the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors. After the passage of Measure A, which includes funds for capital equipment, a college-wide list was developed and then approved by the Board of Trustees for funding.

Facility requests are made at the Facilities Committee, which considers the requests in the context of the college needs. Capital construction projects are usually prioritized at the district level via the Five Year Capital Outlay Plan, which is being incorporated into an updated and revised Facilities Master Plan that will identify and prioritize facility needs at the four colleges as well as at the district.

In most instances, facility requests are driven by institutional improvement goals for instructional programs, student services programs, and administrative priorities. The planned renovation of the science and allied health labs is driven by the need to reflect

state of the art technologies and practices to appropriately prepare students for the workforce. The goal of improved coordination among student services units for greater student retention and success resulted in the renovation of the college Student Center. Currently, the college's fledgling Genomics program is the catalyst for extensive remodeling plans of the first floor of Building D, which necessitates the relocation of the Learning Center. All these plans engage faculty, staff, and college administrators in conversation with district personnel given authority over capital projects.

When possible, the planners attempt to account for the total cost of ownership. For example, the Genomics program will require staff, supplies, and equipment. In addition to biology faculty who are currently employed by Merritt, staffing will be provided by university graduate students working on genomics projects, and supplies will be obtained through grants or industry partners. Genomics equipment has been purchased through Measure A funds, and 28 DNA Sequencers have been donated by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Self Evaluation

With the passage of Measure A in 2006, district-wide long-range capital planning became an essential goal. Over the past two years, the colleges have been engaged with district planning facilitators to create a district-wide strategic plan with delineated goals and activities to achieve those goals. The next phase of strategic planning was the development of college Educational Master Plans and a district-wide Educational Master Plan from which facility and technology plans could be derived. The college Educational Master Plans identify resource priorities through the annual unit plans completed by each unit at every college, and every attempt is made to forecast related costs associated with equipment purchases and facility requests. The college Educational Master Plan was presented to the Board of Trustees in December 2008.

b. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

The college Facilities Committee, comprised of administrative representatives, faculty, classified staff, and students, is charged with responsibility for all matters related to planning and use of the college facilities. It assists in the planning of major capital improvement projects and makes recommendations for improvement in the aesthetics, safety and security of all college faculties, including buildings and grounds. Facility requests are taken to the Facilities Committee for review and recommendation to the College Council.

The district-wide Facilities Master Plan is based on the mission, planning goals and instructional objectives of the colleges as reflected in the college Educational Master Plan and approved by the Merritt College Council.

The college has begun to evaluate facility needs based upon data provided by the district Office of Institutional Research that is captured in the college Unit Plans. Facilities assessment takes place at the college and district levels using this data as justification for requests submitted at both levels. The district then works with the college and stakeholders on prioritization of major building projects to ensure that long-range capital projects are linked to institutional planning.

College unit planning links institutional planning to resource allocation through the college Educational Master Plan. Faculty and staff participate in annual updates and revisions of the Master Plan by providing relevant information through the unit plans to the College Educational Master Planning Committee. The plan is reviewed when requests for equipment or staffing are submitted to the Budget Committee, which in turn, submits expenditure recommendations to the College Council. If the President accepts the Council action, the approved plans are implemented.

The intent of the district is to fully integrate planning, assessment, and budget allocations in order to more effectively and efficiently achieve college and district goals and objectives.

Planning Agenda

- Establish a more efficient and effective system of processing Measure A requests.
- Schedule more frequent drills for disaster planning.
- Fill vacant custodial positions.
- Schedule upgrades and repairs to Environmental Science Center.
- Complete upgrades at the Fruitvale Education Center.

Standard IIIC Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs, services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technological planning is integrated with institutional academic and facilities planning.

1. Technological support within the institution is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communication, research, and operational systems.

a. Technology services are designed to enhance the operation of the institution through professional support, facilities, and hardware and software to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College technology resources are meant to support the College's learning programs and services by providing students, faculty, and staff with appropriate hardware and software based upon the instructional, student services, and other professional needs of our users. Current technological resources are adequate, though lacking upgrade in areas of pedagogy such as multimedia stations with built-in laptop, document display, LCD, microphone/sound system, and wireless controls.

Using a bottom-to-top process, as exemplified in the College's new Integrated Planning and Budget Cycle, the campus community continues to develop a growing awareness of the need for consensus, oversight and healthy dialogue about technology resources and services that can enhance the operations and effectiveness of the institution. The greatest challenge to the advancement, standardization and consistency of technology lies in our ability as a college to maintain full communication via shared dialogue at key committees as an ongoing and expected means to assure the transparency and effectiveness of the planning and purchasing cycle.

To assure transparency and meet technological needs and resource requests, there is an opportunity to identify technology needs at the Program Unit Plan level. A matrix, or Institutional Action Priority Plan, of these needs are then incorporated into our overall College Education Master Plan and provided to shared governance committees for further review. The College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) met on November 14, 2008, to discuss the results of the College Master Plan resource requests, such as technology needs, in order to make recommendations to the College Council on November 19, 2008. This Institutional Action Priority list, as developed from the Unit Plan matrix, was compiled and provided for recommendation of approval to the College Council. It was discussed at this College Council meeting that the above process will be documented in the College Educational Master Plan and submitted to the Board of Trustees on December 9, 2008. The fourth priority on the College's

Institutional Action Priority list (gleaned from all College Unit Plans) is: *#4) Technology upgrades, particularly for smart classrooms and computer labs*

Merritt College has a support team that is dedicated to providing technology resources to minister to instructional, services, and administrative needs. The Information Technology goals and values for the College are outlined in the Educational Master Plan (2007 – 2008), the Institutional Action Priorities with Action Plans (2007 - 2008), and the Institutional Learning Outcomes (2006-10).

The College's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's) include the following 6 statements of which "Information and Computer Literacy" is in direct alignment with our effort to empower students, staff, and faculty to be provided ongoing and state-of-the-art opportunities in technology. This particular ILO supports a college-wide value to imbed learning experiences for students at the program and course levels, such that they are able to demonstrate information competency and technological literacy upon transfer or in the workforce.

COMMUNICATION

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

CRITICAL THINKING

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

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

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

INFORMATION AND COMPUTER LITERACY

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

CULTURAL AWARENESS

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

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND ETHICS

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

Both the College and District have invested in technology, with substantial allocation of funds directed to District IT personnel, software, administrative systems, and district-wide infrastructure.

Two of the most recent examples of district-wide technology resources are administrative systems developed by Peoplesoft: Prompt (Finances) and PassPort (Student Administration Systems). The implementation of both these administrative and instructional systems began in 2005, with the Prompt system being implemented in spring 2006. PassPort was implemented live as of summer 2008 as a partial pilot program prior to full implementation. Development and refinement of these tools have been ongoing. The various modules developed as a result include: financial services and purchasing, human resources, faculty course management, enrollment, and student user components. Training on these new tools and modules has been provided throughout the District and College.

Glitches that arise via this new application of technology, particularly in faculty course management arena, have slowed progress in some instances and impact overall efficiencies when troubleshooting and resolution is necessary before moving forward. As these new data system modules continue to be modified and revised, they will constitute a major improvement to the functionality of administrative systems that impact the college's online registration and off-campus student access, as well as faculty and administrator access, to college information and resources.

Information Technology (IT) Team

Merritt IT staff reports to the Vice President of Instruction however, the College works with the District IT on network infrastructure issues. There are two IT positions staffed within the College Department: one College Network Coordinator and one Computer Network Technician. Both staff members are working to capacity and are challenged to meet the overall technological demands of the College including: individual employee assistance, College infrastructure, advisory role in computer standards and purchasing, upgrading, inventorying, surplus of old equipment, security, PA system set-up, server and other interdependence or centralized work with District IT, just to name a number of the tremendous amount of duties that stretch thin our 2-person IT staff. As technology needs increase, it will be important to address staffing in IT.

Connectivity between the administrative and District networks is via a dedicated T1 line. Upgrade and expansion of wireless access to the internet, using a wireless LAN (WLAN) standard, is a resource the college has available for students in the Library, Learning Resource Center (LRC), and 18 new wireless access points on campus targeting areas where students congregate. There are now a total of 22 wireless access points on Merritt campus. The college continues to expand this service to increase connectivity accessibility to all areas of the campus including the LRC once it is relocated to Building A (estimated move June 2009), prior to moving to its expected permanent location in the Lower Level of the Library.

Technology resources and issues of access for Distance Education learners has become an increased effort for the college. IT has assisted the Distance Education sub-committee in the areas of reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security through a combination of contractual arrangements and IT capabilities. The course management platform is contracted through *Etudes*. *Etudes* and all course management systems are contractual agreements authorized by the district [9]. The district is scheduled to migrate to a new course management platform, *Moodle*, after Spring 2009, although many Merritt College faculty members are currently using *Moodle* as their main course management source. *Moodle* is a free, open-source course management program currently being hosted at Berkeley City College. Specific details implementation detail are being developed now with the campus DE Coordinators working with district office staff. Merritt College began offering online training courses for faculty on *Moodle* in the summer 2008 term.

The College has a campus-wide fiber optics core line that connects all the buildings with the exception of the Self-Reliant House and Track & Field Building. Currently, the College has six pair of data fiber optic lines that span from each college building back to the main network room where core switches are installed.

All faculty and staff have the ability to save data files to a district server, which has regularly scheduled backups. A backup system for college operations is currently being purchased through Measure A funding to better protect the College's data files.

The integrity of the college system is monitored by IT staff and protected by the software and equipment owned by the Peralta Community College District. District IT provides a spam filter and virus protection for incoming messages via the Peralta District email server. Anti-virus programs are upgraded regularly. In addition, the college is currently ordering new computer, laptop, LCD projector, and other such equipment *locking systems* to prevent theft. The following is a list of recent technology provided by the college:

1. New computers (laptops or desktops) to approximately 91 contract faculty
2. The new computer systems provided necessary latest technology for faculty members to access the district's new Passport/PROMT System
3. A new Faculty and Staff IT Training Center including new furniture, instructor technology/media station, and approximately 16 computer systems.
4. A newly installed Welcome Center including approximately 12 new computers located in Building R for students' access to online registration and admission process, FAFSA applications, and similarly related Student Services needs
5. Installed 18 new wireless access points on campus targeting areas where students congregate. There are now a total of 22 wireless access points on Merritt campus.
6. Installed 25 new computers at Fruitvale Center.
7. Upgrade of Math Lab will include 30 new computers upon renovation of college LRC

College Technology Committee

The Technology Committee is a shared governance committee that holds regularly scheduled meetings twice a month throughout the academic year to address technological progress and issues regarding College-wide technology, and to make recommendations to the College Council for revision or further recommendation to the College President for funding and implementation. The Committee's process of transparent communication, recommendation, funding, and implementation is consistent with the process (bottom – top model) followed by the College to develop the College Educational Master Plan. All campus groups are represented in the Technology Committee including: a faculty member and college administrator as co-chairs and 12 other voting members consisting of faculty, classified, and student committee members.

The Technology Committee has accomplished a number of important tasks and made significant contributions to the College's success through their role in technological advancements over the past 5 years. As example, the Technology Committee conducted a survey to assess the status of technology on campus. The survey data results provided the College a means to identify and later analyze the College's current IT inventory and IT inventory processes. In addition, the discussion of the survey's data results served to formalize the College's process of re-using and recycling computer related equipment and materials.

In April 2006, the Technology Committee developed a Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline. This Plan has served to guide the Committee in its role and actions regarding technology within the College and in collaboration with the District. The Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline is included its entirety as an addendum document of evidence attached at the close of this Standard III Section. Below is the Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline Introduction and Table of Contents.

Technology Committee *Technology Plan: Preliminary Outline*

Introduction

This document constitutes a preliminary outline of what the Merritt College Technology Committee would like to develop into a College Technology Plan. The Committee developed this plan by a) identifying and discussing College technology needs during committee meetings during the 2005-2006 academic year, b) reviewing approximately 15 technology plans from community and state colleges nationwide, c) soliciting ideas regarding technology needs from Merritt College staff, faculty and administrators via a survey, and d) critically evaluating and rewriting the outline on a regular basis from its inception in December, 2005, to the present date.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, I ask the members of the College Council to review this outline, to give the Technology Committee your feedback and suggestions, and to endorse this document as a work in progress.

*Respectfully,
Chris Grampp*

*Chair, Technology Committee, 2005-2006 school year
April 19, 2006*

TECHNOLOGY PLAN OUTLINE TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1. Institutional Success**
- 2. Technology Spending and Funding**
- 3. Information Technology and College Infrastructure**
- 4. Inventory of Existing Equipment**
- 5. Hardware and Software Purchasing and Distribution**
- 6. Security, Updates, and Filters**
- 7. Web Pages**
- 8. Staffing and Training**

As the list of Plan Table of Contents shows above, the Technology Committee has played an active role as a forum for discussion and recommendation of College-wide standards in purchase and distribution of computers, projectors, presentation devices, and all smart-classroom technology, equipment, security-related issues, and maintenance. The Committee advocates for standards in all areas of technology and continues to be a support and forum for researching and recommending technology based best practices and standards for the safe and secure use of technology.

The Merritt College Technology Committee has also been an important voice and participates in the ongoing effort to design a new district-wide website. Lastly, the Technology Committee has been an integral partner in the discussion and planning of Merritt College remodeling including individual classrooms or offices, as well as in the technological update of several buildings with regards to infrastructure and the allowance for future technology yet to come.

LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER LABS

The college LRC labs are currently housed on the first floor of the D Building and consist of the Writing and ESL Labs, Math Lab, and Open Lab. See Standard IIC for a detailed description of the LRC. LRC technology hardware and software is driven by student use and need. The LRC, with the help of the college IT Team, provides and maintains the latest editions of standard educational and productivity software. Additionally, student schedules are linked to the campus student tracking system (SARS) which enables faculty to track student use of LRC resources. SARS also assists the LRC Coordinators in identifying and addressing gaps in appropriate learning levels and content area applications.

The IT Team works closely with LRC faculty and coordinators to insure that all LRC networks are properly updated and configured between terms with deliverable dates prior to the first day of the term. Additional and subsequent adjustments to software installation(s), and other necessary changes to configurations are communicated to IT by the LRC faculty coordinator.

AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES

Audio-Visual Services are made available to administrators, part-time and full-time faculty, staff and students. A/V equipment is delivered by IT staff or aides, set-up, and operated on campus (classrooms, meeting rooms, and public areas). IT staff members assist in A/V planning and coordinating all college special events in conjunction with a variety of faculty, administrators and staff. The organization, budget, and managerial structure of the Audio-Visual Department is currently under review. Several new restructuring models are under consideration with a goal to best serve students, staff, faculty, administrators and community via collaboration between the IT Team, Library, Business Office, and Instructional Services.

DISABLED STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Access to computers is necessary for students with disabilities to participate successfully in post-secondary education. Programs and services for students with disabilities (DSPS) at Merritt College provide instruction in assistive technology and cognitive skills improvement. The following assistive technology is available to college DSPS students at the DSPS High Tech Center:

- Screen Readers
- Screen Magnifiers
- Ergonomic Keyboards
- Ergonomic and Alternative Mice
- Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Jaws
- Visual Thesaurus
- SkillsBank

Students in the DSPS program can enroll in the Learning Opportunities and related LRC courses to receive instruction in assistive technology appropriate to their specific disability. Adaptive software and hardware include programs to increase print size on the screen; speech synthesizers that read aloud information on the screen; voice input to allow “hands free” computer operation; an embosser for Braille output of written material; and programs that modify the keyboard. Students can use this adaptive technology for writing, proofreading, doing Internet research, and other activities appropriate to their academic and vocational goals (see above list of assistive technology available in the High Tech Center).

Self Evaluation

Since the last 2003 self-study, the Technology Committee has developed a Technology Plan Preliminary Outline (2006) to assess current procedures and policies and provide more efficient and collaborative ways to approach planning for technology resources. The Technology committee has considered a wide range of issues including purchase, upgrade, and maintenance of technology resources as well as goals and guiding principles to better plan for expansion and innovative uses of technology at the college.

The Technology Committee is a regular shared governance committee of the college and a subcommittee of the College Council. It is comprised of administrators, faculty and staff representatives from all instructional and student support service areas of the college.

With guidance from the Vice President of Instruction, the Technology Committee has met to make crucial decisions regarding the creation of or clarity of policies and procedure that concern technology needs of the campus. Coordination of technology issues among the various college constituents to standardize hardware and software is ongoing. As part of this analysis, the IT department has inventoried hardware and software in use on the campus.

According to the recent college-wide survey 28% of Merritt College faculty members agreed that the college's technological equipment is purchased, maintained, upgraded or replaced in a timely manner: 53% disagreed, 28% strongly disagreed, and 19% were uncertain. While existing technology resources are sufficiently used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness, the college continues to work on strengthening processes to enhance purchasing, maintenance, and timeliness of computer and other technical equipment procurement. Some of the low faculty responses in this survey may be the results of district and college-wide cooperative planning and training in the current change in technology for financial and student services (Passport and Promt).

Among the issues raised in Technology Committee are: Computer Roll-down Policy, Distance Education needs and policies for instructor training and course management systems, a hardware operating systems and applications suite as a standardized technology campus package, design and planning for new "smart classrooms," prioritization of technology training needs reflected in the plan for a new Teaching and Learning Center designated in Building R, Room 28, reconfiguration of the Audio Visual disbursement of equipment to reflect new technology and instructional service needs, and several crucial issues concerning the college's web page, including the hiring of a web master, or web administrator. The Technology Committee is currently revising its college Technology Plan from 2006 to better reflect technological and campus changes and to serve as a guidance tool integrated into the College Educational Master Plan.

Discussions about the college web site have centered on the pros and cons of the utility of web service software systems contracted by the district. The original system designed by SchoolWeb was developed and implemented in 2006. More recently a new vendor, iSITE, was contracted to redesign the PCCD web site. District consultants are still developing the site, but the "go-live" date has been postponed by the Board of Trustees. Several problems and issues were encountered by college personnel concerning the new redesign. These center on lack of participation in the design process, instability of outside personnel responsible for the project that made communication between constituents difficult, a conflict between fundamental conceptualization of a college's web site as a marketing tool or an informational/instruction tool, the system's workability for an academic institution,

security of and access for administrative users, control of academic and information content, responsibility for design, and upkeep and maintenance, DSPS concerns. These issues have been brought to the attention of the Technology Committee members, and campus and district Academic Senate, as well as the College Council. Discussion continues at the district level with district IT staff, the Marketing Director and the vendor.

Interlinked with the district IT and web contract concerns is the campus's responsibility for maintenance and updating of the web. Individual faculty and staff members are currently responsible for the content and maintenance of their own web pages. In some instances, departments, like the Library, career and technical programs including Nursing, Radiologic Science, and Nutrition and Dietetics, and limited programs in the Student Services area have formed internal procedures for responsibility for design, context, and updates of their webpages. However, issues still remain as to who is responsible for general campus and departmental/divisional webpages. It is incumbent on the Peralta Colleges as a whole and collaborative team to help the district clarify and resolve these issues, so that responsible persons can be identified, and the creation of a useful and up-to-date website can move forward. Information and online resources are critical to students' education, progress and success.

b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

Descriptive Summary

The college currently does not have a central location for training personnel in using the college's information technology. Training for students also is provided in various locations. Besides classroom instruction, students receive instruction in student services for online registration and access to enrollment in courses, in the library for research and information literacy, and in the LRC labs where instruction and tutoring is focused on specific academic and basic skills subjects. Training for personnel (administration, staff and faculty) is held in the Faculty and Staff Training Center that was identified as such upon the opening of Building R after an expansive remodel. Other training sites for faculty and staff have been held in the P Building computer labs, and in the Student Service's Welcome Center.

Disabled Student Services and Programs provide information technology training in the DSPS Lab for students with disabilities, as essential part of their regular program and courses offerings. Campus IT and the DSPS also provide and help maintain software for two computer workstations in the library for library research, as well as the High Tech Lab. DSPS provides assistance to students whose goals include transfer to 4-year college, Associate Degree, Certificate of Completion, basic skills improvement, independent living skills, employment, and personal growth. DSPS offers academic advising, counseling, diagnostic testing, access to assistive technology, and other academic accommodations

Self Evaluation

While these labs have various capabilities for training purposes and are well used, availability of space and updating of equipment remain problematic. Some training by IT staff on the use of hardware occurs at individual workstations. However, IT is not sufficiently staffed to allow for more than minimal training during installation of hardware and software. Other training for software systems purchased and launched by the district also occurs at a number of locations on campus, at Laney College Computer Center, and District IT labs. The lack of comprehensive and ongoing training, including adequate space and personnel, has been an identified problem area for the college. Due to lack of proper attention and funding, the district has also been negligent in providing adequate training for personnel. As a result of surveys, data collection, and college-wide dialogue, the Technology Committee and other crucial campus constituents have recommended the continued development of the college's new Teaching and Learning Center.

Due to staffing issues, providing ongoing 24/7 "help desk" style technology/computer assistance from district services has been problematic and inconsistent. However due to the service from college IT team staff many issues and problems are solved. Issues of consistency of service, training of staff as well as adequate staffing remain to be resolved. Another innovation was the concept of "train the trainer" where the college and district identified and trained individual faculty and staff members. These individuals acted as sources of information and individual training for other college personnel, called *Prompt/Passport Business Readiness Teams (BRTs)*. Merritt College has greatly benefited from this source.

The college's IT Team is responsive to the technology demands of the college though staffing remains an issue. Local IT has the ability to either resolve problems, or refer the user to the proper district resource. However, the college needs to retain the ability to implement, maintain, and resolve its unique technology issues and problems. Many of these training issues will be resolved with the continued development of the Teaching and Learning center. Funding from Measure A will be of special benefit to faculty and students in the use of the proposed "smart classrooms," and assist other programs such as the Library/LRC, Audio-Visual, and Student Service in accessing and using these new technologies as they emerge.

AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES

Currently training in Audio-Visual technology/hardware is done on an individual basis when possible by IT staff, self teaching, or peer to peer teaching. If necessary, the IT technician can assist in AV but his primary assignment is as a member of the IT Team. With the implementation of a technology Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), mentioned elsewhere in this standard, training for multimedia products and utilities will increase dramatically.

- c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.***

Descriptive Summary

The management, maintenance, and operation of the college's technological infrastructure and equipment are managed through the Office of Instruction. With the cooperation of faculty, staff, and the IT Team, the hardware needs are agreed upon and purchased through standard district purchasing policies. The development of the college's comprehensive planning and budgeting process has helped to insure that the college's technology needs are addressed by an inclusive dialogue. As a part of this reorganization the creation of department chairs, with annual unit plans, will also serve as a means for keeping technology relevant and current. Using the unit plans, together with program reviews, will assist the various decision-making bodies in the planning and budgeting process to make informed decisions and establish college priorities among the various requests for technology. According to the new more strategic approach that both the college and the district are implementing, the documents mentioned above will inform the master plan which in turn will help establish a more integrated and transparent process of planning, acquiring, maintaining, upgrading, and replacing technology infrastructure and equipment. Also, the campus Technology Committee has contributed in numerous ways to technology planning, e.g., by producing the planning document included at the end of this report and recommending policies, inviting timely vendors and speakers, and recommending procedural changes.

The IT Team has also conducted surveys and evaluations of existing equipment for currency (faculty and staff computers, projection equipment, printers, scanners, AV equipment, players, etc). This kind of record keeping will assist the responsible parties in assessing technology needs and help lead to informed recommendations for the replacement of outdated equipment and new technologies.

The college provides office technology for each full-time employees and relevant technology resources for faculty. Ongoing funding for these resources remains problematic, but the recent Measure A bond, will allow for an overall upgrade and replacement of all older hardware on campus.

The ideal process at the college would have all decisions regarding the distribution of its technology resources are channeled from individual personnel to departments, from department chairs to division managers who then bring these requests to the appropriate committees and management. Prioritized lists of equipment needs, including technology, are finally distributed for dialogue and recommendation by the College Council. However, staffing issues and communication between the college and district IT continues to hinder the efficiency of this process. The new budgeting and planning process is to provide a public opportunity for all members to advocate for the resources needed to improve services and instruction.

As are all purchases, technology purchases are facilitated by the campus business office, in coordination with the district business office, and can include vendor demonstrations, negotiating competitive pricing, license agreements, and warranties.

The IT Team is to evaluate technology and recommend upgrades to current institutional standards and informs programs of new technologies that may be of interest. IT also works with individual faculty/staff with technology needs affect learning and course development, and with departments (e.g. the Library and LRC) to evaluate their special technology needs and give advice on selection and purpose for their respective curricular or services development.

AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES

This is primarily distribution/delivery/set-up service area for loaning A/V equipment for classrooms, special events, etc. This area is funded and supervised by the Office of Instruction. Request for services from faculty continue to be by individual or division request. Currently the Audio Visual Services does not have a designated staff person to offer extensive set-up, delivery, and maintenance of A/V equipment to faculty and administration. From set-ups for audio-video presentations in classrooms, to professional day presentation, and graduation, the demands made on IT staff for AV needs and equipment is great.

Self Evaluation

Attention to technology needs, especially for distance education course, has been made a priority by the Curriculum Committee and special technology needs of new courses have been made a part of dialogue and requirements to developing new courses.

Although the campus technology committee has contributed to the planning for the college, more clarity is needed as to its role in the over-all planning process. All programs and services driven by technology needs have similar problems with adequate funding. Measure A funds has given the college an opportunity to update on a large scale all college technology. However, problems with stable, consistent budgets for technology needs, overly complex and micromanaged ordering and purchasing processes continue to cause problems with prompt update and delivery of technology components, including resultant vendor problems including extreme delays in delivery and outdated inventory.

DSPS

In general, there is very good cooperation among DSPS, the IT Committee, and IT staff related to equal electronic access issues. However, this cooperation is built largely on the skill and long-term positive working relationships among the individuals involved.

At the District level this process is more problematic. The District has not adopted a consistent policy about electronic accessibility. For example, there are specific

concerns about access to web sites and to the new Passport student system but there is no systematic way that these needs are evaluated and met.

d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance and enhancement of its programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

Distribution of technology resources on campus has become an increasing priority, and the college has through development of its new internal planning procedures, begun to establish clarity and transparency in all aspects of planning for technology resources. Proposals are developed college-wide to request technology funds through annual unit plans that include written justification for use of the requested technology. These plans and other written requests are processed through the Office of Instruction using newly developed forms. Requests are prioritized via the budget and planning cycle described above. Since last year's creation of department chairs, these meetings have been a forum for dialoguing about the college's technology needs with all programs and services having a voice in the discussion.

The continued growth in technology-enhanced courses makes support for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services a challenge. Lack of funding for additional classified or student assistant positions has been problematic.

Funding and allocation priorities for faculty/staff desktop computers, replacements and upgrades are coordinated by the Office of Instruction and college's IT Team. Funding for replacements and upgrades for laptops and desktop computer systems is inconsistent. While faculty use of computers and multimedia resources in instruction is increasing, no future or continuing source of funding for replacing or upgrading has been identified. Currently the Measure A bond fund are being used to get the entire college's infrastructure and IT equipment for faculty, staff, and students use either upgraded or replaced. Continued dependence on one-time funding sources for technology and other essential college services is problematic.

AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES

Funds for A/V supplies and equipments remain on a "by-request" or emergency basis. Funding for A/V is usually allocated from the annual State Equipment and Library Materials fund, or Instructional Supplies. In Fall 2006 A/V finally received an annual general fund budget allocation for \$15,000 to purchase badly needed supplies and parts for aging equipment, but there is not regular stable budget. Since Measure A funds have become available AV has benefited from the planning by the Office of Instruction for upgrades and the purchase of new equipment. Also the "smart classroom" project to be implemented during the 2008-08 academic year will accomplish two goals: 1)

Providing state-of-the-art multimedia equipment and capabilities to a select number of classrooms, and 2) Lessen the physical demand on moving equipment from place to place, thus allow more time for the Media Specialist to plan and develop AV services and collection with the Office of Instruction and the Library.

Self Evaluation

The distribution and utilization of technology resources has greatly improved since the implementation of the planning process and the reorganization of campus IT under one manager. Campus IT Team support of individual instructional programs/department and services has led to increased development, better maintenance that have enhanced the colleges programs and services mentioned above.

The college is challenged by the ongoing need to update technology and equipment in all types of instructional delivery. The increased demand for installation and implementation of new technologies in departments and new buildings has not been followed by an increase in staffing or funding to sustain an equivalent level of maintenance.

While this is a major step forward, it does not resolve the ongoing and rising costs of technology. The College recognizes that long-term planning for a technology infrastructure should not depend on one-time funding sources.

Due to recent changes in financial utility and procedures the process for acquiring new equipment is very complex and rather disjointed. Communication about the purchasing process between constituents, including between campus and district Business Offices, can be improved. Coordination of purchases and standardization of equipment would bring savings to the college and allow for more accurate assessment of staffing needs.

Technology needs should continue to be identified and discussed using the new budget and planning process, that allows for integration and inclusions at all levels of the college. Consultation with the Office of Instruction and IT Team during this process is crucial. As the college plans to increase its installation and use of technology including technology-enhanced classrooms (smart classrooms), enhances AV, and multimedia Library resources. Advanced scheduling for maintenance and replacement need to be included in the plan. Money needs to be set aside for scheduled maintenance and budget considerations need to be included in any assessment, inventory and replenishment strategies.

Technology for instructional and student support services require expansion and funding to increase the effective functionality of these components as the need and demands rise. As more instructional, student services, and business activities are conducted online, they will increase the demands on network services and the college's ability to provide access online and on-campus. It will continue to be a challenge for the college to dialogue and compete for funding at the district level unless technology

needs, identified at the college level, are not securely integrated in district technology planning.

2. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

Since the introduction of the college's integrated planning and budgeting process a true and transparent integration of technology planning has begun to occur. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning through various participatory governance processes, various master plan processes such as unit plans, Five-year Facilities/Construction Plan Update, and college committees such as Department Chairs Committee, Technology Committee and College Council. Inclusion of the college's technology goals and needs in the Educational Master Plan will help insure in the future that these will be integrated into district-wide technology planning. At the district level a strategic technology plan has been developed that will also help inform and integrate technology planning throughout the district. This is evidenced by the recent publication of campus technology committee's agendas and minutes.

District technology planning is accomplished by dialogue within the Strategic Planning Management Team, a planning and advisory committee drawn from all constituents district-wide. If the college Technology Committee continues to be a driving force for an integrated planning on campus, it will be a great improvement. All major technology projects are integrated with the institutional planning process. One of the goals in the Master Plan relate to instructional areas and services that demand technological innovation and development. These include: online / distance education, administrative use of technology, curriculum management, and most importantly classroom use of technology. Beyond the committee work, individuals working with technology participate in the Chancellor's and many other District committees that set district standards, directions and needs for technology.

Self Evaluation

Technology planning is new to the college. However, great strides and improvements have been made at the college over the last five years. One of the most important identified goals of the college by its constituencies, as outlined in the college's institutional priorities and action plans, is the development and implementation of a Technology Plan. This plan will be part of the Educational Master Plan. An updated draft of the 2006 plan is currently being written by a sub-committee of the Technology Committee and will be presented to the whole committee and approved by other governance committee during the 2008-09 academic year. This process should be led by the Technology Committee and then submitted for approval using the shared governance procedure.

Planning Agenda

- Continue to refine the college-wide process for requesting technology funding (state and private).
- Establish better communication between all LRC, Library, and IT constituencies about scheduling and coordinating services and programs, especially setting delivery dates prior to term start dates.
- Approve and implement a college-wide Technology Strategic/Master Plan that allows for adequate time for regular and emergency planning, prompt purchase and installation with awareness for vendor and District IT delays.
- Expedite planning and design of the Teaching and Learning Center.

Standard IIID
Financial Resources

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.

- 1. The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.***

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College is allocated funds through the Peralta Community College District, which is funded primarily through SB361 apportionment funding from the state. State funding is comprised of unrestricted general funds and restricted categorical funds allocated to serve special populations or fund specific programs and services (DSPPS, EOPS, CalWorks, Matriculation).

Table IIID.1: PCCD General Funds –from Adopted Budget 07/08

	YEAR END 05/06	YEAR END 06/07	(Estimated) YEAR END 07/08
GENERAL FUNDS REVENUES			
Unrestricted General Funds			
Program Based Funding	83,946,436	95,478,362	98,222,348
Other State	4,921,170	6,543,531	3,651,110
Other local	3,940,359	5,046,326	4,582,872
Book Commission (<i>transfer in</i>)	<u>270,060</u>	<u>296,718</u>	<u>297,583</u>
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS	93,078,025	107,364,937	106,753,913
Restricted General Funds			
Federal	3,054,008	2,875,165	2,961,247
State	10,239,227	10,763,444	14,971,075
Local	<u>1,157,462</u>	<u>869,914</u>	<u>1,416,531</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS	14,450,697	14,508,523	19,348,853
TOTAL OF GENERAL FUND REVENUES	107,528,722	121,873,460	126,102,766

District revenues are allocated to the four Peralta colleges based on previous year allocations and expenditures and a review of needed adjustments. The Budget Allocation Committee, a subcommittee of the district Budget Advisory Committee, was formed in 2006 in response to concerns about possible inequity in allocations to the four colleges, particularly in regards to Vista College’s anticipated growth as they took possession of a new building. The Budget Allocation Committee developed a formula for allocation of district resources which was then taken to the Budget Advisory Committee.

The mission statement of Merritt College forms the core of the college’s strategic planning process, and is reflected in the college’s strategic directions, unit plans, and priorities articulated in the Merritt College Educational Master Plan. Allocations to programs are determined in a number of ways: 1) by formulas which are FTES driven; 2) by mandated appropriation through grants and contracts; 3) through allocations to categorically-funded programs; and 4) through resource development. The college has recently implemented an aggressive resource development initiative focusing on developing alternative resources in response to needs identified in an open, participatory task force.

Self Evaluation

This standard is met. The college remains committed to the Mission, Values and Vision developed and approved in December 2003. Merritt’s planning processes and planning templates encourage faculty to consider the mission of the college and to develop unit mission statements during the unit planning process. Merritt’s 2006 unit planning template was adapted by the District Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) for use by all four colleges, beginning in October 2007. The piece below, copied from a Merritt Unit Plan, documents how the template requires a Mission Statement for the unit. The complete template is included in the appendices at the end of the Self Study

Peralta Community College District

UNIT PLAN UPDATE Template ~ September 2008

Each discipline will complete this form to update the unit plans developed in 2007. These will be reviewed at the college level and then forwarded to the district-wide planning and budgeting process. The information on this form is required for all resource requests – including faculty staffing requests – for the 2009-10 budget year.

I. OVERVIEW

		Date Submitted:	10/25/2008
Discipline	Art	Dean:	Stacy Thompson
Department Chair	David Morales		
Mission/ History <i>Brief, one paragraph</i>	The Art Department at Merritt College seeks to generate and nurture the creative element in human life. Artistic impulse is an intrinsic human necessity for holistic health. The shared creative process of a class in painting or ceramics fosters, in the warmest, most accessible way, a general communication that spreads out to benefit the entire community.		

a. Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.

Descriptive Summary

In September of 2004, Merritt College created a task force on Integrated Planning and Budgeting under the auspices of the College Council. The first Integrated Planning and Budgeting Model was developed and approved by the College Council on April 20, 2005. Upon approval of the new model, the Task Force was disbanded and the Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) was created. As a subcommittee of the College Council, the charge of the IPC was to 1) conduct a situational analysis; 2) recommend 3-5 Strategic Directions to shared governance groups; 3) recommend institutional priorities; and 4) review, analyze and comment on annual Unit Action Plans. The IPC composition was as follows: two administrators (one from instruction, one from student services), three faculty, two classified staff, (including the College Research and Planning Officer), and one student.

In June 2005, the IPC held a two-day retreat to review documents and identify critical issues and future directions related to the following: teaching and learning; access, success, growth and diversity; workforce and economic development; facilities; technology; budget and budget process; and community engagement. Documents reviewed included the Accreditation Self Study and ACCJC Responses; College Mission, Values, and Vision; Program Reviews; College Educational Plan; College Facilities Plan; Matriculation Plan; Title III documents; and Annual Program Plans from Categorical Programs. Four Strategic Directions for the next five years were drafted: 1. Student Learning Outcomes; 2. Culture of Communication; 3. Technology and Media Resources; 4. Human, Fiscal, and Physical Resources.

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

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

In October 2005, each unit developed Unit Action Plans for 2006-07 that supported the approved Strategic Directions, identified needed resources, and listed performance indicators based on the planned activities. Each year since, instructional and student services units have submitted unit plans to articulate planning at the discipline/department level, and to provide data-driven requests for resources.

Merritt College's unit planning process was adopted district-wide as the colleges collaborated on a strategic planning process that required planning processes at the micro unit level as well as the macro district-wide level. It was agreed that unit planning

would inform the college educational master plans that in turn would form the district-wide educational master plan.

For the past few years, the colleges and district have engaged in developing an annual Strategic Planning and Budget Process model with a cycle that is reflected in a flow chart, and that ties budget processes to college planning. The new planning model is based on empirical data for managing resources, and effectively bases the “institutional planning and budget allocations” on measurable and quantifiable data.

The planning process also includes essential dialogue and input from various constituencies through the college’s shared governance process which provides opportunities to test and challenge the data in the decision model. Resource requests are gleaned from the unit plans, considered at the College Budget Committee, and then recommendations are made to the college president.

The Board of Trustees is presented a preliminary district budget, usually in June or July, which includes a detailed Merritt College budget that includes allocation of revenues and projected expenditures. In recent years, due to a delay in adoption of the State Budget, the district’s and, consequently, the college’s budget has been adopted well after the start of the fiscal year. The current year’s recommended budget was presented to the Board in October, 2008.

State Measure A and Measure E bond funds are allocated for building construction and renovation, as well as equipment and new program development. These funds are monitored by the district bond oversight committee that ensures proper use of the funds.

Self Evaluation

Over 95% of the total college budget is predetermined and nondiscretionary. Allocated discretionary funds are augmented indirectly through salary savings which accrue as funded full-time positions remain vacant. This is an informal and unrealistic method of funding budgetary proposals developed from funding requests generated at the discipline/department levels and reviewed by deans and vice presidents. Relying on salary savings to provide needed funds prevents meaningful planning and resource allocation. For this reason, the Resource Development Task Force focuses on realistic means for bringing additional funds to the college.

Of faculty responding to a faculty survey, 65% are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. When asked if budgets have been negotiated using the shared governance process, there was no clear agreement among respondents; nearly a quarter agree with the statement, nearly a quarter disagree, and more than half were uncertain. In addition, faculty had mixed views about the sufficiency of their department budget. Equal proportions of faculty disagree, agree, and are uncertain about the adequacy of their departmental budgets.

Staff responses to a staff survey resulted in the following: Nearly half of staff (46%) are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. Further, one quarter of staff agree and one quarter disagree that financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

b. Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.

Descriptive Summary

Merritt College has continued to implement processes and procedures that address a realistic assessment of financial resources and expenditures. For example, the College Budget Committee reviews and discusses the president's discretionary funds, and makes recommendations to the president based on college needs. The Unit Plan template provides an opportunity to identify needed human, equipment, and facility resources. The approved college Measure A list documents allocation of Measure A funds, and instructional funds for equipment and supplies (funds 14 and 17) are communicated to faculty through the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors.

The District Board of Trustees received the 2008-09 budget recommendation for adoption in October, 2008. Given the nature of the California economy, it is important that the availability of financial resources be reflected in both the adopted and projected budgets for financing operations. In recent years, the district-adopted budget has been approved after the beginning of the fiscal year. In the last two years, with the migration into the PeopleSoft/Prompt financial system, the college has been challenged in accessing budget information when needed to perform the "realistic assessment of financial resource availability." As one of the four colleges in the district, the college's budget process is intricately interwoven with that of the district.

Self Evaluation

This standard is only partially met. The college has structures in place for institutional planning as a reflection of financial resources; however, the uncertainty over the state budget as well as lack of clarity concerning allocation of Measure A funds has made it difficult for the college to ascertain if its financial planning is realistic. In addition, the implementation of the PeopleSoft system has resulted in challenges for those using the purchasing system.

As stated earlier, 95% of the college budget is predetermined. There are processes in place to allocate other funds (funds 14, 16, 17) received from the state and federal

governments that are not predetermined but are targeted for specific purposes such as instructional programs and career technical programs.

Merritt College has been fortunate in attracting additional revenue streams targeted for specific programs. The Associate Degree Nursing program has been awarded close to three million dollars in grants to expand capacity, enhance student retention and success, and develop a respiratory therapy program. The Child Development program has an on-going contract with First Five of Alameda County to improve outcomes of students in the program. Also, the college was awarded a five-year, 1.6 million-dollar Title III Strengthening Institutions grant to address the basic skills needs of Merritt students. Finally, the Resource Development Task Force has successfully established partnerships with community partners that have resulted in additional funds for the college, such as the partnership with Temple Sinai for a childcare facility on the Merritt campus.

Despite the best efforts of the college to align resource planning with institutional planning, over a third of faculty survey respondents and nearly half of staff respondents disagree that at Merritt College, “financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.”

c. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

Descriptive Summary

At Merritt College, resource requests are documented in the unit planning cycle every fall, and are provided in the context of student success data, program productivity, industry trends, and program plans. Unit plans are submitted each October, and this year's cycle of unit planning aligns with the development of the college's educational master plan as well as the district-wide educational master plan. A draft of the college's funding priorities was submitted to the College Council for approval (November 19, 2008) and inclusion in the educational master plan, and these priorities will be considered as part of the district's facilities and technology plans.

Both short-range and long-range financial planning are reflected in the program planning process at the college through the College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) and at the district through the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC). During the past two years, DWEMPC focused on developing a process for assessing instructional programs in order to more effectively allocate district funds. For programs identified as weak, the DWEMPC process may culminate in additional resources to support the program, a recommendation to consolidate like programs across the district, or a recommendation to deactivate the program due to limited student demand.

Plans for payment of long-term liabilities are incorporated into the budget process at the district level. Long-term liabilities consist primarily of general obligation bonds and future retiree benefits. Approved by voters in November 2000, Measure E authorized PCCD to issue \$153 million in bonds to repair and renovate classrooms, training facilities, science and computer labs, and to meet health and safety standards. In addition, a \$390 million bond measure, Measure A, was passed in June 2006 to be used for construction, renovation, and instructional equipment. General obligation bonds are paid with taxes assessed on personal and real property located within the Peralta district.

In response to a Commission recommendation to “provide funding for the long-term liability posed by health care benefits,” in 2005 the Chancellor directed the district chief financial officer to identify and take steps to locate funds for long-term medical liability benefits. In December 2005, the Peralta Community College District sold a series of 2005 bonds that would provide funding for the long-term liability coverage of the district’s retirees’ health care obligations.

The proceeds of the series 2005 bonds were placed in a Retiree Health Benefit Program (RHBP) Fund held by a trustee, to be used only to pay or reimburse the district for payment of retiree health benefit costs. The district projected that the investment earnings on the fund would pay its retiree health care costs while the bonds are outstanding, assuming an annual return of 6%. By virtue of this transaction the district anticipates that it will maintain its retiree health care costs at a constant 6.7% of budget through the 2049 final maturity of the bonds as opposed to experiencing an increase in such costs to almost 9% of budget over the next 15 years.

GASB 45, which requires reporting and accounting for OPEBs, (other post employment benefits such as retiree health care), became effective for employers in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2006. The statement generally requires that employers complete an actuarial valuation to determine their retiree health care liabilities and also calculate the annual required contribution (ARC) to pre-fund such liabilities. The difference between actual annual contributions to the plan and the ARC would be reported as a net OPEB obligation in the district’s financial statements. The district’s preliminary GASB 45 actuarial valuation reported the present value of benefits for retiree health care ranging from \$132 million, at a 7% discount rate, to \$196 million, at 4.5%. The district’s ARC for fiscal 2006 is projected at approximately \$12 million compared with an estimated pay-as-you-go cost of about \$5 million (see Focused Midterm Report, Response to District Recommendation #3).

Self Evaluation

The district is responsible for payment of long-term liabilities, and has clearly identified and planned for payment of these liabilities through general obligation bonds. However, district and college allocation processes do not appear to be transparent to faculty and staff at the college according to survey respondents. When asked if budgets have been

negotiated using the shared governance process at the college, there was no clear agreement among faculty respondents; nearly a quarter of faculty agreed with the statement, nearly a quarter disagreed, and more than half were uncertain. In response to the staff survey, fifty-four percent of staff were uncertain if resources are distributed according to negotiations using the shared governance process, and one-third of staff disagreed with the statement.

Many mechanisms are in place to identify college priorities through a shared governance process and to communicate those priorities to the college community. A lack of understanding concerning funding of college priorities indicates that improvement is needed in communicating allocation processes and decisions. Sixty-five percent of faculty survey respondents and nearly half of staff respondents (46%) are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

d. The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development, with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.

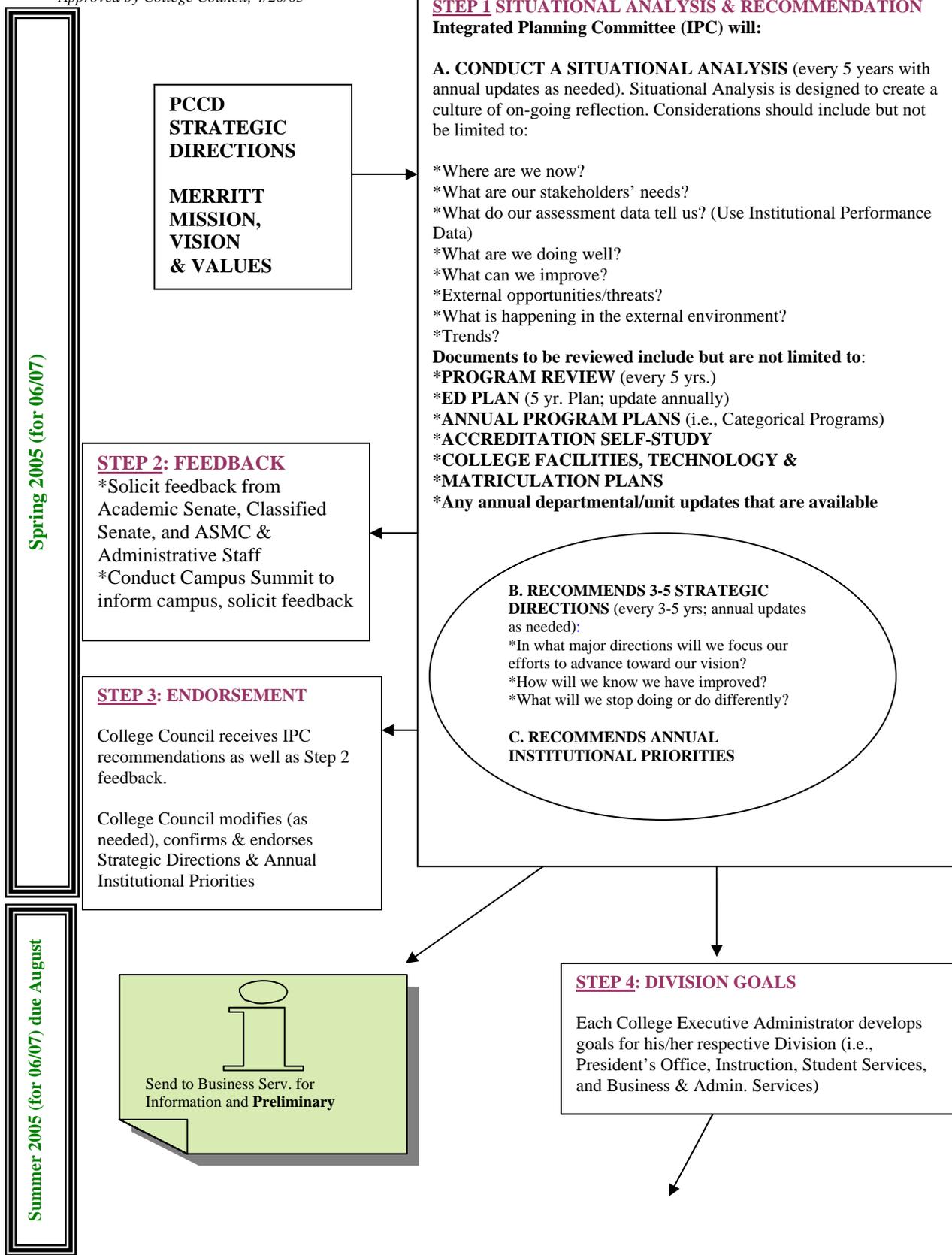
Descriptive Summary

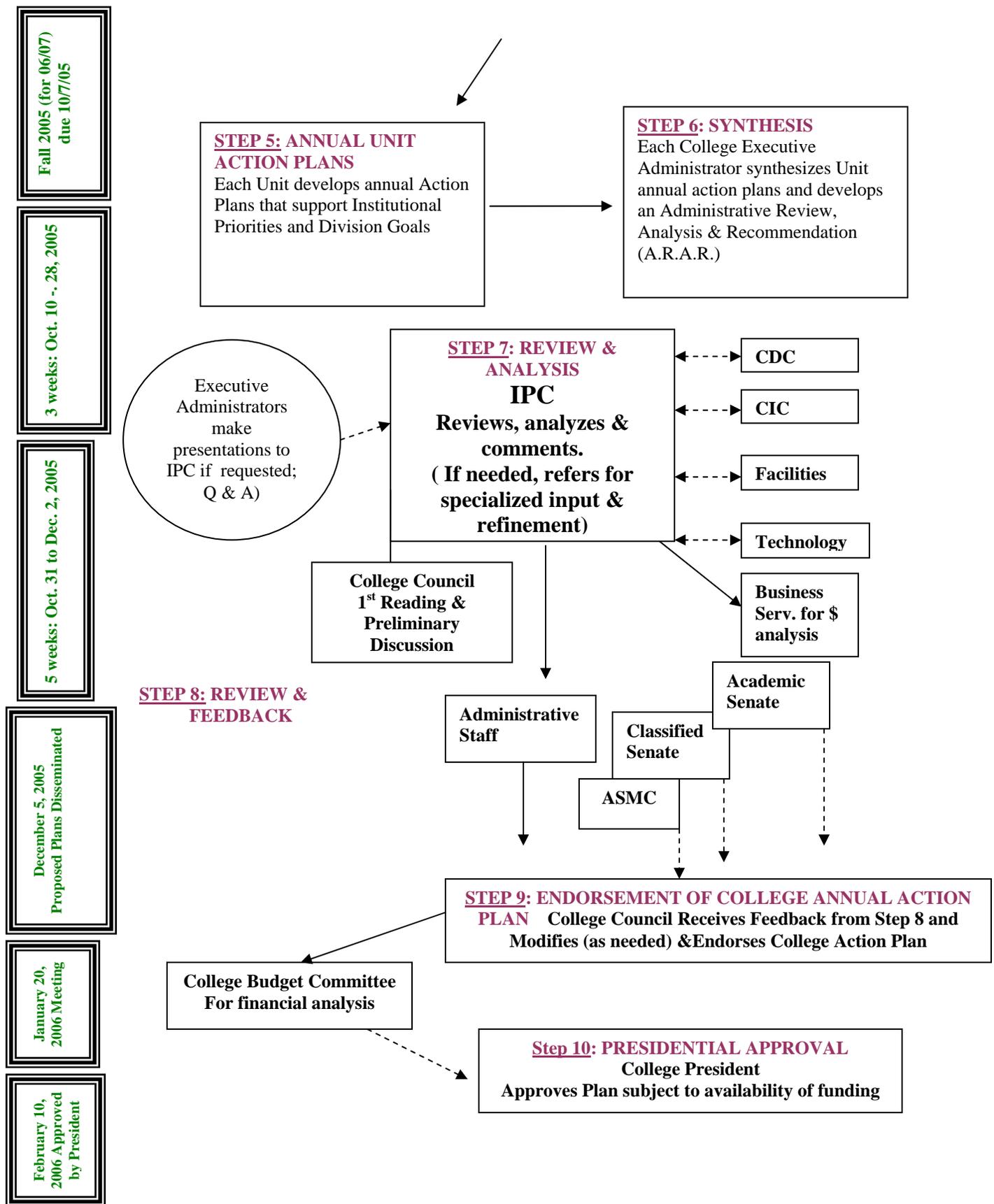
Merritt College's Integrated Planning and Budgeting model was developed in 2005 by the Task Force on Integrated Planning and Budgeting. The Task Force was disbanded and reformed as the Integrated Planning Committee, a subcommittee of the College Council. After much discussion, the College Council adopted the planning model on April 20, 2005, and defined what constitutes for Merritt College an effective institution (see following 4 pages).

Merritt College has continued integrating its strategic planning and budget processes with its internal constituency groups. On the March 6, 2008 Professional Day, Merritt College faculty, staff, and students reviewed the college's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's)³, which serve as a reminder of Merritt College's Mission, Vision, and Values.

³ ILO's describe an integrated set of foundational knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare the student for future academic and career success.

MERRITT COLLEGE PLANNING MODEL





BUDGET DEVELOPMENT BEGINS

**Budget Process
 Paper Flow**

Due Dates

February 1
 (Launch)

March 17

Due to CDC
 Chair
 March 31

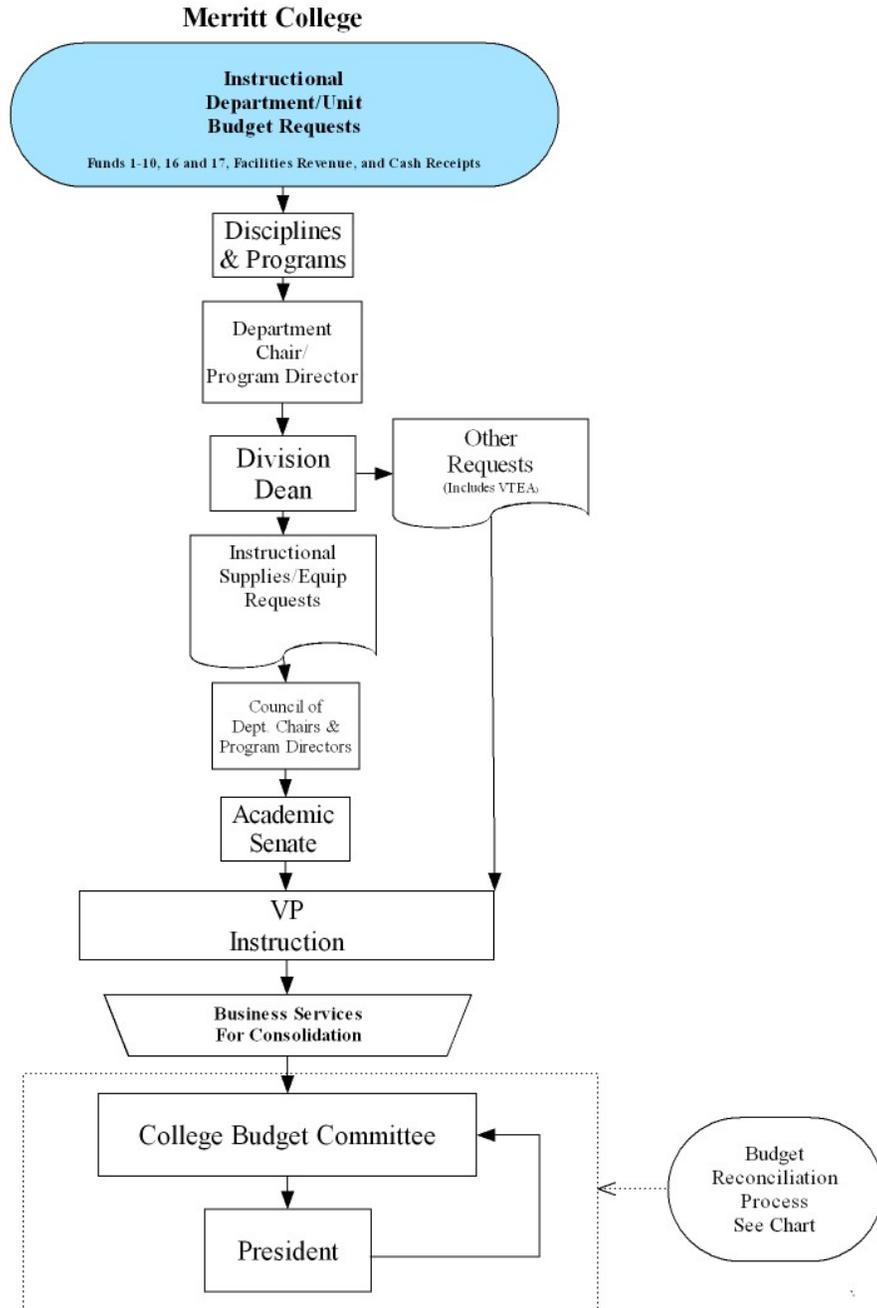
April 5
 May 3

May 5

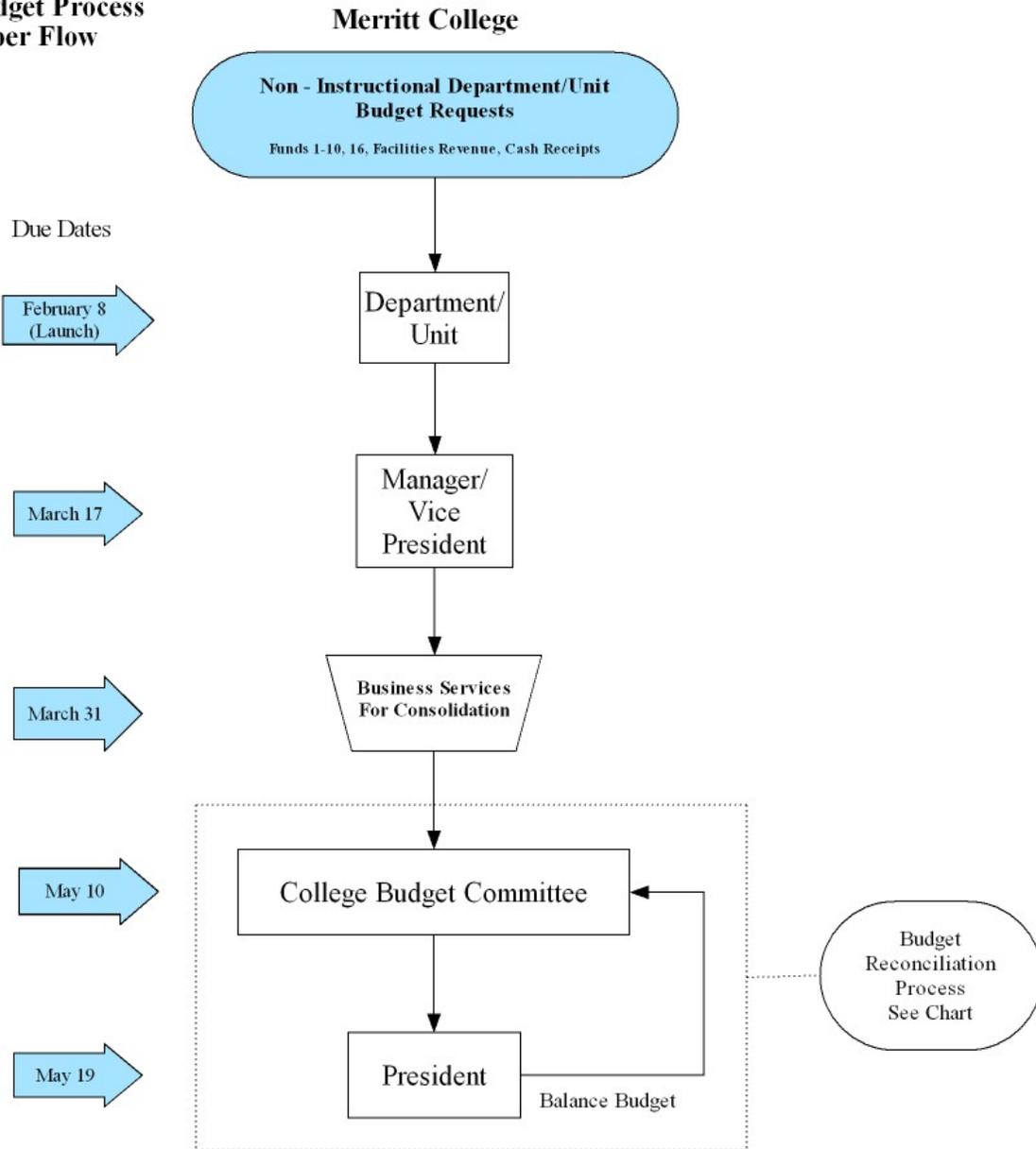
May 8

May 10

May 19



Budget Process Paper Flow



Self Evaluation

In spring of 2007, a district wide Committee for Strategic Educational Planning (CSEP) was formed to evaluate all instructional programs in the district. This more focused level of scrutiny led to the development of a Unit Plan template that delineated program data such as ftes generation, productivity, program trends, and resource needs. Program faculty and staff were required to review their program data and program evaluation, to design action plans that addressed the data, and to identify necessary resources that would assist the program in achieving their intended outcomes. The CSEP Unit Plan format was based on Merritt College's unit planning begun the previous year, so Merritt was well ahead in terms of the concept of unit planning and identification of resources for budget purposes.

Currently, the college has completed its 2008-09 unit planning and the college educational master plan. A unit plan matrix for instructional programs 1) identifies plans of action to address program evaluation, particularly for programs rated as "Watch/Revitalize;" 2) itemizes equipment and resources needed; and 3) documents facility needs. Needed resources identified in the matrix are now captured in the college's educational plan as well as in the district wide educational master plan. An additional matrix sent to instructional programs requests that programs articulate in what ways they address the college and district concepts of access, equity, and student success.

The process described above has led to streamlining of the college planning and budgeting model, although the various governance committees remain actively involved in the process of recommending resource allocations: the Facilities Committee, the Technology Committee, and the College Budget Committee. The College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC) assumed the role of IPC (the Integrated Planning Committee) as district-wide planning took place in SPC (the Strategic Planning Committee) and DWEMPC (the District Wide Educational Master Planning Committee).

Merritt College continues to engage in the integrated strategic planning process at the college and through district planning. We are committed to the college's four strategic directions, to our institutional priorities, and to assisting the district in making significant progress on its five goals: to advance student access and success; to engage our communities and partners; to build programs of distinction; to create a culture of innovation and collaboration; and to ensure financial health. Merritt College is well-positioned to further these district goals through leadership in the district-wide retention and persistence initiative, through our extensive community partnerships, through faculty creativity and innovation in designing new curricula, and through college-wide collaboration to remain fiscally healthy. To further address these district goals, Dr. Robert Adams, the new president of Merritt College, formed the "3 R" task forces to plan activities and articulate needed funds to address these initiatives: A. Recruitment and Outreach Task Force, led by the VP of Student Services; B. Retention and Student Success Task Force, led by the VP of Instruction; and C. Resource Development Task

Force, led by the College Business Officer. Requests for funding from the president's discretionary budget have been submitted.

The college, in collaboration with the district, continues to work on the District Strategic Plan and ensure that strategic planning is focused on the educational planning needs of the colleges.

2. To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound decision making.

a. Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

Descriptive Summary

The Peralta Community College District develops a budget on a yearly cycle according to the PCCD Budget Development Calendar. The proposed Tentative Budget is submitted for approval to the Board of Trustees in June each year. This budget reflects the Governor's proposed budget and includes strategic planning from the colleges, guidelines from the PCCD Budget Advisory Committee, and program data such as ftes generation, productivity, growth, and program trends. Budget allocations are generated from the state after the California Legislature and Governor approve the state budget, which includes funding of community colleges.

The PCC District follows all California regulatory codes regarding posting, review and approval of the Peralta Final Budget. The development of the Final Budget reflects the integration of research, college and district planning, and budget development described in the district's and college's planning processes. Merritt College's budget planning process is part of the district wide budget planning process as depicted in the PCCD Annual Process for Planning and Budgeting Integration. All four colleges Tentative, Adopted, and Final budgets for each year can be found within the District's publications labeled Tentative, Adopted, and Final budgets.

College budget processes are directed through the College Budget Committee during which budget information is disseminated and discussed. Programmatic needs are assessed and reviewed at the unit level for instructional discipline and student services units, and are then documented in the Unit Plans. The allocation process progresses through the College Budget Committee for recommendations to the college president.

External audits may be college-specific in the case of Financial Aid, or district wide with information requested from the colleges.

Self Evaluation

The District's Independent Auditor's Report of the Annual Financial Report (issued May 8, 2008) audited the annual financial statements of the Peralta Community College District for years ending June 30, 2007 and June 30, 2006. The following findings were presented.

Because of the problems with the implementation of the financial accounting system, the District was not able to properly monitor financial activity on a timely basis which has resulted in the delay in accurate reporting of activity to Federal and State agencies, as well as the delay of the audit report. Additionally, internal controls that are considered standard within the industry have been set aside to provide for processing of financial transactions. (p. 62)

The audit concluded that the District's annually audited financial statements provide standard assurances that all mandated financial compliance standards and controls are in place to protect assets with the exception of an integrated and effective asset valuation and inventory control system. The District and Merritt College have completed a comprehensive survey and identification of all assets and equipment valued in excess of \$500. This data was compiled and entered into an inventory management system for the first time, and was completed in July 2008. All new purchases of goods and equipment valued in excess of \$500 are now scanned, and the inventory management system generates an electronic tag which is affixed to the asset.

The system tracks and adjusts write-downs in value as appropriate to accounting standards and schedules which are now integrated within the financial accounting system. This system can adjust asset values to market for more accurate financial reporting.

Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support learning programs and services. Financial documents are audited annually for compliance with board policy and GASB standards, and the district is currently in compliance with these standards.

The District responds to external audit findings in a comprehensive and timely manner. Results are communicated to the District Finance and Audit committee and meetings are announced and open for attendance. Despite the availability of information, more than a third of respondents to the faculty and staff surveys either disagree or strongly disagree that "Financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning." Nearly half of staff (46%) are uncertain if financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

b. Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

Descriptive Summary

District financial information is published regularly and copies of financial documents are made public and archived in the College Library. District budget documents are published on the district Budget and Finance website, and the adopted budget is presented annually at a board meeting which is televised, webcast and open to the public. A flow chart of Annual Planning and Budget Integration of the Peralta Community College District was published in the April 2008 edition of the *Creating our Future: Strategic Planning* newsletter. The flow chart presents the budget process calendar and captures input from the District Wide Educational Planning Committee.

College budget and planning information is provided through the College Budget Committee to committee members and the college community. Information on instructional funds is provided directly to the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors for discussion and allocation, and categorical fund information is disseminated to student services personnel.

Self Evaluation

A relatively large proportion of staff members (45%) are uncertain if resources are distributed according to plans to achieve student learning outcomes, according to respondents on the staff survey. A smaller proportion (36%) of staff disagree with the statement.

Communication between the college and district constituencies have improved over the past few years due to the strategic planning and integrated planning and budgeting efforts. Newsletters, memos, forums, Board listening sessions, and meetings have been utilized to present and discuss the district wide planning and budgeting procedures and allocations. Although budget information on allocations and expenditures is available through the financial system, it is far more challenging to access than budget information in the old legacy computer system, and access is limited to some files such as personnel salary information.

Financial information is available in a variety of formats throughout the institution. Faculty and staff unfamiliar with retrieval of electronic information find it difficult to navigate through the PeopleSoft system to extract financial data. A number of new management financial reports are now available for distribution to College Managers and the College Budget Committee which include expenditures by cost centers.

c. The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

The Peralta Community College District has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability. The instability of the state budget, and the very real threat of midyear cuts to community colleges, has resulted in the chief financial officers of the district

maintaining a district reserve beyond the 3% required by law. During fiscal years 2006-07 and 2007-08, the reserve fund at the beginning of each year was 6.62% and 14.15%, respectively.

The district has in place mechanisms for appropriate risk management, particularly in the areas of future retiree benefits and fund management. In response to an accreditation recommendation, a bond offering of \$150 million was initiated in 2005 to fund future costs of retiree health benefits. On the advice of external financial managers, district funds held in custodial investment accounts have been realigned to provide additional safety and security for district funds.

Board Policy 6.04 provides a vehicle for the district to access general fund reserves to meet financial emergencies. The district's 07-08 reserve of 14.15% provides a safety net as the district faces midyear budget cuts due to the state deficit.

Self Evaluation

Merritt College receives annual discretionary funds through the president's office, and has identified annual recurring expenditures that must be funded through discretionary funds allocated from the district or generated through other revenue streams such as facility rental. The College Budget Committee, in collaboration with the college Business Office, created a list of these college expenses that is updated every year. General fund reserves are not allowed at the college level, but the college is able to maintain some cash flow based on revenue generated from outside sources.

d. The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

Descriptive Summary

The District Budget and Finances Service Center is under the direction of the Vice Chancellor of Finances. The Vice Chancellor and the District Budget Advisory Committee provide fiscal oversight to ensure that the district's finances are conducted in accordance with sound business practices, district policy, the district's business operating procedures, the state education code, and other state and federal regulations. The District Budget Advisory and Budget Allocation Committees are reviewing a model for allocation of funds to the four colleges that accounts for ftes generation, productivity, growth, and inequity in funding.

The College Business Office, under the direction of the business manager and college president, provides direct oversight and management of funds allocated to and generated by the college. This includes budget analysis, accounting reconciliation, contractual relationships, grant management, and reporting out on all college finances.

The college bookstore and food services are run by private entities, and are monitored by the college Business Office.

Self Evaluation

The institution has inadequate systems and practices regarding oversight of finances that include financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contracted relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations and institutional investments or assets. Problems with the implementation of the financial accounting system (PeopleSoft) resulted in an inability to adequately monitor financial activity in order to provide accurate financial reports to state and federal agencies in a timely manner. The college's Associate Degree Nursing program has failed to file financial reports for state grant awards due to the responsibility for these reports, as well as access to information, residing at the district level rather than the college level.

The College Business Office and District Finance Officer share direct accountability for oversight of finances. The historical practice has not involved a routing process which included the College Business Officer or a comprehensive program planning effort.

e. All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

Over 95% of the total college budget is predetermined and nondiscretionary, provides funding for personnel, and is based on collective bargaining agreements as well as a collaborative process to determine how many faculty and staff can be hired. Personnel hiring decisions take into account the mission and goals of the college, and reflect the integrity of the college's governance processes. Commitments to major capital projects are based on identified needs of college programs and services, and are funded by general obligation bonds and reviewed by the following: a district oversight committee, district Budget and Finances Service Center, College Facilities Committee, College Business Officer, and the College Council. Reports on facility repairs, renovations, and construction are regularly provided at administrative meetings and College Council.

Monies from student clubs' fund-raising activities are deposited in trust accounts under the Associated Students of Merritt College (ASMC) and are managed by the college's Principal Accounting Technician for ASMC and the Business Office. Funds from auxiliary activities such as facility rental are properly accounted for and managed by the College Business Officer.

The college has received a number of grants in the last few years: several state nursing grants, two Song Brown and Kaiser grants for nursing, a Predominately Black Institutions grant, and a federal Title III Strengthening Institutions grant. Grant project

directors and administrators ensure that grant funds are used in accordance with the criteria on which the funding was based. The Title III grant includes an external evaluator to monitor and verify that the performance standards of the grant have been met.

Self Evaluation

Merritt College administers funds in accordance with state law, generally accepted accounting principles, and district accounting guidelines. Revenues are used to support college programs and services, and to support the college president's three initiatives: Recruitment, Retention, and Resource Development. The College Business Officer has formed close relationships with the District Budget and Finance Services office to facilitate management of college funds.

A concern on the part of college faculty and staff is the allocation and administration of Measure A bond funds for equipment. Merritt College was allocated approximately \$5 million based on a list that was compiled by the College Budget Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Due to some early issues with the purchasing systems under PeopleSoft, some of the ordered equipment has never been received. The College Business Officer has formed closer collaboration with District Purchasing in order to resolve any purchasing problems and to address faculty responses on the faculty survey that the neither the district office nor the College Business Office demonstrates adequate two-way communication. In addition, the Business Office has conducted training on purchasing procedures and on compliance issues for grants and contracts.

Although programs funded by grants were informed that the district Finance and Budget Services Center was responsible for submitting the financial reports for all grants, in reality these reports have not been submitted in a timely manner, or have not been submitted at all. The program director for the state nursing grant awards does not have the access or capacity to ferret out grant expenditures; therefore, she is hiring an internal consultant with approved grant funds to complete the financial reports, including those that the college and district were remiss in submitting.

f. Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.

Descriptive Summary

District procedures require that contractual agreements are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution and adhere to set policies and lawful agreements. A review of all contracts by the Business Officer is essential prior to presentation to the Board for approval. Contracts can only be executed by authorized officers of the district, and compliance with this policy is being reinforced by recent training conducted by the

Merritt College Business Office and General Counsel. In spring 2008, college faculty and staff were informed of board policy governing contractual agreements.

The district guidelines are upheld by the College Business and Administrative Services, and the College Business Officer provides oversight for all contracts executed for Merritt College through district procedures.

Self Evaluation

There has been inconsistent adherence to this requirement due to lack of understanding by faculty and staff of the business process and requirements. Training on contract procedures has been conducted by the Merritt College Business Office and District General Counsel, and will be ongoing as needed.

g. The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.

Descriptive Summary

The institution's financial management processes are formally evaluated primarily through external audits and during the accreditation review cycle. The district Budget and Finance Services Center, with participation of the college, submits an annual unit review for the purpose of evaluating department effectiveness and improvement opportunities. Informally, budget management processes are discussed at the College Budget Committee and College Council, and there is a process to make recommendations to the president for improvement of management systems.

Self Evaluation

The financial management systems are not well understood by all college constituencies. There are faculty and staff complaints that budget information is not easily accessible on the district's electronic financial system. This is due in part to a lack of training, and in part to a desire to have the budget and budget processes be absolutely transparent and easy to use. In addition, there is some confusion regarding the rolling over of unspent and encumbered funds at the college. While ease of use is not a realistic goal, transparency is, and the College Budget Committee is the vehicle through which budget information is disseminated from the Business Office to the college constituencies.

The current financial accounting system is being enhanced to integrate data bases for end users to develop customized queries to access budget data. The implementation of Business Intelligence applications allowing customized queries will greatly enhance the availability of information and management reports, resulting in improved data-driven fiscal decisions.

Concerns regarding expenditure of Measure A bond funds have prompted the college's Business Officer to establish meetings with district purchasing agents in order to clarify the processes and procedures expected by district purchasing.

3. *The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.*

Merritt College is in the process of implementing a systematic process of evaluating productive use of financial resources. The District Wide Education Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC) reviews the *Annual Planning Budgeting Framework* and develops guidelines and methodologies for planning and budgeting. Through the comprehensive development and annual updating of the educational master plan, program reviews and unit plans, the college community reviews and evaluates planning priorities in order to support decision making regarding the allocation of resources.

Regarding personnel resources, each year the Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors engages in a process to prioritize requests for additional faculty through the presentation of data to the Council. The list is then forwarded to the Academic Senate and the college president. The assessment component is contained within the results achieved: was sufficient data provided for agreement on the part of the president and chancellor; do new faculty contribute to the college in a meaningful and productive way.

Assessing the effective use of funds allocated is far more direct in that the financial system can be accessed to extract reports on budget expenditures. If instructional equipment and supply funds are not expended in a timely manner, they are re-allocated to needier programs, and the department/program that has failed to effectively spend its funds may not receive additional funds requested.

Self Evaluation

The college needs to be more mindful of effective use of all budget allocations. In 2007-08, unexpended VTEA funds were returned to the district for re-allocation to another Peralta college in need of additional funds. This has led to the establishment of a benchmark of December 15 for expenditure of 50% of VTEA funds allocated to Merritt College.

Planning Agenda

- Refine the budget planning process such that all resource allocation decisions are aligned with institutional plans.
- Communicate the alignment of planning and budgeting in written documents and on the web so that the planning and budgeting processes are transparent to staff, students, and the community.

- Establish facilities and technology priorities for the college through the educational master planning process.
- Review the budget development process for possible streamlining.
- Establish procedures at the college for submitting financial reports for grants and contracts.

REFERENCES

1. Technology Committee Plan
2. College Planning and Budget Documents, Accreditation Webpage,
3. College Educational Master Plan
4. IT Software/Hardware Inventory
5. College Web Page/Information Technology, www.merritt.edu
6. District Web Page on Prompt and Passport.
7. Distance Education Course Management Documents (Etudes, Moodle)
8. Campus Faculty and Staff Climate Survey
9. Distance Education Course Management Documents (Etudes, Moodle)

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

Standard IVA

Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

- 1. Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.***

Descriptive Summary

The mission and vision statements of Merritt College clearly identify the college's primary institutional goals as providing an excellent education and strong student support. The mission statement specifies that Merritt College will strive to uphold "open access to excellent instructional programs" and explicitly states that "challenging and rigorous learning experiences" are a core value and a necessary part of student success.

Furthermore, the Merritt College Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO), which were developed collaboratively during campus-wide forums held in 2005, 2006, and most recently reviewed and revised during All College Flex Days in January, 2008 and March 2008, detail real-life expectations for Merritt College students. Areas where students are expected to improve their skills include communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information and computer literacy, cultural awareness, and civic engagement and ethics. These expectations are articulated in the ILO document, demonstrating Merritt's commitment to excellence in education (ILOs, Jan, 2008).

The mission and vision statements are available to everyone on campus by inclusion in the Faculty Handbook, Classified Staff Handbook, Student Handbook, Schedule of Classes Spring 2008 Semester, and the Merritt College Catalog 2007-2009. The statements are also available through the "Shared Governance" webpage, accessible from the home webpage of Merritt College.

The staff, faculty, and administration of Merritt College are dedicated to serving student needs. Explicit in our mission statement is the core value of "Campus Climate – We strive to create a student-centered learning environment that leads to student retention, persistence, and success." Recently, Merritt College President, Dr. Adams,

reemphasized this core value by forming the Recruitment and Outreach Taskforce, and the Retention/Persistence Taskforce teams (Adams Memo 9/19/2007).

Merritt College has a Student Services Council dedicated to student success. This council is comprised of representatives from all units operating under the structural umbrella of Student Services (Counseling, Financial Aid, Admissions, et cetera).“ Bylaws for the Student Services Council are currently under review. A full range of student services are central and accessible at Merritt College, including the Disabled Students Program, High Tech Center, Learning/Tutorial Center, Library, Counseling, Puente Program, EOPS program, Financial Aid office, Career/Transfer Center, and the Health Center.

Faculty and staff emphasize the importance each person on campus places on serving student needs. Faculty understand that they play an essential role in attaining the institutional goal of academic excellence both within the classroom and through faculty and campus-wide organizations. According to the Faculty Survey (2008), a majority of faculty (54%) stated, “Merritt College depends on faculty [including the Academic Senate and CIC (Curriculum and Instruction Council)] for recommendations about student learning programs and services.” A noticeable majority of faculty (88%) agreed or strongly agreed that “instructional methods used in the classroom reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of [Merritt College] students.”

The staff of Merritt College is similarly aware of their vital role in student success. In an interview, Tim Brice (a custodian with the Peralta District for 15-years and with Merritt College since 1997) stated that Dr. Adams recently attended a meeting with the custodial staff and emphasized that everyone on campus has the same “goal of working for the good of the most important thing here – the college students” (Tim Brice interview, 2008). Furthermore, a variety of positive approaches to serving student needs are showcased during each flex day session. Some examples can be seen in the most recent Flex Day Schedule (from 3/6/2008) and include the following collaborative workshops: “SLO Work Session,” “Basic Skills Initiative Workshop,” “District Wide Counselor Workshop,” “Empowerment through Education,” and “Fostering Student Independence.”

There is widespread agreement by faculty that the practice of shared governance has greatly improved on the Merritt College campus in the past several years. College Council Chair (and faculty member) David Morales stated, “I believe Merritt’s institutional leaders continue to improve in involving all constituencies of the college to participate in discussion, planning and implementation.”(Morales interview, 02/08) According to Ann Elliott, Chair of Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), “Merritt’s Senate and Curriculum Committee, the College Council, and CDCPD, the facilities and the budget committee all make faculty perspectives and voices strong on campus provide structures for shared governance. Stronger than they have ever been in my 17 years at Merritt.” (Elliott interview, 02/08).

Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in shared governance. A majority of staff (53%) said they feel informed about how to participate in the shared governance process (Staff Survey, 2008). The President of the Faculty Senate does a great deal to encourage faculty participation in all phases of shared governance including publicizing any open positions on committees through faculty mail, phone calls, and email, as well as making announcements during Professional Day forums. Faculty members also receive regular email updates from the Faculty Senate President about Merritt committee discussions and district governance issues. (Branca interview, 4/08). A list of shared governance committees and their respective bylaws are accessible through the Merritt College Shared Governance webpage (<http://merritt.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?Q=40136>).

Students have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and shared governance through a variety of options. Several shared governance committees require integration of students, faculty, staff, and administration (Bylaws of CIC, College Budget Committee, Student Services Committee, Culture of Communication Team, and Facilities Committee). Also, students are encouraged to run for office or attend meetings of the Associated Students of Merritt College. According to the President of the ASMC, "We definitely spearhead the activities here on campus, the welcoming of new students, try to get information out to students that student government is a vehicle for student voices to be heard" (Interview Durwin Brown, 04/2008). This year, the ASMC distributed an election pamphlet with photographs and descriptions of the student candidates, in order to inform voters of their choices (ASMC Election Pamphlet, April 2008). However, many students still have questions about how to participate in shared governance (Student Focus Group, 2008).

Merritt College makes institutional evaluation available to faculty, staff, and students. Our last progress report (March 15, 2007) is posted on the Merritt College website for anyone to access. All accreditation reports from ACCJC are distributed to all shared governance committees and to anyone who attends Professional or Flex Days. Additionally, all accreditation reports are kept on file at the Merritt Library, in the Merritt College Documents Archive (<http://www.merritt.edu/apps/page.asp?Q=705&T=Pages>).

To ensure that faculty within their individual disciplines are empowered to participate in strategic planning for the future of course offerings and programs, Merritt College provides department chairs with specific data (TRAC DAT sample data; Merritt College Profile Fall 2006). Faculty in each discipline use this information to formulate their Unit Action Plans and Program Review documents (Unit Plan Sample, Action Plan Sample, Program Review Sample). The reports submitted by individual disciplines and departments are then used by the college and district in the creation of the Educational Master Plan (Educational Master Plan sample). The Equity for All Project; Title III Grant is also provided to department chairs to use as a reference and comparative study when assessing their program demographics and student success data within their programs. Department chairs include a narrative description in their respective Unit Plans that specifically address critical findings from the Scorecard Report, such as the disparity found among academic success of Latino and African American student

population in comparison to other student populations. The College Strategic Educational Plan is an overarching document that is additionally provided to department chairs as reference guide to assess program alignment with college-wide educational goals and learning outcomes.

Faculty and staff are asked to participate in and kept well informed about the accreditation process at Merritt College. An open email was sent to all faculty in August, 2008 asking for volunteers to chair steering teams of the Accreditation Committee. Each Steering Team (Standard) Chair was assigned one administrative partner and asked to form a team of at least six members consisting of a mix of faculty, staff, and students. All together, there are 7 steering teams and ## members of faculty, staff, and students on the Accreditation Committee. Furthermore, faculty, staff, and students are asked to fill out a survey for Accreditation. Faculty participation was elicited through several email requests (01/08, Branca; 04/08, Morales), notes in faculty mailboxes, and hard copies provided on the first Professional Day of Spring, 2008. Staff surveys were distributed via email and student surveys were facilitated by instructors during class time. All accreditation reviews and reports are distributed to all shared governance committees, as well as shared with staff and faculty at Professional Days. The most recent Progress Report from Merritt College for the ACCJC is posted on the Merritt website (http://merritt.peralta.edu/Projects/40671/Merritt_Progress_Report_FINAL_3-13-07.pdf).

Self-Evaluation

The college partially meets this standard. Merritt College clearly identifies and articulates its institutional goals and values; however we need to do a better job of ensuring that all students, staff, faculty, and administrators are familiar and can articulate our goals. Although Merritt College's mission and vision statements are available to students, faculty, and staff in their respective handbooks and course catalogs, these documents are not posted in any conspicuous places on campus. Nor did we find the mission or vision statement in an obvious place when we accessed the Merritt College home page on the web.

Faculty and staff are in agreement that the shared governance process has greatly improved over the past 3-5 years. However there are areas of improvement that were highlighted by both groups. Disappointment about the amount of time and effort it takes for serious problems to get attention and resolution (PFT Survey Summary – 12/2007), as well as “having to make multiple requests and tracking down the progress of requests” for problem resolution (Faculty Focus Group – 3/18/2008) were concerns stated by several faculty members.

“Classified still feel they are marginalized and lack respect from faculty and most managers.” (Staff Survey, January 2008) Members of the Classified Senate reported negative experiences with “an overwhelming imbalance in favor of the faculty when it comes to improving and staffing the workplace” as well as a general feeling that classified staff members sometimes get left out of decision-making. (Classified Senate

Feedback, Feb, 2008) These sentiments were echoed by additional classified staff members, with a general feeling that “there are levels among administration, faculty, and classified staff. Classified staff is the last group listened to.” (Classified Staff Focus Group, March, 2008)

Although Merritt College makes an effort to inform all constituents on campus about opportunities to participate in shared governance, faculty feedback on this issue was mixed. According to one PFT Representative, “I think we are encouraged to join committees and to take initiative” (Interview, PFT Representatives, Feb 2008). However, when given the prompt: “I feel informed about how to participate in the shared governance process,” nearly 30% of #? faculty responded that they were “uncertain” with an additional 17% marking “disagree” and 7% “strongly disagree” (Faculty Survey, 2008). Perhaps there are faculty who would like to participate in shared governance, but do not want to join a committee. Although most shared governance committee bylaws are listed on Merritt’s website, it will help inform staff, faculty, and students if meeting dates, times, and agendas for future meetings were also posted.

Students who participate in shared governance feel empowered by the process. As President of the ASMC stated, “When we speak up – we get a positive response.” (Interview Durwin Brown, April 2008). However, many students do not feel informed about how to get involved in student government or on other committees on campus that integrate the voices of faculty, staff, administrators, and students (Student Focus Group, 2008). This disconnect may be a direct result of the current difficulties Merritt College faces in communicating with students outside of the classroom. Because many Merritt College students do not necessarily have fixed phone numbers and addresses while attending school, the “Culture of Communication” Committee recognizes the need to create “peralta.edu” email addresses for each student at Merritt College. The Culture of Communication Committee (CCC) was formed as a task force under the umbrella of the College Council to address deep concerns regarding a general lack of communication on campus. The CCC determined that by all students, faculty, administrators, and staff being assigned Peralta.edu email addresses, communication with each other and specifically students will increase exponentially. The CCC has also recommended to the College Council (approved and forwarded to President during April 2008 College Council) a stable method through a Digital Messaging System (DMS) that will allow for messages to be sent via Peralta.edu email. This DMS on Merritt College campus will be established and maintained by the college, and will better provide information and guidance to specific students or to a larger student group or population, which will greatly assist with their educational success at Merritt College.

2. The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.

- a. Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.**

Descriptive Summary

Both faculty and administrators have substantive and clearly defined roles in institutional governance at Merritt College. The Council of Department Chairs and Program Managers (CDCPD) is a committee of faculty and administrators that acts as an “advisory body to both the Merritt Academic Senate and the Vice President of Instruction in all matters relating to instruction” (CDCPD Bylaws, 04/04). The faculty have two very strong “faculty-only” groups: the Academic Senate and the Peralta Federation of Teachers (PFT). Article III of the Academic Senate of Merritt College clearly states the “powers” of the faculty, including “Criteria of personnel selection and retention including administration personnel, assignment,” “Academic policies,” “Student personnel policies,” “Institutional philosophy,” and “Educational expenditures,” which includes budget, building, and long-range plans (Academic Senate Constitution). The PFT Constitution, Article I spells out the purposes of this faculty organization, including representing “the ideas and interests of faculty members in the Peralta Community College District” (PFT Constitution). The Faculty Handbook also includes all rights and responsibilities of instructors (Faculty Handbook).

Staff and students at Merritt College also have the opportunity to participate in shared governance through organizations that invite input into institutional decision-making. The Classified Senate is made up of Classified Staff only. Additionally, the Classified Staff handbook provides a listing of all staff rights, and responsibilities. Classified Staff have two union organizations, Local 1021 (educational staff), Local 39 (custodial and engineering staff), which advocate for members’ rights as employees.

The Associated Students of Merritt College (ASMC) constitution states the organization’s purpose: “to encourage students in community participation, and in the planning and direction of student and community activities.” The bylaws state the group’s central mission as “the improvement of the quality of campus life” (<http://www.merritt.edu/Projects/40178/ASMC%20Handbook%20082506.doc>). According to their website, the goal of the ASMC “is to be the voice of the Merritt Student Body” ([http://merritt.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=40178](http://merritt.peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=40178)). The ASMC is also responsible for forming and promoting student clubs on campus, through their subcommittee, the Inter-Club Council of Merritt College (Bylaws of Merritt Inter-Club Council).

The bylaws of several shared governance committees at Merritt College are explicit that members of faculty, administration, classified staff, and students work cooperatively in college governance. For example, the College Council bylaws state, “it shall be the

policy of the college community to establish procedures to ensure Merritt College students, faculty, and staff (permanent and hourly) and administration have the right to participate effectively in college governance” (College Council bylaws, 11/03). A subcommittee of College Council, the College Facilities Committee (CFC) makes recommendations to the College President, via the College Council concerning “renovations, remodels, and use of Bond Funds designated for facilities and the physical environment.” It is further made clear in the CFC Bylaws that “The College President should consult with the College Council on all major facilities issue before a decision is made.” Another subcommittee of the College Council is the Merritt Technology Committee (MTC), a mixed body of faculty, classified staff, administrators, and students, set up to advise the College President, via the College Council, on all issues relating to Information Technology on campus (MTC Bylaws, 09/04). The Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) is an important shared governance committee (a subcommittee of College Council), made up of administrators, faculty, classified staff, and at least one student. IPC has the responsibility to “conduct situational analysis; recommend 3-5 Strategic Directions; recommend Annual Institutional Priorities; review, analyze & comment on unit Annual Action Plans and Administrative Review, Analysis & Recommendation” (Draft of Strategic Directions & Institutional Priorities, 2005-2010; http://merritt.edu/DRAFT_STRATEGIC.html).

The College Budget Committee, with a membership requiring a mix of administrators, faculty, classified staff, and at least one student, emphasizes the role of shared governance “in matters relating to budget development processes, procedures and the allocation of funds” in its bylaws (CBC bylaws, 04/04). The roles of all shared governance groups, including Administrative Leadership Council, College Council, Faculty and Classified Senates, ASMC, CDCPD, CIC, Facilities, Technology, and Budget Committees are clearly laid out in a synopsis of Merritt College’s Integrated Planning and Budget Cycle (<http://merritt.edu/IntegratedPlanningAndBudget.html>).

Self-Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Merritt College shared governance committee bylaws and constitutions clearly articulate the roles of faculty, administrators, staff, and students in institutional governance and decision-making. Rights and responsibilities of each group are also specified in the Faculty, Classified Staff, and Student Handbooks. Disappointingly however, when asked if “faculty have a clearly defined role in Merritt College’s shared governance process,” 49% indicated “uncertain” (Faculty Survey Results, 2008). On the staff survey (distributed in January, 2008), 37% of respondents indicated they were “uncertain” while another 26% marked “disagree” or “strongly disagree” when asked whether “staff have a clearly defined role in Merritt College’s shared governance process” (Staff Survey Results, 2008).

Clearly there is a disparity between the clarity of the written policies and the level of knowledge staff and faculty have about their roles in the shared governance process at Merritt College.

- b. The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.***

Descriptive Summary

The faculty at Merritt College have strong leadership and organizations that play a role in determining student learning programs and services. The administration of Merritt College relies heavily on the Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC), Council of Department Chairs and Program Directors (CDCPD), Student Services Committee (SSC), and Faculty Senate for recommendations about curriculum, education plans, and other student learning programs.

The Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) is a committee of the Academic Senate, and therefore a body made up of voting members who are mostly faculty, with one student. Non-voting administrators (deans and vice presidents) are expected to attend when matters arise within their area. The CIC “makes its recommendations” to the Academic Senate and Vice President of Instruction on “approval of new programs or courses” as well as other matters relating directly to curriculum (CIC Bylaws, 03/04).

CDCPD requires all instructional department heads to participate as voting members. Other faculty members include the chairs of Counseling and the Library. The Assessment Coordinator, Instructional and Student Services Deans, VP of Instruction, and Academic Senate President are non-voting members. The bylaws of CDCPD specify their responsibilities to include: “To review and make recommendations on all instructional matters” (Bylaws CDCPD, 2004).

Self-Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Faculty are strong advocates for educational planning, and have several committees that are required, by institutional policy, to recommend approval of new course outlines or programs, improvements on current curricula or programs, and advise on any and all instructional matters. According to Merritt College written policies, administrators are non-voting members on these faculty-run committees.

- 3. Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution’s constituencies.***

There are several effective shared governance committees at Merritt College that require collaboration of all four college constituencies: faculty, administration, staff, and students in their written bylaws. These include the College Council, College Budget

Committee, and College Facilities Committee. On all three of these committees, students, staff, faculty, and administrators are expected to contribute, through both voicing their opinions and using voting privileges. Curriculum and Instructional Council (CIC) involves faculty and one student as voting members, where administrators are expected to attend and participate (especially concerning instructional programs for their areas), but do not vote.

In addition to the above-mentioned policy and educational program oriented committees, Merritt College also has many essential standing committees that function as a partnership among students, staff, faculty, and administrators. The Accreditation Committee requires each standard committee to have faculty and classified staff as co-chairs. Additionally, there must be at least one administrator serving on each standard committee. Standard committee co-chairs are encouraged to incorporate the voices of every constituent group on their individual teams (Example: Standard IV Accreditation Team). The Graduation Committee also has a mix of constituent groups, including a student representative from ASMC, Dean of Student Services, Student Activity Coordinator, Classified Staff and Faculty representatives that work together to plan a successful graduation ceremony at Merritt College (Email from Powell, June 2008).

Apart from official shared governance and standing committees, several organizations at Merritt College operate with a volunteer membership that incorporates a working group of students, faculty, and classified staff. The Merritt College Reporter is a newspaper published by the ASMC, with articles contributed by faculty and classified staff (Merritt Reporter, March/April 2008). Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, operates a chapter at Merritt College with a volunteer faculty advisor. Puente Project is a two-semester counseling and reading/writing program to foster learning skills with a focus on Chicano (a)/Latino (a) reading and writing topics. Puente has two faculty advisors.

Interviews with faculty, students, and classified staff representatives on campus provided evidence that groups on campus work together to improve the college. One example from the ASMC President detailed how the College Council changed the policy regarding reserving the Student Lounge on campus, after representative from the Associated Students of Merritt College presented their case. As Mr. Brown stated, "When we speak up – we get a positive response" (Interview Brown, 2008).

Another example of different constituencies partnering to further student needs comes from a faculty advisor of Puente Project. Recently, the two faculty advisors of the group along with two student members attended a meeting of the College Budget Committee to self-advocate and ask that their budget not be cut for the 2008-2009 academic year. Both the students and advisors spoke at the meeting and the CBC immediately gave positive feedback to the Puente representatives, telling them that their budget would not be cut for the following year.

Self Evaluation

Although this collaboration among different entities at Merritt College works well, nearly all constituents report a breakdown when it comes to communication. Students reported that communication on campus is not effective for students to get essential information. None of the eight students involved in a shared governance focus group session said that they receive regular communication about health and safety, the President's Office, the Office of Instruction. When asked, "Do you feel informed about what is going on at Merritt?" the students unanimously answered "no" (Student Focus Group results, 2008).

Faculty also expressed disappointment with communication, most resolutely from the District and Board of Trustees. According to the Faculty Chair of College Council, "The district does not clearly delineate nor communicate in general. It is common to get more than one response from key district personnel to serious issues affecting the colleges. What is most clear is that there is ineffective communication among district managers" (Morales interview, 2005). Peralta Federation of Teachers representatives simply said, "Communication is not effective" (PFT Representatives interview, 2008). The Academic Senate President suggested the lack of communication between the Board of Trustees and Merritt College manifested in policies that were passed at the District Level by the Board, but that never come to fruition at the campus level. "Look at the smoking policy, passed the board last year and we are still no where with it. I don't think the board has a clue on how its policies are carried out at the college level. I don't see a feedback loop for them which connects what they pass and then a report on how it is being enacted" (Interview Branca, 2008).

According to the most recent faculty survey, there was wide dissatisfaction with communication both on-campus and at the district level. When given the following prompt, "Please select all units from the following list that demonstrate adequate and regular two-way communication," the best response was for the Office of Instruction, while the least positive was for the Business Office. Below are the units that were evaluated on their communication practices by the faculty and the percentage of faculty who felt these units did an adequate job:

- 11.6% - the Business Office
- 14.6% - the District Office
- 15.9% - Student Support Services Dean
- 27.4% - Student Services Offices
- 28.7% - President's Office
- 29.3% - Division Dean Humanities
- 31.1% - Division Dean Sciences
- 37.2% - Office of Instruction

Merritt College recognizes both the significance and urgency to improve communication on campus. "Culture of Communication" was named one of four strategic directions in 2006-2007 and declared an institutional priority. The goal "To have clear communication and listening be a way of life at Merritt College in order to arrive at true shared values, and develop an appreciation of the diverse perspectives in the College community"

(http://merritt.edu/DRAFT_STRATEGIC.html).

To this end, Merritt College organizes a number of flex day speeches and activities dedicated to informing staff and faculty about institutional efforts to achieve goals and improve learning. The college website has also been expanded to include a “Shared Governance” page, replete with names, bylaws, meeting times, and minutes of the various governance committees. The Integrated Planning and Budget Model (<http://merritt.edu/IntegratedPlanningAndBudget.html>) as well as the Draft of Strategic Directions and Institutional Priorities are also posted on the shared governance page (<http://www.merritt.edu/apps/comm.asp?Q=40136>).

4. *The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-study, and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.*

Merritt College takes seriously the recommendations made by the Accreditation Visiting Team and has made it a priority to respond quickly and honestly. After the April 11, 2007 visit by the ACCJC, the college submitted a Progress Report on March 15, 2008 (Progress Report, March 2008). The information included in the progress report accurately discloses all developments undertaken by Merritt College in order to continuously improve our practices and better meet the educational needs of our students.

In preparation for the ACCJC visit and review of Merritt College in Spring, 2009, we have organized an Accreditation Committee, with monthly meetings of the Chairs and regularly monthly meetings of individual teams. The Accreditation Committee began meeting in September, 2007. Standard Chairs were given their tasks and took on the responsibilities of research and writing their responses. The Steering Team of the Accreditation Committee will continue to meet throughout the Fall, 2008 and through the ACCJC’s visit in Spring, 2009.

In addition to communicating with the ACCJC, Merritt College has many vocational programs that require regular communication with external agencies, either for the purpose of accreditation or community involvement. As part of our Title, Part C funds, Merritt College must provide evidence “that a group of individuals be involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs” (Perkins IV Section 134 (b)(5)). The Division Dean II communicates regularly with the Vocational Program chairs to ensure that they are maintaining contact with appropriate external agencies (Perkins IV Local Planning Matrix).

The Merritt College Radiologic Science Program works with many different agencies, including Alta Bates Summit Medical, Children’s Hospital Oakland, Doctor’s Hospital San Pablo, and Eden Medical Center) both reporting to and seeking advice from these

organizations (Rad Sci CTE Planning Team, 2008-2012). Similarly, Merritt's Child Development Department communicates regularly with several organizations, including Oakland Head Start, the East Oakland License Child Care Association, Alameda County Health, and the Regional Center of the East Bay (Child Dev CTE Planning Team 2008-2012). The Licensed Vocational Nursing program (LVN) reports to the Board of Vocational Nurses for clinical and faculty approval, including annual reports on students and programs and submission of an accreditation report every four years. Additionally, the LVN program representatives meet with other California Vocational Nursing program directors, at least twice per year.

Although the Allied Health and Child Development programs communicate in an official capacity with their accrediting agencies and local licensed facilities, other vocational programs participate in voluntary communication with community organizations. The Administration of Justice (AJ) program collaborates with the Oakland Police Department to better prepare students for the law enforcement field, as well as supporting current police officers with information on degree programs (Email Dixon, 5/2/08). The Real Estate program at Merritt College works directly with the California Department of Real Estate, California Association of Realtors, National Association of Realtors, and the California Association of Real Estate Educators (among others) in an unofficial capacity. Similarly the Business program stays in close contact with the Local Chamber of Commerce (Email Forkner, 5/2/08).

According to Audrey Trotter (Project Director for the planning grant and liaison to the U.S. Department of Education's Title III Program Officer), Merritt College maintains regular email, telephone, and written communication with the Department of Education. Merritt College was awarded a Strengthening Institutions Part A Title III Planning Grant in 2004 and a one-year extension of the grant through September 2006. Due to this grant, the Program Officer from Title III made one on-site visit to Merritt College during the first year of the planning grant. In addition, Merritt's Research and Planning Officer, grant writer, and Title III Project Director participated in U.S. Department Strengthening Institutions Pre-Application Technical Workshops prior to the submission of our Title III grants in 2006 and in 2008.

Merritt has filed an application for eligibility (twice) which is the first step in applying for the five-year comprehensive development Title III grant. As required for the Title planning grant, mid-year and annual reports were submitted to benchmark progress in achieving grant goals and objectives and to ensure compliance in budgetary expenditures.

Every effort has been made to maintain integrity in our relationship with the Department and to report accurate institutional data (Email Trotter, May 2008).

5. *The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and*

effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

Standard IVB Board and Administrative Organization

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

- 1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.***

Descriptive Summary

The Peralta Community College District consists of four colleges: Berkeley City College, College of Alameda, Laney College, and Merritt College. The governing board of the Peralta Community College District is a seven-member board. Each member is elected from a specific geographic region in North Alameda County and each serves a four-year term. Board member terms are staggered with biennial elections in accordance with California Education Code (Board Policy 1.01). Though elected by geographic region, governing board members represent the interests of all county residents (Board Policy 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior).

Two student trustees are elected by the student body of the four colleges for a one-year term (Board Policy 1.02). On an annual basis the Board of Trustees elects a president and vice president (Board Policy 1.04). The foundational responsibilities of the Board of Trustees vested in them by the voters of Northern Alameda County are to provide the best possible learning experience for students of the four colleges; to assure that the district and its colleges are effectively and efficiently managed; to maintain fair and equitable policies for employees and students of the district and its four colleges; to represent the general interests of the entire college district; to be knowledgeable of and support the mission and philosophy of the California community colleges; and to support the work of the district office and the colleges in meeting the district mission, vision, values, and strategic planning goals (Board Policy 1.05, 1.16, and District-wide Strategic Plan).

The Board of Trustees keeps up-to-date on the district-wide strategic planning process and implementation of the five strategic planning goals; in 2007 approved hiring a consultant (Chuck McIntyre, Computer-Aided Planning) to conduct an extensive external and internal environmental scan to aid in unit planning and educational master planning; approved hiring a consultant (WLC) to assist the district in formulating a district-wide facilities plan; keeps informed of the implementation of the PROMT and PASSPORT components of the PeopleSoft system; and received regular reports in the

2007-2008 academic year on the creation of an updated district-wide educational master plan and college educational master plans. Periodically the board conducts study sessions and workshops to examine key initiatives and provide overall guidance. In addition, the governing board holds formal, posted, and publicized “listening sessions” at each of the four colleges at least once a year to obtain direct input from faculty, staff, students and the public. On a monthly basis, the Board Standard and Management Committee is briefed on accreditation and strategic planning.

The Board of Trustees is regularly updated on the status of district finances. Such reports are provided both at meetings of the Board of Trustees, as well as the meetings of the Board of Trustees Audit and Finance Committee. Reports include an update on the status of state funding and the state budget, the status of the district budget including the district reserve, external audit reports, and expenditure of bond monies. In accordance with state regulations, the board has established a bond oversight committee to directly oversee Measure A funds.

The Board Policy Review Committee with the assistance of General Counsel three years ago began the task of reviewing and updating all board policies and has been regularly forwarding policy revisions to the full-board for review and approval. Board policy has a clearly defined procedure for hiring the Chancellor (Board Policy 1.20) and the college presidents (Board Policy 1.18). In addition, Board Policy delineates the role of the Chancellor (Board Policy 2.05) and the role of the college presidents (Board Policy 2.10).

The Board Facilities and Land Use Committee reviews all facilities action items and land use initiatives prior to review by the full board. This process has allowed for effective oversight by the board.

Annually, the Board of Trustees conducts an evaluation of the Chancellor and the Chancellor evaluates the college presidents. Evaluations are conducted to assure that the job performance of each individual is assessed and communicated to the individuals being evaluated in accordance with established procedure. The review and evaluation process includes an annual performance contract which serves as the basis for the annual performance review of all district administrators, with the governing board solely responsible for the Chancellors review and evaluation. Other performance reviews are presented to the governing board in closed session as part of administrative contract renewal. With the implementation of integrated strategic planning, performance evaluations are correlated with the five district-wide strategic planning goals.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees works together to support the interests of the district and takes an active role in advocating for the interests of the community as a whole. The Board has taken seriously its role in and oversight of integrated strategic planning, an ACCJC recommendation to which the district and colleges have responded on an annual basis. The Board also has taken seriously a

previous ACCJC recommendation not to micromanage and relies on the Chancellor, as the chief administrator, and the college presidents to operate the colleges in accordance with the policies and implementation procedures of the governing board. The board has consistently funded any additional or outside assistance the district and colleges need to write and implement an integrated strategic plan, as well as to update district and college educational master planning, facilities master planning, and technology planning. The board has requested regular reports on the various planning processes. In the process of updating educational master plans, the board has asked the colleges to make monthly presentations at board meetings on programs of distinction and to comment on student and program learning outcomes. With the new California community colleges curriculum approval process, the board receives monthly reports on curriculum changes and individual board members ask pertinent questions regarding curriculum actions.

The Board of Trustees acts as a board of the whole and even when votes are not unanimous individual members honor the decision of the whole.

- a. The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.***

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees is an independent policy-making body. The board president and vice president adhere to their roles and responsibilities as per Board Policy 1.04. The Board of Trustees members adhere to their appropriate roles and responsibilities as per Board Policy 1.05. In this regard, each member of the board works to “base decisions upon all available facts in each situation, vote their honest conviction, and abide by the final majority decision of the board.” (Board Policy 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior). Individual members of the board observe the policies that govern decision making; board members have authority only when acting as a board legally in session.

The Board of Trustees, as outlined in Board Policy 1.10, Meeting of the Board of Trustees, section I, Public Participation, seeks advice and opinions of the community it serves by providing opportunity for “Communication from the Public” at all open sessions of the Board of Trustees and permits public comment on individual board agenda items. (see also, Board Policy 1.11, Standing Rules for Public Hearings). Further, the board in the last couple of years has begun to hold “listening sessions” at the colleges to provide additional opportunity to hear the advice and opinions of the college constituencies. As previously stated, once the Board of Trustees reaches a decision, it acts as a whole.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees acts as a whole to represent the public interest in the four colleges of the district and takes care, through effective policies and transparency, to preclude conflicts of interest.

- a. The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.***

Descriptive Summary

The district per its mission statement, strives to “provide educational leadership to empower our students to achieve their highest aspirations and to become community leaders.” The district envisions meeting the mission “by providing learner centered educational experiences and by being committed to innovation and continuous improvement.” During the process of developing a district-wide strategic plan, an updated mission statement was created emphasizing that “our programs and services enhance the human, economic, and social development of our communities.”

The five strategic planning goals of the district provide for implementing the mission of the district (A: Student Access, Success, and Equity; B: Community and Partner Engagement; C: Programs of Distinction; D: Culture of Innovation and Collaboration; and E: Ensuring Resources to meet our Mission). Board policies related to academic programs (Board Policy Manual, Chapter Five, Educational Services) and student services (Board Policy Manual, Chapter Four, Student Personnel Services), developed and reviewed by the board, are consistent with the district and college mission statements and Title 5 requirements.

The board has adopted the District-wide Strategic Plan comprised of five (5) strategic goals (as noted above), all of which address student learning programs and services and the resources which are necessary to support them and it reaffirmed the strategic plan at a special board workshop, November 27, 2007. The governing board directs the colleges and district staff to compile reports on program review, educational master planning, enrollment, curriculum changes, and programs of distinction.

With the development of a District-wide Strategic Plan and the updating of a district-wide educational master plan and college educational master plans, which are driving the completion of a comprehensive district-wide facilities master plan and a new resource allocation process and calendar, the district under the purview of the Board of Trustees demonstrates its commitment to the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services aligned with the district’s mission, vision, and values.

The board directs the Chancellor to work closely with the college presidents to coordinate resource allocation and to identify short-term and long-term resource needs.

Since September 2006, the Chancellor has been meeting bi-monthly with the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services, the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administrative Services, the Vice Chancellor of General Services, and the four college presidents, as the Strategic Management Team, to ensure ongoing accountability for meeting the mission of the district and to ensure ongoing implementation of district-wide strategic planning and resource allocation based on educational master planning.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees, through the Board Policy Review Committee, for the last three years has been doing a deliberative review of all board policies. One focus of this review is to assure that the district meets its mission, in keeping with the mission of California community colleges, and to ensure quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services. Further, this review of board policies ensures conformance with existing laws, regulations, court interpretations, and best practices. The Board Standards and Management Committee regularly reviews the implementation of strategic planning and receives reports from the colleges regarding accreditation. The Board Audit and Finance Committee receives regular reports regarding the district-wide budget and the state of the State budget providing oversight of resources necessary for student learning programs and services. These board committees report directly to the full board. Through these various processes this standard is met.

b. The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

Descriptive Summary

Final approval and responsibility for educational programs and fiscal integrity of the district rests with the Board of Trustees. As stated in Board Policy 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior, the board works with the Chancellor to “recognize the importance of understanding and evaluating the educational program of the District and of providing long term educational planning,” as well as “shape the direction of the District through strategic planning, setting goals and priorities.” Various board policies in chapter 5 of the Board Policy Manual speak to educational quality. Those policies include: B.P. 5.11, Review Policy for Instructional Program; B.P. 5.12, Articulation Policy for Instructional Programs and Support Services; B.P. 5.15, Code of Instructional Standards; B.P. 5.20, Requirements for Degrees and Certificates; B.P. 5.22, Standards of Scholarship; and B.P. 5.61, Educational Advisory Committees, to name a few.

As mentioned previously, the board is regularly updated on the strategic planning process, educational master planning, programs of distinction, and curriculum changes. The board is also provided the findings of the State Chancellor’s Office Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC).

In conjunction with the chancellor and district general counsel, the board is apprised of, and assumes responsibility for, all legal matters associated with the operation of the colleges and the district office. As needed, the district hires other counsel to take on specific tasks.

The Board of Trustees bears responsibility for monitoring all aspects of the district and college finances. An independent audit of the district's financial statements and accounting practices is made annually by an external auditor and reviewed by the board. The Board Audit and Finance Committee and the full board are regularly updated on the OPEB investments which meet GASB 45 regulations. The board receives an annual report on the financial condition of the district, as required by the state and following the guidelines of the State Chancellor's Office for California Community Colleges.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The Board of Trustees, functioning as an independent body, has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. The board's decisions are made with adherence to federal, state, and local policies and guidelines.

- c. The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.***

Descriptive Summary

Bylaws and policies specifying the governing board's size, duties, responsibilities, structures, and operating procedures are approved by the board and published in the Board Policy Manual: B.P. 1.01, Membership; B.P. 1.02, Student Trustees; B.P. 1.04, Board Officers and Duties; B.P. 1.05, Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees; B.P. 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior; B.P. 1.09, Parliamentary Procedures; B.P. 1.10, Meetings of the Board of Trustees; B.P. 1.11, Standing Rules for Public Hearings; and B.P. 1.21, Committees.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The policies related to this standard are published in the Board Policy Manual which is posted on the district's Web site and available in hard copy at each college in the Office of the President.

- d. The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.***

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees for the Peralta Community College District is charged with establishing broad policies, which govern the operation of the district, and has the expectation that all policies and procedures are followed properly. The Board Policy Manual which contains policies and implementing procedures, as previously noted, is posted on the district Web site and is in the president's office at each of the four colleges. As previously noted, the Board Policy Committee is involved in a process of reviewing and updating all board policies as necessary, a process which began three years ago. Board Policy Committee meetings, as per the Brown Act, are open meetings.

Representatives of the various district constituencies attend these meetings to provide input and recommendations in the review process. In addition, when appropriate, proposed policy revisions are additionally reviewed at other board committees. As the past-president of the board noted, "All board policies are reviewed, discussed, and debated in at least one of the board committees in an open, quasi-informal, and posted forum that includes the various stakeholders, the public, and the media." All revisions to policy are taken to the full board for review and adoption. In the fall of 2007 the board developed a new self-assessment instrument and has taken seriously the need to conduct such a self-assessment.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The current board policies review process the Board Policy Committee has undertaken shows their commitment to meeting this standard.

- e. The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.***

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees has a process for board member development and new member orientation. This process was recently codified as Board Policy XX New Board Member Orientation, and Board Policy XX, Board Development. Individual trustees are expected to regularly attend workshops and forums conducted by the California Community College Trustees (CCCT), the Community College League of California (CCLC), and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) for professional development and to keep current on issues and trends effecting post-secondary education. Board membership and staggered terms of office is stated in B.P. 1.01, Membership.

The president of the governing board, the chair of the Board Standards and Management Committee, and the Chancellor formally meet, on a semi-annual basis with congressional senators and representatives and with senior staff of the Federal Departments of Education, Labor, Homeland Security, Health and Welfare, Justice, and the National Science Foundation to advocate for initiatives and programs on behalf of the Peralta colleges. These representatives meet with the district's Washington, D.C. lobbyist on a regular basis, either in person or by telephone conference call, to define and refine strategies to pursue legislative earmarks and federal grants.

Board members and the Chancellor also meet with State of California legislators, agency staffs, and the district's State lobbyist to advocate on behalf of the four Peralta colleges and California Community Colleges in general. Individual board members are expected to "carry the flag" of the Peralta colleges at a broad array of functions and forums within the district's service area. Board members also visit other community colleges to gain insight into best practices which can be adopted by the Peralta district.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

- f. The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.***

Descriptive Summary

In the past, the board held a fall semester board retreat which served as a team building session and an opportunity for informal self-assessment. In fall 2007, the board officially engaged in a formal self-assessment process. The self-assessment instrument focused on board organization and leadership, board policy, community relations and advocacy, board-chancellor relations, standards for operations and performance of the Peralta district, and board education. These areas were responded to using a Likert scale of evaluation. Open ended questions addressed board strengths, accomplishments, areas in need of improvement, board operation, and setting board goals. The process was officially codified as Board Policy XX, Board Self-Evaluation Policy.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. With the initiation of an official self-evaluation process in fall 2007 and the codification of this process into board policy, the college and district came into compliance with this accreditation standard.

g. The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 1.06, Board of Trustees Code of Ethics and Behavior, details the expectation of board members' behaviors. The policy covers a range of topics including confidentiality of information discussed in closed session, to work in harmony and cooperation with other board members when there is a difference of opinion, base decisions on the available facts, and to resist use of the position of trustee for personal gain.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. The current board of trustees works to be collegial, collaborative, and professional

h. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.

Descriptive Summary

The Board of Trustees has been informed and involved in the accreditation process through regular reports from the Chancellor, vice chancellors, and college presidents. As is well known, the four Peralta colleges have filed annual progress reports with ACCJC, as well as a focused mid-term report, since the time of the last accreditation site visit. So in this regard, the board has probably received more reports than many other governing boards regarding district and college efforts to meet the accreditation standards.

Various reports have been provided to the board on integrated strategic planning, educational master planning, resource allocation, student learning outcomes and programs of distinction, facilities master planning, technology planning, and many others. Based on board response to the various reports provided, it is evident that the board takes the accreditation process seriously and wants to be knowledgeable of all the work that is being done to meet accreditation standards. Board members have seriously reviewed progress reports and the focused mid-term reports and have reviewed this accreditation self-study. The governing board assumes full responsibility for ensuring that all ACCJC recommendations for "corrective action" are effectively and efficiently responded to in a timely manner. Further the board has taken an active role in writing the responses to Standard IV.B. a-j, which pertain to the governing board.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

- j. The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively.***

In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.

Descriptive Summary

The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and hiring the Chancellor of the district per B.P. 1.20, Chancellor Selection. This procedure was adopted in 2005. The board conducts annual evaluations of the Chancellor in closed session. The role and responsibilities of the Chancellor are outlined in B.P. 2.05, The District Chancellor/Superintendent, and the role and responsibilities of the college presidents are outlined in B.P. 2.10, College Presidents. The selection process for college presidents is outlined in B.P. 1.18, Management Hiring Policy.

The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to the chancellor to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds the chancellor accountable for operation of the district. The governing board has taken seriously a previous ACCJC recommendation to not micromanage the district and has charged the chancellor with full responsibility for administering the district. The Chancellor in meeting the charge of the board meets twice a month with his Strategic Management Team, comprised of the three vice chancellors and the four college presidents. These meetings provide the forum for addressing district strategic and educational planning and for providing and maintaining quality educational programs and services for the community.

Self Evaluation

The college meets this standard. Procedures are in place for the selection and evaluation of the Chancellor and the college presidents. These procedures have been followed, clearly and successfully, in the hiring of all chief executive officers since their approval. The board has and upholds a policy for delegation of authority.