

EVALUATION REPORT

**HARTNELL COLLEGE
156 Homestead Avenue
Salinas, California 93901**

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

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited Hartnell
College from March 19 to March 22, 2007**

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**Comprehensive Evaluation Visiting Team Roster
Hartnell College
March 19-22, 2007**

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Summary of the Evaluation Report

Institution: Hartnell College

Dates of Visit: March 19-22, 2007

Team Chair: Dr. Chris McCarthy
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A nine-member accreditation team visited Hartnell College from March 19-22, 2007 for the purpose of evaluating the institution's request to reaffirm accreditation.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair attended a training session on January 18, 2007, and the chair and the team attended a training session on February 6, 2007.

The institution's self study was received five weeks prior to the visit. The team found elements of the self study to be challenging. Self Evaluation sections sometimes strayed from the standards being addressed, and planning agenda items did not always correlate with the self evaluations. Sections of the report would have benefited from careful editing.

In the Eligibility Requirements section, the college did not provide direct evidence that it meets some eligibility requirements; rather, the report simply listed the eligibility requirements as presented by ACCJC, with the name of Hartnell College inserted in some passages. The team noted that the college clearly does not meet Eligibility Requirement 8, which relates to Student Learning Outcomes.

The Academic Senate did not sign off on the official self study. Three days before the visit, the team received an Academic Senate response to the self study, which disputed a variety of statements contained in the official document.

In determining their response to Hartnell College's application for reauthorization of accreditation, the team analyzed the self study and supporting documents, reviewed the report of the previous team; held on-campus meetings with individuals and groups; scheduled a public meeting with the Board of Trustees; conducted open sessions to provide access to any member of the college or community; and visited off-campus sites at King City, East Campus and Natividad Medical Center. A summary of major findings follows.

Commendations

The team found much to commend at Hartnell College. The college is commended for the construction of its new library and learning resources building. The building has spaces for quiet study, group study rooms, single computer stations, grouped computer stations and traditional library tables. Casual seating is strategically paced to take

advantage of natural light and external landscape views. The combination of colors, materials and natural light create a welcoming atmosphere conducive to learning. With its state-of-the-art technology and elegant design, it is a rich addition to the college campus and sets a high standard for future construction

The team applauds the community for funding Measure H, and we commend the manner in which the college has moved their facilities projects forward. The team is impressed with the way the college has developed a Nursing partnership at Natividad Medical Center and the manner in which they have served King City. We commend the design, the technology and student friendly atmosphere of the new Library. We applaud the Agriculture partnership, the Admissions and Records Lab, and the Executive Information System. We commend the Student Services area for the creation of Student Learning Outcomes.

The team found hope for the future in the passion of Hartnell College employees, who were helpful and cheerful and who clearly exhibit a dream of what the college can become. The administrators, faculty and staff often represent the best qualities that we find in community colleges: they are dedicated to students, and they care deeply about the power of education to transform lives.

Recommendations

The team is making seven recommendations as the result of this visit. While this report shares suggestions in a variety of areas, these overriding concerns have caused them to stand alone.

First, the team believes that an ongoing, collegial, self reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes is essential if the college is to move beyond the dislocation it has experienced and fully realize its potential. This conversation must have the foundation of a shared set of ethical considerations which will inform the way in which this dialogue takes place. The accreditation standards call for a written code of professional ethics for all personnel, which has yet to be developed by Hartnell College. This code could serve as a guide for facilitating such a dialogue. Therefore, the team recommends the following, which addresses our current concern as well as a recommendation made by the 2000 visiting team:

Recommendation 1. The team recommends that the college develop a professional ethics code for all personnel and use it as a foundation for conducting an ongoing, collegial, self reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes, including the governance process. (Standards I.B.1; III.A.1.d; IV.A.1)

The self study attests that planning processes at the college are not fully linked to resource allocation, and that program review does not yet fully contribute to the planning

and budgeting process. In response to this need, the team makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2. The team recommends that college constituencies agree upon and implement an ongoing, systematic, integrated process for program review, planning, budgeting and hiring, and that a means be developed to communicate decisions made in those arenas back to the campus at large. (Standards I.B.3; I.B.5; III.A.6; III.B.2.b; III.C.2; III.D.1.a; III.D.2; III.D.2.b)

The team has commended the college for the construction of a new library and the planned construction of additional new buildings. However, it is clear that long-range planning that addresses staffing, providing technology support and maintaining those buildings will be critical. Therefore, the team recommends the following:

Recommendation 3. The team recommends that a planning process be completed that will address the needs for staffing and maintenance in new buildings and for technology support in both new and existing buildings. (Standards I.B.3; I.B.4; I.B.6; III.A.2; III.A.6; III.B.1.a; III.B.1.b; III.B.2; III.2.a; III.B.2.b; III.C.1.c; III.C.2)

The development of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) in the instructional program is overdue. The team has commended the Student Services Program for making significant progress in development of SLO's, and the initial work performed in the instructional area is of high quality. However, only fourteen instructional courses have developed SLO's, and they have yet to be developed at the program level. The assessment of SLO's at all levels needs to be addressed. This is a matter that is tied to eligibility requirements as well as standards of good practice. Therefore, the team makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 4. The team recommends that the college engages in a broad-based dialogue that leads to:

- The identification of Student Learning Outcomes at the course and program levels; and
- Regular assessment of student progress toward achievement of these outcomes. (Standards II.A.1.c; II.A.2.a; II.A.2.b; II.A.2.e; II.A.2.f; II.A.2.g; II.A.2.h; II.A.2.i; II.A.3)

Since the 2000 accreditation visit, the college has put in place the curriculum review and approval processes required to update, delete, and add courses and programs. However, the ability to move the college's significant backlog of curriculum through its approval processes was significantly impacted by the cessation of committee meetings during the faculty's work-to-contract and strike periods in 2006. To date, 55% of the curriculum identified by the 2000 accreditation team as needing review for revision or deletion has not been addressed. One result of this lengthy delay in addressing outdated curriculum has been to keep old courses and programs that are no longer being offered in the college catalog, causing confusion and frustration for students who wish to take specific courses or enter programs. Therefore, the team recommends the following:

Recommendation 5. The team recommends that the college complete the review and revision of all course outlines and ensure that the catalog information regarding currently offered courses and programs is accurate. (Standard II.A.2.c, II.A.6.c).

The team is concerned about a recent pattern of declining enrollments and deficit spending. We are aware that efforts have been made to address immediate fiscal needs by leaving vacant positions unfilled and by shifting positions to grant funds. The college has created an Enrollment Management Team (EMT), responsible for recommending strategies for creating new efficiencies in scheduling and developing enrollment management recommendations. The team believes that this effort should be enhanced and integrated with existing campus offices that can provide data that will assist it in developing ways to address the enrollment shortfall. The creation of a long range fiscal stability/enrollment management effort, which utilizes the services of the Office Business and Finance, the Office of Instruction, Admissions and Records, Student Services, Outreach Services and other college resources, is vital to ensuring that enrollments are maintained and long term fiscal stability is attained. Therefore, the team offers the following:

Recommendation 6. The team recommends the creation of an enhanced long range fiscal stability/enrollment management effort, which utilizes the services of the Offices of Business and Finance, Instruction, Admissions and Records, Student Services, Outreach Services and other appropriate college resources. (Standards III.D.1.a; III.D.1.b; III.D.1.c; III.D.2.c)

Finally, the team is deeply concerned about the way in which some members of the Board of Trustees have represented the public in a manner that is not in keeping with appropriate established board protocols. The team believes that the board has not acted with the collegiality expected of a publicly elected body, and it has not performed in accord with the accreditation standard that mandates that once the board has made a decision, it acts as a whole. The Board appears to have not been fully engaged in the accreditation process. The Board has not yet developed a policy for procedures to deal with ethical sanctions. Therefore, the team offers the following recommendation:

Recommendation 7. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees completes their Ethics Policy by developing procedures for sanctioning those who commit ethical violations, and that they develop a comprehensive trustee development plan that provides training focused upon appropriate board behavior, roles and responsibilities. (Standards IV.B.B.1.a; IV.B.1.e; IV.B.1.f; IV.B.1.g; IV.B.1.h)

Response to Recommendations from the 2000 Visiting Team

In analyzing the college response to recommendations made during the last evaluation visit, the team found that three of the five previous recommendations have not been fully addressed.

Recommendation 1. Course outlines not in compliance with state requirements must be updated immediately to ensure transferability and accuracy of course content. (Former Standard 4.D.4)

In 2000, the visiting team recommended that all course outlines be updated to ensure transferability and the accuracy of course content. The self study attests, and the team has confirmed, that the college has not updated the majority of course outlines, some of which lack grading standards and current content. Over the last six years, the college has updated or deleted only 45% of the course outlines. This recommendation has not been met and remains a critical need. Therefore, the team offers a new recommendation, listed above as Recommendation 5, which addresses the completion of this task.

Recommendation 2. Conduct a systematic review and evaluation of information and learning resources, with linkages to the budget planning process. (Standards 6.5, 6.7)

This recommendation has been partially addressed. While review and evaluation of information and learning resources has been accomplished, linkage to the budget planning process has yet to be realized.

Library and learning resources services were evaluated in an administrative program review of the Administrative Information Systems and Library Services department in 2005. Within the library, the staff annually review the number of books purchased for each discipline. They use this information to plan for the following year. However, it is unclear how this administrative services review is linked to the budget process at the institutional level.

The Technology Master Planning Committee has conducted a systematic review and evaluation of information and learning resources. The results of that review and evaluation are contained in the Hartnell College Technology Plan approved on April 9, 2004. A current draft revision of the plan is being developed by the Technology Master Planning Committee. The current draft cites Activity Cross References that include the Educational and Facilities Master Plan, Matriculation Committee minutes, Associated Students minutes, Datatel CORE minutes and other documents. In addition, the institution has very successfully collaborated on and built a beautiful new Library and Learning Resource Center with technology that will provide state-of-the-art services to students for many years to come. This part of the recommendation that has been aimed at review of technology resources has been addressed.

The part of this recommendation that has not been addressed is the linkage of the review and evaluation of information resources to the budget planning process. In the current Accreditation Self Study, the institution admits “the College has no plan or line item budget for replacing this equipment” (Standard II.A2.d) and “The lack of budgetary support for maintaining campus technology has been an ongoing problem that has been identified repeatedly in shared governance committees as a major problem for the

College but as of yet remains unsolved due to continuing budget constraints. This problem impacts student learning from delays in replacing projector bulbs in classrooms to incompatible equipment in classrooms.” (Standard III.C1.c)

The team offers a recommendation, listed above as Recommendation 2, which incorporates this concern into the need to link budgeting to all institutional program review and planning efforts.

Recommendation 3. Develop procedures to systematically ensure the evaluation of part time faculty (Standard 7)

An evaluation method for part-time faculty has been established and is being utilized. This recommendation has been addressed.

Recommendation 4. Implement the management evaluation procedure (Standard 10)

A management evaluation procedure is in place and fully implemented. Managers have been evaluated using the procedure. This recommendation has been addressed.

Recommendation 5. The board, administration, faculty staff and students need to reach a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all constituencies in institutional governance[s]. To ensure the integrity of educational programs and services, the college must implement process[es] for curriculum approval, instruction, student services, information and learning resources, budgeting, and administrative, faculty, staff and students.(Standard 10)

The college should clearly determine the appropriate role of the College Council in institutional governance. (November 2002 Visit)

The 2000 team recommended that the board, faculty, staff and students need to reach a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all constituencies in institutional governance. We find that there is still considerable question, and that there is some frustration, about this issue. Constituents report a lack of transparency in the decision-making process, confusion about how governance recommendations are considered when decisions are made, and a need for greater communication to the campus at large about the rationale for decisions.

The ongoing nature of this problem is of serious concern. The team is aware that this recommendation appeared in 1994. In January, 2001, David Wolf, Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission referenced the importance of this issue in a letter to the institution. We believe that the college still has work to do to ensure that this recommendation is met, and we offer Recommendation 1, listed above, to assist in clarifying the roles of individuals and constituent groups in college governance processes, to ensure that the improvement of the student learning environment is at the heart of campus discussions, and to improve the communication climate of the campus.

Introduction

Founded in 1920, Hartnell College is a comprehensive community college serving the Salinas Valley in Monterey and San Benito Counties. Hartnell College currently operates four sites: Salinas Main Campus, Salinas East Campus, the King City Education Center, and Natividad Medical Center. The college draws students from Salinas; the communities of Bradley, Castroville, Chualar, Greenfield, Jolon, King City, Lockwood, Moss Landing, San Ardo, San Lucas, Soledad; and adjacent rural areas. The current population of the district is over 255,000 people.

The Hartnell Community College District serves a population that is mostly minority, low income, with limited educational attainment. In 2005, 71% of the students were minority, 57% were Latinos, 41% were non-native English speakers, 61% were first-generation college students, and nearly 60% received some form of financial aid. The number of Full Time Equivalent Students (FTES) has decreased from 6,903 in 2001-02 to 6,409 in 2005-06.

The last comprehensive accreditation visit took place in fall 2000. An interim report was submitted in 2001, followed by an interim visit. Another progress report was completed a year later, in October 2002, followed by an evaluation team visit in November of that year. The college submitted a Focused Midterm Report in October 2003, which was followed by a Focused Midterm Visit.

In the years leading up to this accreditation visit, Hartnell College experienced several major changes. The college has experienced a decline in student enrollment, which has resulted in a decrease in state funding of \$1.6 million from their base allocation. However, in 2002, Hartnell College succeeded in passing a \$131,000,000 facilities bond, Measure H. Those funds have led to the construction of a new Library and Learning Resource Center and a new parking structure on the main campus. Additional projects are planned. Construction of a 12,000 square foot facility in King City was completed in 2002 to serve the residents of south Monterey County. The nursing program is housed at the Natividad Medical Center.

Hartnell College began organizing for the 2006 Accreditation Self Study in February 2005 with the appointment of the Accreditation Steering Committee. Oversight Teams were assigned to support the self study for each of the standards. Team members included representatives from administration, faculty and classified staff. Students also participated on several of the teams. In addition, seven representative teams worked on the sub-sections of standards three and four. Early committee meetings included participation by faculty members.

However, stalled contract negotiations led to a “work to contract” action starting in January 2006, which lasted approximately one year. During that time, faculty did not perform campus duties outside of their teaching responsibilities. As a result, faculty did

not fully participate in the development of the Self Study, and the Academic Senate did not sign off on the Self Study. The work to contract stance also slowed the progress of activities such as curriculum review and revision, development of Student Learning Outcomes, professional development, and participation in governance decision-making.

A faculty strike in the fall of 2006 lasted five days. While salary issues were finally negotiated, it is clear that the strike had a continuing impact upon the institution. When the team arrived in March of 2007, the communication climate appeared to be improving, and campus life was beginning to return to normal, but tensions were still apparent.

One week prior to accreditation visit, the superintendent/president announced that he would be retiring on June 30, 2007.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Hartnell College is one of the 109 colleges that operate as part of the California Community Colleges system. The college was last accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in 2000.

2. Mission

The evaluation team confirmed that Hartnell College's mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 28, 1998 and reconfirmed on June 6, 2006. The mission states that Hartnell is "responsive to the learning needs of our community," but does not include a specific commitment to achieving student learning.

3. Governing Board

The Hartnell College Board of Trustees is a seven member body elected from seven geographic areas within the district. A student trustee is elected by the student body to serve a one year term. The team confirmed that the Board makes policy for the district and exercises oversight of its operations. Board members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The board adheres to a conflict of interest policy.

4. Chief Executive Officer

Hartnell College's superintendent/president was appointed by the Board of Trustees in 1995. His full time responsibility is to guide the college.

4. Administrative Capacity

The evaluation team determined that Hartnell College has sufficient staff with appropriate preparation and experience to operate the college.

5. Operational Status

The evaluation team certifies that Hartnell College is fully operational, with students actively pursuing its degree programs.

7. Degrees

The evaluation team certifies that a substantial portion of Hartnell College's educational offerings lead to degrees. According to the Office of Research and Planning, a significant proportion of students are enrolled in degree programs or preparing to transfer to a four-year institution.

8. Educational Programs

The team confirms that Hartnell College's degree programs are congruent with its mission, are based on recognized higher education fields of study, are of sufficient content and length, and are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the

degrees offered, although they do not yet culminate in identified student outcomes. The college has not completed the task of identifying and assessing student learning outcomes. Therefore, students are not required to show evidence of identified achievement outcomes to complete courses, degrees, and certificates.

9. Academic Credit

Hartnell College awards academic credit in a manner conventional for California community colleges and consistent with generally accepted good practice.

10. Student Learning and Achievement

The evaluation team examined course outlines, syllabi, and the college catalog and found that the college does not define or publish expected student learning and achievement outcomes for its programs. Nor has the college developed regular and systematic assessment that demonstrates student achievement of outcomes. However, the college has done high quality initial work developing, assessing, analyzing course outcomes and using the results to make improvements in course outcomes across 14 courses from different disciplines.

11. General Education

The institution defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. The general education component includes demonstrated competence in writing and computational skills and an introduction to some of the major areas of knowledge. While the college has identified three program level Student Learning Outcomes in General Education. Course level SLO's are not complete. Degree credit for general education programs is consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

12. Academic Freedom

The evaluation team verifies that faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic community in general. The college has an Academic Freedom policy.

13. Faculty

Hartnell College had 117 (2005-2006) full-time faculty members with expertise and training consistent with the needs of the college educational programs. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities which includes development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning is contained in the Faculty Association agreement.

14. Student Services

The evaluation team reviewed the student services provided by Hartnell College and found them to be consistent with the needs of the student body and the college mission statement.

15. Admissions

The evaluation team found Hartnell College admissions criteria and requirements in the college catalog, schedule of classes and on the college's website. The policies are consistent with those required of California community colleges.

16. Information and Learning Resources

The evaluation team found that information and learning resources are sufficient to support the current courses and programs offered in all formats and locations.

17. Financial Resources

The institution has a funding base that is currently adequate to support its programs and services. However, college reserves have fallen from 19% to 6.6% over the past five years, the 2006 salary negotiation has resulted in a significant funding shortfall, enrollments have been in general decline, and an investigation by the Financial Crisis Management Advisory team (FCMAT) projected that the college could fall into a negative fund balance situation within two years of their April, 2006 report. The institution has received unqualified audits, with some reportable matters that have been quickly addressed. The college is in the process of enhancing their Budget Committee process and ensuring that campus constituents receive adequate financial information.

18. Financial Accountability

External financial audits are performed annually at Hartnell College. These are conducted by a certified public accountant and are made available to the public.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

Hartnell College evaluates how well and in what ways the college is accomplishing its purposes through internal reports, reports to the California Community College Chancellor's Office and other internal and external reports. The team finds evidence of widespread planning. Much work remains to develop student learning outcomes at the course, program and college levels before the college can evaluate and make those outcomes public. The team also finds that the college needs to integrate its planning process and develop links between planning and resource allocation.

20. Public Information

Hartnell College has a college catalog, class schedules, supplemental publications and web-based information that provide information about requirements, major policies affecting students, and general information about the college. However, the team has noted that significantly outdated courses and programs appear in the college catalog, and it has offered a recommendation in response.

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The team finds that Hartnell College has deviated from the commission's eligibility requirements and standards. The team noted that three of the previous team's recommendations have not been fully addressed. The Hartnell College President, President of the Board of Trustees, Vice President/Assistant Superintendent, and

President of the Associated Student Body signed the self study. The Academic Senate President did not sign the self study. The college has disclosed information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.

Standard I

Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

General Comments

The college's most recent Mission Statement was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 2, 1998 and reaffirmed on June 6, 2006. The college plans on reviewing the Mission Statement through the shared governance structure during the next accreditation cycle.

The college has made efforts toward improving institutional effectiveness through the utilization of data and research results for planning and assessment purposes. Since the last accreditation visit, improvements have been made in the areas of research, planning and institutional assessments. However, the team found that the constituents at Hartnell College continue to face challenges in developing an on-going, effective dialogue centered on student learning, institutional effectiveness, and in implementing a comprehensive planning process that will help the college achieve the levels of excellence to which the institution aspires.

Since the last accreditation visit, the Planning Committee has updated the Educational and Facilities Master Plan, a new program evaluation process was developed and a full cycle of review has been completed. The Planning Committee, Budget Committee, Program and Services Review Committee, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Work Group, Enrollment Management Committee, Management Team, Technology Master Planning Committee, and the Hiring Committee are among those involved in various aspects of institutional assessment and planning efforts.

The Office of Research and Planning conducts extensive research to support assessment and planning, develops and administers a wide range of surveys, and supports many of the college's planning efforts. The college is commended for the recent implementation of the Executive Information System (EIS), a valuable tool which should be used to support all levels of planning, decision making, and assessment of programs and services.

The team acknowledges the efforts of the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Work Group in leading the college's efforts to define, develop, and assess student learning outcomes. This dedicated group reports that fewer than 20 courses have completed student learning outcomes. The college faces much work ahead to complete this important task.

I.A Mission

Findings and Evidence

The college has adopted a Mission Statement that focuses on ensuring “that all students have equal access to a quality education and the opportunity to pursue and achieve their goals.” The college regularly surveys community members and students to determine their learning needs. The college develops and revises its student learning programs and services through its Curriculum Committee and Student Services Council (Standard I.A.1).

The current Mission Statement was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 2, 1998 and reaffirmed on June 6, 2006. The Mission Statement is published in the college catalog, schedule of classes, and Educational and Facilities Master Plan. It is also available on the college website (Standard I.A.2).

The college community reviewed the Mission Statement before it was reaffirmed by the Board of Trustees on June 6, 2006. While some felt that the review was a thorough and genuine discussion, others believed that the review could have benefited from more time for reflection and continued refinement (Standard I.A.3).

The college’s Educational and Facilities Master Plan begins with the Mission Statement. The Mission Statement is also mentioned repeatedly, in whole or in part, throughout the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan (Standard I.A.4)

I.B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

Findings and Evidence

The team found that Hartnell College has made progress in its use of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis on an ongoing cycle of evaluation. While planning efforts are not fully integrated, individuals and committees recognize the need for a systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation. Procedures are in place to assist the college in its efforts to verify and improve overall effectiveness of the programs, services, and institutional processes.

The college states in the abstract of its self study that “dialogue is a core value at Hartnell College.” Individual college committees and units engage in frequent discussions about student learning and institutional processes; however, little action has been taken in this regard and important discussions involving the entire institution are not occurring. The team found that there has been little meaningful dialogue or any significant improvement in student learning. In contrast, the team found that the long standing conflicts among faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees continue as part of the culture of the college. Collegial conversations have not occurred, making it difficult for the institution to work as a team to address the serious issues that have faced the college over the past

years. Issues such as declining enrollments, budget shortfalls, changing community and student demographics, and the development of SLO's, all of which impact the viability of the college, need to be thoroughly understood and examined by the entire college community. The college has not come together as a community to discuss common solutions to the problems it faces or to develop goals and institutional strategies to achieve those goals. The dialogue issues were compounded during 2006, when the faculty withdrew from participating in committees. During that time productive communication broke down completely and resumed just prior to the team visit. (Standard I.B.1.)

The college is committed to ongoing planning and has a number of planning processes in place. Hartnell College establishes institution level goals in three major planning documents. These plans are guided by the college's mission statement and vision. The major planning document is the Educational and Facilities Master Plan, which is updated every two years. This plan is a combination of the goals established by individual units and departments, the Technology Master Plan Team, and the Enrollment Management Team. The Planning Committee establishes annual priorities, requesting input from the college. The Planning Committee's priorities are used by the Budget Committee to help guide the disbursement of block grant funds. The Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan identifies the institution level goals/outcomes in measurable terms and how the outcomes will be assessed. To date, the assessments have not been completed. The team found that many, but not all of the college's goals are written in measurable terms. In addition to these college goals, the Board of Trustees and President establish the President's Annual Goals. (Standard I.B.2.)

Since the last self study in 2000, the college developed and has refined program review processes for instructional programs, student services programs, and administrative programs. Nearly all of the college's programs and services have participated in the process, which is designed to evaluate and plan at the unit level. The reviews have led to improvements in programs and services. However, program review processes are not directly linked to the college's institutional planning and budget processes. (Standards I.B.6, I.B.7)

The team finds that evaluation and planning are linked. There is a commitment to the use of data, research, and analysis to guide the planning and decision-making processes. The Office of Research and Planning has conducted a wide range of surveys and produces the fact book, which are used to guide planning and decision making. Both quantitative and qualitative data are made available to the college community. The office analyzes and interprets data and the survey results in detailed reports for use in planning. Summaries are distributed widely to inform the entire college community. In 2003, the college developed the Institutional Research Agenda, a six year plan that lists 56 projects that support various college initiatives. In addition the college's Executive Information System provides data that is useful for evaluation and planning at all levels. The college identified the need to strengthen the link between planning and budgeting. The planning committee identified the need to design a more comprehensive process for linking all levels of college planning to the budgeting process. At the time of the team visit, the

budget committee was beginning to provide more detailed information to the college units to help them prepare budgets to better address their unit level plans and priorities. Since 2003, when the college began to experience budget reductions, the process for allocating funds to support goals has not been clear to the college community. (Standards I.B.2., I.B.3., I.B.4., I.B.6)

The team finds that the college has not been budgeting resources to support many of its critical plans. For example, the Technology Plan is a comprehensive document that has been thoughtfully and thoroughly prepared and modified over a period of years to identify equipment, software, technical support, training, and replacement needs for the colleges growing acquisitions. While most of the equipment has been purchased with grant funds and bond funds associated with new construction, the college has not developed a funding plan to provide for the related costs. The college has not budgeted for building maintenance and staffing costs associated with new bond construction projects. In addition, the team finds that there are perceptions on campus that budget decisions are not based on the college's plans. The team believes that the college should develop mechanisms that make the budget decision making process more transparent to the college community and to explain the basis of budget decisions. (Standard I.B.3.)

The planning process at Hartnell College is broad-based and there are opportunities for input and involvement in planning. The Planning Committee is a shared governance committee that includes representatives for each constituent group. Other committees also contribute to planning efforts including Program and Services Review Committee, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Work Group, Enrollment Management Team, Technology Planning Team, and others. The team observed that the college's various institutional effectiveness efforts are not clearly connected and the overall efforts are not well understood throughout the college community. The research and planning results are communicated through research briefs, planning reports, the college website and other documents. The communications with the constituencies outside of the college are not as effective. When the office of Research and Planning completes the assessment of outcomes, the college will have the information needed to communicate institutional quality to its public. (Standards I.B.4., I.B.5.)

Conclusions

The college addresses the standard on the use of its Mission Statement to guide the establishment of student learning programs and services. It responds to the standards on the approval, adoption, review and dissemination of a Mission Statement. It also addresses the standard on making the Mission Statement central to institutional planning and decision-making. (Standards I.A.1, I.A.2, I.A.3, I.A.4)

The college has done a good job in addressing most of the areas within this standard on Institutional Effectiveness Program review, and planning processes have been established and implemented. Progress has been made in the area of research and analysis to guide planning and decision making. EIS is available to support evaluation, planning, and decision making. However the college needs to streamline and further integrate its

planning efforts and does not meet all of the standards related to institutional effectiveness. (Standards I.B.2; I.B.3; I.B.4)

Hartnell College does not maintain on-going, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. The team believes that Hartnell College needs to direct its conversations toward student learning, which must be at the heart of their dialogue. If the college is to improve institutional effectiveness it must find ways to build effective communication and to put the students and student learning first and foremost in all of their endeavors. The college desperately needs to engage in discussions aimed at the serious issues it faces. The team believes that the lack of effective communication is one of the most serious issues that the college needs to address. (Standard I.B.1)

The team found the college is conscientious in its institutional planning efforts and that it is working toward assessment of the goals on a regular basis. The college devotes a lot of effort in program review, unit level planning, institutional planning, and college level plans. The team agrees with the college's analysis in the self study which concludes that college plans are not integrated and the allocation of resources are not clearly linked to established plans and goals. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4)

The team observed that significant effort is expended on planning. Within the broader college community there is uncertainty as to the roles of the committees, possible duplication of effort, and limited accountability among the various committees. The team suggests that the college examine the committee structure, assess the need for all of the committees, and consider streamlining the various planning groups to be more efficient. The process may be unnecessarily complicated. (Standard I.B.4)

The college has developed the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan, but due to cutbacks in the office of research and planning, the final assessment has not been completed. The team encourages the college to complete the report and to communicate information about institutional quality to the public. (Standard I.B.5)

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. The team recommends that the college develop a professional ethics code for all personnel and use it as a foundation for conducting an ongoing, collegial, self reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes, including the governance process. (Standards I.B.1, III.A.1.d, IV.A.1)

Recommendation 2. The team recommends that college constituencies agree upon and implement an ongoing, systematic, integrated process for program review, planning, budgeting and hiring, and that a means be developed to communicate decisions made in those arenas back to the campus at large. (Standards I.B.3; I.B.5; III.A.6; III.B.2.b; III.C.2; III.D.1.a; III.D.2; III.D.2.b)

Recommendation 3. The team recommends that a planning process be completed that will address the needs for staffing and maintenance in new buildings and for technology support in both new and existing buildings. (Standards I.B.3; I.B.4; I.B.6; III.A.2; III.A.6; III.B.1.a; III.B.1.b; III.B.2; III.2.a; III.B.2.b; III.C.1.c; III.C.2)

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Services

General Comments

Hartnell College is a comprehensive community college offering a wide variety of general education, vocational, basic skills, and transfer courses, including 56 associate degree programs and 41 certificates. The college offers courses at its main campus, East campus, King City Center, and Natividad Medical Center, as well as a variety of outreach locations. In recent years, the college has experienced a major decline in enrollment due in part to changing community demographics, shifts in local business and industry employment opportunities, and a decrease in college resources. These changes have impacted the type and number of course offerings needed to serve students in the areas of basic skills, and vocational and transfer programs, as well as the methods in which courses are presented.

Hartnell College actively recruits and supports students from diverse backgrounds. The majority of the students are Latino, which corresponds to the demographics of the Salinas Valley. In spite of the recent strife between the Board and administration and the faculty and administration, Student Services focuses on carrying out its mission of ensuring that “all students shall have equal access to a quality education and the opportunity to pursue and achieve their goals” (college mission statement). Student Service’s mission statement supports the college mission to “recruit, retain, graduate and transfer students/ Student Services assesses student support services using program review, student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures to improve the effectiveness of these services.

The quality of student services is assured through the program review process and the Student Services Council, which is composed of the managers and lead staff and faculty of the various programs. The Student Services Council meets weekly under the leadership of the vice president of Student Services, who has been in her position at the college for thirteen years. The program review process for Student Services, called the P.E.E.R. (Productivity, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Responsiveness) has been underway for ten years. The P.E.E.R. process was developed with student services faculty and staff input and is well organized and complete. Student success data and student satisfaction surveys are used to evaluate program effectiveness in the program review process.

All services are under the administrative purview of the vice president of student services and include Admissions and Records, Matriculation, Counseling, Financial Aid, counseling for athletes, Disabled Student Programs and Services, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services, Veterans and re-entry services, Child Development Center, Student Activities and student government, Transfer Center, and the Trio, Gear-up, and Americorps grants. The student services leadership has a goal of offering services in a One Stop environment and increasing the self service opportunities for students to access services. Learning Resources services are under the direction of the director of Learning Resources Center, who reports to the vice president of instruction. Services are offered to

all students at the main campus in Salinas, and to a limited degree at King City and at East Campus. Tutoring is offered at the main campus in the Learning Resources Center, but not at King City or East campus. An on line component is in development. Very limited services from EOPS and DSPS are offered at King City and East campus. The college does not offer Health Services, but does have Crisis Counseling.

Online services are also available to students. Information about the college is available on the website, but information for students is not easily located. Through Datatel, the web based software program used by the college for all human resources, finance, and student administration system functions, "Web Advisor", an on line portal, was developed for students (and renamed PAWS) three years ago. Students are able to apply on line, and view financial aid information and information such as the class schedule for the semester, grades, and transcripts through PAWS. The student educational plan is electronic, but at this time is only available on an internal drive with access by counselors. The Admissions Office also has a nine station computer lab which gives students the opportunity of applying on line and applying for financial aid. Computer stations are also available in King City for self service functions. These computers are all accessible for students with disabilities. The counseling department provides on line advising and on line orientation through an online course, Counseling 31 (which is also offered by lecture, in English or Spanish). Information about how to enroll is also offered in a small pamphlet in both English and Spanish.

Telephone registration is also available to students. This is the most frequently used means of enrollment. The manager of enrollment services believes that this may be because many students' first language is Spanish, and they may feel more comfortable on the telephone speaking to a bi-lingual staff member, rather than using a computer, which has minimal access in Spanish.

Student Services is actively engaged in "building the pipeline" to education, that is, providing early outreach to elementary and middle schools and offering outreach, assessment, financial aid information and assistance and counseling at the 15 feeder high schools. Two years ago Student Services started the "Early Admit Program" to high school seniors in order to increase enrollment. The Early Admit Program provides an opportunity for students to complete all steps of the registration and enrollment process at the high school. The program has increased the percentage of high school students choosing to come to Hartnell and addressed the lowered enrollment of the past few years. Outreach services are planned by the Enrollment Management Committee, which is in the process of becoming a shared governance committee.

II.A Instructional Programs

Findings and Evidence

Hartnell College offers a variety of courses, programs and services in accordance to its stated mission (Standard II.A.1). Students may choose from nearly 1000 courses, 56 associate degree programs, and 41 certificate programs, which are listed and described in the college catalog. Student need for specific courses and programs are identified through a range of college processes, including assessment and placement, articulation agreements, and requests from local industry and business employers (Standard II.A.1.a). The college uses a variety of course delivery methods, including face-to-face, self-paced, bilingual, Spanish, online, hybrid, interactive video, and audio conferencing classes (Standard II.A.2.a, II.A.2.d). Distance education offerings are clearly identified in the class schedule. Students may use on-campus computers and conferencing equipment at the main campus, King City Center, East Campus, and Natividad Center to access course offerings. The college has stated it would like to increase its offerings in distance education, including adding fully online certificate and degree options. In addition, the college has significantly increased its number of “smart classrooms,” thus providing faculty increased teaching methodology options to meet the diverse learning styles of their students.

The college’s Curriculum Committee has primary responsibility for the approval of new and revised courses and programs, as well as for deleting those that are outdated (Standard II.A.1.2). The 20-member committee is chaired by a faculty member; its membership includes 14 faculty, the vice president of instruction and 3 deans. Since the 2000 accreditation visit, the college has put in place the curriculum review and approval processes required to update, delete, and add courses and programs. However, the ability to move the college’s significant backlog of curriculum through its approval processes was negatively impacted by the cessation of committee meetings during the faculty’s work-to-contract and strike periods in 2006. To date, 55% of the curriculum identified by the 2000 accreditation team as needing review for revision or deletion has not been addressed. One result of this lengthy delay in addressing outdated curriculum has been to keep old courses and programs that are no longer being offered in the college catalog, causing confusion and frustration for students who wish to take specific courses or enter programs (Standard II.A.2.c, II.A.6.c).

Evaluation of overall program effectiveness is provided through the instructional program review process, which is supported by data from the Office of Institutional Planning and Research and the Executive Information System (Standard II.A.2.e). Support data includes enrollment trends, retention and success rates, and productivity. The review template, which has been revised several times during the last six years, is now closely aligned to accreditation standards and provides opportunities for those under review to collect and report information, which when acted upon, can help integrate their planning efforts with other college planning processes, such as technology and student services planning. Since 2004, the template has required a listing of all program courses and the dates of the latest course outline revisions.

The college catalog provides students with detailed information on the college's course and program offerings and is available in both paper and electronic formats, as is the schedule of classes. The catalog also includes statements on credit transfer and cheating (Standard II.A.7.b). Grading policies and the criteria for the awarding of credit also appear in the catalog, as do the requirements for degree and certificate programs. The Board's policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility for faculty is available in the Hartnell College Faculty Handbook (Standard II.A.7.a, II.A.7.c). Since the college has not yet begun the process of identifying student learning outcomes for instructional programs or general education and has only identified and assessed student learning outcomes for a small number of individual courses, learning outcomes do not appear in the catalog (Standard II.A.6.b).

The college provides a definition for general education in its catalog and lists a broad array of course offerings to meet the general education requirements for its associate degrees. The college has not yet developed student learning outcomes for its general education curriculum (Standard II.A.3, II.A.3.a). All degree programs include a focused study in one or more areas of inquiry or an interdisciplinary core (Standard II.A.4). The college catalog provides brief descriptions of its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, and course requirements. However, program student learning outcomes are not provided (Standard II.A.6.b).

The college has established a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Work Group and provided 40% reassigned time to a faculty member to assist faculty in the development of student learning outcomes. Volunteer faculty in the disciplines of English, Spanish, speech, counseling, DSP&S, chemistry, library, history, early childhood education, computer science and information systems, adaptive physical education, and mathematics are in various stages of identifying, assessing, and analyzing student learning outcomes and using that information to make improvements for one or more courses in their disciplines. Selected vocational programs have outcomes in place, as required by their respective industry standards. However, these programs do not appear to be aligning their outline efforts with any other college programs or disciplines. Student learning outcome development activities have not yet begun for degree and certificate programs. The college does not have a timeline for when they will develop and implement a comprehensive plan to infuse student learning outcomes throughout the required areas of the institution.

II. B. Student Support Services

Findings and Evidence

Student surveys praise the excellent student services at Hartnell College. The administrators, faculty, and staff clearly are dedicated to providing quality services to Hartnell students. Less clear is how the institution demonstrates that these services support student learning and student success through research. It does not appear that the recommendations from student services program reviews and the results of Student

Learning Outcomes have been integrated into the college strategic plan to increase the recruitment and retention of students. (Standard II.B.1).

The college publishes a catalog for its students with precise and accurate information, although there is a concern about the currency of all of the information about majors that have not been taught in part or in total for many years. The catalog is published annually and contains all of the required information except for the statement of Academic Freedom, which is to be found in the college faculty handbook. The catalog is free and available in all locations on campus, as well as on-line. The schedule of classes is published three times per year and is available in paper and on line. It is also free and available in multiple locations on campus. The schedule of classes includes descriptions of courses.

Major policies affecting students are in the catalog and schedule of classes. Students must go to the Office of the Vice President for Student Services to obtain information about the grievance process.

Policies on the confidentiality of student records are to be found in a clear statement of confidentiality which is distributed to all staff and faculty and is available in the office of Admissions and Records. The catalog contains a statement of confidentiality of the records of students who are concurrently enrolled (Standards II.B.a; II.B.b; II.B.c; II.B.d).

The college researches and identifies the learning support needs of its population from the validation of the assessment instruments and through research on student success, i.e., persistence, course completion, etc.. Learning support needs of students are served through a variety of special grants, such as the TRIO grant, located in the Academic Learning Center (ALC). Learning support services such as tutoring, supplemental instruction and math and writing labs are available in the ALC. Some classes have bi-lingual aids; these are listed in the back of the schedule. It is not clear that the support programs have been designed in response to documented student needs. While the college conducts customer satisfaction surveys and student opinion surveys, the college has yet to gather more focused research regarding the evaluation of student needs for services once a student has enrolled.

Student services staff verbalized the importance of building a college going culture in the majority group by early outreach, staffing with bi-lingual staff and faculty and increasing technology for those for whom Spanish is the first or primary language. Improvement in ESL assessment will be one way to increase services to provide equitable access to Latino students. The implication is that there will be increased courses in non credit and credit ESL classes. There has been an increase in information provided in both languages on how to enroll, but the only information in Spanish in the current printed schedule is on two pages listing the 64 class sessions taught in Spanish or with bilingual Spanish/English aides. On- line services are evaluated through surveys of students and have received high marks from students. (Standard II.B.3.a)

The college encourages personal and civic responsibility opportunities for its students by encouraging the Associated Students of Hartnell College (ASHC) to participate in shared governance and hiring committees. The Student Activities Office encourages students to become members of numerous clubs and supports activities through cultural diversity activities. A Diversity Conference was held two years ago. EOPS sponsored a Leadership Conference in the spring of 2006. The student satisfaction survey students gave high marks to these co-curricular and extra curricular activities. (Standard II.B.3.b)

The college designs, maintains, and evaluates counseling to support student development and success through the program review process. The student learning outcomes evaluate how counseling enhances student development and success. All counselors have the required training and degrees. A recommendation in the Educational Facilities Master Plan for a counselor ration of 1 to 800 has not been met. (Standard II.B.3.c)

The self study claims that the college supports and enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, however there is little evidence other than a list of activities that did not appear to be recent. The Student Equity Plan did not seem to be well known. Two of the members of the Diversity Committee, which does not meet regularly, are on the Equity for All Committee which has promise for deepening the understanding of the student success data for groups of students. Hartnell College is a Hispanic Serving Institution, which has allowed for grants that have given the college the ability to better serve a population that is predominantly Hispanic and that closely mirrors the demographics of the service area. (Standard II.B.3.d)

The college regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases. The college follows the open admissions policy of all California community colleges, as outlined in the catalog and schedule of classes. Students enroll on line, in person at all sites, and by telephone. Spanish language assistance and assistance for students with disabilities is available.

The assessment instruments used for placement into ESL, English, and math classes are on the list of locally developed and validated instruments published by the California Community College Chancellors office. Although approval to offer these locally developed assessment instruments is still in effect, the ESL approval expires June 30, 2007 and the Matriculation Committee plans to work with ESL faculty to develop an oral and written component. (Standard II.B.3.e)

The college maintains student records permanently, securely and confidentially, with a provision for secure backup of all files. The college follows established policies for release of student records. (Standard II.B.3.f)

The college evaluates student support services through the program review process led by the Student Services Council, but the recommendations from program review do not appear to be fully integrated into an overall college planning and budgeting process. Although data on student success is available, it is not clear how this information is used to improve programs. (Standard II.B.4)

II.C Library and Learning Support Services

Findings and Evidence

The library and other learning support services are sufficient to support the institution's instruction programs (Standard II.C)

Hartnell College has just finished construction and occupation of a new Library & Learning Resources (LLR) building, with approximately 250 computer work stations and seating for 400 students. The building has spaces for quiet study, group study rooms, single computer stations, grouped computer stations, and traditional library study tables. There are several areas for casual seating, many of them strategically placed to take advantage of the natural light and external landscape views. The combination of colors, materials and natural light create an atmosphere conducive to learning. Staff and students report it is a place where the users feel welcome and comfortable. Included in the footprint of the building is space for the Faculty Resource Center, library staff, and storage for AV equipment, bibliographic instruction classroom, distance learning classroom, and a community meeting room. The LLR building is very visible from the street, giving the campus enhanced exposure to the community. With its state-of-the-art technology and elegant design, it is a rich addition to the college campus and sets a high standard for future construction.

The move to the new building took place in the spring of 2006, opening for the beginning of the summer session. Staff indicated that the move was very well planned and executed. Planning included a vigorous weeding of the print collection and careful calculation of shelving needs.

Based on interviews with students and staff, personnel are trained and competent, and learning resources personnel (in terms of staffing the public service areas) coverage is adequate. All librarians teach bibliographic instruction at the request of other faculty members. These classes are customized to assist students with specific assignments with a major emphasis on information competency. The Learning Resources department also offers regularly scheduled credit courses in internet literacy (online), and Introduction to Using the Academic Library. There are fifteen library/media technology courses on the Program Course/Curriculum List in the 2005 program review. Of these, all but four have been written and/or revised since 2002. Faculty is in the process of putting several of the courses on the inactive list. In addition to teaching the courses, librarians staff the reference desk, do collection development with the cooperation of faculty subject specialists and work one-on-one with students and staff (Standard II.C.1.b).

The book collection appears to be up-to-date and attractively presented. The library subscribes to numerous online databases, and hardcopy periodicals. Databases are accessible through the use of a "cat card" that validates that the user is either an enrolled student or a member of the public who has purchased the card

(Standard II.C.1). The online public access catalog (OPAC) as well as the online databases are accessible remotely to cardholders (Standard II.C.1.c).

The online databases, the hard copy books and periodicals and the technology built into the building “support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.” Audio-visual equipment is housed in the building to be circulated to classrooms and meeting rooms as needed. However, more and more of the classrooms on campus are smart or “semi-smart,” so delivery is kept to a minimum. (Standard II.C.1.a)

Learning resources staff have several concerns about financial support for the department. For example, funding for student workers who have traditionally helped to cover public service stations such as circulation has been cut. The library materials budget is not institutionalized but rather is funded with block grants and special projects money. Librarians also expressed concern that they have insufficient time and money to do adequate curriculum review and collection development. The team notes that weekend library service (4 hours) has been eliminated since the last visit (Standard II.C.1.c).

Staff indicated that support and maintenance for the advanced technology built into the new facility is potentially a problem because there is inadequate technical support staff. Plans for the new CALL building will aggravate this situation further by adding about 200 more computers (Standard II.C.1.d). The team suggests that the college carefully review the need for technical support and build this support into the budget.

Hartnell College’s LLRC has informal cooperative agreements with Monterey Bay Cooperative Library System (MOBAC) and Monterey Peninsula College (MPC) and CSU Monterey Bay (CSUMB) whereby students can use and borrow materials from the public libraries and academic libraries. They also have an agreement (MOU) with the Monterey County Office of Education to provide a microwave WAN to the King City center. The College’s online library system is housed, maintained and serviced at CSUMB. There is no formal MOU in place governing this agreement at this time (Standard II.C.1.e). The team suggests that the college establish a more formal contract for this service.

Learning resources staff evaluate the effectiveness of the online databases annually using statistics generated by the vendors. A survey conducted in the spring of 2005 was completed by 57 students. The results indicate that 69% of respondents rate the quality of the AV equipment in the media center as Excellent or Very Good. Sixty-seven per cent rated the quality and reliability of the computers in the media center excellent or very good, and the service in the media center was rated excellent or very good by 82% of respondents. Ninety-one per cent of students, faculty and staff indicated satisfaction with library reference, informational and technical services provided by library staff (Standard II.C.2).

Conclusions

Hartnell College is experiencing challenging circumstances in attracting and maintaining the enrollment needed to more easily fund its program offerings and services, and thus ensure it can continue to meet its educational mission of being comprehensive community college. To increase student access and enrollments, the college has obtained a variety of grant and foundation funding sources to better serve students residing some distance from the main campus or in specialized programs by establishing the King City Center and Natividad Centers, planning for additional vocational facilities at the East Campus, and increasing distance education opportunities. Although the college would like to add completely online certificate and degree programs for its students, the resources to support such programs are not currently available. The college has also focused on revitalizing occupational programs, such as nursing and agricultural education, and implementing new strategies to attract and support Spanish speaking students. All of these efforts appear to be moving the college in the right direction, but more needs to be done. (Standards II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.b)

The failure of the college to complete 100% of its curriculum course outline updates as recommended in the 2000 accreditation visit has resulted in obsolete courses and programs, which are no longer offered, remaining in the catalog. In turn, this has misled, confused, and frustrated students who are trying to select and complete courses and programs, and is contributing to a credibility issue for the college about its ability to meet its educational mission and serve its communities, just when it is trying to increase enrollments. Likewise, it unnecessarily distracts from the many high quality courses and programs currently in place and being offered. (Standards II.A.2.e, II.A.6.c)

The college needs to move swiftly to complete the update of its course outlines, including deleting those courses and programs no longer being offered or meeting the needs of students. Further, these changes must be accurately reflected in the catalog and systematic processes put in place to ensure students enrolled in programs being deleted or significantly changed receive the information and support needed to complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption (Standard II.A.6.b).

College research regarding changing community demographics and student preparation levels, as well as information from local business and industry partners about the changing employment opportunities in the college's service area, have caused the college to begin serious work in adjusting programs and services to meet those needs (Standard II.A.1.a). This is critical work that can be enhanced by purposely creating the opportunity for ongoing college wide dialogue on how to best meet student needs, and then directing the results of that dialogue to the appropriate, established committee or operational group for further exploration, planning, and implementation. Successful completion of this work requires collaboration across the college and recognition that faculty have a central role and responsibility in establishing high quality, relevant, and current instructional courses and programs, and in ensuring their continuous improvement (Standard I.B.1, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e). The college community is strongly encouraged to work collaboratively to improve its programs and services, and to fully address and integrate the results of the instructional program reviews in this process.

Through its beginning dialogue on student learning outcomes, establishment of the Student Learning Outcomes Work Group, and the work of select disciplines on course student learning outcomes, the college has laid an initial and important foundation for implementing student learning outcomes. However, in order to meet Standard II.A for instructional programs, the college must greatly intensify its efforts to develop and implement student learning outcomes at the course, program, general education, and support services levels. These efforts should include establishing a clear plan with a timeline showing how and when the college will meet this standard. (Standards II.A.1.c; II.A.2.a; II.A.2.b; II.A.2.e; II.A.2.f; II.A.2.g; II.A.2.h; II.A.2.i; II.A.3)

Student Services is to be commended for its high quality and enduring services and the completion of program reviews and Student Learning Outcomes. Student Services is also to be commended for its dedication to student access and development by offering enrollment and matriculation services that contribute to the development and success of students, as well as increasing access for students. (Standard II.B.1)

The program review process would improve with the inclusion of student success data, for the purpose of program planning. Assessment of student learning outcomes should also be given a high priority. Dialogue on student success should occur regularly between student services and instruction. The enrollment management team should be empowered, and guided by research, to tackle issues of recruitment and retention. The excellent work by the Student Equity Plan, California Tomorrow, and Equity for All committees should be linked to develop strategic integrated comprehensive strategies to improve student success and foster a campus wide dialogue to broaden the understanding of the meaning of a commitment to diversity for the whole college. The results of program review for instruction and student services are excellent tools to improve integration for greater student success. (Standard, II.B.3.d; II.B.4)

Despite some anxiety about staffing levels and support for the LLR technology, the Library and Learning Support Services meet Standard II.C. The team suggests, however, that the college look at the need for technical support and financial resources, and that the college establish a formal agreement with CSUMB for servicing the online OPAC. (Standards II.C.1; II.C.1.e)

The new Library/Learning Resource building is a source of pride for both students and staff, and it has energized the library staff as well as the college community. (Standard II.C.1)

Recommendations

Recommendation 4. The team recommends that the college engages in a broad-based dialogue that leads to:

- The identification of Student Learning Outcomes at the course and program levels; and
- Regular assessment of student progress toward achievement of these outcomes. (Standards II.A.1.c; II.A.2.a; II,A.2.b; II.A.2.e; II.A.2.f; II.A.2.g; II.A.2.h; II.A.2.i; II.A.3)

Recommendation 5. The team recommends that the college complete the review and revision of all course outlines and ensure that catalog information regarding currently offered courses and programs is accurate. (Standard II.A.2.c, II.A.6.c).

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Standard III Resources

General Comments

Hartnell College has experienced a recent pattern of deficit spending and declining enrollments. This has limited the college's ability to hire needed full-time faculty and classified staff. The team also noted a lack of planning for classified staff to support both new facilities and new and existing information technology equipment.

The college has in place the appropriate policies regarding technology use by students and staff at Hartnell College in the Board Policy 2115. Technology on the Hartnell campus has been put in place to support student learning programs across campus and at off-campus locations, to provide services which facilitate the efficient operation of the College and improve institutional effectiveness. The Technology Master Plan incorporates the work of other committees in its plans and includes wide participation from across all parts of the campus and off-site locations. The Technology Master Planning Committee should be commended as a model for other planning processes. All services, support, hardware and software are selected and implemented to enhance students learning and improve institutional effectiveness.

Training for technology is on-going and appropriate for both students and staff. The College acquires, maintains and upgrades technology and infrastructure with predominantly one-time funding, a practice that should change to an on-going funding source to insure long-term stability and currency. The institution should also make a commitment to adequately staff the support and maintenance of the technology and infrastructure on campus and slow the deployment of additional technology until such time as that commitment can be made. To insure continued smooth operations a Disaster Plan and Business Continuity Plan need to be developed.

The fiscal situation at Hartnell College has raised concern. Since the last accreditation visit, the reserves carried over by the college have dropped from 19% to 6.6%, as the college used those funds to make up shortfalls in revenue. In 2004-2005, the college received stability money after borrowing from summer session to balance the budget. When the needed FTES was not found to make up the borrowed amount, \$1.6 million was lost from the college base funding.

In spring 2006, the college called in the Fiscal Crisis Management Advisory team (FCMAT) to analyze the status of college finances. This action was taken after negotiations with faculty had reached impasse. FCMAT made a number of suggestions regarding actions the college could take to avoid a precipitous and ongoing decrease in funds, including coordinating enrollment management efforts with various offices of the college, increasing the responsibilities of the budget committee, and initiating better analysis of non-instructional spending. Notably, FCMAT predicted that the college would

fall below a 5% reserve level in a year if significant actions were not taken, and fall into a deficit situation within two years.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the year preceding the faculty strike of 2006 was characterized by a “work to contract” environment, where faculty did not participate in activities outside of teaching. Therefore, participation in governance and decision-making in the financial area was limited.

The faculty strike in the fall of 2006 resulted in a three-year increase in salary that totaled 10%. In order to fund the estimated \$2 million shortfall that resulted, a number of vacant positions went unfilled and a number of classified and management positions were shifted to grant funds – with reassignment of duties that decreased former responsibilities and added grant funded responsibilities. However, many of these positions will revert to general funds at the end of the 2006-2007 fiscal year, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$1 million.

III.A Human Resources

Findings and Evidence

The college has established procedures designed to meet this standard for all academic and classified employees (Standard III.A.1).

The college has well developed procedures for hiring that include a significant role by discipline faculty in the hiring of new faculty. Hiring procedures for classified staff and managers are similar to those for faculty, with appropriate modifications (Standard III.A.1.a).

The college evaluates all full-time and part-time faculty through specific procedures in the Faculty Association collective bargaining agreement. The two represented classified employee groups are evaluated using procedures contained in their respective collective bargaining agreements. Administrators and classified managers are evaluated according to an established Managers’ Evaluation Process (Standard III.A.1.b).

Because the college is still developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) for most courses at this time, the District and the Faculty Association have not negotiated specific language to meet this standard as a component of faculty evaluation. The team notes that this negotiation should proceed in tandem with the development of SLOs rather than waiting for all of them to be developed first. There is also a need for cooperation between the Faculty Association and the Academic Senate in this area of overlapping responsibilities (Standard III.A.1.c).

The Board of Trustees and the college Leadership Team both have written codes of ethics. There is presently no written code of ethics for faculty or classified staff. The team had concerns about the lack of any written process for accountability when there are

violations of the existing codes, especially in the case of members of the Board of Trustees (Standard III.A.1.d).

The college's reliance on large numbers of grants has led to the need for additional administrators, as required by some grants, and the assumption of additional duties by the college's regular administrators. This has caused concern on the part of many college employees who are aware of pressing unfilled needs for full-time faculty and classified staff. (Standard III.A.2).

The college has collective bargaining agreements developed in the "meet and confer" process with the respective employee associations. The college uses the collective bargaining agreements and their associated grievance procedures to resolve disputes over wages and working conditions (Standard III.A.3, Standard III.A.3.a).

The college human resources unit has recently moved to a new location on campus. The new location of personnel records needs modification to ensure timely access to records while maintaining an appropriate level of security. The college has a clear plan to resolve this issue promptly (Standard III.A.3.b).

The college has an Equal Opportunity and Treatment plan. The college also has a Diversity Committee whose mission is "promote communication, equal opportunity efforts, cultural awareness and respect for divergent points of view on the Hartnell campus and beyond." However, because of a recent work-to-contract action by the Faculty Association, the committee has not had the full participation of all college constituencies and this has limited its effectiveness. Faculty have recently been reappointed to this committee but the team is unable to determine the current level of activity because of a lack of recent written evidence in the form of committee minutes (Standard III.A.4, Standard III.A.4.a).

The college human resources unit monitors the diversity of academic and classified employees and makes this information available to the public (Standard III.A.4.b).

The college has a written policy addressing this standard for all members of the college community, including students. In addition, employee unit agreements provide mechanisms for resolution of problems related to the treatment of employees (Standard III.A.4.c).

Along with all other community colleges in the state, the college has experienced a reduction in categorical staff development funding at the same time that overall college funding has declined. This has made it challenging for the college to provide support for a staff development coordinator position and for some staff development activities. In addition, because of a recent work-to-contract action by the Faculty Association, the committee has not had the full participation of all college constituencies and this has limited its effectiveness. Faculty have recently been reappointed to this committee but the team is unable to determine the current level of activity because of a lack of recent

written evidence in the form of committee minutes (Standard III.A.5, Standard III.A.5.a, Standard III.A.5.b).

The college is struggling with the sensitive issue of replacing full-time faculty during a time of severely reduced funding. The team noted the need for a clear, timely explanation of the reason for any faculty hiring decisions that don't follow the recommendations of the Full-Time Faculty Hiring Committee. (Standard III.A.6).

III.B Physical Resources

Findings and Evidence

Hartnell College is an attractive campus with well-maintained buildings and grounds. The new Learning Resource Center is a valuable addition to the campus. The three off-campus sites at King City, at East Campus and at Natividad Medical Center, provide safe and sufficient physical resources. (Standard III.B.1)

The College's Educational and Facilities Master Plan was developed in 1999 and was designed to be revised every two years. The Plan was developed with wide input from the college. In November of 2002 the district voters approved Measure H, a general obligation facilities bond that provided \$131 million for new facilities and for renovation of existing facilities. Those funds have been combined with state facilities bond funds and support from the College's Foundation. (Standard III.B.1.a)

The King City Center has developed enrollment sufficient to generate state support as an established Center. Day-to-day maintenance is provided through contracts with local businesses. The Center's success in developing enrollments has led to contention for classroom space. Part of that has been alleviated with innovative scheduling, including Saturday classes. (Standard III.B.2)

There is no college owned parking associated with the King City Center. The public parking available to students is somewhat remote from the Center. The students have voiced safety concerns to which the College has not been able to respond. (Standard B.1.b)

The Maintenance and Operations (M and O) budget was decreased by 5% in the current year and two positions went unfilled. The Team was not able to document plans to increase the physical plant budget to accommodate the growth in the college's physical plant (Standard III B.2.a).

The decline in enrollment has led the College to rethink the enrollment projections upon which planning for new buildings were based. According to the Educational and Facilities Master Plan, the college originally projected it would reach an enrollment of 16,000 students by 2010. This target enrollment is not expected to be achieved until 2024. The College is building for more students than it will enroll for years. The team

could not find a plan to provide for the maintenance and operation of those facilities unless enrollment increases provide additional revenue. (Standard III.B.2.a)

The Educational and Facilities Master Plan provides for physical resource planning. However, the team did not find evidence that “total cost of ownership” of new buildings is being budgeted. (Standard III.B.2; III.B.2.b)

III.C Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning and support services and to improve the effectiveness of the institution. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. (Standard III.C)

The institution has 1,200+ computers for student and staff use on campus and at off-campus sites including the library, instructional labs and classrooms, Academic Learning Center, faculty and staff offices, PAWS room, King City Education Center, Natividad Health Education Training Center, Faculty/Staff Resource Center and many other locations. In addition, more than forty Smart Classrooms - which include multimedia, document camera, projector, computer and video capabilities - are available for faculty use and four Distance Education classrooms with two-way video capabilities are available at three locations. ADA workstations are provided at each location. Virus protection software and a variety of application software are provided at all locations. (Standard IIC.1 and IIC1.a)

College-wide communications are provided by voice telephone and electronic mail systems across a district network and a microwave network shared with the Monterey County Office of Education to offsite locations at East Campus, Natividad, Greenfield High School and King City. All locations are also connected to the internet. Research and operational systems are supported by the Datatel enterprise resource planning system. Through this system students are supported with web registration in both English and Spanish. Most functional areas of the college, including student services, business office/payroll, human resources, financial aid and instruction are supported by Datatel. The Matrix system supports digital imaging for transcripts and other paper documents. Telephone registration is also provided for students in both English and Spanish. Other services, such as Degree Audit and e-commerce, are under development. The college is evaluating Early Alert System alternatives. Distance Education is currently supported by the e-College course management system, but other alternatives are being investigated. The Executive Information System provides staff with information about the enrollments and FTES projections and as well as persistence and retention information using data from the Datatel system. (Standard III.C1.a)

Personnel to support these systems include one manager, one network analyst, one telephone repair specialist, one network repair specialist, five computer programmers, two hardware repair specialists, one half-time secretary, one secretary/trouble desk specialist, one instructional technologist and student workers as available. It is a concern of the team that this staffing level is inadequate to sustain the current operation over a

long period of time. In addition, the new Center for Assessment and Life-long Learning (CALL) building is expected to house over two hundred additional computers, for which there is no planned technology support staff increases. (Standard III.C1.a)

Recently a Storage Area Network (SAN) was acquired to store data backups. In addition, a backup is stored daily in a vault in a different location on campus. An emergency shutdown procedure has been documented should a power failure occur. One area of concern is the lack of a Disaster Recovery Plan and a Business Continuity Plan in the event of a disaster. (Standard III.C1.a)

Training for students is provided in several ways. The PAWS room in Admissions and Records provides a place for one-on-one training in the use of the registration system. Classrooms and open labs areas are available in the Classroom Administration Building (CAB) with staff to assist them. Self paced courses are also available in the CAB facility in the areas of keyboarding, word processing and basic computer operations. The Library also houses computers and access to electronic resources for research including staff to assist them in both the use of the resources and the computers. ADA accessible workstations are available at these locations. (Standard III.C1.b)

Training for faculty and staff is offered through the Faculty and Staff Resource Center. This center offers training classes as well as one-on-one instruction. Offerings include training on software tools, smart classroom technologies, Distance Education technologies, e-College tools as well as instructional design assistance. (Standard III.C1.b)

The College systematically plans, acquires, maintains and upgrades/replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs. The Hartnell Technology Plan outlines the plan for acquisition, upgrade and replacement. Through grants and campus resources the requisite equipment, software and infrastructure are acquired, maintained, and upgraded. The majority of the funding for the acquisition, maintenance and replacement of the infrastructure and equipment is through grants and one-time monies. This budgeting strategy is of concern to the team, as it does not ensure the long-term stability of funding for replacements. Currently, the average PC is three years old, very near the need for replacement. The cost to replace more than twelve hundred computers is a tremendous liability for the College. In addition, the network equipment is also nearing the end of its useful life and will need to be replaced over the next 2-3 years. Current network issues indicate that this infrastructure may already be unable to handle the demand. The servers are all newer technology which will not need replacement for 3-6 years. The supplies and parts needed for the smart classrooms will also not be sustainable in the current budget model. One exception to the use of one-time funds is the Datatel maintenance costs which is paid for with on-going monies provided through the College general fund (Standard III.C1.c)

Distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance and enhancement of the College's programs and services. Computers, smart classrooms and other technology solutions are evidenced throughout the institution. All

faculty and staff have access to technology. Students have access to technology in their programs of study. Students are served by technology in the various services offered for them on campus. When purchases are made, technology is placed according to greatest need at that time and any replacements are relocated to places where they may be of use as determined by the Associate Vice President of Educational Technology and Library Services. Distribution is based on the priorities of the Technology Plan and results of assessments done such as the 2004 Digital Divide Survey (Standard III.C1.d)

The Technology Master Planning Committee has conducted a systematic review and evaluation of information and learning resources and the results of that review and evaluation are contained in the Hartnell College Technology Plan, which was approved on April 9, 2004 as well as in the current draft revision of the plan being developed by the Technology Master Planning Committee. The current draft cites Activity Cross References, which includes Educational and Facilities Master Plan, Matriculation Committee Minutes, Associated Students, Datatel CORE Minutes and other groups showing review and evaluation of the work or those planning bodies in developing the Technology Plan. To this extent the technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. (Standard III.C.2)

Assessments of effectiveness of technology resources has been done via the 2004 Digital Divide Survey Final Report, the 2005 Accreditation Employee Survey Final Report, and the 2005 Student Opinion Survey Final Report. In developing the draft Technology Plan these assessments are being used to develop the plans. The Library uses the usage statistics of the online databases to determine if those resources should be continued. (Standard III.C.2)

III.D Financial Resources

Findings and Evidence

The college relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning. This is noted on the annual Adopted Budget, and items funded by the college support the improvement of the student learning environment. While the Self Study notes that the allocation model does not directly relate to the mission and goals of the institution, it attests that decision making is based upon those guidelines. In explanation of this, the Self Study reports that a general ongoing drop in FTES has left the college with little discretionary money to spend on emerging needs that would be in line with the mission and goals of the college. (D1)

A Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) report of April, 2006 recommended that the college develop a series of strategies for addressing projections that declining enrollments and deficit spending could put the college in severe financial straits within two years. Specifically, the report projected that the college would “fall into a negative fund balance situation during fiscal year 2007-08 if the current level of structural deficit spending continues without either revenue enhancement or expenditure reductions.” (D1.b)

The college has taken some steps toward addressing that concern. An Enrollment Management team (EMT) has developed strategies for scheduling efficiency and enrollment growth, but the team did not find evidence that those strategies are currently being institutionalized or incorporated into institutional planning efforts (Standard III.D.1.a)

The college financial situation was exacerbated by a three-year salary increase for faculty, which left the district reportedly \$2 million short of financial expectations. In partial compensation, seven positions were moved from general fund to grant funds, with duties adjusted accordingly. However, as of June 30, 2007, those positions will be moved back to the general fund, and the district expects that half of the shortfall will remain. (Standard III.D.1.b)

The self study reports that planning and budgeting are not sufficiently integrated (Standard III.D.1.a). College staff reports that 85% of the general funds are spent on salaries and benefits, and mandated costs require expenditure of most of the remaining balance. (Standard III.D.1.b) This has led to some frustration regarding the limited role of the Budget Committee. In recent years, as declining enrollments have reduced the amount of resources available, the Budget Committee has received only summaries of annual financial figures and has had a role limited to expending block grant funds. The college has made a commitment for the coming year to increasing the amount of financial detail given to the Budget Committee and to giving it a clear voice in making budget recommendations to the president. The team verified that the process of providing detailed budget information to the committee has already begun. (Standards D.2; D.2.b)

While the college has seen the addition of a new Library and is planning additional buildings, staff reports that no long-term planning has been conducted that will ensure that maintenance, computer technology services or staffing are being planned for the new buildings. (Standard III.D.1.c)

There is a perception on campus that budgetary decision-making is done by senior administration, with little input from campus constituent groups. While the college has governance groups devoted to planning and budget, the team was made aware that many on campus feel their roles are not as expansive as is necessary. (Standard III.D.1.d)

The college has received unqualified independent audits, with reportable items being addressed in a timely fashion. (Standard III.D.2.a)

Conclusions

The team believes that written codes of professional ethics need to be developed for both faculty and classified staff in order to meet the standard. This work should be done by the Academic Senate and Classified Senate and reported to the College Council. The team also believes that, in order to effectively meet this standard, the entire college needs a

well-understood, well-supported code of ethics for all college personnel (Standard III.A.1.d).

The team is troubled by the recurring pattern of faculty work-to-contract actions during the last two accreditation cycles that make it difficult to assess whether the college is meeting their obligation to ensure that diversity efforts are being actively supported by campus constituents and whether professional development is being effectively utilized and evaluated. (Standards III.A.4; III.A.5; III.A.5.a; III.A.5.b).

Technology resources are used to support student learning and support services and to improve the effectiveness of the institution. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. (Standard III.C) Evidence indicates that the Technology Master Planning Team in its development of technology plans uses assessments and campus-wide input in developing those plans. (Standard III.C2) The team commends the institution for quality and depth of technology to support the learning process and training functions for the use of technology, particularly in the design and building of the new Library & Learning Resource Center. (Standards III.C1.a; III.C1.b)

The team is concerned about the lack of linkage to the budgeting process to carry out those plans and is concerned about the long-term viability of the technology resources if necessary on-going funds are not allocated to maintain the equipment and infrastructure. (2000 Accreditation Report Recommendation 2; Standard III.C1.c) The team is also concerned about the expansion of technology resources on campus and at satellite locations given the already stretched staff resources to support the software, hardware and network. This is especially of concern in opening the new Center for Assessment & Lifelong Learning. (Standard III.C1.a)

The team strongly encourages the development of a Disaster Recovery Plan and a Business Continuity Plan. (Standard III.C1.a)

The college has a need for greater integration of institutional planning and resource allocation. While planning efforts proliferate throughout the campus, there appears little coordination with the decision-making process that determines allocation of resources. (Standards III.D.1.a)

There is a need for better communication about financial resource issues to the campus. Many report a lack of “transparency” when financial decisions are made. While part of the problem may be, as some have suggested, that constituents assigned to governance committees are not participating or reporting appropriately to their constituent groups, the institution should be able to devise methods that ensure effective communication of financial decisions. (Standards III.D.2; III.D.2.b)

The team is primarily concerned with the long range impact of a pattern of spending and declining enrollments, especially given the FCMAT projections of significant financial problems if solutions are not found. The team is concerned that the institution has sufficient cash flow to maintain long-term stability, especially in the event of unforeseen

financial emergencies and unexpected occurrences. A concerted and coordinated effort to address long term fiscal stability and enrollment management is necessary. (Standard III.D.2.c)

Recommendations

See Recommendation 1

See Recommendation 2

See Recommendation 3

Recommendation 6. The team recommends the creation of an enhanced long range fiscal stability/enrollment management effort, which utilizes the services of the Offices of Business and Finance, Instruction, Admissions and Records, Student Services, Outreach Services and other appropriate college resources. (Standards III.D.1.a; III.D.1.b; III.D.1.c; III.D.2.c)

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

General Comments

Hartnell College has been marked by governance tensions in the last few accreditation visits. The need to address the roles and responsibilities of constituent groups in governance has been a recurring theme. While governance committees proliferate at the college, there has been a historical perception that their work is not fully considered when decisions are made.

The team found issues that were observed and reported by visiting teams at least as far back as 1988. The 2000 Visiting Team reported that:

There is a serious breakdown in communication between the administration/board and the faculty resulting in the absence of a substantial faculty voice in some educational matters. If effective communication is not restored between these groups, the results will be detrimental to students. (page 32)

In 2007, an additional rift seems to distinguish the relationship between the board of trustees and the administration. This tension has been documented in minutes of Board of Trustees meetings.

Hartnell College has a seven member board with the members elected by individual trustee districts within the Hartnell Community College District's geographic boundary. The College is administered by a President/Superintendent, who is hired by the Board. The board is charged with establishing policies that ensure the quality, integrity and effectiveness of student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The running of the college is delegated to the Superintendent/President (hereafter referred to as president), who oversees the governance process addressed in this standard.

IV. A Decision Making Roles and Processes

Findings and Evidence

The self study reports that surveys have shown a significant difference in the perception of constituent groups regarding whether they have a substantive role in governance and that the decision-making process involves those who will be affected. The team heard comments on campus that expressed the view that people felt they were routinely not consulted when decisions were made that impacted their areas. (Standard IV.A.1)

The self study states that "there still seems to be some confusion about how to implement actual shared governance processes" (pg. 141). A statement that some on campus have interpreted as being symptomatic of their lack of substantive involvement in governance

is contained in Board Policy 2005, which states that “The Board reserves the right not to accept recommendations” of college governance processes. (Standards IV.A.2.a; IV.A.3)

A difference in perception regarding whether constituent groups have substantive participation in governance is revealed by a campus survey that revealed that 62% of managers replied in categories “strongly agree” or “mostly agree,” while only 9% of full time faculty did so. The addition of a College Council, which consists of members of all constituent groups, has not ameliorated that perception, with the self study reporting that “faculty and classified staff seem unclear on its specific role, some perceiving it as an additional, filtering layer of administration coming between the recommendations of shared governance committees and the governing board. membership is weighted heavily toward administration” (pg. 144). (Standards IV.A.2.b; IV.A.3)

There were concerns expressed about the connection between the Full-Time Faculty Hiring Committee’s role in prioritizing replacement hiring in the current environment of budget cuts. However, a review of the minutes of the Full-Time Faculty Hiring Committee’s minutes demonstrates that the committee’s recommendations are reflected in the decisions about filling or not filling positions that are subsequently made by the college’s administration. (Standard IV. A.2.a)

The team found that the college has dedicated considerable time and effort in the establishment of governance committees. However, the Academic Senate has called for a new analysis of the governance structure and process at Hartnell College. (Standard IV.A.2.b) The College Council has asked for a review of the Shared Governance Committee Handbook (Standards IV.A.3; IV.A.5)

The institution has responded in part to previous recommendations made by the Accrediting Commission. However, some of those responses have not been fully realized. This is evidenced by the team finding that three of five former recommendations have not been completely addressed. (Standard IV.A.4)

IV.B Board and Administrative Organization.

Findings and Evidence

Although the Hartnell College Board of Trustees is an independent board that establishes policies, the Self Study attests and the team heard numerous reports that board members engage in inappropriate, and potentially unethical, behavior. The team has been made aware of widespread concern about board actions through discussions with trustees, administrators and staff members, and representatives of constituent groups. Board minutes report many of the actions that have caused concern.

When the board has made decisions, some board members who do not support those decisions have actively advocated against them. The Self Study reports an incident where a board member authored a ballot rebuttal to the board’s decision to support Measure H, the college’s 2002 general obligation facilities bond. The team learned that a board

member joined the picket line during the 2006 faculty strike, advocating against the decisions of the board. Two board members reportedly held news conferences, illustrating their independence from board decisions. The team was advised by trustees and other college leaders that this kind of inappropriate behavior occurs frequently. One trustee interviewed by the team stated that it is more important for trustees to advocate for their individual beliefs rather than abide by decisions of the board when the individual member feels that the board's decision is wrong. This behavior by the board is in violation of board policy and the accreditation standard that specifies that once decisions are made, the board acts as a whole. (Standards IV.B.1.a; IV.B.1.e)

Some board members reportedly communicate with faculty directly on critical issues rather than work through the president. One trustee stated to the team that it was a trustee's responsibility to communicate directly with college constituencies or individual employees as necessary to solve problems. The team was told that the bypass of the President's office occurs often. This type of action is not in accord with the board policy which assigns the president the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the governing board and for executing all decisions of the governing board requiring administrative action. (Standards IV.B.1.j; IV.B.2.a)

Board meetings are frequently not collegial. In public session, the president has been told by a board member to be quiet, and on another occasion he was told by a board member that he would be fired. Documentation indicates that a college administrative employee at a board meeting on 8/1/2006 received attacks on her job performance by some board and faculty members and had to leave the board meeting. In another example, the board minutes of 12/5/2006 reflect that the meeting had to be recessed due to a trustee being declared out-of-order. One female trustee interviewed by the team stated that she had been threatened by a male trustee. The board minutes of 10/26/2006 documented the conversation, and in the opinion of the team the statement could be perceived as a threat. However, in a subsequent interview, another trustee stated that comments concerning a threat at that meeting were misunderstood. In another instance, the board minutes of 10/19/2006 reflect that the board requested an investigation regarding communications between a trustee and the faculty negotiation team. In yet another instance, the team was told that a faculty member had initiated a suit against the college and a trustee had communicated with the faculty member's lawyer. All of these examples support the finding that the board is in violation of their own policies and the accreditation standard. (see Board Policies 1025 & 1055) (Standards IVB1.e; IVB2.b)

The team was told by several persons that confidential information from closed sessions has been passed on to faculty members. This is a violation of the confidentiality requirements of board policy. Further, this policy indicates that the governing board, by a majority vote, may reprimand any board member for unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged material. Although the team found no instance where a board member had been reprimanded, it did find documentation from board meeting of 4/4/2006 that a trustee had been excluded from closed sessions. (Standard IVB1.e)

The team found that the board has established policies which support the mission statement and that policies existed that made it clear that the board had final responsibility for educational quality and financial integrity. Legal matters are handled in closed session in accordance with a board policy on closed sessions. (Standards IV.B.1.b; IV.B.1.c).

New member orientation consists of briefings and tours. Continuing board development has been on hold due to a lack of funding. The team considers the lack of recent board member involvement in board development and growth opportunities (e.g. external conferences and workshops for trustee education, skill and communication improvement) to be a factor in the continuation of the board behavior described above.

Board policies specify staggered terms of office to ensure continuity of membership (Standard IV.B.1.f).

The board conducts an annual self evaluation where it sets goals. The last evaluation was conducted in 2006. However, the process has not been issued as a board policy. The team suggests that the self evaluation process be published as a board policy. (Standard IV.B.1.g)

Although the board has a code of ethics, it does not contain provisions for dealing with behavior that violates its code. The team was told that a revision to include these requirements was in progress. The team notes that there is a specific provision in a board policy for reprimand when a board member engages in unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged material from a closed session. The team found no evidence that this sanction had been invoked. (Standard IV.B.1.h).

Although the trustees received information about accreditation, the team notes that their involvement during the site visit was minimal. There were no trustees at the opening meeting with team. Only two trustees of seven attended an agendaized board meeting to meet with team. The team was told that normally six or seven trustees attended regular board meetings. A third trustee who did not attend the agendaized meeting later requested a meeting with team. No other trustees requested meetings with the team or explained their absence from the board meeting. The team regards this occurrence as a lack of interest in the accreditation process by a majority of elected trustees. (Standard IV.B1.i).

The governing board conducts an annual evaluation of the president. The 2006 evaluation established six goals for the president. The team notes that the goals do not include the major problems the team found during this site visit and documented in this report. The board and president may have missed an opportunity to address major problems being experienced at the college. The matter of the governing board delegating full responsibility and authority to the president to implement and administer board policies without board interference is seriously compromised at Hartnell by unethical behavior of the board. This situation is addressed in the earlier description of questionable behavior by the board. (Standard IVB1.j)

The team learned that there is a perception by constituencies that administration is overstaffed. The team was advised by executive level administrators that there are vacancies that need to be filled and that the administration is not overstaffed. The adequacy of administrative staffing at Hartnell College is not clear to the team. The team feels that the college should review staffing needs and widely disseminate the results to eliminate misconceptions about administrative staffing in the college community. Authority is delegated to administrators in accordance with board policies. (Standard IVB2.a)

The president has the responsibility for guiding improvement of the teaching and learning process through the collegial process, ensuring high quality research , ensuring educational planning is integrated with resource planning to achieve SLO's and establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation. Various board policy requirements along with management processes cause the president to deal with these responsibilities on a continuing basis. The team has found problems in several of these areas such as establishing collegial dialogue and conducting planning. These problems are addressed under the specific applicable standards in this report (Standard IVB2.b)

The president is responsible for administering board policies, statutes, and regulations. Board policies are evaluated annually in accordance with an established review policy to ensure necessary changes are included and that institutional practices are consistent with these policies. (Standard IVB2.c)

The team has found that the college has potential financial problems. These problems are addressed in the applicable sections of Standard III. (Standard IV.B.2.d).

The team notes that the president has been very active in the community and communicates with the community in several ways. Publications such as the "Presidents Newsletter", "Linking Up", "Bond Newsletter", "Foundation Newsletter", and press releases are examples. The president also makes public appearances and gives speeches in the community. (Standard IVB2.e)

Conclusions

The team finds that the recommendations involving clarification of decision-making roles and processes made by visiting teams in 2000, in 1994, and in 1988 have not yet resulted in a governance environment that is characterized as an environment of empowerment, innovation and institutional excellence. While singular examples of these characteristics are widely evident at Hartnell College, the college has not yet created a governance environment that conforms with the accreditation standard.

The team found that Hartnell College has a serious problem with inappropriate behavior exhibited by members of its governing board. Certain members of this board engage in behavior that is at odds with their charge to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and financial stability of the institution. The board

seems unwilling to act as a unified governing body. The team considers that many of the problems at the college have been aggravated by the board's lack of unity and leadership. The board should model ethical behavior and collegiality for college employees. The team feels that the accreditation standards that govern proper board roles, responsibilities and behaviors have not been met.

Recommendations

See Recommendation 1

Recommendation 7. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees completes their Ethics Policy by developing procedures for sanctioning those who commit ethical violations, and that they develop a comprehensive trustee development plan that provides training focused upon appropriate board behavior, roles and responsibilities. (Standards IV.B.B.1.a; IV.B.1.e; IV.B.1.f; IV.B.1.g; IV.B.1.h;)

