

PROGRESS REPORT

*Submitted to the Accrediting Commission
for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools &
Colleges on October 15, 2007*

Solano Community College

4000 Suisun Valley Road
Fairfield, CA 94534-3197



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Interim Superintendent-President

Governing Board

James M. Claffey

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Dr. Barbara A. Beno, President
Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRESS REPORT SUBMISSION

Dear Dr. Beno:

Solano Community College has completed a progress report in response to the March 15, 2007 evaluation team report and subsequent review and direction of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges on April 18, 2007. Three copies of the report, plus an electronic version, are submitted to the Commission and copies of the report will be sent to each team member when we receive the team roster.

Solano Community College wishes to express its appreciation for the assistance and support of the Commission, and in particular, Vice President Jack Pond in supplying clarifying information and being so available and helpful.

The College community wants the Commission to know that the work of addressing the recommendations of the Commission has been a positive and rewarding experience for the College. Solano Community College administrators, faculty, staff, and governing board have focused on both the immediate needs and future directions for the College and have used recommendations of the Commission as a very positive force in working toward new levels of excellence.

Sincerely,

Gerald F. Fisher
Superintendent/President

GF:KJR:js

(707) 864-7112 • (707) 864-7213 FAX • [email:gerry.fisher@solano.edu](mailto:gerry.fisher@solano.edu)

Commitment to our communities!

Certification of the Accreditation Progress Report

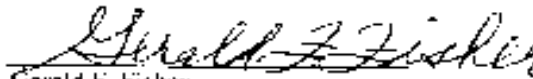
Date: October 3, 2007

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

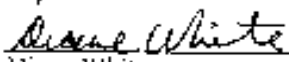
FROM: Solano Community College
1000 Suisun Valley Road
Fairfield, California 94534-3197

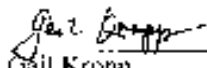
This Accreditation Progress Report is submitted for the purpose of assisting in the determination of accreditation status.

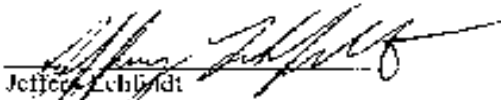
We certify that there was broad participation by representatives of the campus community and we believe the Progress Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

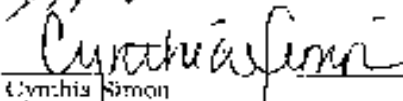

Gerald F. Fisher Superintendent/President

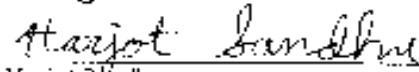

Pam Keith President, Governing Board

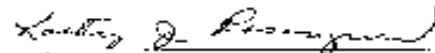

Diane White President, Community College Association/CTA/NLA


Gail Kropp Academic Senate President


Jeffrey Echhardt President, Operating Engineers, Local 39


Cynthia Simon President, California School Employees Association


Harjot Sandhu President, Associated Students of Solano College


Kathy J. Rosegren Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs & Accreditation Liaison Officer

Statement on Report Preparation

Solano Community College submits this Progress Report as a summary of institutional progress made in response to the three recommendations of the Accreditation Evaluation Team that visited the College in April, 2007. The Liaison Officer and the Director of Research and Planning prepared the report with significant input from Director of Human Resources for Recommendation 6, the Vice President of Business and Administrative Services for Recommendation 7, and members of the Governing Board for Recommendation 8. The report was presented to the Academic Senate, the Shared Governance Council, and the Division Deans for approval and to the Financial and Budget Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC) for information. Each of these bodies is comprised of constituency membership from across the campus, and official membership lists of each of these groups are provided in Appendix 1 of this report. The Superintendent/President's Executive Council guided and supported the work of the report, which it approved on October 1, 2007. The report was then presented to the SCC Governing Board on Wednesday, October 3, 2007. Draft copies of the Progress Report were posted to everyone on the College e-mail system and updated throughout the process.

Progress Report

Solano Community College

Introduction and Overview

At its meeting on June 6-8, 2007, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, reviewed the Progress Report submitted by the College (March 15, 2007) and the report from the Evaluation Team that visited the College the subsequent month (April 18, 2007). The Commission accepted this initial progress report from the College and directed the College to submit an additional Progress Report by October 15, 2007. The Commission directed that this second Progress Report focus on three of the original eight recommendations and concerns made by the visitation team on their comprehensive evaluation visit to Solano Community College on October 25-27, 2005. These three recommendations and concerns addressed the needs in the areas of staffing and organizational stability (General Recommendation 6), fiscal integrity and stability (General Recommendation 7), and leadership (General Recommendation 8).

This Progress Report speaks to each of the three recommendations described in the April 18th Evaluation Team report and listed in this executive abstract summary.

Documentation is provided as evidence of progress made on each recommendation. The Report is submitted in compliance with the Commission's accreditation requirements. Specifically, this report focuses on the recommendations and concerns as shared in the Accrediting Commission June 29, 2007, letter to Gerald F. Fisher, Interim Superintendent/President, Solano Community College.

Using the numeration and ordering provided by the Commission, the College presents the following responses:

Responses

General Recommendation 6: Staffing and Organizational Stability

The College should continue to focus on prior accreditation evaluation reports and implement the recommendations. Stability in personnel, particularly in leadership positions, fiscal services and human resources will help the College to meet the requirements of Standard III and assure institutional integrity. (III.A, III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.3)

In its action letter of June 29, 2007, the Commission's specific concerns relative to General Recommendation 6 had to do with the College focusing on "stability in personnel, particularly in leadership positions, fiscal services and human resources." The Commission is understandably concerned about staffing stability at Solano Community College. Since the 2003-04 academic year, the number of administrators who have retired or resigned has been dramatic, particularly in the areas of senior leadership. Nonetheless, considerable progress in replacing them has been made since the spring of 2006. At that time, a permanent Vice President of Business and Administrative Services and a permanent Director of Human Resources were hired and continue to serve the College. The Dean of Humanities retired in May of 2007 and was replaced in July [\[Evidence 1\]](#).

The College recruited and selected a new Vice President of Academic Affairs in March of 2007, only to have the applicant withdraw after the position was offered. Reasons given by the applicant for turning down the position included the cost of relocating from Oregon to the San Francisco Bay area and uncertainty surrounding the hiring of a new Superintendent/President [\[Evidence 2\]](#).

Solano Community College terminated the responsibilities of the former Superintendent/President in December of 2007 and immediately named long-time SCC administrator Gerald F. Fisher the Interim Superintendent/President. The College conducted an extensive search for a new Superintendent/President this spring and summer [\[Evidence 3\]](#). The selection committee screened twenty-one applications and selected ten candidates to interview. Four of these applicants accepted interviews and three of them were sent to the Governing Board as final candidates. The Governing Board interviewed those candidates on August 17 [\[Evidence 4\]](#). At its September 19, 2007, meeting the Governing Board named Mr. Fisher the Superintendent/President. [\[Evidence 5\]](#).

The College is currently advertising for the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President of Student Services [\[Evidence 6 & Evidence 7\]](#). Applications for these two positions close on October 30th, interviews are scheduled for mid-November, and hiring is expected by December. These two positions are currently being filled by people in interim status. Additionally, the College is in the screening process for a permanent Director of Fiscal Services and a new permanent position of Director of Marketing and Public Relations, both middle-level administrators [\[Evidence 8 & Evidence 9\]](#). It is anticipated that both positions will be filled during the 2007 fall semester.

General Recommendation 7: Fiscal Integrity and Stability

The College should develop a detailed plan with a timeline and fixed responsibility to address the long-term financial obligation including debt retirement, capital lease options, and establishment of a reserve/fund for retiree benefits. Financial obligations associated with negotiated settlements should be evaluated and managed to determine long-range impact on institutional financial stability. (III.D.1.; III.D.2.; III.D.3; ER17)

In the action letter of June 29, 2007, the Commission asked that Solano Community College address in this Progress Report “the long-term financial obligations including debt retirement, capital lease options, and establishment of a reserve for retiree benefits.” The Progress Report of the April 18th Evaluation Team visit is very concerned about the College’s obligation, through the collective bargaining process, “to provide employee benefits, primarily in the health care area, that do not appear to be sustainable given the current fiscal allocation and expenditure experience.” In addition, the report from April 18th noted that tardiness of the annual financial statements and the decentralized purchasing process are problems. The final concern in this recommendation area is that the College focus on achieving consistent enrollment growth.

The College is very much aware that it needs to focus on long-term debt reduction, and it has taken steps to do so in the areas of Student Center Revenue Bonds, General Obligation Bonds under Measure G for capital improvement projects, capital lease obligations, and retiree benefits.

The Student Center Revenue Bond currently has an outstanding balance of \$87,200 and is scheduled for debt retirement in 2009 [\[Evidence 10\]](#).

The College has issued voter-approved General Obligation Bonds, payable solely from proceeds of ad valorem taxes, in the amount of \$124,500,000 for the purpose of constructing and repairing College educational facilities. Due to significant growth in the District’s tax base, the voters will experience a five-year shorter repayment term than originally anticipated [\[Evidence 11\]](#). All bonds sold received “AAA” ratings [\[Evidence 12\]](#). The retirement of this debt has no impact on the College’s financial resources. Overall, the current timeline for repayment of the Measure G Bond is reasonable and should have no negative impact on the financial solvency of the College in future years.

On April 26, 2006, the College joined the Community College League of California’s Retiree Health Benefit Program Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to begin addressing the GASB 45 compliance requirement for unfunded post-employment benefit obligations. The College has deposited \$917,000 into an irrevocable trust to address the unfunded liability for retiree health benefits. The most recent actuarial figures are approximately \$11.8 million for the College [\[Evidence 13\]](#). The Board has set funding retiree health benefits liabilities as one of their 2007/2008 annual goals [\[Evidence 14\]](#). Solano Community College expects to meet the compliance requirement starting in fiscal year 2008/2009 and, therefore, is about two years ahead of the federal timeline.

In February 2006, the Employee Benefits Cost Containment Committee was formed, in accordance with the College’s collective bargaining agreements, to research and possibly secure ways of providing employee health care options at more reasonable costs. This

Committee held a series of meetings throughout the 2006-07 academic year; however, no progress was made on lowering health care costs in the negotiated collective bargaining agreements during that academic year. The Committee presented a cost containment proposal for negotiations considerations in May of 2007, and the Committee will continue to study options in preparation for upcoming negotiations. This item remains a major goal for the College in negotiations with all of the bargaining units on campus for the current year [\[Evidence 15\]](#).

In regard to the April 18th Evaluation Team's cited concerns around the lateness of annual financial statements, timely completion of the annual audit, and the decentralized purchasing process, the College plans to file the annual financial statement by the October 15, 2007, deadline. The annual audit is scheduled to start on October 29th, which is approximately two weeks earlier than the prior year and will allow both the College and the external auditors the appropriate time for review and filing by the December 31, 2007 deadline [\[Evidence 16\]](#). Filling the position of Purchasing Technician/Buyer is one of the top five institutional priorities for staffing in 2007-08 [\[Evidence 17\]](#); in the meantime, the College has hired a purchasing expert to assist with areas of competitive bidding requirements and other purchasing rules and regulations around compliance issues [\[Evidence 18\]](#).

In the spring of 2007, the Interim Superintendent/President re-constituted the Enrollment Management Committee under the combined leadership of the Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Interim Vice President of Student Services. The Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis throughout the year to plan strategies for increased enrollment in both the long and the short terms [\[Evidence 19 & Evidence 20\]](#). A new permanent position of Director of Marketing and Public Relations is expected to be filled during the 2007 fall term, and he/she will assume a major role on the Enrollment Management Committee at that time [\[Evidence 21\]](#).

In the area of student enrollment growth, the College did not realize the desired spring 2007 growth and, once again, elected to include summer 2007 enrollment figures in the 2006-07 enrollment projections. First census figures for the 2007 fall semester show a modest increase in enrollment of 2.04% [\[Evidence 22\]](#). The College anticipates an increase in that figure as the new Vallejo Center will be open to students on October 1st, and at least twenty additional classes are scheduled from October 15th – December 19th [\[Evidence 23\]](#). The College will also offer a number of eight-week online courses this fall, also beginning the week of October 15th [\[Evidence 24\]](#). The Division Deans have preliminarily scheduled an increase of over one hundred classes (most of them at the Vallejo Center) for the 2008 spring semester.

General Recommendation 8: Leadership

In order for the Governing Board to focus on the institution's major issues and questions of policy, the Board of Trustees is encouraged to delegate full responsibility and authority to the President to implement and administer board policies and the operation of the College. The institutional leaders should likewise foster empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence through dialogue that builds trust and increases focus on student learning and assessment of learning

outcomes, institutional effectiveness, and integrity. (IV.A.1, IV.A.3, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2.a)

It is clear from the April 18th Evaluation Team report that the Commission had serious concerns that no progress had taken place on this recommendation from the time of the first Accreditation Team visit in October of 2005. Based on the SCC Progress Report of March 15, 2007, the Evaluation Team reiterated that the Board of Trustees “needs to address the issue of delegating full responsibility and operational authority to the Superintendent/President.”

Since that time, the Board has moved forward in this area of delegation of authority. It held a retreat on March 3, 2007, on the role of the Governing Board. Dr. Cindra Smith, Director of Education Services for the Community College League of California, conducted this day-long workshop [[Evidence 25](#)].

Building on that training, the Governing Board, on June 6, 2007, adopted a new Board Policy, #1075, delegating to the Superintendent/President full responsibility for administering all Board policies [[Evidence 26](#)].

In addition, the Governing Board has requested that workshops on the role of the Board, similar to the March 3rd retreat, be scheduled for their participation on a yearly basis. Further, the Board plans to conduct a self-evaluation of their progress on this issue every three months as long as necessary for this policy to become standard practice.

Concluding Statement

Since its last Progress Report (March 15, 2007), Solano Community College has continued to implement all general recommendations cited by the Accreditation Visiting Team (October 2006) and confirmed by the Commission. Moreover, the College has increased its efforts to address the three specific recommendations (6, 7 and 8) identified by the Evaluation Team (April 2007) as special concerns of the Commission. In spite of the brief intervening time since the College’s last progress report, significant steps have been taken to stabilize the staffing in middle and upper management, address the issues of fiscal integrity and stability, and clarify the lines and limits of authority and responsibility between the Board of Trustees and the College’s leadership. The College remains committed to using the accreditation standards to better address the needs of the students and the institution.

Index of Evidence

- [1.](#) Appointment of Dean of Humanities (Board Agenda Item 1, Agenda from June 20, 2007)
- [2.](#) Report on Failure to Hire Permanent VP Academic Affairs (Board Minutes from April 4, 2007, ref. p. 7)
- [3.](#) Job Announcement and Description for the Superintendent/President; Members of the Interview Committee
- [4.](#) Board Minutes from August 17, 2007
- [5.](#) Board Agenda and Minutes from September 19, 2007
- [6.](#) Job Announcement for Vice President, Academic Affairs
- [7.](#) Job Announcement for Vice President, Student Services
- [8.](#) Job Announcement for Director of Fiscal Services
- [9.](#) Job Announcement for Director of Marketing & Public Relations
- [10.](#) Student Center Revenue Bond (excerpt from Audited Financial Statement, p. 26)
- [11.](#) Annual Debt Service on General Obligation Bond (excerpt from USB Investment Bank Official Statement, p. 9 and Audited Financial Statement, p. 27)
- [12.](#) General Obligation Bond Rating (excerpt from USB Investment Bank Official Statement, cover)
- [13.](#) Reference Materials: Actuarial Report
- [14.](#) Board Goals for 2007-08 (Board Minutes from May 2, 2007, p. 2); Details for Goal 1
- [15.](#) Reference Materials: Employee Benefits Cost containment Committee
- [16.](#) Letters of Engagement for External Auditors 2006 & 2007
- [17.](#) Final 2007-08 District Priority List (Annual Budget for 2007-08, p. 7)
- [18.](#) Personal Services Contract for temporary services of a Purchasing Expert
- [19.](#) Charge of Enrollment Management Committee (EMC minutes from March 2, 2006)
- [20.](#) Agendas and minutes from the Enrollment Management Committee (May and September 2007)
- [21.](#) Job Description for the Director of Marketing & Public Relations
- [22.](#) Comparative enrollment figures for Fall 2005, Fall 2006, and Fall 2007
- [23.](#) Schedule of late-start classes at the new Vallejo Center
- [24.](#) Schedule of online late-start classes for fall 2007
- [25.](#) Board Minutes from March 3, 2007

26. SCC Board Policy #1075

Appendix 1: Official Membership of Key Campus Groups

GOVERNING BOARD

Solano Community College District

FALL 2007

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>
President	Pam Keith
Vice President	Phil McCaffrey
Trustee	James M. Claffey
Trustee	Denis Honeychurch, J.D.
Trustee	Stephen Murphy, J.D.
Trustee	A.C. "Tony" Ubalde, Jr., Rel.D.
Trustee	A. Marie Young
Student Trustee	Lillian Nelson
Secretary	Gerald F. Fisher

ACADEMIC SENATE Solano Community College

FALL 2007

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>
President	Gail Kropp
Vice President-Elect	Jeffrey Lamb, Ph.D.
Secretary	Ferdinanda Florence
Treasurer	Susanna Crawford, O.D.
Ex Officio	Erin Farmer

Members – 2006-2008 Terms

<u>Division</u>	<u>Name</u>
Math/Science	Susanna Crawford, O.D.
Physical Education	Scott Parrish
Humanities	Emily Blair, Ph.D.
Career Technical Education	Sarah Nordin
Part-Time Representative	Lou McDermott
At-Large Senator	Ruth Fuller

Members – 2007-2009 Terms

<u>Division</u>	<u>Name</u>
Business and Computer Science	Thomas Watkins
Fine and Applied Arts/BS	Ferdinanda Florence
Health Occupations	Jacqueline (Jackie) Rock
Student Support Services	Robin Arie-Donch
Part-Time Representative	Carl Ogden, Ed.D.
At-Large Senator	Joseph Conrad, Ph.D.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Solano Community College

FALL 2007

Title

Name

Superintendent/President

Gerald F. Fisher

Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs

Kathy J. Rosengren,

Vice President, Administrative & Business Services

Mazie Brewington

Interim Vice President, Student Services

Lisa Waits, Ed.D.

Vice President, Technology & Learning Resources

Jay Field

Director, Human Resources

Richard Christensen, Ed.D.

ACCREDITATION RESPONSE TEAM

Solano Community College

FALL 2007

Title

Name

Superintendent/President

Gerald F. Fisher

Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs
Accreditation Liaison Officer

Kathy J. Rosengren

Director, Research & Planning

Rob Simas

Vice President, Administrative & Business Services

Mazie Brewington

Director, Human Resources

Richard Christensen, Ed.D.

Governing Board Trustee

James M. Claffey

Governing Board Trustee

Pam Keith

Governing Board Trustee

A. Marie Young

ASSC EXECUTIVE BOARD
Solano Community College

FALL 2007

<i><u>Title</u></i>	<i><u>Name</u></i>
President	Harjot Sandhu
Vice President	Vacant
Legislative Advocate	Vacant
Public Relations Officer	LaTasha Warmesley
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Vacant
Student Trustee	Lillian Nelson
Advisor	Shirley Lewis, J.D.

**DEANS
(Instruction and Student Services)**

Solano Community College

FALL 2007

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>
Dean, Student Services	Sal Alcalá – Financial Aid/EOPS
Dean, Academic Affairs	Fran Brown – Health Occupations
Dean, Student Services	Catherine Fites – Admissions and Records
Dean, Academic Affairs	Robert Johnson – Career Technical Education
Dean, Academic Affairs	Robert Myers – Physical Education and Athletics
Dean, Academic Affairs	David Redfield, Ph.D. – Math/Science
Dean, Academic Affairs	Philip Andreini, Ph.D., – Humanities
Dean, Academic Affairs	Leslie Rota, Fine & Applied Arts/Behavioral Sciences
Dean, Student Services	Erin Vines – Counseling/Guidance and DSP
Dean, Academic Affairs	John Urrutia – Business and Computer Science
Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs	Kathy J. Rosengren
Interim Vice President, Student Services	Lisa Waits, Ed.D.

FABPAC

Solano Community College

FALL 2007

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>
Vice President, Administrative & Business Services	Mazie Brewington (Chair)
Minority Coalition	Sal Alcalá
CSEA	Sally Bailey
Classified Managers	Richard Christensen, Ed.D.
CTA	Tom Grube
Academic Senate	Dorothy Hawkes, Ph.D.
Academic Senate	Gail Kropp
Academic Senate	Jeffrey Lamb, Ph.D.
CSEA	Janice Larsen
Op. Engineers, Local 39	Larry Nikkel
Academic Senate	Barbara Pavão
Educational Administrators	David Redfield, Ph.D.
Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs	Kathy J. Rosengren
Interim Director, Fiscal Services	Elizabeth Skelly
Classified Managers	Marge Trolinder
Educational Administrators	John Urrutia
Interim Vice President, Student Services	Lisa Waits, Ed.D.
Academic Senate	Thomas Watkins
ASSC (two positions)	Lillian Nelson
	Samuel Martin
CTA	Diane White
<u>Position Alternates/Vacancies</u>	
Op. Engineers, Local 39	Jeffery Leheldt
CSEA	Barbara Kelley
Educational Administrators	Fran Brown
CTA	Kevin Anderson, J.D.
Minority Coalition	Vacant
Academic Senate	Vacant
Classified Managers	Vacant

MEASURE G STEERING COMMITTEE

Solano Community College

FALL 2007

Title

Name

Vice President, Business & Administrative Services

Mazie Brewington

Program Manager

Scott Colt

Vice President, Technology & Learning Resources

Jay Field

Superintendent/President

Gerald F. Fisher (Chair)

Director, Facilities

Frank Kitchen

Consultant

Chris Rhoden

Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs

Kathy J. Rosengren

Interim Vice President, Student Services

Lisa Waits, Ed.D.

SHARED GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Solano Community College

FALL 2007

Title

Name

Academic Senate, President

Gail Kropp

ASSC (two positions)

Harjot Sandhu

Lillian Nelson

CCA/CTA/NEA President

Diane White

CSEA, Chapter #211, President

Cynthia Simon

Op. Engineers, Local 39, President

Jeffery Lehfeldt

Alternate: Larry Nikkel

Management

Shirley Lewis, J.D.

Minority Coalition

Sal Alcalá' and Kevin Anderson,
J.D.

Resource Persons

Mazie Brewington,
Rich Christensen, Ed.D.;
Jay Field, Kathy J. Rosengren,
Charles Shatzer, Lisa Waits,
Ed.D.; and Nora O'Neill
Superintendent/President
Gerald F. Fisher

Appendix 2: Substantiating Evidence