

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

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

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

Description:

The College conducts an ongoing dialogue in a variety of forums, ranging from departmental to campus-wide discussions. These forums act to present issues concerning the campus, its programs, and its students, and all have as their goals the improvement and enrichment of campus life.

Following is a list of these groups and committees and their function in promoting a dialogue with focus on the College's strengths and weaknesses.

- In-service Workshops—Organized activities explore the College's efforts to fulfill its functions and to realize the Mission Statement's principles. Activities are periodically conducted during Flexible Calendar(Flex Cal) in-service training program [1B-1]^{*} and monthly Student Services in-service workshops. [1B-2]
- Division/Department meetings—Separate divisions/departments focus on College aims, as well as the responsibilities of each division/department to fulfill these goals.
- Committees—Separate and smaller groups of instructors and staff, as well as administrators, work together to recommend changes in the College curriculum and academic areas [see Standard II.A].
- Division dean meetings and retreats—the heads of departments, as well as the College's administrators, discuss the College's direction adjusting and determining goals to fulfill the directives in the Mission Statement.
- Task Forces—Representatives from all campus constituencies form working groups on an ad hoc basis to investigate and make recommendations on specific prioritized issues.
- Retreats provide informal sessions, where the concerns and achievements of the College and its personnel are reviewed and discussed.
- Program Review—the College evaluates instructional and student programs and their presentation, questioning both the courses offered and how they mesh to form the program itself [1B-3].
- Curriculum Review—the Curriculum Committee systematically evaluates courses offered at the College, examining the course descriptions and codes, scrutinizing the

^{*} References are marked with square brackets [] and listed at the end of the Standard.

courses' construction and directives to provide the best educational experience [www.solano.edu/president/committees/meetings].

Through the groups and occasions listed above, the College shows commitment to its education offerings in an effort to further the goals of the Mission Statement, while allowing for change and growth.

Evaluation:

The College meets this standard.

Planning Agenda:

None.

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

Description:

The College has adopted a model that provides for overall goals to be established and then effected through instructional initiatives. Dialogue is ongoing concerning the College's effectiveness. The instructors and staff are committed to continuous review in order to improve the direction and scope of learning, a commitment which is achieved in a variety of ways, from course reviews and evaluations of programs to campus-wide workshops.

Once the College's overriding goals are determined and understood, measurable initiatives are created, focusing on specific management outcomes that can be implemented and evaluated. The institution's members understand the time and effort related to these goals' pursuit. The College routinely reviews the Mission Statement in a variety of ways, but largely in division meetings, various committee groups, and Flex Cal forums.

Furthermore, a variety of sources provides vital data for the College to measure its accomplishments and successes. Some of these sources are:

- "Smart classrooms"—Classrooms are remodeled, upgraded and provide for technical improvements [see Standard II.C.1.a].
- Online classes—Online classes enjoy continuing growth, increasing the number of courses, sections, and service. Each calendar year this program expands to meet student demand and is evaluated for its effectiveness.
- Disabled students—The College remains committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), continuing to make modifications in existing structures for expanded access, including purchasing furniture and equipment.
- Learning Communities—The College continues to broaden its offerings of linked or integrated classes [see Standard II.A]. These offerings have increased in numbers and sections and are reviewed on a semester-by-semester basis.
- Student Equity Plan—The College collects data to evaluate student access and success [1B-4]. These data are evaluated and integrated into the three-year plan [1B-5].

The following instruments also enhance College goals:

- Assessment tests that provide reliable information to determine student placement in classes and levels where students can succeed.
- The Composition Mastery Exam (CME) where students are given two hours to create an exit-level essay, demonstrating their ability levels and the College's success in placing them in the proper composition class.
- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that gauge the result of class work, helping to evaluate the student's improvements and movement through the College system.
- Student evaluations of faculty that provide both quantitative and qualitative documentation, illuminating the effectiveness of our instructors.
- Instructor evaluations by division deans that result from classroom observation, assessing the instructor's method of instruction and its success in the classroom.

All these measurements are relevant to the efficacy of the College's educational offerings and programs; and, as part of the College's on-going self-evaluation, these measurements are collated and shared among College personnel, adding to the College's functionality and understanding of students and staff.

Evaluation:

The College meets this standard.

Planning Agenda:

None.

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

Description:

The College has a comprehensive program that measures and examines existing Instructional Programs and Student Services. Through its Program Review process, the College biannually evaluates its programs. The Instructional Program review (2003-2004) and the Student Services Program review (2000-2001) [1B-6] are the most recent examples. These reviews look at both the quantitative data and the qualitative analysis based on the results of each area's three year plans and priorities established under the institutional goals for each year.

This on-going evaluation assists the institution in assessing progress toward stated goals and objectives. The College is currently undergoing a review of its processes to further integrate Program Review, Planning and Budget development. During the 2004-2005 academic year a Task Force was established to review existing processes and recommend changes that would improve the existing process. The Task Force completed its recommendations and took the recommendations to the Associated Students, Academic Senate, Financial and Budget Planning Advisory Committee, and the Shared Governance Council for dialogue and comment during the 2004-2005 year. The recommendations of the Task Force will be instituted in the 2005-2006 academic year.

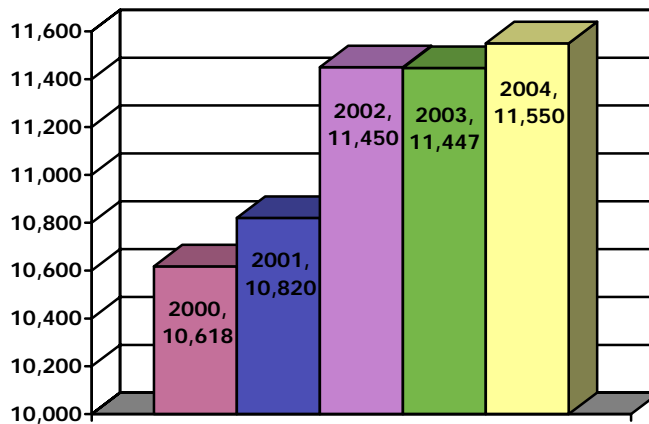
In addition to the Program Reviews, many program level assessments occur to assist students in the successful completion of their programs. The following instruments assist in the evaluation process:

- Assessment tests in English, Mathematics and ESL that provide guidelines for placing students in classes and at levels where they can succeed.
- The Composition Mastery Exam (CME) where students are given two hours to create an English 1 entry level essay, illustrating both their levels of ability and revealing the College's success in helping them attain that level.
- SLOs that gauge the result of class work as the College evaluates the student's growth and movement through the system.
- Student evaluations of instructors that provide both qualitative and quantitative material from which to understand and better the role instructors play in the classroom and beyond in students' lives and education.
- The use of Learning Communities to interweave various disciplines into a comprehensive group of courses to promote the relationships of disciplines to each other.

As a result of the above processes, the College has data and analysis to assist in resource allocation throughout the planning cycle. The College hiring process is based soundly on meeting the high demand areas of instruction that are required by our students.

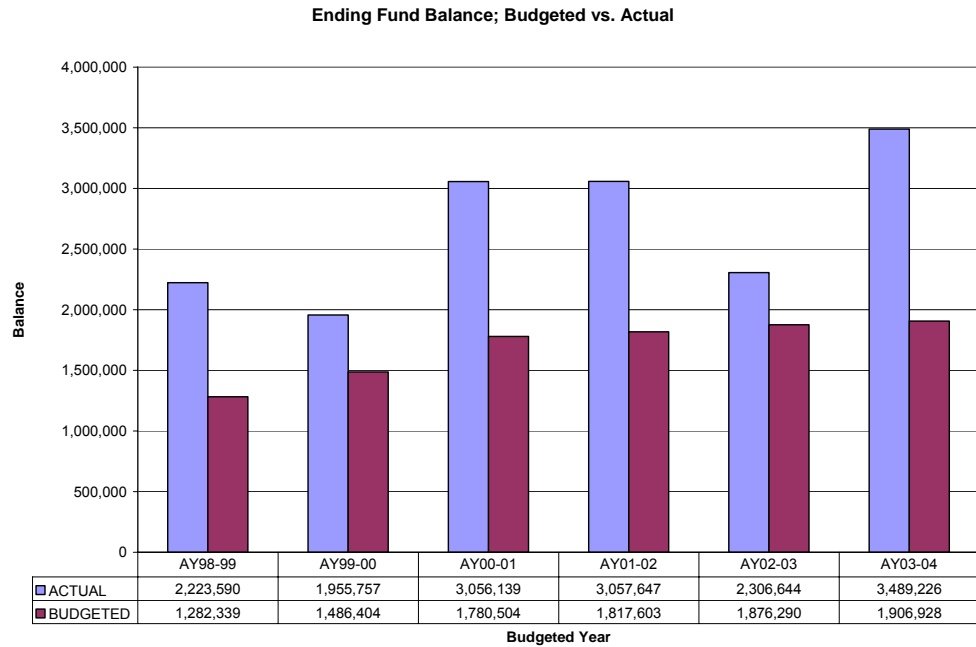
The College has exhibited steady growth over the past five years and is fiscally sound.

• Figure I-1: Enrollment Growth Fall 2000 thru Fall 2004



http://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/studdemo_coll_cube.cfm

• Figure I-2: District Ending Balances; AY1998-99 thru AY2003-04



[1B-7]

Evaluation:

The College meets this standard.

Planning Agenda:

None.

The Vice President of Technology and Learning Resources will investigate the possibility of presenting the reports via electronic mail.

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

Description:

The planning process incorporates input from all College stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, and administrators). Planning for the institution is guided by and focuses on the Mission, Vision and Strategic Directions, adopted and reviewed regularly by the Governing Board. Institutional Goals are adopted annually to focus the institutional needs with regard to allocating limited available resources.

Faculty are appointed to representative committees by the Academic Senate; classified staff are appointed by the CSEA and Operating Engineers, Local 39 unions; students are appointed by the Associated Students of Solano College (ASSC); administrative representatives are appointed by the Superintendent/President. These groups seek input from their constituents and voice concerns, participate in planning, and suggest solutions for the entire College community.

Representatives from the above groups serve on the committees to plan and write the Educational Master plan; the Technology plan; the Facilities Master plan; and they participate

in the Financial and Budget Planning Advisory Council (FABPAC). Minutes from these committees are posted on the campus Intranet to ensure wide access to both the issues and the discussion affecting each committee.

The College uses a Program Review process that provides all segments of the institution the opportunity to address specific areas/disciplines/departments in an analysis of the effectiveness of its services. The results of the analysis are integrated into three-year plans as part of the planning process. Institutional goals are established each year with input from the Educational Administrators and the Executive Council and are reviewed by the Academic Senate and Shared Governance Council before being forwarded to the Board of Trustees for input and adoption. These goals focus the planning process and assist the College in establishing Institutional Priorities, which are, in turn, sent to FABPAC for funding consideration. FABPAC considers possible funding sources and forwards its recommendations to the Superintendent/President.

Evaluation in this area takes place through a variety of meetings aimed at integrating these divergent constituencies in furthering a common goal.

- Shared Governance
- The Educational Master Plan
- Technology Master Plan
- Human Resources Plan
- Business Plan

These constituencies and documents provide input concerning institutional effectiveness. Furthermore, the Academic Senate, as well as the administration, meets to discuss the work done to ensure quality in education.

Evaluation:

Although the College meets the standard, there remains a need to continuously improve the transparency of campus budgeting, evaluation, and planning processes.

Planning Agenda:

The chairs of all standing committees will ensure that all minutes are posted to the Intranet for college-wide review.

In completing their annual reports, managers will identify and evaluate completed projects and report outcomes to the campus community.

I.B.5. The institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.

Description:

The Research and Planning Office provides the College community with reports and analysis of information for use in decision making and evaluation. Examples include reports, such as The Student Equity Plan; historical data on degrees awarded; reports to local high schools on the success of their students; reports on the success of students in their progress from English Fundamentals (English 370) to completion of College Composition (English 1); and annual highlights of progress toward the District's Strategic Goals. In addition, many research projects address the success of students in various disciplines (i.e., Math and Science).

Evaluation:

The College meets this standard.

The Research and Planning Office provides data on its Web site [http://www.solano.edu/institutional_research] indicating the composition of the College student body and its relation to Solano County's population to demonstrate that the College effectively serves all of the community. Survey data indicate high levels of student satisfaction with student services [1B-8]. Specific research results for various disciplines are provided to faculty for review and analysis.

Notwithstanding compliance with the standard, as Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) become more widely instituted throughout the campus, more research will be required to assess their effectiveness for students.

Planning Agenda:

The Vice President of Student Services will regularly assess the impact on the Office of Research and Planning resulting from the campus-wide implementation of SLOs.

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

Description:

The Research and Planning Office provides the College community with timely and accurate information for decision making and evaluation. The results of research and surveys are posted at the Research and Planning Web site on the intranet for access by the various campus committees. This site includes information about students, educational programs and the community.

The Director of Research and Planning facilitates the discussions of the Strategic Planning Coordinating Council to ensure progress is being made in each of the seven strategic directions adopted by the College. These directions are 1) Quality Teaching and Learning, 2) Student Access, 3) Institutional Diversity, 4) Organizational Culture, 5) Technology, 6) Fiscal Strength, and 7) Community Relations. An annual highlight brochure is distributed to the campus community indicating progress in each area [1B-9].

Evaluation:

The College meets this standard.

The Educational Master Plan provides the overall direction to the College. The Facilities Plan and the Technology Plan are updated annually to support the Educational Master Plan. This is accomplished by identifying any planning item that may impact these plans by noting them in the three-year plans. The three-year plans originate in each area of the campus and provide the direction for the area/departments/divisions. Each area tracks its accomplishments from year to year. The accomplishments of all areas and their impact on improving the effectiveness of the College are not always communicated clearly to the entire campus. Efforts are underway to improve this communication through educational workshops planned for all the Division Deans so that they may engage faculty and staff at the Division level in a comprehensive dialogue and understanding of the process for planning and resource allocation. The Program Reviews of instructional and student services programs are an essential part of the institutional planning and resource allocation. To assure the effectiveness of the Program Review and the planning and budget development process, a campus-wide committee was formed in 2004-05 to address the integration of these

components and identify strengths and weaknesses of the current process. The committee found that the three-year plans were the most well understood process and that the planning and budget development process was understood to a lesser degree. The Task Force on Program Review, Planning and Budget Development made several recommendations to improve understanding of the process, including well defined timelines, and greater communication of decisions at all levels of the process.

Planning Agenda:

The College will modify its systematic review by instituting a Process Evaluation and Review Team (PERT) to analyze the effectiveness of Program Review and the planning and budget development cycle on an on-going basis. The PERT will make its first review of the process at the end of the 2004-05 academic year and will review the process each year thereafter.

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

Description:

Each academic/student services division conducts a regular program review. The present pattern is every two years. The previous five years of trend data are reviewed to determine necessary modifications to curriculum offerings. Every five years the academic divisions conduct a complete curriculum review of all division curriculum offerings, updating and deleting as circumstances warrant. The plans/activities in each area are tracked by year and provide a historical record of accomplishments. These findings inform the faculty hiring process and are used to make modifications to current programs and services, and to plan for the future.

The Student Services Program Review is used to assess the effectiveness of the services provided. "How do we rate?" surveys are compiled periodically to get feedback from our students [1B-10]. In addition, division/area meetings occur regularly, and discussions of student concerns and comments by students take place. These results are used in modifying services and identifying areas where improvement is warranted.

Evaluation:

The College meets this standard.

The Program Review process has a long history at the College. The outcomes from the program review are used to bolster requests for new faculty positions and are considered as a key to the development of the Educational Master Plan. Providing effective services for our students is the primary core value of the institution's "Focus on Students." The Task Force on Program Review, Planning and Budget Development is preparing a series of information workshops to explain the planning processes used in the budgeting cycle to all campus constituencies. It is hoped that this will clarify the process for all.

Planning Agenda:

Notwithstanding that the College meets the standard, it will provide workshops and training opportunities to increase understanding of the planning process and evaluation of this process. This will be accomplished by various means (forums, meetings, in-service sessions). The Program Evaluation and Review Team (PERT) will assess the effectiveness of the planning and evaluation process annually. The PERT will establish a formal mechanism for reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the Program Review, planning and budget development cycle, and will develop an assessment tool or strategy to assist with the regular evaluation of the effectiveness of this process.

Standard I References

- 1A-1 Educational Master Plan (2004-05)
- 1A-2 Grade Distribution Reports
- 1A-3 7-Year Business Plan
- 1A-4 Human Resources Plan
- 1A-5 Technology Plan
- 1A-6 Accreditation Self-Study Survey of Faculty & Staff: Tabled Data Fall 2002, Fall 2003, Fall 2004
- 1A-7 Taskforce on Program Review, Planning, & Budget Development: Final Report (DEC04)
- 1A-8 Board Minutes [May/June 2005]
- 1A-9 Solano Community College Catalog 2005-2006
- 1A-10 Strategic Plan (approved by Board, JUL 2000)

- 1B-1 Examples of Flex Cal brochures
- 1B-2 Examples of Student Services In-service Workshops
- 1B-3 Instructional Program Review
- 1B-4 Student Equity Plan (JUN 04)
- 1B-5 Three-Year Plan
- 1B-6 Student Services Program Review 2000-2001
- 1B-7 CCFS-311 Reports (1998-99 thru 2003-04)
- 1B-8 Student Accreditation of Self-Study Survey: Tabled Data Fall 2002, Fall 2003, Fall 2004
- 1B-9 Strategic Goals: Highlights of Activities & Achievements for the 2003-2004 Academic Year
- 1B-10 "How do we Rate?" Survey