PROGRESS REPORT

Mission College 3000 Mission College Boulevard Santa Clara, CA 95054

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the team that visited

Mission College on April 27, 2009

Robert Dees, Team Chair

Progress Report Visiting Team Roster Mission College April 27, 2009 Mr. Robert Dees (Chair)
President
Orange Coast College

Mr. Michael Bagley Chief Instructional Officer Feather River College

Mr. Ken Stoppenbrink Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services San Bernardino Community College District DATE: May 16, 2009

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

FROM: Team Chair, Robert Dees

President, Orange Coast College

SUBJECT: Report of Progress Report Visit,

Mission College, April 27, 2009

Introduction:

At the request of the Commission, a three-member team chaired by Robert Dees and two other members, Michael Bagley and Kenneth Stoppenbrink, visited Mission College on April 27, 2009, to review evidence in support of the College's first Progress Report.

Two previous Commission teams had visited Mission College in response to its Self Study reports in 1995 and 2001. Each of these visits resulted in recommendations, and the College began submitting reports in response to the Commission's concerns in 2002. These reports were accepted by the Commission and progress was noted. The team that visited Mission College in 2008, however, indicated that improvements had not been sustained and made new recommendations, several of which repeated those made in 1995 and 2001. In June 2008, the Commission placed Mission College on Warning status and asked that it submit by March 1, 2009, a report of its progress in addressing specific recommendations by the 2008 team. The purpose of the 2009 team visit was to verify the College's progress in meeting the recommendations covered in that report.

The team visiting Mission College on April 27, 2009, also visited West Valley College and the West Valley-Mission College District office the following day. The team chair met on the morning of Monday, April 27, at the West Valley Mission District office with the district Chancellor, Dr. John Hendrickson; Mission College President Dr. Harriett Robles; and the President of West Valley College, Dr. Phil Hartley. The group discussed the purpose of the team's visit and reviewed the schedule and logistics for the team's two-day visit to the District's colleges.

Following the chair's morning meeting with the chancellor and presidents, the team met in Santa Clara to prepare for its visit to Mission College that afternoon. Once at the College, the team immediately began reviewing evidence in support of the Progress Report. The team found that the College was well prepared for its visit, with documentation organized and campus staff available for interview. After reviewing documents over the course of the afternoon, the team members met together with the following College representatives to ask questions and to verify the team members' interpretations of the supporting documents: Dr. Harriett Robles, President; Dr. Norma Ambriz-Galaviz, Vice-President of Instruction and Articulation Officer; Dr. Worku Negash, Vice President Administrative Services; Stephanie Kashima, Academic Senate President; and My Loi, Classified Senate President.

On the following day, April 28, the team visited West Valley College where it met again with the Chancellor and also with three members of the District Board: Trustee Jack Lucas, Board President; Trustee Bob Owens; and Trustee Chad Walsh.

Evaluation of Mission College's Progress Report

The team found the College's First Progress Report for Accreditation to be accurate and appropriately responsive to the Recommendations discussed below.

Recommendation 1: Given two previous teams' recommendations (1995 and 2001), the team strongly recommends that the College immediately implement systematic and continuous program review and planning processes that are linked to resource/budget allocation. (I.A.1, I.A.7, I.B.3, I.B.6, II.A.2e, II.c.2, IV.B.2.a)

Mission College has made significant progress in meeting this recommendation. In the fall of 2008, the College's primary governance groups, the Academic Senate and the Governance and Planning Council (GAP), developed and approved a four-year rotation cycle for program review. All program areas consequently completed a full program review during 2008-2009 and will also complete an annual update review beginning 2009-2010. The College's process requires that each program review undergo a rubric-based critique by campus planning and governance groups before its submission for final approval by the GAP. Before giving such approval, the GAP ensures that the submitting program has included appropriate goals based on data, has requested resources appropriate to those goals, and has written outcomes and assessment plans for all of its courses and services.

As of spring 2009, all programs are scheduled to begin 2009-2010 with only 75% of their normal budgets for supplies, equipment, and hourly staff as the College moves away from rollover budgeting. To regain their reduced funding, programs with approved program reviews are eligible each spring to request additional resource allocation to begin the next year, but only if their program review has been approved by the GAP. When a program review is not approved by the GAP, the submitting program may revise and resubmit the program review to the GAP. At the time of the team's visit, the GAP was preparing to review requests for additional funding for next year from programs with approved program reviews; it was also discussing what action to take regarding six programs that had not had their program reviews approved at that time.

This process has allowed the College to effectively link program review and planning to resource and budget allocation. The team reviewed minutes from both the Academic Senate and Program Review Committees that demonstrated how the program review process was completed on the campus and how it matched with the college's effort to link program review with planning and resource allocation. To gauge the acceptability of the new program review process, Mission College staff completed a survey on the program review process. Results were generally positive, though an increase in faculty workload was a noted concern. The College's Program Review Committee has discussed whether or not the perceived increase in workload may eventually erode the consistency in the way that constituency peer groups critique program review documents. The visiting team feels the College will need to monitor the consistency of its peer review process and safeguard against losing consistency. Overall, the team saw clear evidence that the College has worked diligently to plan and to implement new processes for program review, planning, and allocation of budget and resources.

Team Conclusions

The Commission expects program review and planning to be at a "sustainable quality" level.

Mission College is now in its first year of implementing an ongoing four-year cycle for program review and will begin in 2009-2010 to implement a new annual review process. Both the four-year program review and the annual review processes are tied to a budgeting and resource allocation model initiated this spring. The team found that Mission College has made substantial progress in responding to the earlier recommendations regarding program review and planning linked to budget and resource allocation; however, it is too soon to know whether these new processes are sustainable and effective. The team consequently concludes that the College is at the "development" level in the Commission's rubric for institutional effectiveness. The College will need to review and evaluate the results of these processes throughout next year. It will also need to continue to ensure that Student Learning Outcomes and assessment are closely integrated with the four-year program review cycle, annual reviews, and the new budget and resource allocation model.

Recommendation 2: The team recommends that Mission College establish and implement a schedule for systematically reviewing its mission and values statements. (I.A.3)

The team confirmed that the College has effectively addressed this recommendation. The campus has implemented an annual master planning calendar and assigned responsibility for annual review of the mission and values statements to the Governance and Planning Council (GAP). The mission and values statements were approved by the governing board in September 2007 as well as updated and reviewed college-wide in August 2008. They will be reviewed again by the GAP in spring 2009 and annually thereafter.

Team Conclusions

The team concludes that the College has established and implemented a schedule for systematically reviewing its mission and values statements. The expectations of Recommendation 2 and standards for accreditation have been met.

Recommendation 5: The team recommends that the College review and complete its planning agendas for both the 2001 and 2007 accreditation visits. (I.B.4, I.B.6)

Mission College has made a strong commitment toward addressing this recommendation. The team saw evidence that the College has effectively completed all of the planning agendas for 2001 and well over two-thirds of those for 2007. The majority of 2007 Planning Agendas items identified in the Progress Report as "in progress" at the time of the team visit were within 75% to 90% complete. College staff who met with the team during its visit indicated the College expects to have all of these remaining items completed before the end of fall 2009.

Team Conclusions

The matrix created to track the College's progress on this recommendation was no doubt an effective tool for the college and surely helpful to the team. Follow-up discussions with staff and review of supplemental evidence further verified the College's level of success with this recommendation. The team feels the campus is very close to meeting this recommendation fully and needs only to complete outstanding portions of the remaining planning agendas.

Recommendation 6: As previously recommended by the 2001 visiting team, the current team also recommends that the College continue to develop, implement, and regularly assess the results of its recruitment, retention, and success plan for underrepresented faculty, staff, and students and that it submit such a completed plan for the Commission's review. (2001 team Recommendation II, Standard III.A.4) (II.A.4, III.A.4.a, III.A.4.b)

The team found that Mission College has devoted significant time and effort in developing and assessing its efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented faculty, staff, and students. Since at least 2007, College task forces and committees have completed a number of planning documents based upon research and assessment, including the Mission College Staff/Faculty Diversity Plan, District EEO Plan, and Student Equity Plan. The College's matrix on planning agenda items from the 2001 and 2007 Self Studies shows that entries related to non-traditional or underrepresented students and staff have been completed. These items include widening access to the College diversity report and implementing best practices to increase minority hiring, completion of the College's Staff Diversity Plan, assessment of the current Cultural Pluralism requirement, and reactivation of the Student Success Committee. The team also saw evidence that campus staff utilize data when developing plans to address specific needs in access, retention, and success among underrepresented and underserved student populations.

The College's Student Equity Committee guides the majority of the College's efforts on behalf of underrepresented students. The Committee coordinates the activities of the Student Equity Plan and includes faculty and staff representing relevant areas of the campus (e.g., Title V Grant, Matriculation Advisory Committee, Academic Senate). The Student Equity Plan is included in the College's master planning calendar and reviewed annually. The plan and updates to it are published on the college website. The Staff/Faculty Diversity Committee, which addresses diversity among the College's staff, was formed in spring 2009, meets monthly, and reports directly to the College president.

Team Conclusions

The College's Staff/Diversity Plan was submitted to the Commission along with its progress report. Drawing upon that report and other evidence reviewed during the team's visit, the team concludes that the College has met the expectations of this recommendation.

Recommendation 9: The District and the College need to address the impact of the reduction in fiscal resources caused by the apportionment penalty assessed on the District this past year. (III.D.1.b, III.D.1.c, III.D.1.d, III.2.a, III.2.d, III.D.2d, III.D.2.e, IV.A.4, IV.A.5)

The team reviewed evidence that the College and the District have given serious priority to addressing the fiscal impact of the apportionment penalty assessed on the District in 2008-2009. The College and District have developed and are implementing a multi-part plan to regain apportionment, rebuild revenues, and ensure ongoing fiscal stability. As part of this effort, the District has already paid \$4,903,995 toward the penalty assessment and will pay the remaining \$740,232 in three equal installments over a three-year period. The District Land Corporation has contributed \$3,396,851 toward the initial assessment and is prepared to assist further if necessary. The District has also benefited this year from a surge of additional, beyond-target 936 FTES in enrollment growth. The increase resulted from effective planning on the part of both District colleges and as a result of weak economic conditions in the state. Such growth will lessen, if not fully mitigate, the impact of the base reductions of 2,243.57 credit FTES for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 imposed by the apportionment penalty.

In carrying out its plan to ensure long-term financial stability, the District is also implementing measures to reduce ongoing expenditures from the General Fund, including transferring staff to increase efficiency and reduce operational costs, defunding vacant positions, and reducing staffing through a 2008-2009 retirement incentive. At the time of the team's visit, the District expects that twenty-five or more full-time faculty and several top administrators will take advantage of the current incentive to retire by the end of this fiscal year. The resulting savings in

personnel costs will allow the District additional fiscal flexibility and the ability to plan effectively to replace staff as needed. In addition, the District is also currently studying a recently completed organizational review compiled by an outside consulting firm. The review includes options and recommendations that if fully implemented could result in more than \$10 million in reduced costs for the District.

Team Conclusions

The District and its two colleges have worked responsibly together to address the impact of the reduction in fiscal resources caused by the State's imposition of an apportionment penalty. Payment of a majority portion of the assessment penalty has already been made, and well designed and practical plans are in place for payment of the remaining amount over a three-year period. Significant enrollment growth at both Mission College and West Valley College has greatly enhanced the District's ability to achieve full restoration of its credit FTES base within the next few years. Despite a large and serious assessment penalty, the District is implementing procedures to strengthen its financial foundation and remains fiscally sound. The team concludes that the District has effectively addressed this recommendation.

Recommendation 12: The team recommends that the College constituencies seek input from the Board of Trustees to establish District-wide goals that address the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the educational programs of the District so that these goals may be incorporated into the strategic planning process of the College.

The West Valley-Mission Board of Trustees has shown enthusiasm as well as diligence in working with District staff to develop and implement goals related to the effectiveness of the District's educational programs. In fall 2008, the Board adopted two sets of educationally focused goals. One set addresses District-wide priorities affecting such areas as enrollment, fiscal stability, community educational needs, communication, diversity, and the quality and focus of District education programs. Another set of goals focuses on the Board itself. These goals emphasize increasing Board discussions of educational quality and student success, ensuring the District's fiscal stability, increasing open communication, and improving Board operations. The three Board members who met with the team on April 28 were clearly supportive of the goals and felt they provided Board members with a better focus and direction for addressing the District's educational issues. Just as significantly, the new District goals have been incorporated into the Mission College master plan and will also serve as a basis for the College's resource allocation process in spring 2009 and all future planning at the campus. The team saw evidence that District goals have been incorporated into planning and program review processes at Mission College.

In addition to these double sets of new goals, the Board began in November 2008 to hold workshops and study sessions focusing on its two colleges' mission statements and educational plans, as well as on aligning district-level goals with those of the two campuses. At its December 4, 2008, study session on participatory governance, the Board endorsed a number of follow-up actions intended to clarify its own appropriate governance role, to minimize any appearance or reality of Board micromanagement, and to strengthen the role of participatory governance at the Board level and across the District. New 2008-2009 Board Goals adopted in January 2009 include increasing the number of Board discussions regarding such matters as curriculum, program review, and student success rates, as well as explicitly relating Board agenda items to the educational priorities of the District and its colleges. Beginning February 2009, the Board agenda will include a regularly scheduled presentation by staff about educational and student services.

Team Conclusions

The District and its governing board have responded fully and effectively to this recommendation. The new Board goals and attendant changes to the agenda provide Board members with a stronger and much needed educational focus; the study session follow-up actions have identified areas to which the Board should give more time and attention as well as less. Most importantly, development and implementation of Board goals have provided Mission College and West Valley College with a clearer foundation on which to base their own planning and allocation processes. The team believes the College has responded satisfactorily to this recommendation and has met the standards for accreditation.