

# Follow-Up Visit Evaluation Report

Los Angeles Southwest College  
1600 West Imperial Highway  
Los Angeles, CA 90047

A Confidential Report Prepared  
for the

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited  
Los Angeles Southwest College/Los Angeles Community College District

on

April 16, 2013

## **Follow-Up Visit Team**

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# Follow-Up Visit Report

DATE: April 16, 2013  
TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges  
FROM: Dr. Pamela Luster, Team Chair  
SUBJECT: Report of Follow-Up Visit Team to Los Angeles Southwest College/Los Angeles CCC District April 16, 2013

## **Introduction**

A comprehensive visit was conducted to Los Angeles Southwest College on March 12-15, 2012. At its meeting of June 26-28, 2012 the Commission acted to impose Probation immediately and to require that Los Angeles Southwest College submit a Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2013 followed by a visit of Commission representatives.

The visiting team, Dr. Pamela Luster, Dr. Lori Bennett, and Mr. Mark Clair conducted the follow-up site visit to Los Angeles Southwest College on Tuesday, April 16, 2013. All members of the team were on the March 2012 visiting team. The purpose of the team visit was to verify that the Follow-Up Report prepared by the College was accurate through examination of evidence, to determine if sustained, continuous, and positive improvements had been made at the institution, and that the institution had resolved the recommendations made by the comprehensive evaluation team and now meets the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

The focus of Los Angeles Southwest College's follow-up visit was on six (6) College Recommendations and five (5) District Recommendations. The team divided its time at the college between reviewing evidence and interviewing individuals/groups at the college, and the team chair Dr. Luster worked remotely in concert with Dr. Bonnie Dowd, chief business officer, and Dr. Doug Dykstra, chair of chairs, at the District office. In general the team found College representatives sufficiently prepared for the visit with a well-organized evidence room at the college level and appropriate interview schedules at both locations allowing the team to conduct its assessment in a timely, organized manner. Over the course of the day, the team met the President of the College, The College Council, Strategic Planning Council and with a number of LASC faculty, staff, administrators, and students directly involved in meeting the recommendations made by the commission.

The Follow-Up Report and visit were expected to document resolution of the following six (6) College recommendations and five (5) District recommendations:

## **External Visiting Team 2012 College Recommendations**

### **College Recommendation 1**

*In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the college validate the current planning model by formally assessing the effectiveness of the process with qualitative and*

*quantitative data. Further, the team recommends the College be attentive to the regular and consecutive implementation of the annual process and document the results for dissemination to the college constituency for the purpose of program improvement. (IB.3, IB.4, IB.6)*

*The 2006 Recommendation 3 read: The team has found that there is a divergence between plans and subsequent action. Therefore, the team recommends that the college focus greater attention on assessing the currency and effectiveness of all programs and services with particular emphasis on the following areas: a) staff development; b) distance learning; c) technology; d) enrollment management and e) occupational education. The team further recommends that the college incorporate the identified needs and adopted action plans into the Integrated College Operational Plan. (Standards IA.1, IB.3, IB.7, IIa.1a, IIA.1b, IIA.2b, IIA.2c, IIA.2f, IIA.3, IIA.5, IIC.1a, IIC.2, IIB.3, IIIC.1, IIIC.2)*

### **College Recommendation 2**

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College maintains a functional website to encourage communication, particularly in the following areas: 1) information on programs and services for students, and 2) information and documentation on governance and other committee activities. (IIA.2.b, IIA.2.h, IIA.2.i, IIA.6.c)

### **College Recommendation 3**

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College review the availability of appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to all students. In particular, the team urges the College to review the parity of services provided to students in distance education as compared to students on campus. (IIB.3.a)

*Recommendation 4 from the 2006 Comprehensive Evaluation read: There is no clear evidence that the college has developed specific strategies to meet the educational needs of the changing demographics of its community. The team recommends that the college intensify its efforts to identify service area needs. The team further recommends that the college develop plans for programs, courses, and services to address identified needs. (Standards IA.1, IIA.1a, IB.3a, IIB.1, IIIB.2, IIID.1)*

### **College Recommendation 4**

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the library regularly update its print and online collections in consultation with discipline faculty. (IIC.1.a) The team further recommends that, to meet the stated Institutional Student Learning Outcome in Information Competency, the College implement a cycle of instruction, assessment, and program improvement through the appropriate learning resource and instructional areas of the College. (IIC.1.b) Finally, the team recommends that a sustainable funding source be identified for the acquisition and maintenance of learning resource materials. (IIC.1, IIC.2, IIID.1.a)

## **College Recommendation 5**

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College reviews all aspects of professional development, including key elements of peer review, self- reflection, and continuous review of appropriate pedagogy for the student population. In particular, the completion of faculty evaluations systematically and at stated intervals; engagement in dialogue addressing staff and faculty professional development on various teaching pedagogies and strategies to meet the diverse learning styles of its diverse student population. *(IIIA.1.a)*

## **College Recommendation 6**

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College fully utilize the established consultative committee structure by documenting actions and recommendations in agendas, minutes, and other official tools to ensure that dialogues and decisions affecting the College are communicated widely and clearly across the campus constituencies. *(IVA.3)*

## **Visiting Team 2012 District Recommendations**

### **District Recommendation 1**

In order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the teams recommend that the district actively and regularly review the effectiveness of the construction bond oversight structure and the progress in the planned lifting of the moratorium to ensure the financial integrity of the bond programs, and the educational quality of its institutions as affected by the delays of the planned facilities projects. *(IIIB.1.a, IIIC, IIID.2.a, IVB.1.c, Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18)*

### **District Recommendation 2**

In order to ensure the financial integrity of the district and the colleges, and to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the teams recommend the resolution of the material weakness and significant deficiencies cited in the 2010 financial audit be fully effected by the completion of next year's audit, and appropriate systems be implemented and maintained to prevent future audit exceptions. *(IIID.2.a, IVB.1.c, Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18)*

### **District Recommendation 4**

To fully respond to the recommendation first tendered by the Comprehensive Evaluation Team in 2006, and to reflect a realistic assessment of financial resources, financial stability, and the effectiveness of short- and long-term financial planning for the district and the colleges, and in order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the teams recommend that the district adopt and fully implement as soon as is practicable an allocation model for its constituent colleges that addresses the size, economies of scale, and the stated mission of the individual colleges. *(IIID.1.b, IIID.1.c, IIID.2.c, IVB.3.c, Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18)*

### **District Recommendation 5**

To meet the Standard, the teams recommend that the Board of Trustees make visible, in behavior and in decision-making, their policy role and their responsibility to act as a whole in the public's interest. Further, the teams recommend continuing professional development for the Board of Trustees to ensure a fuller understanding of its role in policy governance and the importance of using official channels of communication through the chancellor or his designee. (IVB.1.a)

### **College Responses to the 2012 External Evaluation Team Recommendation**

**Recommendation 1:** *In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the college validate the current planning model by formally assessing the effectiveness of the process with qualitative and quantitative data. Further, the team recommends the College be attentive to the regular and consecutive implementation of the annual process and document the results for dissemination to the college constituency for the purpose of program improvement. (IB.3, IB.4, IB.6)*

*The 2006 Recommendation 3 read: The team has found that there is a divergence between plans and subsequent action. Therefore, the team recommends that the college focus greater attention on assessing the currency and effectiveness of all programs and services with particular emphasis on the following areas: a) staff development; b) distance learning; c) technology; d) enrollment management and e) occupational education. The team further recommends that the college incorporate the identified needs and adopted action plans into the Integrated College Operational Plan. (Standards IA.1, IB.3, IB.7, IIa.1a, IIA.1b, IIA.2b, IIA.2c, IIA.2f, IIA.3, IIA.5, IIC.1a, IIC.2, IIB.3, IIIC.1, IIIC.2)*

#### **Findings and Evidence:**

LASC has made significant progress towards assessing and communicating outcomes related to planning. The flow of information for planning begins with instructional and non-instructional program review. Essential components for program review (e.g. SLOs, enrollment trends) are captured in the templates and documents are posted online. Instructional program reviews culminate into an Instructional Department Plan (IDP) that is reviewed and signed by the Dean and VP. The IDPs, as well as non-instructional program reviews, are then presented to the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC). After the SPC has reviewed the plans and considered the college's strategic goals, the final product of either the Integrated College Operational Plan (ICOP) or SPC, depending on the cycle, is forwarded to college council. Once the plan has been approved, the president forwards the approved plan to the budget committee where requests are connected to the College's and District's goals.

The planning process was found to be well-documented and widely disseminated as evidenced in the Strategic Planning Handbook and posted on the college's website. The Annual College retreat is used to kick off the planning cycle, with an increase in attendance for the August 2012 session noted this year. As the team noted in its March

2012 visit, the current planning structure has been in place for the last several years providing consistency to the process, however levels of participation and documentation of outcomes and integration was inconsistent. At the time of the March 2012 visit, college staff suggested that the high turnover in the administrative ranks made it difficult to provide consistency in the planning process. This condition still exists at the college with more than half of the administrative staff serving in interim roles. Although change is inevitable, providing a consistent framework for planning efforts will aid in communicating the process to the campus community. In addition, qualitative and quantitative data are considered throughout the planning process as evidenced in the program review templates, the “core indicators” that support the ICOP and Strategic Plan (SP) objectives, the annual retreat survey and focus group, and point of service surveys used in the non-instructional program review process to assess outcomes.

Continuous improvement of the planning process was evidenced by the extension of the Strategic Plan from three years to six years to better integrate with the District Strategic Plan. In addition, the College is hopeful that the consolidation of committees into three main committees (i.e. Educational Master Plan, Facilities Plan, and Technology Plan) will increase participation and streamline the process needed to integrate this material into program reviews. Having served for three years, the chair of the program review committee commented that faculty is considering additional data sets for inclusion, as identified in the annual program review process lead by the Academic Senate. The team found evidence that the 2012-13 ICOP strategic objectives were updated to guide the annual planning process while also guiding long-term planning described in the 2011-14 Strategic Plan.

The Annual Retreat survey and focus group results from August 2012 revealed that communication of the planning process still needs improvement. However, evidence confirmed that dialogue has been initiated on how to increase communication via increased training opportunities, revision of the planning handbook, more detailed data on the website, and a year-end forum to assess the planning process.

### **Conclusion:**

The team found evidence to support a continuous planning process that leads to program improvement. The team found that the college has in place, 1) evaluation of the planning process with qualitative and quantitative data, and b) implementation of the annual process and documented the results for program improvement.

The college is engaged in implementing a planning process that is well-documented. Further, the team found evidence that plans and subsequent action are aligned, and that the college has focused its attention on the areas identified in the 2006 recommendation. The ICOP does identify the college needs annually, and the strategic plan long term, evidence of successful annual and long term planning processes are in place.

The team finds that the college recommendation was fully addressed and that the standard is now fully met.

## **College Recommendation 2**

*In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College maintains a functional website to encourage communication, particularly in the following areas: 1) information on programs and services for students, and 2) information and documentation on governance and other committee activities. (IIA.2.b, IIA.2.h, IIA.2.i, IIA.6.c)*

### **Findings and Evidence:**

The College has worked diligently to bring their website up-to-date. This includes a new design that is more user friendly but also more informative for the students, staff and faculty. In February of 2013, a permanent Public Information Officer (PIO) position was filled to guide the process for updating the college's website. Efforts were made to redesign the website using AMF Media. However, AMF's timeframe was not conducive to the situation at the college. Aside from a few template designs and color arrangements, very little work had been completed through AMF. However, during this time efforts were focused upon inclusion of the campus community by way of forums to discuss website layout and standardization.

The College now uses a District contractor (i.e. Zumwinkle.com) for support including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidance. In addition, OmniUpdate is used for hosting the website and content management. At the time of the visit, the team used the website extensively and found most links to be functional. This included links for students to access all student services as well as easy navigation for shared governance committees and the planning process.

To ensure that the website is easy to navigate and informative to all constituent groups, several modes of communication were used. For example, student meetings were used to develop tabs such as "Current Students" on the homepage for easy navigation to those areas most used by this type of student. In addition, faculty is involved in creating templates for their departments and the staff development coordinator is working with faculty to complete this process. In late 2012, OmniUpdate provided a webinar to instruct users on how to update their web pages. The PIO has also developed a website maintenance policy to help assure a consistent and standardized design. She holds workshops with faculty and students to discuss the look and feel of the website and soon will hold workshops on the use of OmniUpdate. Finally, evidence was provided for a survey that will be disseminated soon to assess the usability and content of the website. The college only has 15 licenses for OmniUpdate meaning that the PIO has to make most of the changes herself. The College is aware of the personnel resources required to maintain the website especially considering the PIO has additional duties.

### **Conclusion:**

The team finds that the institution has fully addressed this recommendation and fully meets this standard.



### **College Recommendation 3**

*In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College review the availability of appropriate, comprehensive and reliable services to all students. In particular, the team urges the College to review the parity of services provided to students in distance education as compared to students on campus. (IIB.3.a)*

*Recommendation 4 from the 2006 Comprehensive Evaluation read: There is no clear evidence that the college has developed specific strategies to meet the educational needs of the changing demographics of its community. The team recommends that the college intensify its efforts to identify service area needs. The team further recommends that the college develop plans for programs, courses, and services to address identified needs. (Standards IA.1, IIA.1a, IB.3a, IIB.1, IIB.2, IID.1)*

#### **Findings and evidence:**

In order to review the availability and assess the need for student services, the College conducted student surveys, held focus groups, and conducted a gap analysis of current student services. In fall 2012, the College conducted a student Climate Survey (in English/Spanish) in several instructional courses, including accounting, biology, music, personal development, English, ESL, and computer courses. Several of these courses were part of their EOPS, Veterans, DSPP, Puente, and Passages programs. The College distributed about 300 surveys and received approximately 250 useable responses. The survey findings showed strong student interest in several areas including: on-campus “hang-out” space and study space, more classes, more tutors, more hours and better library services, and more information about campus events and students clubs.

After reviewing the survey results, the College then conducted eight focus groups that represented their diverse student population. The purpose of these focus groups was to test the themes of the survey findings and to hear a more in-depth perspective from students. Results from the focus groups were combined with those of the climate study, and shared with the accreditation team, deans, and department chairs. In January, a formal report regarding the survey was sent to the LASC President and the results were formally presented to the campus community during a spring 2013 Flex Day event. Throughout the spring semester, the results were also shared with the Student Services Managers, College Council, Strategic Planning Committee, the Associated Student Organization (ASO) President and the ASO Executive Committee.

After sharing the survey results with the campus community, the college is beginning more in-depth discussions on how to improve student services and student success. For example, the Associated Student Organization developed a list of recommendations to improve student involvement and presented their recommendations to the college President. The Vice President of Student Services is scheduled to meet with the

Department Chairs to discuss the survey results so that Department Chairs can incorporate recommendations into fall planning. The student service programs also plan to review the survey results as part of their 2013-2014 program review process which begins during the spring 2013 semester, with the expectation that they will begin implementing changes over the summer. A formal recommendation for improving student services will be submitted to the President as part of the ongoing process of review.

The college also began some immediate steps to address some of the student survey findings. To address student concerns regarding access to classes, deans and department chairs reviewed the spring 2013 class offerings and adjusted class times to extend throughout the day. They also began mapping course offerings to transfer degrees to make sure they offer the right combination of courses to allow students to complete their programs.

In addition to the climate study, the College also conducted a student athlete survey to determine which classes athletes were enrolled in and what tutoring services they needed. Based on survey results, they developed a Student Athlete Academic Boot Camp with structured study halls and tutoring. The College also designated an Athletic counselor to assist student athletes with class advisement and Ed Plans.

To continue the assessment of student services and student needs, during spring 2013 the College plans to participate in the CCSSE survey.

The College also assessed the parity of “land-based” and “online access” services. Student services managers reported on services provided by each area and the College identified gaps in services provided for on-ground and online students. Based on these results, the College implemented the following tutoring support services:

1. Tutor Trac – an online system to schedule tutoring appointments
2. SmartThinking – online, interactive tutoring sessions available to all students anytime and anywhere (24/7)
3. Student Lingo – a series of online workshops to provide support in several areas

Since these new systems were implemented during fall 2012, the College has developed web-based student satisfaction surveys and will conduct an assessment in May 2013 to gauge user satisfaction, as well as to solicit recommendations for improvement. The results of this assessment will also be used in decision making to determine if the College should maintain the programs as-is, increase the services, or modify, limit, or discontinue the services.

In spring 2013, the College also began providing online counseling to improve access to counseling and advising for both online and land-based students. Students can make counseling appointments online, send emails to an online counselor through “askacounselor” and e-advising, or contact their own counselor through the portal system. The College has developed an online survey and will conduct an assessment during April 2013 to determine student satisfaction with the online askaCounselor

advising system. In order to develop and monitor the online counseling system, the College provided some release time for a counselor during this academic year. The College has marketed the online counseling service to students through flyers, text messages, email, classroom presentations, and their website.

In addition to the above-listed student surveys, the College notes that it has conducted several focus groups and held many discussions on student needs and interventions as part of their Achieving the Dream initiative. Based on these results, the College began offering student orientations in July 2012 and created an online orientation PowerPoint presentation. Students can also access Admissions and Records via the web, find frequently asked questions (FAQ's) on the counseling webpage, and find descriptions of all the student services on the website.

Specific to the Library, third party comments received by the team supported the notion that the Library needs more Librarians in order to provide more access for students. Evidence suggest that there are a mix of both full and part time Librarians available and budgeted, however the full time Librarians have had attendance challenges that require the college to close the Library on short notice when limited time is given for substitutes to be called. Whatever the case, evidence demonstrating the college's long term commitment to student access for the Library remains an issue.

Lastly, based on a review of "best practices" to determine the type and level of services needed to support online instruction, the college developed a distance education instructor's manual. The Distance Learning Guidelines, Policies and Procedures Manual was approved by the Academic Senate in spring 2012.

### **Conclusion:**

Given the limited period of time since the previous accreditation visit, LASC has made a significant effort to survey students through qualitative and quantitative measures to determine gaps between student need and services provided by the College. Survey results have been shared widely across campus, and the College is in the process of analyzing the results to develop formal recommendations for the President to improve student services for students.

The College has also made a significant effort to improve parity between services provided to on-ground vs. online students. LASC has implemented an online tutoring system, an online counseling system, and developed an online student orientation presentation. Students can also access Admissions and Records online and find online information about college services. The College is implementing plans to assess all the online systems at the end of spring 2013 to determine if they are being used by students, if they are beneficial, and gain suggestions for improvement.

The follow-up team finds that the college has satisfactory addressed the recommendations from 2006, and that they meet the standard sections identified in 2006, (Standards IA.1, IIA.1a, IB3.a, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIID.1).

The college has partially addressed the recommendation from 2012, and partially met the standard from the 2012 report (IIB.3.a).

#### **College Recommendation 4**

*In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the library regularly update its print and online collections in consultation with discipline faculty. (IIC.1.a). The team further recommends that, to meet the stated Institutional Student Learning Outcome in Information Competency, the College implement a cycle of instruction, assessment, and program improvement through the appropriate learning resource and instructional areas of the College(IIC.1.b). Finally, the team recommends that a sustainable funding source be identified for the acquisition and maintenance of learning resource materials. (IIC.1, IIC.2, IID.1.a)*

#### **Findings and evidence:**

LASC reported that Library faculty and staff began updating and “weeding” its collection of outdated materials during spring 2011, as part of the campus facilities improvement process. The College used a formal, written process to ensure discipline faculty from across campus and librarians gave input during the decision process to de-select volumes and during the selection of new books and materials for the library collection. After completing this process, the librarians determined that only 644 of the remaining 42, 494 print volumes were published since 2007. As a result, the College began working to update both print and electronic book collections. Even though they were updating the electronic book collection as part of this process, the librarians noted that the electronic database sources were always current.

During 2012- 2013, the Library completed a 2-year materials acquisitions plan. The Library also revised the collection development policy; it was approved by the Academic Senate and includes faculty consultation during the book acquisition process. The process was used for the first time during this academic year, with faculty from almost every discipline providing input on book and material acquisitions. The College recently purchased a significant variety of printed books, e-books, online music, and reference materials. The books are expected to arrive by the end of the semester.

As part of the process, once the materials are received by the College, the Librarians will notify the campus community about the new materials by posting the information on the website and sending an announcement to all full-time and adjunct faculty. The College also noted that all the electronic databases, except Lexis/Nexis, are available to all students on and off campus. Based on the work completed to-date, the team found that LASC has responded to the first part of this recommendation.

However, the team found that the Library has only partially responded to the recommendation to implement a cycle of instruction, assessment, and program

improvement. The Library conducts both instructional and non-instructional program review, according to the Strategic Planning Process. However, the last instructional review was in 2010. The College noted that next annual assessment cycle would begin in spring 2013, but as of the accreditation visit, there was no record of an updated program review.

The Library also conducts an annual non-instructional program review and evidence provided showed that they assessed SLOs during fall 2012. However, the Librarians stated that the intervention based on the assessment results was to revise the pre/post text to more closely match the instructional content, rather than shift instruction to align with better learning outcomes. While the team recognizes that the Library did implement a cycle of instruction and assessment, revising SLOs and test questions does not meet the requirement to identify program improvements.

The Library also began offering two Information Competency courses this year. The librarians should also ensure that they assess the SLOs for these courses and use the assessment results to identify course or program improvements.

Finally, the College has identified a funding source and agreed to allocate \$50,000 per year for five years to update the Library Collection. This amount was approved by the college President. The allocation began in 2012-2013, and the Library purchased a variety of resource materials.

### **Conclusion:**

The visiting team finds that the college has responded to this recommendation and meets standard sections, *(IIC.1.a, IIC.1, IIC.2, and IID.1.a)* They have implemented an annual process to update their Library collection, and the College has allocated significant resources to support this effort over the next five years.

The Library has also begun to implement a cycle of instruction and assessment related to their Library Science courses and information competency sessions, however they have not completed the assessment cycle using assessment results to develop and implement program improvements.

The team finds that the college has not responded satisfactorily to this recommendation and does not meet the standard section. *(IIC.1.b)*

### **College Recommendation 5**

***In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College reviews all aspects of professional development, including key elements of peer review, self-reflection, and continuous review of appropriate pedagogy for the student population. In particular, the completion of faculty evaluations systematically and at stated intervals; engagement in dialogue addressing staff and faculty professional development on***

*various teaching pedagogies and strategies to meet the diverse learning styles of its diverse student population. (IIIA.1.b)*

**Findings and evidence:**

During spring 2013, the College reviewed the evaluation of Staff Development sessions. The Staff Development Committee began working with the institutional researcher to modify the evaluation form to gain better information about each workshop and session to capture measurable data. The College also reviewed its professional development goals and is in the process of consolidating the Staff Development and Travel and Reimbursement Committees. To represent their goal of campus-wide staff development, the College is discussing renaming the combined group the Professional Development Committee.

During spring 2012 and fall 2012, the College provided a variety of workshops based on input from Achieving the Dream faculty and student surveys, informal input, and student success topics. Rigorous evaluations were conducted for many of the sessions. However, the workshops were sparsely attended. So, the Staff Development Committee offered the spring flex sessions during the newly implemented college hour in an effort to improve attendance.

During spring 2013, the college offered an array of flex activities that focused on developing engaging pedagogy for their current student population. Evaluations were conducted for many of these sessions. Feedback from participants stated that these flex sessions gave them tools to take away and use in the classroom. A more in-depth faculty and staff development survey was conducted during Spring Flex Day. The Staff Development Committee reviewed this data and shared the results with the campus community. The two main topics of interest were cultural diversity and technology advancement in the classroom. The Staff Development Committee plans to use this information to develop the next set of faculty flex sessions.

As part of the Achieving the Dream initiative, the College also developed the Faculty Academy. This full-year program is led by a facilitator from outside the college, and focuses on providing a safe environment to learn innovative teaching techniques to help reach students of color and those who have difficulty learning in a traditional classroom setting. 14 faculty members have participated over the last two years. LASC's goal is to have 50% of the full-time faculty members participate over next three years. According to several faculty members who participated in the Academy, the program helped them to think about what they can do to improve their pedagogy and student success.

In addition to participation in the Faculty Academy, another 14 faculty members have participated in the Faculty Teaching and Learning Academy (FTLA) offered by the LACCD. The district program is a two-day training session that teaches participants a variety of skills including how to: effectively assess SLOs, integrate technology, and improve classroom management. This program also supports faculty focus on improved pedagogy and student success.

The College also developed an annual process to ensure that faculty evaluations are completed at the stated intervals. The process is led by the Office of Academic Affairs, which sets a timeline for completion. A staff member from the Office of Academic Affairs maintains a database of all full and part-time faculty evaluations. The Office of Academic Affairs notifies the dean and department chair when evaluations are due and sets a timeline for completing evaluations each semester. Based on the evidence, all evaluations were current as of April 1, 2013.

**Conclusion:**

LASC has updated its faculty evaluations and developed a process to ensure that evaluations are conducted systematically each semester. The College has also provided a variety of faculty development training sessions that focus on improving pedagogy and meeting the needs of the current student population, and has conducted surveys to determine what faculty and staff are interested in learning. The Staff Development committee is using this information to develop future flex activities. The College is currently re-evaluating and modifying its flex session form to make it more useful and to provide quantitative data. It has also re-evaluated its staff development training goals and is considering a revised Professional Development committee that will support both faculty and staff development. The College should continue evaluating all aspects of its professional development program and ensure a continuous review of appropriate pedagogy for their diverse student population.

The team finds that LASC has partially responded to this recommendation, and partially meets the standard. (III.A.1.b)

**College Recommendation 6**

*In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College fully utilize the established consultative committee structure by documenting actions and recommendations in agendas, minutes, and other official tools to ensure that dialogues and decisions affecting the College are communicated widely and clearly across the campus constituencies. (IV.A.3)*

**Findings and evidence:**

LASC has engaged in several activities to meet this recommendation, both through its Strategic Planning Committee and its College Council. The college held several retreats and workshops leading to the establishment of templates for meeting agendas and minutes, regular communication through the office of the PIO and regular and continuous assessment of the consultative committee structure. Evidence of meeting minutes and agendas are found on the college website; well organized and accessible documents are available for all governance committees. Follow-up interviews with committee members confirm that communication regarding committee meetings, membership, and structure has been greatly improved.

## **Conclusions:**

The college has significantly increased college wide systems, and use of the consultative structure. However, evidence suggests major college committee meetings are cancelled with limited communication, and that quorums cannot always be met due to poor attendance at meetings. The college will need to assess the outcomes of these efforts towards encouraging a larger group of college constituents to participate in governance activities.

While the college has made significant progress on this recommendation, it has only partially met the recommendation and partially met the standard. (IVA.3)

## **LACCD - District Recommendation 1 (2012)**

**In order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the Teams recommend that the District actively and regularly review the effectiveness of the construction bond oversight structure and the progress in the planned lifting of the moratorium to ensure the financial integrity of the bond programs, and the educational quality of its institutions as affected by the delays of the planned facilities projects. (Standard III.B.1.a, III.D.2.a., IV.B.1.c.; Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18).**

**Findings and Evidence:** The District has taken a number of actions to improve the effectiveness of its construction bond program including the effectiveness of the bond oversight structure and a review of the LACCD Building program. The Chancellor formed an Independent Review Panel made up of experts in various areas to provide recommendations on a variety of topics including the building program's operations, internal and external controls to provide a "checks and balances" system of control, and construction related policies, practices and procedures. The Independent Review Panel was made up of prominent local construction industry and business community experts tasked with addressing specific areas of concern related to ethics, cost containment, education and communication and program effectiveness. In October 2011, prior to the issuance of its full report the Panel recommended a moratorium on all new construction projects that had not yet been awarded to permit adequate time for the hiring of a new District Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Development. On January 4, 2012, the Panel issued its full report on the District's Building program, which included seventeen (17) recommendations to strengthen the District's bond construction program. The Executive Director subsequently hired brought a breadth and depth of experience in education bond construction programs of similar complexity and dollar volume to that of the District.

The temporary moratorium, since lifted, also allowed the District the opportunity to conduct a thorough evaluation to determine whether the colleges could afford the costs of maintaining and operating the new buildings, whether there was sufficient capital to build projects with currently authorized bond funds, and, whether or not the planned facilities matched the current projected facilities needs of each college. Over the past year,



numerous changes have been made to the bond construction program including a more centralized approach to construction program management, leaving the College Presidents responsible for defining and ensuring appropriate responses to educational and programmatic needs, but transferring the responsibility for managing and executing the design and construction of the buildings to an industry “best practice” of having the College Program Managers report to the District’s Executive Director of Facilities. In addition, a \$160 million District bond reserve was established to address contractor defaults, claims and other unforeseen conditions and other unbudgeted risks. With these improvements, project budget shortfalls were addressed before the situations escalated; further the potential overbuilding at any of the campuses was averted to ensure that the colleges maintained appropriate lecture, laboratory, and office capacity.

Separate audit practices to reconcile all obligations and expenditures related to general obligation Proposition 39 bond funds were implemented and conducted between the District and Build LACCD financial systems on a monthly basis. Since 2012, the District has also provided additional training to ensure that the reconciliations are prepared in a timely manner and identified a dedicated employee responsible for the reconciliation task. The Board of Trustees passed Board Resolution BT6 to “lock-in” a baseline scope and budget at the project level for all remaining work at the colleges, versus its previous practice of providing a total college allocation for construction projects. In addition, the revised Master Budget Plan also requires District level approvals for proper use of Prop A/AA and Measure J bond ballot funds, and any changes in scope of college construction projects.

One of the most significant requirements in regard to Proposition 39 bond programs is related to establishment of a citizens’ oversight board. While the chair and vice chair of the District’s Citizens Oversight Committee (DCOC) appeared to be forthright, dedicated, and concerned, the Committee as a whole had not performed as it should. The District conducted a review and recommended revisions to the appointment practice to the DCOC and formalized the process and procedures for the DCOC’s activities including providing a part-time and full-time dedicated staff, and requiring and ensuring more rigor in regard to attendance at DCOC meetings by all committee members. As a result, the DCOC is fully staffed and augmented with new members from the construction industry and the DCOC by-laws have been updated to reflect the changes made to the process and procedures for the DCOC.

In addition to the Independent Review Panel’s seventeen (17) recommendations, the Chancellor and Board of Trustees created a Capital Construction Committee of the full Board (seven Trustees) to provide policy guidance, oversight of the bond program, and approval of master plans and environmental impact reports. Board Ad Hoc Committees were also formed to consider additional policies to further strengthen oversight and control and an Independent Office of Inspector General and Whistleblower program was created. The one area in regard to this recommendation that was discovered during the Team’s follow-up visit to the District that had not been previously identified is that the District has decided to eliminate the Office of Inspector General and replace it with a Bond Monitor Manager that will be solicited through a bid process to provide oversight

with regard to fraud, whistle blower reporting, and elimination of waste in the bond construction program. The Office of Inspector General contract was discontinued with a thirty (30) day notice by the Board effective as of the end of April 2013. There will be a period of time where some of the duties of the Office of Inspector General will be handled by the College Program Management firms reporting through the new external Program Manager firm for action by the Executive Director and the District's Internal Auditor with regard to reporting of fraud and other whistle blower types of activities.

**Conclusion:**

The District has fully addressed the recommendation, corrected the deficiencies, and now is in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. As a result of various policy and procedural improvements implemented since the original accreditation visit in 2012, the District has increased its Proposition 39 compliance and improved upon its financial controls and reporting practices. Of particular note in regard to Recommendation 1 for the District is the deep commitment made in creating the Independent Review Panel and the District's immediate efforts in addressing the seventeen (17) recommendations made by the Panel and other areas of concern identified by the accreditation visiting team in 2012 to fully meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements. As of the follow-up team visit to the District in April 2013, the Board and District confirmed its intent to continue to implement the recommendations of the Independent Review Panel and intent to consider additional Ad Hoc Committee policies to strengthen bond oversight and control. The Board also plans to increase the number of Independent Performance Auditor's reports conducted on the bond program. In light of the follow-up visit and evidence provided during the visit, the Teams have determined that the District has made significant improvements to the effectiveness of its bond construction program, including oversight internally and externally. The District lifted the construction moratorium upon ensuring the financial integrity of the bond construction programs and the facility requirements at each of its institutions to provide educational quality. Therefore, the Teams have determined that the District has satisfactorily responded to the ACCJC Recommendation 1 (2012) and should continue the improvements to its facilities construction program and its oversight to ensure the effectiveness of its \$6 billion bond construction program as approved and authorized by the District's voters and defined in Proposition A/AA and Measure J.

**LACCD – District Recommendation 2 (2012)**

**In order to ensure the financial integrity of the District and the colleges, and to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the Teams recommend the resolution of the material weakness and significant deficiencies cited in the 2010 financial audit be fully effected by the completion of next year's audit, and appropriate systems be implemented and maintained to prevent future audit exceptions. (Standards III.D.2.a., IV.B.1.c.; Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18).**

**Findings and Evidence:** When the Teams visited the District in 2012, there were several outstanding 2011 Audit findings identified by the independent auditing firm that were related to audit findings for fiscal year 2011, 2010 and 2009 financial statements; as

well as state and federal findings. Several findings were identified as being “significant deficiencies;” with regard to Employee Benefits, Risk Management, and Information Technology and a “material weakness;” was identified with regard to the Capital Assets and General Obligation Bond Program. Findings can be an opportunity to avoid such a situation from occurring in a future audit; however, when findings are material and recurring they can become a cause for concern for any organization.

The 2012 audits were completed and accepted by the Board of Trustees as of December 19, 2012 in accordance with the California Community College System’s requirement that all Districts have an annual independent audit conducted and submitted to the State Chancellor by December 31<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year. The audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the *Government Accounting Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

**Conclusion:** The District has fully addressed the recommendation, corrected the deficiencies, and now is in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. The independent auditor issued an unqualified opinion for the 2011-12 fiscal year. At the time of this writing, the District’s audit findings from 2010 had been addressed. In addition, three of the financial statement audit findings identified during the 2010-11 audit have been fully implemented. It should be noted that findings 11-01 and 11-04 identified in the 2011 Audit have been brought forward as Financial Statement finding 12-01 related to Student Financial Assistance – Special Tests Provisions – Verification and 12-02 related to Competitive Grants for worker Training and Placement in High Growth and Emerging Industry Sectors (ARRA) – Eligibility in the 2011-12 audit report. Both 12-01 and 12-02 findings have been identified by the auditors as “significant deficiencies” requiring measures to better ensure appropriate internal controls; however, neither is considered to be material weaknesses. No material weaknesses with internal control over major Federal Awards programs were identified.

The primary audit issues pertaining to the Capital Assets and General Obligation Bond Program have been addressed. The District has implemented policies and procedures for monthly reconciliations in collaboration with Build LACCD in regard to 2011 Audit findings FS-11-01 - Capital Assets and General Obligation Bond Program. The District has implemented two of three phase processes to improve the process of reconciling and reporting of bond funded furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) to include fixed asset inventory and reconciliation, which was completed in September 2012 and additional technology solutions are in progress. The District also requires all employees having procurement responsibility to annually submit a California Fair Political Practices Commission Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700). The District purchased e-filing of Form 700 software in January 2012, which has a “look-up” function to cross reference information on Form 700 with District and Build LACCD. The District has also implemented a reconciliation process and appropriate internal control practices with regard to Employee Benefits and Risk Management issues identified in the 2011 audit.

Based upon the information reported in the follow up report and interview data along with additional evidence provided during the follow up visit, the Teams have determined that the District has responded appropriately with regard to timely completion of its 2011-12 Audit and resolved any material deficiencies noted in the 2010 Audit related to ACCJC's Recommendation 2 (2012).

#### **LACCD – District Recommendation 4 (2012)**

**To fully respond to the recommendation first tendered by the Comprehensive Evaluation Team in 2006, and to reflect a realistic assessment of financial resources, financial stability, and the effectiveness of short- and long-term financial planning for the district and the colleges, and in order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the Teams recommend that the district adopt and fully implement as soon as is practicable an allocation model for its constituent colleges that addresses the size, economies of scale, and the stated mission of the individual colleges. (Standards III.D.1.b., III.D.1.c., III.D.2.c., IV.B.3.c.; Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18).**

**Findings and Evidence:** This recommendation required the District to develop, adopt, and fully implement a resource allocation model as soon as practicable to address the size, economies of scale, and mission of each college within the LACCD. The evidence provided prior to and during the Teams follow-up visit identified several ways in which the District has addressed financial resource allocation to create a more equitable and efficient model. In February 2011, the District created an Executive Committee of the District Budget Committee (ECDBC) to review the district's budget allocation formula, examine base allocations for each college, review the treatment of college ending fund balances, and develop a college deficit repayment policy to the District. The District initially implemented a financial resources allocation model similar to the State's SB 361 allocation model; however, subsequently determined that two additional phases were necessary to create an allocation model that addresses all of the issues related to this recommendation.

The first phase provided for increases to the colleges' basic allocation to include minimum administrative staffing and maintenance and operations (M&O) costs. The second phase calls for the ECDBC to study the remaining allocation changes necessary to identify college needs (including M&O), as well as provide sufficient funding for colleges to deliver equitable access for non-traditional and underserved populations of students. At the June 13, 2012 meeting the Board of Trustees adopted Phase I, which included providing a set-aside from the District's reserve (or from new revenue received) in order to mitigate an adverse effect on any college as a result of a reduction in its budget allocation pursuant to the implementation of the changes tied to Phase I. The Phase I implementation included no reductions in the 2012-13 budget year to any college and a one-third reduction to occur each year over the next three years through 2015-16. In so doing the District satisfied the fundamental features of the recommendation in question.

Phase II will address how the District will tie any growth resources as they occur from the State to the financial resources allocation model for the colleges. The District Budget Committee based upon the review and recommendations of the ECDBC is committed to continue addressing Phase II impacts during the 2013-14 budget development process. In addition, the Board's action taken in June 2012 included a requirement that an assessment of the budget allocation model be conducted annually. The District Budget Committee is scheduled to evaluate the new model at the end of the current 2012-13 budget year to see if the new plan has been effective in addressing the needs of the smaller colleges. If needed, the District will develop a plan to modify the existing budget allocation model further. Progress on Phase II is to be reported to the District Budget Committee on an on-going basis with full implementation of all phases related to the new model expected to be completed by December 2013 for use in the development of the 2014-15 academic year's budget.

**Conclusion:** The District has fully addressed the recommendation, corrected the deficiencies, and now is in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. The follow-up visit indicates that the District has provided clear evidence to show that it continues to refine its budget allocation model in order to address the size, economies of scale, and stated mission of the individual colleges. Three of the colleges that experienced excess allocation of budgets in the past will begin the three-year pay-back period as of the 2013-14 academic year and six of the colleges will receive additional budget allocations during the 2013-14 academic year. The 2012-13 academic year was identified during the Phase I process as the "hold harmless" year for the colleges to permit time for the three colleges that will lose budget allocation to make the necessary adjustments in their college budget planning for 2013-14. During the Team's follow-up visit, Phase II was identified as being the "icing on the cake" to resolve some of the long-standing inequities in the budget allocation process between the large and small colleges to ensure that adequate funding is provided to each of the colleges in order to serve its stated mission. In addition, as of 2012-13, all of the colleges will be allowed to retain their balances up to 5% of their annual budget allocations for future planning purposes.

#### **LACCD - District Recommendation 5 (2012)**

**To meet the Standard, the Teams recommend that the Board of Trustees make visible, in behavior and in decision-making their policy role and their responsibility to act as a whole in the public's interest. Further, the Teams recommend continuing professional development for the Board of Trustees to ensure a fuller understanding of its role in policy governance and the importance of using official channels of communication through the Chancellor or his designee. (Standard IV.B.1.a.)**

**Findings and Evidence:** During the visit, the follow-up team representatives for all three college accreditation teams, conducted three interviews. One with two publicly elected Board of Trustees members and a separate interview with the student body elected Board of Trustees member. The follow-up team representatives also interviewed

the District Chancellor to confirm evidence provided in advance of the follow-up visit to demonstrate that the Board understands and is following its policy-making role and its responsibility in acting as a whole to best serve the interest of the public rather than acting individually. Discussions during the visit also addressed the efficacy of improvements that have been made to obviate circumvention of the Chancellor by members of the Board.

Since February 21, 2012 the Board has held three Board retreats with the second held on April 19, 2012 and the third held on November 13, 2012. The retreats were conducted with an emphasis on improving performance that included annual board development, orientation, and assessment methods to measure improvements. All three retreats were facilitated by external instructors possessing expertise in board governance to include policy making, legal, and accreditation related roles and responsibilities for elected Board members. In January 2013, the Board conducted a self-evaluation to measure its improvement as compared to an evaluation conducted in 2012 to determine the areas in which there was an increase in measured commitment.

The self-evaluation survey instrument drew upon input from a broad base of district personnel including campus presidents, district senior staff, union leaders, academic senate leaders and student government leaders. The Administration and Finance areas of the self-evaluation survey had a relatively high proportion of items that exhibited a net increase in commitment in these areas of Board responsibility. The Community Relations and Education areas experienced the least improvement. Therefore, the Board committed to the development of concrete action items to improve in this area and intend to assess their progress in the next evaluation. In addition, to reinforcing the role of the Chancellor as the Board's conduit of communication to staff and to address the issue of Board behavior, all Board members completed the ACCJC's online accreditation training and approved on January 30, 2013, a revision to the Board's Rule 2300.10 (Code of Conduct) and 2105 (The Board of Trustees) language to include a pledge to follow official channels of communication with the Chancellor in gathering any information from staff that is not contained in the public record. Language also included a commitment to civility and courtesy in order to demonstrate in word and deed a respect of others and a willingness to acknowledge that reasonable people can respectfully disagree based upon divergent views. The Board also committed to attend conferences and visitations to other district board meetings to gain a broader understanding of operating methods and challenges facing neighboring districts.

**Conclusion:** The District has fully addressed the recommendation, corrected the deficiencies, and now is in compliance with the Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. The follow up visit indicates that the Board of Trustees has provided clear evidence to show its commitment to ensuring that Board members understand their role as policy makers, the importance of using official channels of communication through the Chancellor or assigned designee, and the need to operate in a respectful manner as a body representing the public's interest in regard to policy and governance making for the LACCD. The Board of Trustees provided to the Team representatives an actionable improvement plan which was developed on March 19, 2013 to address the Accreditation

Standards and deficiencies noted. The Board members interviewed reported upon the improvements made thus far and the continued commitment of all Trustees to openly address deficiencies noted in the last evaluation on an on-going basis and through subsequent annual retreats.