

EVALUATION REPORT

Los Angeles Valley College
Valley Glen, California

A confidential report prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for California and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team
that visited Los Angeles Valley College from March 11–14, 2013

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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION: Los Angeles Valley College

DATE OF VISIT: March 11–14, 2013

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Barbara R. Kavalier
President, San José City College

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) assigned a nine-member evaluation team to visit Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) on March 11–14, 2013. The purpose of this visit was for the evaluation team to conduct an extensive assessment review to determine the extent to which LA Valley College meets the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

LAVC produced a well-written report and provided adequate information needed to assess compliance with the Standards. College personnel were welcoming and willing to accommodate the needs of the team. The team room provided an effective, secure and comfortable environment for completing our work. We appreciated the diligence of key college personnel in responding to all of our requests. It was apparent that the College recognized the importance of the site visit. The team also appreciated the cooperation of the Chancellor and Board of Trustees. However, the team encountered some district-level administrators who did not seem supportive of the evaluation process and who were either unavailable for interviews or who expressed frustration with LA Valley Evaluation Team’s requests for interviews.

Although LAVC’s self-study report was well-written and organized, in some instances, the team struggled to find appropriate documentation associated with each Standard. Additional work was required to identify information that was critical during the evaluation visit.

The evaluation team reviewed the college’s self-study report, supporting documentation, reports from previous visiting teams and other accreditation documents. Many meetings were held with individuals and groups both at the college and the district. Additionally, the team held two college wide forums, allowing the entire community to ask questions and provide feedback.

It was obvious to the team that the faculty, staff, administrators and students feel a genuine connection to the college and are dedicated to the retention and success of the students. We found a spirit of collaboration among the leaders of the different constituency groups. The team was particularly impressed with the work of the Academic Senate and the leadership of the Senate president in advancing the work of student learning outcomes (SLOs). Many times throughout our visit we heard LAVC described as a “family.” It is evident that the employees value each other and recognize the import of their work.

There were a number of excellent practices identified as commendations for LAVC, including the following:

- The college is to be commended for having been recognized as a 2011 Tree Campus USA by the Arbor Day Foundation and Toyota North America. LAVC is the only community college in California to receive this recognition.
- The college should be commended for development of the comprehensive 2012–2017 Technology Plan, which is informed by multiple sources and is used to inform decision-making and resource allocation for technology at the college wide level.
- The district should be commended for including assessment of student learning outcomes in the faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement.

There were also some major areas of concern identified by the team. In reviewing the recommendations issued to the college in 2007, not all deficiencies have been addressed. Specifically, the college has not fully integrated its planning processes or incorporated evaluation, improvement and re-evaluation of all its programs and services. Although much progress has been made in advancing student learning outcomes throughout the institutions, the college is not at the proficiency level. Of particular concern is the college's on-going budget deficit and inadequate planning needed to ensure the long-term financial stability of the institution. All of the previous district recommendations have been met.

As a result of an extensive evaluation of LAVC, the team identified eight college recommendations and one district recommendation:

College Recommendation 1:

In order to achieve sustainable continuous quality improvement, the team recommends that the college use ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.

The team recommends that the processes:

- Provide learning and achievement data on students enrolled in all delivery formats.
- Fully evaluate indicators of effectiveness and make improvement based on findings.
- Assure systematic analysis of data to inform decisions.

(Standards I.B, I.B.1, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.6.b, IV.B.2.b)

College Recommendation 2:

The team recommends that the college evaluate its institutional planning process, including hiring decisions, and ensure planning practices are integrated and aligned with resources (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.4).

College Recommendation 3:

In order to fully meet the Standards, the college must assess and align SLOs at the course, program, and institutional levels and use the results to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standards I.B, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.3.b, II.A.6.b, IV.B.2.b).

College Recommendation 4:

The team recommends that the college develop a formal definition of correspondence education that aligns with the U.S. Department of Education regulations and Commission policy and a process for determining the differences in practice between correspondence education and distance education (Standards II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.2.c, II.A.2.d, II.A.2.e, II.A.7, II.B.1, II.B.2.c).

College Recommendation 5:

To fully meet the Standards, the college should ensure that records of complaints are routinely maintained as required by the Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions (Standards II.B.2, II.B.2.c, II.B.3.a, II.B.4).

College Recommendation 6:

To fully meet the Standards, the college should ensure that all employee performance evaluations are conducted in a timely basis in accordance with the employee contracts (Standard IIIA.1.b).

College Recommendation 7:

The team recommends that the college, in collaboration with the district, put measures in place to ensure the effective control and implementation of the bond program and that decisions related to facilities are aligned with institutional planning (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b).

College Recommendation 8:

To fully meet the Standards, the college should establish appropriate management and control mechanisms needed for sound financial decision-making. The institution should ensure that it has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability with realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences and to ensure long-term financial stability. The team recommends that the President effectively control budget and expenditures (Standards III.D, III.D.2.c, IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a, IV.B.2.d).

District Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the Chancellor and Board put accountability measures into place to ensure the long-term fiscal stability and financial integrity of the college (Standards IV.B.1.j, IV.B.3).

Accreditation Evaluation Report for Los Angeles Valley College March 11–14, 2013

Los Angeles Valley College has a long history of success in meeting the higher education needs of its community. Established in 1949, the college began its first academic year with 439 students housed in five bungalows. Today, LAVC serves approximately 20,000 students and offers more than 140 associate degree programs and certificates. The College serves the citizens of San Fernando Valley, including the communities of Van Nuys, North Hollywood, Panorama City, Pacoima, Sherman Oaks, Valley Village, Studio City, Encino, Tarzana, and Burbank. LAVC is recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and has a diverse student population consisting of 41 percent Hispanic, 35 percent White, 6 percent African American, and 10 percent Asian/Pacific Islander.

LAVC is one of nine colleges within the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) which is the largest community college district in the nation. The college is under the leadership of Dr. Susan Carleo who serves as the college president. LACCD covers more than 882 square miles and serves more than 250,000 students. The other colleges that make up the district include: Los Angeles City, East Los Angeles, Los Angeles Harbor, Los Angeles Mission, Pierce, Los Angeles Southwest, Los Angeles Trade-Tech, and West Los Angeles. The colleges are supported by the District Office under the leadership of Chancellor Daniel LaVista.

The district has been successful in gaining support from the voters of Los Angeles to pass several bond measures. LAVC has received \$626 million for expansion and renovation projects which will replace many older buildings and lead to the remodel of many others. The college offers no degree or certificate programs at off-site locations.

Recent Accreditation History

The last comprehensive accreditation visit was March 19–22, 2007. As a result of that visit, the college received five commendations, five college recommendations, and four district recommendations. At their 2007 meeting, the Commission reaffirmed LAVC's accreditation status. A progress report was due March 2008 which required the college to provide an update on responding to college and district recommendations. Another report was required and submitted in October 2008. The college's March 2009 follow-up report was accepted by the Commission at its June meeting. The last Midterm Report, submitted March 2010, included the college's improvement plans for following up on deficiencies. The report was accepted by the Commission in June 2010.

Major Recommendations for Los Angeles Valley College

The team found that the college had successfully responded to all of the previous district recommendation issued by the 2007 visiting team. However, not all of the college-specific

recommendations had been addressed. As a result, the team made the following major recommendations in its 2013 report.

College Recommendation 1:

In order to achieve sustainable continuous quality improvement, the team recommends that the college use ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.

The team recommends that the processes:

- Provide learning and achievement data on students enrolled in all delivery formats.
- Fully evaluate indicators of effectiveness and make improvement based on findings.
- Assure systematic analysis of data to inform decisions.

(Standards I.B, I.B.1, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.6.b, IV.B.2.b)

College Recommendation 3:

In order to fully meet the Standards, the college must assess and align SLOs at the course, program, and institutional levels and use the results to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness (Standards I.B, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.3.b, II.A.6.b, IV.B.2.b).

College Recommendation 8:

To fully meet the Standards, the college should establish appropriate management and control mechanisms needed for sound financial decision-making. The institution should ensure that it has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability with realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences and to ensure long-term financial stability. The team recommends that the President effectively control budget and expenditures (Standards III.D, III.D.2.c, IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a, IV.B.2.d).

Responses to Recommendations of Previous Evaluation Team March 19–22, 2007

The team reviewed the college's progress on addressing the recommendations from the 2007 Evaluation Team Report and found that LAVC had made progress on most of the previous recommendations, specifically the district recommendations. However some of the previous college recommendations still need work and those issues have been incorporated into the recommendations of this 2013 review.

District Recommendation 1:

The team recommends that the District should provide leadership in supporting the progress toward incorporating achievement of stated student learning outcomes as a component of faculty evaluation (III.A.1.c).

As reported by the college, the incorporation of SLOs into faculty obligations and evaluation was taken on part of the negotiations for the 2008–2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement. On examination of the faculty evaluation form (Appendix C: 2011–2014), the following was found under Professional Responsibilities for all faculty:

1. Writing SLOs and establishing assessment tools/rubrics [disciplines or departments]
2. Including the officially approved course SLOs on course syllabi [all faculty]
3. Incorporating approved SLOs in teaching [all faculty]
4. Providing the instructor with a copy (electronic or hard copy) of the course outline and any officially approved SLOs [department chairs]
5. Determining a process for officially approving SLOs [determined by the college and usually jointly agreed to by the faculty in a discipline or department and the college's academic senate]
6. Conducting SLO assessments in assigned classes and using the results to make appropriate changes in instruction to improve student learning [all faculty]

This is clearly evidence of leadership among the administration and the faculty union that will result in a systematic move toward the development, use and assessment of SLOs across all the colleges in the district.

This recommendation has been met.

District Recommendation 2:

The team recommends that the College should closely monitor in future years the success of the District's plan for addressing retiree health benefit liability to assure that out-year obligations are met without significant impact on the financial health of the institution (Standard III.D.1.c).

The LACCD took significant steps to address the issue of its unfunded liability for retiree health care in fall 2006 by negotiating an agreement, approved by the district's six unions and the Board of Trustees, to begin pre-funding a portion of its unfunded obligation. The district annually directs 1.92 percent of the previous fiscal year's full-time employee payroll into an irrevocable trust, managed through CalPERS. In addition, an amount equivalent to the district's annual Medicare D refund is diverted from the district's operating budget into the trust. As of June 30, 2012, the balance in the trust was \$39,751,541 and its Fair Market Value was \$41,694,651. In 2009, facing a state budget crisis and enormous increases in health benefit costs the district's Joint Labor-Management Benefits Committee (JLMBC) took action to reduce the cost of health care coverage for both active and retired employees. The Board approved the move to health care plans administered by CalPERS, which took effect January 1, 2010. Because of the significantly lower retiree benefit costs under CalPERS the district was able to reduce its GASB obligation by \$97 million.

This recommendation has been met.

District Recommendation 3:

The team recommends that the Board of Trustees should complete the self-evaluation process by discussing and developing a set of board goals to respond to any issues identified in their self-evaluation. The Board should institutionalize the goal setting and measuring of accomplishments as part of the self-evaluation process (Standard IV.B.1.g).

The Board of Trustees adopted a board rule on October 17, 2007 that established the setting of board goals as part of its annual process of self-evaluation. At its annual retreats, the Board scores its performance, reporting on its self-assessment, and the summarized evaluations of constituency representatives who sit at the resource table during board meetings. The Board establishes new goals for the following year, both to address District priorities as well as any issues that have arisen as a result of the self-evaluation.

In 2010, the Board adopted a District Effectiveness Review Cycle, which aligns annual Board and CEO goals with District Strategic Plan (DSP) goals. The annual cycle includes board evaluation, board retreats, college activities in support of goals, institutional effectiveness reports, and district effectiveness reports that align with the DSP.

This recommendation has been met.

District Recommendation 4:

Although in practice the evaluation of the College presidents and district chancellor occurs on a regular basis and is an inclusive process, the team recommends that the district develop a written policy that clearly defines the evaluation process (Standard IV.B.1.j).

The district's Human Resources (HR) division drafted a formal written policy, the Performance Evaluation Process for College Presidents, which clearly spells out the evaluation process that has been and continues to be followed. The description is now included in the packet with the evaluation forms used.

To address this recommendation regarding the chancellor's evaluation, the Chancellor's Office issued a directive (Chancellor's Directive #122) that spells out the procedure that has been and continues to be followed. The Board solicits input from constituencies and collects data to evaluate performance on a number of criteria. In July 2010, the evaluation processes for the Chancellor and the college presidents were integrated into the Board's newly adopted District Effectiveness Review Cycle.

This recommendation has been met.

College Recommendation 1:

The team recommends that the college develop written, institutionalized procedures for the regular review of its mission and that it formally reference the mission in all of its planning and decision-making processes (Standards I.A.1, I.A.3, I.A.4).

College Recommendation 1 directed the college to develop written, institutionalized procedures for the regular review of its mission and that it formally reference the mission in all of its planning and decision-making processes. The college has made significant progress toward achieving the recommendation.

The college reviews its mission on an annual basis and revises it as necessary, per the Educational Master Plan (EMP). The process is broad and inclusive, with the resulting document being approved by the college's central governing body, the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC), and then by the Governing Board. The mission is published on the college website and is embedded within college processes and publications. The mission is central to institutional planning and decision-making with its inclusion in planning and resource allocation documents and in all shared governance committee minutes.

This recommendation has been met.

College Recommendation 2:

The team recommends that the college strengthen, document with narrative, and disseminate the integration of all its planning processes. These processes should incorporate evaluation,

improvement and re-evaluation, as needed, of all its programs and services (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.2.f, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.3, IV.B.2.b).

College Recommendation 2 directed the college to strengthen, document with narrative, and disseminate the integration of all of its planning processes. And further, that these processes should incorporate evaluation, improvement, and re-evaluation, as needed for all of its programs and services. There is evidence that the college has made progress in dialoging, developing, documenting, and disseminating the integration of its planning processes, and that it incorporates a continuous improvement type of assessment plan. However, there is no evidence to indicate that the college has completed the process of evaluation, improvement, and re-evaluation.

The college is not at the sustainable continuous quality improvement level regarding the use of ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.

The college has not fully addressed this recommendation.

College Recommendation 3:

The team recommends that the college accelerate the continued development and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program, certificate and degree levels to ensure continuous improvement (Standards I.B.1, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.3, IV.B.2.b).

Significant progress has been made in developing SLOs and subsequent assessments. SLOs are developed at the Institutional, Program Pathway, and Course levels. Outcomes are written for every course, but assessment of those outcomes, to inform the learning process, occurs on a limited basis.

The district is to be commended for incorporating SLOs into the faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement. The college has not, however, made the necessary progress in assessing all programs and courses to the degree that assessment results are used to make improvements. As such, LAVC is not at the proficiency level for SLOs.

The college has not fully addressed this recommendation.

College Recommendation 4:

The team recommends that the college take action to address the current \$1.9 million deficit immediately and develop plans to establish financial stability in the long term to ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability (Standards III.D.2.c, IV.B.2.d).

The college identified within the Self-Study Report an Actionable Improvement Plan to “ensure that a budget prioritization process is fully developed and followed, then evaluate it,

and embark on a campus wide campaign to communicate how budgetary decisions are made.”

While the college has made significant budget reductions to address its deficit, the college continues to face an ongoing structural problem. Based on an in-depth analysis of the budget development and allocation processes, as well as decisions related to hiring, the team came to the conclusion that financial resources are not sufficient to support operations and that the college is not managing its financial affairs in a manner that ensures financial stability. This seems to be a shared problem between the college and the district.

The college has not fully addressed this recommendation.

College Recommendation 5:

The team recommends that the College implement its planning agenda regarding communication and participation in the decision-making process and evaluate its implementation and overall effectiveness (Standard IV.A.1.b).

The district, in collaboration with the college, revised its *Planning and Decision-Making Handbook* which articulates the shared governance process and the roles of faculty, classified staff, students, and administrators on all shared governance committees. As well, the college has made significant improvements to college wide participation in decision-making by emphasizing the importance of participatory governance and encouraging active participation by the constituency groups. The college has conducted ongoing assessment of governance and completed the 2011 accreditation survey to identify employee awareness of governance, communication, and decision-making.

The college has made good progress in providing opportunities for all campus constituents to participate in shared governance committees and to connect multiple levels of planning.

This recommendation has been met.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Los Angeles Valley College is approved as a public two-year community college under the authority of the California State Department of Education and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The college is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

2. Mission

The visiting team confirmed that the college regularly reviews its mission statement. The Board of Trustees recently approved the new mission statement in February, 2013. Los Angeles Valley College's mission is clearly defined and published in its catalog and is appropriate to a degree-granting institution.

3. Governing Board

The college is governed by the elected seven-member Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees, including one student trustee. Los Angeles Valley College is one of nine colleges in the LACCD. The Board of Trustees functions as an independent policy-making body which represents the interest of its constituents and which meets all responsibilities associated with governance. Board members have no employment, family, or personal financial interest in the institution.

4. Chief Executive Officer

Los Angeles Valley College is under the leadership of a chief executive officer whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. The president is appointed by the Board of Trustees and reports to the chancellor.

5. Administrative Capacity

Los Angeles Valley College has adequate administrative personnel with appropriate credentials and experience to provide the college with the support necessary to advance the mission and purpose of the college.

6. Operational Status

The college is fully operational and has adequate structures and operational procedures in place to support its mission.

7. Degrees

The college provided evidence that the majority of its courses lead to a degree or certificate. LAVC offers 62 Associate of Arts degrees, 19 Associate in Science degrees, and two Associate of Arts for Transfer degrees.

8. Educational Programs

The college's degree programs are aligned with its mission. The degrees offered are of sufficient content and duration to meet the demands of students and the needs of business and industry.

9. Academic Credit

Los Angeles Valley College appropriately awards credits based on the regulations for California Community Colleges and within the scope of recognized practice within higher education. Credit is offered in semester units.

10. Student Learning and Achievement

Although Los Angeles Valley College has made progress in advancing student learning outcomes in all areas of the college, additional progress is needed in assessing SLOs and using results to improve student learning; the college continues to make progress in the evaluation and integration of data into planning processes and is working to move toward the Commission's expectation of proficiency related to student learning outcomes.

11. General Education

The college offers degrees that include general education sufficient to contribute to the educational needs of students. General education requirements are identified for all degree and certificate programs. This information can be accessed in the college catalog and website.

12. Academic Freedom

The LACCD Board of Trustees adopted Board Rule 1204.12 in February 2006 to articulate policies related to academic freedom. As well this statement is incorporated into the LACCD Faculty Guild agreement. Los Angeles Valley College's Academic Senate has also defined academic freedom and evidence exists of an environment that supports intellectual freedom.

13. Faculty

Los Angeles Valley College has a total of 553 faculty of which 194 are full-time faculty, and 259 part-time faculty. The team found that the college has sufficient faculty to support the mission of the college.

14. Student Services

The college offers a wide array of student support services to meet the needs of both selected target populations and the general student body. The team found evidence that these services have been successful in supporting the educational goals of the students.

15. Admissions

Los Angeles Valley College maintains an open door admissions policy that aligns with its mission and complies with California Code of Regulations and State Education Code. Admissions policies are appropriate for a public community college and clearly articulated in the catalog.

16. Information and Learning Resources

Appropriate learning support is available to all students at LAVC. The college maintains a fully functioning library and eight learning support labs and two open computer labs. Online resources are available to students who are located off-campus.

17. Financial Resources

The team found that the college relies upon the district for loans to fund its on-going deficit; the LACCD Chancellor has extended forgiveness of the debt, with the expectation that the loans provided will be paid back. This has resulted in LAVC's reliance on the district for financial stability. While the college has made significant budget reductions to address its deficit, the college continues to face an ongoing structural budget problem.

18. Financial Accountability

The LACCD uses external certified public accountants to perform annual audits. The college and district respond appropriately to any audit recommendations.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

The college has made good progress in establishing planning processes. Many of the elements of planning and evaluation are in place or currently being developed. However, the team found that the college does not have a fully integrated planning process with measurable outcomes and is only in the early stages of evaluation of planning. As such, LAVC is not at the sustainable quality improvement level.

20. Public Information

Los Angeles Valley College produces and makes available to students an annual catalog which includes general information about the college, policies impacting students, and requirements associated with enrollment and matriculation policies and procedures.

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

Los Angeles Valley College maintains a good relationship with the Commission and responds appropriately to all of the Commission's requirements and requests. The status of accreditation is accurately presented on the college website and in the college catalog.

STANDARD I

Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A. Mission

General Observations:

The Los Angeles Valley College mission statement defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning. The mission identifies its educational pathways with a focus on student success, which aligns with data provided on demographics (I.A.1). The college's three core values support the mission with a focus upon student success and completion, access and mutual respect, and stewardship of resources.

The college reviews its mission on an annual basis and revises it as necessary, per the EMP (I.A.3). The process is broad and inclusive, with the resulting document being approved by the college's central governing body, the IEC, and then by the governing board (I.A.2). The mission is published on the college website and is embedded within college processes and publications. The mission is central to institutional planning and decision-making with its inclusion in planning and resource allocation documents and in all shared governance committee minutes.

In the 2007 accreditation evaluation report, Recommendation 1 directed the college to develop written, institutionalized procedures for the regular review of its mission and that it formally references the mission in all of its planning and decision-making processes (I.A.1, I.A.3, I.A.4). The college has made significant progress toward achieving the recommendation.

Findings and Evidence:

The previous mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees on November 5, 2008. There is evidence in the published minutes of the Educational Planning Committee that the mission statement was reviewed in 2010 and 2011, and was fully revised in 2012 (I.A.3). The revised mission statement identifies its pathways to student success, including certificates, degrees, transfer, and continuing education, enabling students to advance holistically and become productive and engaged members of the global community (I.A.1). It was approved by the IEC on December 4, 2012 and the Board of Trustees on February 6, 2013 (I.A.2). The recently revised mission statement will inform development of the new EMP, indicating an alignment of planning processes with the mission (I.A.4). There is evidence that the mission is widely published on the college website and in college planning documents including the EMP, the *Planning and Decision-Making Handbook*, the Facilities Master Plan Update (2010), program review and annual plans, and within committee agendas and minutes per the standardized college agenda/minutes template (I.A.3, I.A.4).

There is evidence that the college uses the mission statement in its planning and decision-making processes. The link to resource allocation occurs through program review and annual plans, where requests must align with goals stated in the EMP; these requests are then reviewed and prioritized by assessment and recommending committees, and ultimately approved by the shared governance IEC (I.A.4). This process is still in its implementation stage, so the outcomes of the overall process are not yet available.

Conclusions:

The college has made great progress in assuring that the mission, vision, and core values are routinely reviewed and revised, broadly disseminated, and that the mission informs all planning and decision-making.

The college meets this Standard.

Recommendations:

None

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:

Los Angeles Valley College has made progress in demonstrating an intentional planning, implementation, evaluation, and resource allocation cycle that informs and supports student learning and success (I.B). There is evidence that the college has created a three-tiered committee and reporting structure to systematically integrate planning, evaluation, and resource prioritization processes, and does so in a manner that incorporates broad involvement of appropriate constituencies (I.B.4). The college has set goals, which are articulated into practice through the EMP, which serves as the college strategic plan (I.B.2, I.B.3). There is evidence that the College is using data derived from targeted surveys to inform its practices, along with available SLOs assessment and selected student achievement data (I.B.3). The college communicates its processes and outcomes through its shared governance committees, publications, and via the college website (I.B.5).

In 2011, the college became a participant in the Achieving the Dream (AtD) initiative, which further evidences its commitment to effective research and data-informed practices leading to increased student learning and success. In March 2013, the college published the *Report on Progress of Achieving the Dream (PASS) Initiatives*, which conveys a clear and systematic focus on measurable results to inform practice (I.B.1).

In the 2007 accreditation evaluation report, Recommendation 2 directed the college to strengthen, document with narrative, and disseminate the integration of all of its planning processes. And further, that these processes should incorporate evaluation, improvement, and

re-evaluation, as needed for all of its programs and services. There is evidence that the college has made progress in dialoging, developing, documenting, and disseminating the integration of its planning processes, and that it incorporates a continuous improvement type of assessment plan. However, there is no evidence to indicate that the College has completed the process of evaluation, improvement, and re-evaluation (I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6).

Recommendation 3 directed the college to accelerate the continued development and assessment of SLOs at the course, program, certificate, and degree levels to ensure continuous improvement. The college has created a comprehensive plan to develop and assess SLOs; however, evidence did not support that the plan had been accomplished across all courses, programs, certificates, and degrees. Over half of course-level SLOs have been assessed, with 100 percent completion expected at the end of fall 2013. Two of the three program pathways have been assessed, with the third in progress (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.5).

Findings and Evidence:

There is evidence that in 2009, with the creation of the Big Picture Committee, the college began its work in earnest to address Recommendations 2 and 3. There is evidence that the committee dialogued broadly and worked to create the model that is now the three-tiered organizational committee/workgroup structure (I.B.1, I.B.4). The IEC serves as the tier-one shared governance body, with tier-two committees including the Educational Planning Committee, Hiring Priorities Committee, Program Effectiveness and Planning Committee, Student Success Committee, Technology Planning Committee, and Work Environment Committee. Each of the tier-two committees has a variety of workgroups that address specific issues and report back to it. The processes of this systems model are intricate and require collaboration that is provided by the tier-one council. Various committee agendas and minutes and workgroup deliverables document the planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts of the college (I.B.2, I.B.3).

Survey data indicated that respondents were aware of opportunities to participate on committees and workgroups (I.B.1, I.B.4). The *Planning and Decision-Making Handbook*, published in 2012–2013 comprehensively communicates processes and opportunities to participate (I.B.5). The data also indicated that faculty and staff engage in dialogue about student learning. However, evidence did not indicate that assessment cycles have been completed in terms of planning or learning, or resulting in institutional effectiveness reports (I.B.2, I.B.3).

In the self-evaluation report, the college stated that it would not complete its assessment of learning outcomes until fall 2013 and that not all of its annual plans had been submitted on time. Evidence indicates that when creating their SLOs assessment plan, the college made a conscious decision to focus upon developing a process that employed assessment practices such as the creation of rubrics, inter-rater reliability, and sound sampling techniques, with validation by an external reviewer to assure that the assessments they used would more fully inform program improvement. Participation in the SLOs assessment cycle is required of all

faculty per their Collective Bargaining Agreement, as is inclusion of SLOs in their syllabi. Minutes and notes from department meetings and information provided in program reviews and annual plans document and communicate the changes that have resulted from these assessments. A significant amount of effort has been devoted to SLOs; however, the college recognizes that it has not completed the full assessment cycle. At the time of the site visit, they had reached 66 percent completion and expected to complete all assessments by the end of fall 2013. The two program pathway assessments that were completed are extensive, thorough, and include detailed methodology and multiple measures of assessment (I.B.3). The third program pathway assessment is in progress.

To support the integrated practices of planning, evaluation, and resource allocation, the college recently implemented an online system for program review annual planning, with modules comprehensively including SLO data, student achievement and effectiveness data, curriculum review and planning, technology needs, human resource needs, facilities, and budget implications. However, the levels of detail with which individual programs complete these modules vary (I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6).

To assure the integrity of their integrated planning and resource allocation process, the college has set SLO assessment as a required component of the annual plan and program review in order to qualify for resource allocation. However, even with this requirement, not all programs have submitted their work. Without full participation by programs and service units in completing learning outcome assessments and submitting annual plans in a timely manner, integrated planning, evaluation, and resource allocation cannot be fully implemented (I.B.3).

The college included two items from Standard I.B in its Actionable Improvement Plan. One is to guide allocation requests by prioritizing the objectives in the 2013–2019 Educational Master Plan, which is expected to be completed in fall 2013; the other is to fully implement a single-cycle comprehensive program review, which follows the new planning calendar, also to be completed in fall 2013. The college is forthcoming regarding its needs and its plans to address them; evidence is consistent with the college’s assessment. The team strongly suggests that key performance indicators also be included in the prioritization of objectives in the EMP per the United States Department of Education Regulation 602.16(a)1(i), which requires that institutions set standards for satisfactory performance of student success, including student achievement, and student learning (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7).

There is evidence that the college communicates matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies, including an annual presentation to the Board of Trustees. Community and extensive student demographic information is provided, along with data reports regarding retention and success, which are disaggregated according to standard criteria of age, gender, race/ethnicity, first generation status, and more. However, there was no evidence of disaggregated information regarding graduation rates, transfers, distance education, and other metrics on the college website. Some college data was made available on the district website, where reports were completed for all nine colleges. While the college collects and

disseminates data, such as survey results or tables with metrics, there is little evidence that such data is analyzed and presented in a manner to inform decisions (I.B.3, I.B.5, I.B.6).

There is evidence that the college evaluates its processes and acts upon findings, and that it utilizes a system of validation and quality assurance regarding outcomes assessment. Committees have an annual assessment of their effectiveness which includes various criteria according to the charge of the committee. Surveys are used by each committee to gather feedback on its effectiveness. Processes are also reviewed and assessed and acted upon by committee members, which is evidenced in committee minutes. To integrate the entire process, an annual assessment of all college planning is conducted at the Institutional Effectiveness Council Retreat in June of each year (I.B.6, I.B.7).

Conclusions:

The college has made great strides in designing its integrated planning, evaluation, and resource allocation processes. The next step is to complete a full cycle and re-evaluate.

College Recommendation 1:

In order to achieve sustainable continuous quality improvement, the team recommends that the college use ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.

The team recommends that the processes:

- Provide learning and achievement data on students enrolled in all delivery formats.
- Fully evaluate indicators of effectiveness and make improvement based on findings.
- Assure systematic analysis of data to inform decisions.

(Standards I.B, I.B.1, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.6.b, IV.B.2.b)

College Recommendation 2:

The team recommends that the college evaluate its institutional planning process, including hiring decisions, and ensure planning practices are integrated and aligned with resources (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.4).

STANDARD II

Student Learning Programs and Services

A. Instructional Programs

General Observations:

The college offers courses, programs, degrees, and certificates in multiple formats, such as distance education, that support its mission and are responsive to the educational needs of its diverse students. SLOs are developed at the Institutional, Program Pathway, and Course levels. Outcomes are written for every course, but assessment of those outcomes, to inform the learning process, occurs on a limited basis.

Findings and Evidence:

The college demonstrates that all instructional programs align with the mission of the college and uphold its integrity (II.A.1). To meet the varied needs of its student population, the curriculum includes transfer, basic skills, and career-technical education courses (II.A.1.a). Courses are offered in a variety of learning modalities beyond the traditional classroom, including online and hybrid. In fall 2012, the college limited growth in online offerings in order to review data and determine the appropriate size of its online program to meet community needs and ensure student success.

The college Distance Education Committee provides a venue for faculty and distance education staff to provide guidance on the operations and development of Virtual Valley. However, no process has been adopted to determine the difference between distance education and correspondence education. In a sampling of courses and a tour provided by faculty, the definition of distance education was inconsistently applied. The Virtual Valley website provides a wealth of resources for both students and instructors. Instructors find helpful information ranging from a guide to the online evaluation process to a rubric of best practices, including a section on regular, effective interaction (II.A.1.a, II.A.1.b, II.A.2.b).

The college has collected raw data on success and retention in distance education classes, including demographics. However, there is little evidence that such data has been analyzed and utilized in planning for assessing the effectiveness of this delivery method (II.A.1, II.A.2.d, II.A.2.f).

The college has identified SLOs for all of its courses, programs, and pathways. In 2009–2010, the college developed an Institutional Assessment Plan to guide a regular cycle of SLO assessment review for all courses. However, the college has not completed assessments of learning outcomes for all courses and programs, as required, to meet the ACCJC proficiency Standard. The college has established procedures for developing and evaluating courses and programs. Faculty play a central role in establishing and assessing SLOs and in evaluating

courses, programs, and program pathways outcomes. Assessment results are reviewed by the college's Outcomes Assessment Committee (II.A.1, II.A.1.c, II.A.1.a, II.A.2.a).

The curriculum committee review process ensures that all degree programs focus on an area of inquiry or have an interdisciplinary core. The college accurately and reliably assigns credit hours. Further, the college publicly discloses transfer of credit policies (I.B.1-6, II.A, II.A.4, ER #9).

All courses offered at the college regardless of type of credit awarded or delivery method undergoes periodic review through the college's curriculum process. Curricular processes defined in Administrative Regulations ensure depth, breadth, and rigor of programs. Established policies require that core courses for degrees and certificates are offered at least once every two years. A comprehensive six-year program review and annual plan updates are established components of the college's quality and improvement processes. Program Review is the primary means of evaluating the effectiveness of programs and courses. Distance education courses undergo separate review; however some courses have Distance Education Addenda that have remained unchanged for five years and are unavailable to the public on the college's curriculum website (II.A.2.f, II.A.6).

A new approach to strengthening strategies for improving student success is in process as a result of the college's adoption and involvement in the national AtD initiative goals. Although the college has a defined Program Review process, the college continues to have issues with program review timelines, submissions, and follow through as well as a lack of documented student progress, success, and achievement data. The college also acknowledges a need to focus on improvement in the program review documents. A challenge in completing the program review cycle has been understaffing in the Office of Research and Planning, which has been improved with hiring of a research analyst in fall 2012 (II.A.2.c, II.A.2.d., II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.A.2.f).

The college provides complete and well-publicized information about general education requirements in the college catalog, schedule of classes, and college website. Faculty who serve on the curriculum committee determine course general education status (II.A.3). Transfer information as well as general education requirements for associate degrees are included in both the course catalog and schedule of classes. The college does not use departmental course or program examinations (II.A.2.g, II.A.3.a, II.A.3.b, II.A.3.c). Occupational areas rely on advisory boards for curricular input and to remain current with skills needed in the workforce. The college's curriculum committee ensures that all degree programs follow a specified plan, Plan A, Plan B, or Transfer Degree requirements (II.A.4). Some occupational programs have designed certificates that meet outside industry standards, and some programs prepare students for California licensures, permits, or certifications. The college reports Gainful Employment information through its website (II.A.5).

The college catalog adequately reflects information about programs, courses, and transfer policies. SLOs are published in the catalog and schedule of classes. Course learning outcomes are attached to course outlines that can be publicly viewed (II.A.6). Articulation

agreements demonstrate the college's commitment to providing students with clear lines of transfer to institutions across the state. Processes are in place to accept transfer credit from other institutions (II.A.6.a). The college developed a policy to ensure that programs are attainable. When programs are discontinued, processes are in place to assist students in completing program requirements (II.A.6.b). College publications undergo periodic review. Practices are in place to review printed and online information for accuracy and timeliness (II.A.6.c).

Statements of Academic Freedom grounded in Board Policy and in the Collective Bargaining Agreement are found in the College catalog and in the schedule of classes (II.A.7). The Academic Senate has an Academic Rights and Responsibility Committee that investigates and makes recommendations for charges of any breach of ethics (II.A.7.a). Information on student conduct is published in the catalog and schedule of classes. Per Board Policy, faculty includes on their syllabi a statement about student codes of conduct as they relate to academic honesty. The college utilizes a unique user name and password for each student and each online and hybrid class must utilize the college's Learning Management System (II.A.7.b). Employee standards of performance are outlined in employee contracts and district personnel guides. Faculty standards of conduct are included in the faculty handbook (II.A.7.c). The college does not offer courses in foreign locations (II.A.8).

The team requested to review files associated with documented complaints as required by the Accrediting Commission. There appeared to be some confusion on the part of the college staff regarding the expectations related to these required records and their location. Although multiple requests were made to review the files, the team was only given a list of complaints at the end of the visit. This prevented the team from being able to conduct a physical review of the files, to:

- Observe the manner in which they are handled (as the group of complaints, and as individual complaints) in terms of procedures related to the complaint policies;
- Review for possible trends of issues that may invoke issues with Accreditation Standards.

While the summary of complaints routinely maintained was helpful, it could not be a substitute for actually reviewing the files. (II.B.2.c, III.A.4.c)

Conclusions:

The college provides educational programs and offers those programs in a variety of instructional delivery modes. Significant progress has been made in developing SLOs and subsequent assessments. The college has not, however, made the necessary progress in assessing programs and courses to the degree that assessment results are used to make improvements.

The team encourages the college to evaluate distance education courses through an ongoing systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, and currency (II.A.2.e).

The college partially meets the Standard.

College Recommendation 3:

In order to fully meet the Standards, the college must assess and align SLOs at the course, program, and institutional levels and use the results to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness (I.B, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.3.b, II.A.6.b, IV.B.2.b).

College Recommendation 4:

The team recommends that the college develop a formal definition of correspondence education that aligns with the U.S. Department of Education regulations and Commission policy and a process for determining the differences in practice between correspondence education and distance education (Standards II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.2.c, II.A.2.d, II.A.2.e, II.A.7, II.B.1, II.B.2.c).

College Recommendation 5:

To fully meet the Standards, the college should ensure that records of complaints are routinely maintained as required by the Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions (II.B.2, II.B.2.c, II.B.3.a, II.B.4, III.A.4.c).

B. Student Support Services

General Observations:

The Student Services division of the college has developed and implemented processes to better serve an increasingly diverse student population. Comprehensive planning and implementation of those plans has resulted in departments achieving notable administrative outcomes with process and efficiency changes implemented as a result of their assessment.

Findings and Evidence:

Student Support Services have developed their administrative learning outcomes and assessed them to determine that students receive effective support services to further their educational goals. The college offers a wide range of services that meet the varied needs of its student population. The services include counseling, financial aid, transfer, basic skills tutoring, testing, grievance and complaint services, and career orientation (II.B.1, II.B.2.c, II.B.3.a).

The college annually publishes a catalog (paper and online) for its constituencies including all required general information and statements that students can utilize to improve their learning experience as well as requirements for admissions including fees, descriptions of

enrollment methods to achieve degrees and certificates, and requirements for graduation and transfer to four-year institutions (II.B.2.b, II.B.2.c, II.B.2.d).

Additionally, student academic support needs are identified and supported during the initial admissions and counseling process, assigning students to basic skills testing, and guiding them to plans of study most suited for their interests and skills levels. The college supports a vital Associated Student Union whose members have developed comprehensive goals and have evaluated their actions to unify and provide activities for its diverse student body (II.B.3.a, II.B.3.d, II.B.3.e).

The college provides equitable access to student support services by providing a wide range of services online. There is evidence that the student services team has thought carefully about how to meet the needs of students in all delivery formats. With the exception of placement testing, a student can complete the matriculation, advisement, and registration processes online. At the time of the visit, the counseling department had launched email counseling for students (II.B.3.a).

Conclusions:

The college provides comprehensive student services to students in all delivery formats. Significant progress has been made in developing SLOs and subsequent assessments. The college has not, however, made the necessary commitment to assessing programs and courses to the degree that assessment results are used to make improvements. Course assessment results need to be more fully integrated into the Program Review process with more focus on improvement.

The college meets this Standard.

Recommendations:

None

C. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:

In the fall of 2012, the college opened a new Library and Academic Resource Center (LARC), providing a modern and attractive venue for library and learning support services. Key personnel in both the library and learning support services note that having all services housed in the same building promotes student access to services as well as collaboration amongst learning resources personnel.

Findings and Evidence:

The college supports student learning through its library and a number of tutoring labs. The library collection is appropriate in size to serve the college's population, featuring over 150,000 print volumes, 20,000 electronic books, and 80 print periodical subscriptions. The library provides access to 20 online database services with a wide variety of disciplines represented. The library is staffed by four faculty librarians and seven classified staff, along with part-time librarians and staff. The library has a collection development policy that is directed by qualified personnel and that includes the input of relevant faculty members. The college has a decentralized model of tutoring, with a General Tutoring Lab, Math Lab, Reading Center, Writing Center, and Science Lab providing learning support services to the general student population. The lead of each tutoring lab is a faculty member in a relevant department who maintains a line of communication with other discipline faculty. In addition, specialized student populations can receive academic support through the EOPS/CARE tutoring center, the TRiO/Student Support Services center, and the SSD (Services for Students with Disabilities) High Tech Center (II.C.1.a).

The college has demonstrated a strong commitment to instructing students in information literacy through the library and learning support services. The library offers the Library Research Methods course, along with a variety of related workshops. The Writing Center offers multiple workshops on topics related to information literacy (II.C.1.b).

The library has planned and implemented online services and materials access for students. The Writing Center and Science Lab offer online tutoring. The Math Lab does not since math courses are not offered in a fully online format (II.C.1.c).

The college identifies an actionable improvement plan to “establish an institutional standard for core library educational materials based on an analysis of long-term needs and integrate it into the college resource allocation process” (II.C.1.a, II.C.1.c).

Construction of the LARC building has brought new equipment, including computers that are secured through cables and an electronic theft detection system (II.C.1.d). The library engages in collaborative agreements with other organizations for services and materials. The library licenses electronic databases and e-books through the Community College Library Consortium, a partnership between the Community College League and the Council of Chief Librarians. The Consortium provides regular evaluation of resources (II.C.1.e).

The library and the tutoring units engage in program review and annual plan updates, utilizing data to provide evidence that their services are supporting SLOs (II.C.2).

Conclusions:

The college is encouraged to develop a comprehensive plan to align its library and learning support services with the goals of its growing distance learning program, so that the institution can support the quality of its instructional program regardless of delivery method. The General Tutoring Lab, the Math Lab, the Science Lab, and the Writing Center are making a concerted effort to coordinate their activities in areas such as SLO assessment,

planning, tutor training, and grant seeking. Key personnel demonstrate a spirit of collaboration that places student need rather than disciplinary territory at the focal point of their efforts.

The college meets this standard.

Recommendations:

None

STANDARD III

Resources

A. Human Resources

General Observations

LAVC has put into place procedures that guide the selection, hiring, and evaluation of qualified personnel needed to support the success of students. The college employs qualified faculty and staff in accordance with board policies, state regulations, and employee contracts. As of fall 2012, the college has a total of 553 faculty, (35 percent are full-time contract faculty), 224 classified employees, 436 unclassified employees, and 22 administrators.

Classified hiring is governed by a Personnel Commission that monitors the screening and selection process for classified employees including identification of position classifications, as well as compensation. The Personnel Commission is an independent body, employed by the district, which works collaboratively with the district HR department on matters pertaining to classified staff, including policy development for classified staff who are not represented. The Personnel Commission reports to a board of Commissioners who are appointed by the State Chancellor, based upon recommendation of the LACCD Board of Trustees. Hiring of academic employees complies with state and local policies, and is the responsibility of the college president in consultation with the Academic Senate. Hiring committees are comprised of discipline experts, an administrator, and an EEO representative who serves as a non-voting member. The college has an employee designated as the single point of contact on the campus who serves as the liaison with the district HR department. All job announcements are posted on the district/college websites. Administrative hiring is conducted in accordance with the process for classified or academic employees depending upon the position. All employees are evaluated in accordance with board policies and employee contracts.

LAVC demonstrates an appropriate understanding of the issues related to equity and diversity and maintains programs and services that support a diverse workforce. As well, the college has a written code of ethics and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of all personnel.

Findings and Evidence:

LAVC employs qualified academic personnel in accordance with state and local policy (III.A.1). Hiring criteria are specified in the district *Human Resources Guide* and subject to review and change by the district Academic Senate. Faculty are fully involved in the hiring process, articulated in a Hiring Handbook developed by the college Academic Senate. While the process for hiring adjunct faculty is much more abbreviated, all candidates must meet the minimum qualifications. Applicants must hold degrees from recognized accredited institutions. Faculty positions are advertised on the college website as well as on campus

(III.A.1.a). Candidates for academic positions who possess degrees from institutions outside the United States must have the degree evaluated for equivalency by a state-approved evaluation service (III.A.1.a). The institution verifies the qualifications of applicants and newly hired faculty by reviewing academic credentials including transcripts. The interview process for faculty can also include a teaching demonstration to evaluate effective instruction. Faculty teaching distance education courses must meet the same rigorous hiring criteria (III.A.1.b.).

The college President and Academic Senate assume responsibility for ensuring that the hiring process is conducted in accordance with district and college procedures. Specific criteria for identifying hiring priorities are aligned with program review and the mission of the college. The president makes the final hiring decision, however little evidence exists to ensure that faculty hiring decisions are aligned to planning and resource allocation (III.A.2, III.A.6).

The need to fill classified positions is determined by the vice presidents for each division. All positions must be reflected on the department's five-year hiring plan that is reviewed by the Hiring Planning Committee (HPC) (III.D.A.2). The president makes the final decision as to which positions will be filled. The hiring supervisor determines the specific position qualifications. Job descriptions and the hiring process for classified positions are the responsibility of the district's Personnel Commission. Classified positions are advertised on the college website, and on campus (III.A.1.a). In addition, the district maintains an interest list that routinely receives email notices of various job openings. Applicants for classified positions are screened for minimum qualifications by the district Personnel Commission, which also conducts the first level of interviews. Applicants are rated by the Personnel Commission and the names of those who receive top rankings (1, 2, and 3) are provided to the college. The college selects the top-ranked candidates to interview and makes the final hiring decision.

Administrator hiring follows either the academic or classified process depending on the position. The process for hiring administrators is conducted in accordance with the college's handbook and district procedures as well as state regulations.

The district has policies and procedures to ensure fairness in the hiring process (III.A.3). district and college policies clearly outline the minimum qualifications for all faculty, classified administrators, and academic administrators (III.A.3.a). All job openings are posted on the district/college websites. Hiring committees are convened by the college and include an EEO representative who is a non-voting member of the committee (III.A.3.a). The president makes the final hiring decision.

Evaluation of all employees is conducted in accordance with district personnel rules and collective bargaining agreements (III.A.1.b). Evaluations of academic employees rely on a peer review process and are conducted in accordance with the criteria specified in the Faculty Guild agreement. The evaluation is based upon effective teaching and performance of duties, including assessment of SLOs, which are clearly specified in the agreement. At minimum, the department chair and vice chair, or designee, participate in the review process. More

comprehensive reviews include the dean, department chair, and faculty peers. Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years. An academic senate representative is included in the committee for review of probationary employees who are evaluated annually for the first four years of employment, or until tenure is granted. The evaluation process for faculty includes a standardized evaluation form, visits to the classroom, student evaluations, and conference with other faculty members. The college maintains a tracking system which includes the dates of evaluation of all faculty to ensure that evaluations are systematically conducted in accordance with the contract.

The criteria and process for evaluation of classified employees is contained in the regulations of the Personnel Commission and collective bargaining agreements. Classified employees are evaluated annually. Reviews may be done more frequently at the discretion of the supervisor. The district has responsibility for systematically notifying the supervisor that an employee is due their evaluation. The college has made improvements in the evaluation date for classified employees by aligning the evaluation date for all classified employees making it more systematic for the supervisors.

The specific procedures for follow-up on less than satisfactory performance reviews are specified in the employee bargaining agreements and included on the evaluation form. The college has made improvement in the evaluation process as evidenced by the responses on the accreditation survey. The college has employed a tracking system to ensure that all classified employees are evaluated. However, the team found that a number of classified employee evaluations are not current. Supervisors and administrators are also evaluated in accordance with the terms and conditions of their respective employee contracts.

District Board Rule 1204 specifies a code of ethics for all non-faculty employees (III.A.1.d). In addition, the college academic senate adopted a code of ethics for academic employees (III.A.1.d). Official personnel records are maintained in the district HR office which is responsible for assuring confidentiality of all records pertaining to employees (III.A.3.b). Unofficial copies of personnel records are also maintained by the campus single point of contact.

The college has ongoing training programs on diversity and cultural sensitivity (III.A.4.a). The district has an Office of Diversity that supports the colleges and processes all complaints involving equity matters. All employees who participate on hiring committees must participate in diversity training (III.A.4). In addition, all managers and supervisors participate in a workshop that incorporates diversity training. The college also has a number of programs and campus activities for students that celebrate diversity (III.A.4.a). The District Office maintains records of employee diversity and hiring which are available in the District Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (III.A.4.b).

The team attempted to review formal complaints as required by the Accreditation Commission. Unfortunately, the college and district did not understand the nature of the team's repeated requests, offered conflicting feedback as to where the records were housed, and were unable to provide comprehensive evidence of complaints related to equitable

treatment of students and employees, even though their Self-Study reports that there were 12 formal complaints filed since 2008 (III.A.4.c).

The college offers a robust professional development program for faculty including training on a variety of teaching and assessment strategies, administrative procedures, and shared governance. The team found that professional development opportunities for classified staff were limited (III.A.5).

Conclusions:

The college has demonstrated that it has adequate personnel to support programs and services, that policies are in place to guide evaluation and professional development processes, and that diversity is supported throughout the institution. The team had some concern with the employee evaluations being conducted on a regular basis and with the maintenance of records of complaints.

Commendation:

The district should be commended for including assessment of SLOs as part of the evaluation component of the faculty contract (III.A.1.c).

College Recommendation 6:

To fully meet the Standard, the college should ensure that all employee performance evaluations are conducted in a timely basis in accordance with the employee contracts (III.A.1.b).

B. Physical Resources

General Observations:

As a result of the college's 2007 Self-Study Report, the Commission recommended that the college plan, build, maintain, and upgrade its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services. Much progress has been made in responding to this recommendation. Los Angeles Valley College has gone through a physical transformation in the past ten years. The 2003 Facilities Master Plan, updated in 2010, is used to guide all processes associated with the bond program and physical resources, contributing to an inviting learning environment that is well maintained. The plan is routinely updated by consultants. The current plan includes assignable square footage and space utilization for all buildings. Effective utilization, planning, budgeting, technology needs, and programming are informed by three representative committees comprised of members from the various constituencies, along with respective administrative departments. The total cost of ownership is considered in capital planning through the recent inclusion of M&O for new buildings in the district budget model.

The college is committed to sustainability and minimizing adverse impact on the environment. All new buildings are LEED certified. The renovation of the campus has been grounded in the EMP and guided by the Facilities Master Plan following the passage of the most recent bond, Measure J in 2008. A college website, titled: *Revitalization of Los Angeles Valley College* provides the college community information on the status of the various construction projects.

The team heard many positive comments about the campus, which spans 105 acres and is home to more than 1,600 trees, earning the college the distinction of *Tree College* by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Findings and Evidence:

On the 2011 accreditation survey, 80.6 percent of respondents said that LAVC's physical resources (including facilities and equipment) were effective in supporting programs and services. The college has put processes in place to assure that physical resources are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment (III.B.1, III.B.1.a).

Campus safety is a priority for the campus and many strategies have been implemented to ensure a safe environment. The college subscribes to an emergency notification system (AlertU), where students and employees sign-up to receive notices. LAVC also uses "voice notification" and fire alarms to inform building occupants in case of an emergency. The Sheriff's department conducts training on emergency response. In addition, it conducts tests of its emergency notification system in accordance with the Cleary Act. The college's Emergency Response Plan is available on the campus web page (III.B.1).

Due to a number of successful bond measures, the college has moved forward with new construction and renovation projects. Proposition A was approved in 2001 for \$1.245 billion, followed by Proposition AA in 2003 for \$980 million; and, in 2008, the citizens approved Proposition J at the amount of \$3.5 billion, out of which, LAVC received \$305 million for Proposition J and a total of \$626 million for all bonds. The district has secured the services of an external company to manage the bond programs, with a dedicated program manager assigned to each campus.

The team reviewed documentation associated with Total Cost of Ownership (TCO). The college has done an adequate job compiling an inventory of data for each facility, including assessment of all resources needed to support both current and new buildings. Long-range plans have been identified for calculating the TCO of facilities and equipment (III.B.2.a).

The district placed a moratorium on its bond program in 2011 to ensure colleges were not over-building and that infrastructure costs were appropriated. The college reported that the moratorium significantly delayed construction and added substantial costs to specific projects due to litigation. As well, the district removed approximately \$20 million from one of the

college's projects, placing the funds in a contingency account at the district. The team could find no evidence that this decision was aligned with the institutional plan or the Facilities Master Plan (III.B.2.b).

Multiple audit findings have been identified with the bond program. Under the guidance of the district and the college's program manager, plans have been developed for responding to the findings in the audit. At the time of the visit the college reported that all of their construction projects had been "released" from the moratorium, but some were held up in litigation. Based on a review of evidence and discussions with key personnel, it appears as though some decisions related to facilities and specifically to the bond program, are not aligned with institutional planning and not fully understood by college personnel. As well, little evidence exists to demonstrate that the district and college has used the result from the evaluation of physical resources to inform improvements related to the bond programs (III.B.2, III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b).

Conclusions:

The current facilities at LAVC support student learning and provide a welcoming environment for the community. The team was particularly impressed with the college's commitment to becoming a Tree Campus.

Although the district has been successful in securing general obligation bonds needed to enhance the physical resources of the college, problems have existed related to the oversight of the bond program. There is hope that the new bond management team will establish the appropriate structures needed to increase accountability. The team was impressed with the level of commitment demonstrated by LAVC faculty and staff regarding sustainability.

Commendation:

The college is to be commended for having been recognized as a 2011 Tree Campus USA by the Arbor Day Foundation and Toyota North America. LAVC is the only college in California to receive such a distinguished award.

College Recommendation 7:

To meet this Standard, the team recommends that the college, in collaboration with the district, put measures in place to ensure the effective control and implementation of the bond program and that decisions related to facilities are aligned with institutional planning (I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b).

C. Technology Resources

General Observations:

LAVC demonstrates a significant commitment to technology in support of the needs of its constituents. It is clear that the college addresses the hardware and software needs of the campus, along with online needs ranging from distance learning to web-based communications and delivery of online administrative and student services (III.C.1.a, III.C.1.d). With the increasing importance of integrated planning, campus technology has provided the means for inputting, managing, and reporting data and information. The college assures adequate infrastructure and redundancy to support stable communication and operations (III.C.1.c).

Professional development has long been a strength for the college; LAVC uses a survey assessment of needs to identify content and modality of training appropriate for college constituents. In addition, the college provides readiness and training materials for students engaging in distance learning, and training and support for faculty teaching in the online environment (III.C.1.b).

The college has incorporated new processes to optimize access to needed hardware and software with centralized specification and purchasing practices, development of a technology database to manage inventory, and the implementation of a cascade policy to roll down equipment that has been replaced with bond purchases. The college actively seeks and receives grant funding to support the needs of its constituents, and participates in Perkins Grant funding (III.C.1.c).

The college demonstrates an intentional integration and alignment of planning, evaluation, and resource allocation in technology (III.C.2).

Findings and Evidence:

As reported in the Self-Evaluation Report, the college supports a broad array of technologies across the campus. Advances in practice are evidenced including modernization of web presence, implementation of social media, web-enhanced services and distance education, and online student services. Work in supporting teaching and learning appears to be advancing with the addition of online resources and tools for faculty, staff, and students, along with greater support for classroom and office technologies (III.C.1.a).

Technology training for the campus is addressed in a variety of ways. Students receive one-on-one assistance from tutors and instructional assistants in the computer labs, including the Writing Center and CCATT Lab. The library supports information competency for all students. Online students and faculty receive assistance and training with the ETUDES learning management system through Virtual Valley. The Professional Development Department creates a training agenda based upon an annual needs assessment. Topics and

modalities vary according to expressed need. A major training event titled TechFest kicks off fall and spring semesters, preparing faculty with just-in-time technology skills (III.C.1.b).

Technology infrastructure is adequately supported, and effectiveness is planned to improve with the building of the new data center. The college participates in CENIC to assure internet connectivity. Practices to support optimal utilization of hardware and software resources appear to be in place, including the leveraging of a “cascade” roll down policy to maximize return on investment of older equipment. Practices assure redundancy to mitigate unexpected failures in internet and network connectivity (III.C.1.c).

After years of decentralized acquisition of hardware and software, the college has taken action to streamline and standardize their purchase, and is advancing a plan to sustain replacement of equipment in a timely manner, which is important given the amount of technology that has been purchased with one-time funds such as the bond and various grants. Interviews with faculty and staff indicate a strong sense of support for computer labs and administrative functions from campus IT. There is a positive relationship between campus and district Instructional Technology (IT) planning functions (III.C.1.a, III.C.1.c, III.C.1.d).

In terms of integrated planning, the Technology Planning Committee creates and updates the LAVC Technology Plan. The plan provides the basis for prioritization of technology requests through the annual planning process. The committee uses a rubric to rank requests according to predefined need. The most recent prioritized list was approved by the IEC, which submitted it to the President for approval, and resulted in the purchase of 100 new Wi-Fi hotspots on the campus (III.C.2).

Two items of concern for campus technology address sustainability. The college has identified technology staffing in its Actionable Improvement Plan and has included line item funding for technology in the Technology Plan. These concerns are legitimate, given the significant addition of new labs, applications, and services with the build out of the campus, and the cost to replace, maintain, and support these technologies (III.C.1.c). The IT Manager collects data in support of department tasks and activities to quantify workload.

The college makes use of surveys to identify user satisfaction and user needs, which inform planning. In the case of informing technology, surveys include the 2011 Administrative Services Program Review Survey, the 2011 Accreditation Survey, 2011 Professional Development Survey, and the 2011 Technology Committee Survey (III.C.1).

Conclusion:

College technology services, processes, and practices align with constituent needs, assuring that the college can accomplish effectively its many technology related activities and functions.

The college meets this Standard.

Commendation:

The college should be commended for development of the comprehensive 2012–2017 Technology Plan, which is informed by multiple sources and is used to inform decision-making and resource allocation for technology at the college wide level.

Recommendations:

None

D. Financial Resources

General Observations:

LAVC, as stated in its Self-Study Report, relies on its mission and goals associated with its EMP to guide decisions related to financial planning. The budget for the college is allocated by the district. The district budget is authorized in Board Policy and complies with state regulations. Tentative and final budget documents are completed in a timely manner and presented to the Board of Trustees for adoption in accordance with state regulation (III.D.1.d, III.D.2.b). The district provides regular updates on the budget to the Board of Trustees.

The Interim Vice President for Administrative Services, in collaboration with key district personnel, has primary control over budgetary processes, with the President making the final decision on budget expenditures. The budget office provides monthly and quarterly reports to monitor enrollment and expenditures (III.D.2). The reports are available on the website of the budget office which is easy to use (III.D.2.b).

Based on the District’s Final Budget for 2012-2013, the college’s 2012-13 budget “with transitional funding adjustment,” was \$44,093,174, with fixed costs of approximately \$48 million. As indicated by the College President, with the passage of Prop 30 in November 2012, funding was restored by adding \$4.5 million, to create a total allocation for 2012-13 of about \$48.6 million. Projected fixed costs were reported by the college at about \$49.6 million. This continued shortfall was a particular concern to the team in that LAVC had a recommendation in 2007 which called for the institution to “take action to address the current \$1.9 million deficit. . .”

The college has established processes in place for budget development and allocation. However, there is concern about the extent to which the college relies on its EMP in allocating resources. The ongoing fiscal crises in California, along with questionable hiring decisions that have been made at the college, have contributed to a sustained negative impact on the college’s budget for the past six years. The district establishes enrollment targets for the college based upon the college’s percentage FTES share of the total FTES allocation for the LACCD, and in accordance with the district budget allocation model. The model has

undergone review and refinement over the past years, most recently in June 2012. This restructuring of the model, phased in over the next three years, has resulted in a shift of resources among the nine campuses. The allocation model is currently under review in accordance with a directive from the Board of Trustees that the model be assessed annually.

Findings and Evidence:

The team could not find evidence that the college's fiscal planning is integrated with the EMP (III.D.1). While the college has restructured its planning processes to ensure that the budget is linked to planning, the team could not substantiate the linkage; as well, little evidence could be found to support that this process is widely understood by employees (III.D.1.a). All planning is addressed on an annual basis by the college's primary shared governance body, the IEC. Requests for additional funding originate at the department level and go through an extensive review and approval process before being submitted to the IEC for prioritization (III.D.1.b, III.D.1.d). Recommendations for funding from the IEC are submitted to the President for final approval. The 2011 Accreditation Survey showed that the majority of the college does not understand how budget decisions are made. As a result, the college has made strides to improve the transparency and inclusiveness of the budget development process including posting a budget flowchart on the website of the budget office and conducting a Town Hall meeting on the budget. Nonetheless, the team found that the budget development and allocation process is not widely understood (III.D.2.b).

The college receives its operating budget allocation from the district based upon enrollment targets calculated by the district, determined by the college's share of the total district FTES allocation from the state. The allocation includes growth (or reduction) and COLA, if funded. The college has been running a deficit for the past six years. The team observed that it appears as though the college has developed a culture of overspending its allocated budget. This practice seems to be supported at the district level. Constituent groups shared concerns with the team about the chronic overspending of the budget and, in many instances, attributed the budget deficit to questionable hiring decisions.

Based on a review of data, the team found that the college has a structural budget problem which appears to be caused by a misalignment between its allocation and ongoing expenses. According to the President, LAVC is given three directives by the Chancellor and Chief Fiscal Officer for the district:

- Meet the college's target for FTES production
- Maintain the college's Faculty Obligation Number (FON)
- Balance the college's budget

The team inquired as to why the college hired 27 faculty members in 2010 and another six in 2012, despite evidence that LAVC met its FON and was operating with a deficit during both years. As a response to this inquiry, the President indicated that the district's priority was for LAVC to meet its FTES goal. She further indicated that the college relies upon the district

for loans to fund their deficit and is on a repayment plan or “forgiveness” of the debt. The college relies on the district for financial stability (III D.1.c).

The college had been operating at or well above its FTES target for five years, but in 2011–12 fell below its FTES target and overspent its budget further trying to achieve the target. One factor noted by the district that contributed to the college falling below its FTES target was a change in policy prompted by the state Chancellor’s Office that aligned the drop deadline with census reporting. The college has taken some steps to address its deficit including increases in class size, reduction in summer and intersession, installation of solar panels for energy savings, mandatory ten percent cut to the budget in 2007 (excluding contractual and mandated costs, and health and safety needs) and 25 percent across the board cut in 2009, and initiation of a hiring freeze, except for critical positions.

The college has also secured the services of an external consulting company to fully assess its budgeting processes and allocation practices. It is the hope of the President that the recommendations offered by this company will help resolve the college’s ongoing budget problems. The district recently revised the budget allocation model to fund maintenance and operations for new facilities as part of the college’s base allocation (III.D.1.c) which is intended to help with budget stability. The college is required by the district to maintain a one percent reserve for emergencies or unforeseen occurrences (III.D.2.c); however, with its chronic budget deficit, the college has relied on the district for contingencies. The district maintains a contingency reserve of at least five percent.

The district has identified liability for the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 45 requirement. The district allocated 1.92 percent of the full-time employee payroll and Medicare part D refund into an irrevocable trust to meet the obligations of GASB 45, annual other postemployment benefits (OPEB) obligations. The district also switched health care plans to CalPERS which resulted in significant savings and reduction in the district’s OPEB obligation.

The college actively seeks additional funds through partnerships and grant opportunities. The college Foundation also provides support for instructional, student services programs, and scholarships. A college Grants Committee reviews grant opportunities for alignment with the EMP. The college currently has about \$5.8 million of grants funded in 2011–12, and about another \$3.5 million in 2012–13 (III.D.2.d).

The college uses the SAP financial system. Overall the district appears to have had some internal control issues with the transition to the new system, most of which have been resolved. Access to the system is password protected based upon user business responsibilities which allows for internal controls (III.D.2.d).

The Associated Students is funded by student fees and maintains a balanced account. Enterprise operations at the college consist of the bookstore, food service, and Community Service. All enterprise operations are self-supporting and generate revenue for the college (III.D.2.d, III.D.2.e). In 2011–12, \$300,000 was generated by Enterprise operations. The

cafeteria is outsourced to a vendor who leases space from the college. The bookstore is an in-house operation that is undergoing some downsizing due to changes in the textbook market. The college president and vice presidents can approve contracts that do not exceed \$5,000. All contracts greater than \$5,000 are executed by a regional procurement specialist (III.D.2.f).

In 2010 the college identified several irregularities in the business processes with the Associated Students, parking, bookstore, the business office, and student refunds at the college. The President and Vice President of Administrative Services requested an investigation by the district Internal Audit department. The audit resulted in findings of several irregularities with internal controls as well as district policies and procedures, some of which were district internal control issues (III.D.2.a). The college has fully addressed the recommendations of the internal audit (III.D.2.g).

The district has received an unqualified audit for the last six years (III.D.2.a). There were no material findings. Past audit reports show a number of internal control problems, including several findings related to the Financial Aid program. Some findings were due to a conversion to a new financial administrative system. Very few of the issues with financial controls were specific to Los Angeles Valley College. At the time of the visit all but one of the findings has been resolved. The results of the audit are communicated to the Board of Trustees and posted on the district website (III.D.2.a).

Conclusion:

While the college has made significant budget reductions to address its deficit, the college continues to face an ongoing structural budget problem. After careful review of the budget and allocation processes, the team came to the conclusion that financial resources are not sufficient to support operations and that the college is not managing its financial affairs in a manner that ensures financial stability. This seems to be a shared problem between the college and the district.

College Recommendation 8:

To fully meet the Standards, the college should establish appropriate management and control mechanisms needed for sound financial decision-making. The Institution should ensure that it has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability with realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences and to ensure long-term financial stability. The team recommends that the President effectively control budget and expenditures (III.D, III.D.2.c, IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a, IV.B.2.d).

STANDARD IV

Leadership and Governance

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Observations:

The environment at LAVC promotes participation in decision-making and provides multiple opportunities for representatives from constituent groups to serve on participatory governance committees. To address whether institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation and institutional excellence, and whether staff, faculty and administrators are encouraged to take the initiative in improving practices, programs and services, the college conducted a 2011 Accreditation Survey. Based on the findings, 93 percent of the respondents indicated that they are aware of opportunities to participate in committees and workgroups at the college.

During the last two years, the college implemented a revised shared governance structure that has improved participation in the decision-making process. A well-defined three-tiered committee structure allows for campus participation and input. It appears that college employees care about institutional effectiveness and are willing to participate in governance structures that ensure quality outcomes. Personnel interviewed expressed optimism about the revised governance structure and its potential for linking planning, evaluation, and resource allocation. A centralized college communication web page provides public access to information about shared governance committees, their processes, and their actions. Email blasts provide employees with notification of committee updates and postings.

Findings and Evidence:

LAVC has a governance structure that encourages participation from all campus constituents. A revised Planning and Decision-Making Handbook articulates the shared governance process and the roles of faculty, classified staff, students, and administrators on all shared governance committees. A tiered committee structure with significant faculty representation and connections to program review, curriculum, and the EMP informs decisions and allows for recommendations about student learning programs and services. Despite the intention of inclusion of all constituencies in the shared governance process, classified staff expressed dissatisfaction with their numerical representation on Tier-Two committees. The IEC functions as the college's primary shared governance committee and serves as the College's clearinghouse for all committee recommendations (IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a).

Members of the college leadership team meet regularly with counterparts across the district and the relevant vice chancellor or chancellor. College leaders indicated opportunity does exist to serve on district committees but expressed the desire to more fully engage in meaningful dialogue on decisions that impact the college (IV.A.3).

The college has relationships with many outside agencies, businesses, and other colleges and demonstrates honesty and integrity in those relationships. The college participates in accreditation-related processes and complies with all reporting requirements (IV.A.4).

The college's newly instituted shared governance structure has increased participation and improved communication. The structure is continuing to evolve and it appears that constituency groups are committed to continuing to refine the process. At this point, the connection between continuous quality improvement relative to the analysis of data, planning, and resource allocation has not been established (IV.A.5).

Conclusions:

The college has made good progress in providing opportunities for all campus constituents to participate in shared governance committees and to connect multiple levels of planning. The college should continue to build on this work and further refine their processes to ensure that the planning is linked to evaluation and resource allocation. The college also needs to consider ways in which committee representation among constituency groups can be better balanced.

Recommendations:

None

B. Board and Administrative Organization

General Observations:

The college is governed by an elected seven-member Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees, including one student trustee. The board functions as an independent policy-making body representing its constituent and public interests. The board provides policy level leadership needed to support the nine colleges. The roles and responsibilities of the Chancellor, the Board, and Presidents are clearly defined and focus on supporting the educational quality of the district and the colleges (IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a).

The previous evaluation team report for LAVC included both college and district shared recommendations, with specific deficiencies associated with Standard IV. Particularly, the previous evaluation team recommended that the Board of Trustees complete the self-evaluation process and set goals for improved performance. As well, the team recommended that a policy be developed for the evaluation of the chancellor and presidents. The college has taken action to address these previous recommendations. The district has also advanced the work of policy development by creating a process for the systematic review and revision of Board Rules. The board has established a program for board development and has fully implemented the self-evaluation process.

The team found evidence that the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the Institution and that adequate communication processes exist for sharing information. Extensive work has taken place to evaluate the delineation of functions, out of which, the district recently produced the District Governance and Functions Handbook. More than 275 process maps detail functions across the district.

The team identified several areas of concern related with the Standards in IV.B. These concerns focused on the college's control of budget and expenditures, the district's allocation of resources, and the alignment of resources to institutional planning.

Findings and Evidence:

A significant area of concern for the team was the college's current fiscal deficit. This concern was also cited in the 2007 Evaluation Team Report. The expectation is that the President effectively controls budget and expenditures. Based on the team's review of evidence and interviews with district and college staff, it appears as though decisions have been made by administration at the college level that contributed to an ongoing deficit. For example, in 2010 the President made the decision to hire 27 faculty members at the same time that the college was facing a deficit exceeding \$1 million (IV.B.2.d).

The Self-Study asserts that the President makes budgetary decisions in conjunction with the overall goals in the EMP and has restructured internal processes needed to align planning to budget. While planning processes appear well documented and articulated the impact of these processes is nullified by the perpetual negative fund balance. Although efforts have reduced the deficit on an annual basis, the college continues to overspend its allocation. Strategies identified for managing the budget within such limitations include increasing efficiency in class size, reducing offerings, implementing a hiring freeze, and requesting debt forgiveness from the district. Although these efforts represent work toward fiscal stability, the college maintains a negative end-of-year balance. The Self-Study indicates that 90 percent of the budget represents fixed costs; however on-site interviews with the President and vice presidents revealed that in the "Final Budget for 2012–2013" the college is committing more than 100 percent of its budget to fixed costs (including personnel, benefits, and utilities) (IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a, IV.B.2.d).

The district Board of Trustees has developed a goal setting process as part of its self-evaluation process. Additionally, the board developed a District Effectiveness Review Cycle to align the board and the CEO goals with the District Strategic Plan. Board meetings validate the self-evaluation process and the establishment of specific goals in the areas of: communication, dialogue, goals, and working together with the Chancellor. The board adopted a pattern of quarterly retreats with guest presenters that facilitate board development and goal achievement. The board approved the revised Vision 2017 at their February 6, 2013 meeting. According to the Board of Trustee meeting minutes, the board does take ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. The Board of Trustees web page includes a Board Rules document addressing the requirements of this standard. The Board Rules and minutes support that the board acts in a manner consistent

with its policies and bylaws. Since the past accreditation visit the board has adopted new and revised rules. They are supported by district personnel in following the adopted rules. The Board Rules includes clear ethical standards and procedures for sanctioning board members in violation of ethics. Interviews with board members during the site visit and documentation in board meeting minutes verify that the board is kept apprised of accreditation activities in meaningful ways (IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.b, IV.B.1.c, IV.B.1.d, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.f, IV.B.1, IV.B.1.h, IV.B.1.i).

The college has done a thorough job identifying how the governing board is responsible for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. A number of district committees have been put in place to advance these areas of responsibility. Each committee provides reports to the board which monitors progress. The board has established quality assurance standards associated with educational and strategic planning and has tasked the Internal Audit Department with enhancing and enforcing controls needed to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. As well, it appears as though the district has made good progress identifying multiple means of ensuring the financial integrity of the capital construction projects (IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2.c).

In response to the expectation that the district/system clearly delineate and communicate the operational responsibilities and functions of the district from those of the colleges, LAVC provided evidence focused on the findings of the 2009 ACCJC Evaluation Team, which visited three other District colleges, indicating the 2008 Functional Map successfully delineated the roles and responsibilities of the District and the colleges. The 2007 team recommended that additional actions be taken to evaluate the accuracy of the delineation and to use results for improvements (IV.B.3.g). The District Planning Committee took the lead in assessing and revising the functional map. Additionally, a survey was administered to assess the accuracy of the delineation of functions between the district and colleges. A *District Governance and Functions Handbook* was recently created as a means for communicating the decision-making process and is used to increase employee awareness of district/college functions. During the site visit, the team received a copy of the 2013 *District Governance and Functions Handbook*. The document is thorough in its depiction of the relationship among district and college functions. In conversations with faculty and staff, it appears as though there is still confusion regarding the roles and functions of the district office as compared to functions at the college. The team suggests that the college identify strategies for disseminating information about the delineation of functions and collaborate with the district on the ongoing evaluation of employee awareness of district and college functions (IV.B.3.a).

Overall, it appears as though the district/system provides fair distribution of resources that are adequate to support the effective operations of the college. However, regarding fiscal allocations, college staff felt that the district could be more supportive. Specifically, questions were raised regarding the fairness of the new allocation model and its impact on the college's ability to balance the budget. The team suggests that the district review its resource allocation model to ensure that the distribution of financial resources is fair (IV.B.3.c).

To address whether institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence, and whether staff, faculty, and administrators are encouraged to take the initiative in improving practices, programs, and services, the college conducted a 2011 Accreditation Survey. The majority of the responses appear to be favorable. Additionally, the President has identified multiple opportunities for employees and students to be engaged in discussions about the college (IV.A.1, IV.B.2.b.).

Conclusion:

The board has made good strides in their self-evaluation and development. The college and the district have carefully articulated decision-making processes; however, those processes are not effectively linked to budget decisions. Those processes are quite sophisticated but the practical application of the outcome is revealed in the perpetual budget deficit. The college appears to have developed a culture of deficit and the district a culture of rescue. Given these circumstances, the college's effort to strategically plan are mitigated by the constant attention required to meet an annual budget which falls short of fixed costs.

District Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the Chancellor and Board put accountability measures into place to ensure the long-term fiscal stability and financial integrity of the college (IV.B.1.j, IV.B.3).