EVALUATION REPORT

Norco Campus
Riverside Community College District

2001 Third Street
Norco, CA 92860-2600

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Norco Campus on October 19-22, 2009

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Team Chair

Norco Campus
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SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Norco Campus is a public, two-year, associate degree granting institution in southern California. It is part of the Riverside Community College District, comprised of Riverside City College, the Norco Campus and the Moreno Valley Campus. The campus has been in existence since 1991. Norco Campus (along with Moreno Valley Campus) is seeking initial accreditation.

In 2002, the governing board adopted a resolution in support of the transition of the Norco and Moreno Valley Campuses toward college status within a district-wide system. In 2004, the Riverside Community College District submitted a substantive change request to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) seeking to become a three college district. In 2005 Norco was granted eligibility by the ACCJC to proceed with the accreditation process. In 2007 it submitted a full self-study seeking both Candidacy and Initial Accreditation, and a team visit was made to the campus. ACCJC then granted Norco Candidacy for two years, with a report to be submitted by October 2009; the commission did not grant initial accreditation at that time. The campus had the option of seeking an extension of Candidacy for two additional years or proceeding immediately with a self study and seeking initial accreditation once again. Norco chose the latter path and submitted its Self Study Report to the ACCJC in August 2009.

Norco Campus has been growing rapidly in recent years and now serves over 10,000 students at a time or about 6900 full-time equivalent students per year. The campus offers a comprehensive curriculum including transfer disciplines, 17 career technical education programs (6 are Associate of Science degrees and 11 are certificates) certificates, and basic skills instruction. The John F. Kennedy Middle College High School is located at a high school facility on the campus. The high school serves about 700 students, 450 of whom are participating in the Middle College. The Norco Campus also offers an extensive distance education program including courses, and programs which can be completed largely online. A $350 million local bond measure (Measure C) passed in 2004 has allowed the construction and renovation of many facilities across the district. At Norco a new Industrial Technology building has just come into service and a Student Success Center is under construction.

A nine member team visited Norco Campus on October 19-22, 2009. Members of the team were from colleges across the state of California and included two faculty, two college presidents, a former chief business officer, a director of research and planning, a vice president of student services, a vice president of instruction and a team assistant. The team prepared for the visit by means of Team Chair Training and Team Training provided by the ACCJC.

The campus submitted a thorough, candid, clearly written and well documented self study. The team members reviewed the self study closely in advance of the visit, examined the evidence provided in DVD form by the campus, and studied the campus's website. All members of the team were very well prepared and were quite knowledgeable about the campus before arriving for the visit.

The visit began on Monday, October 19, and half of the team members, led by the team chair, spent the morning at the district office meeting with board members and district staff. The Norco Campus team was joined there by the team chairs and members of the visiting teams for Riverside City College and Moreno Valley Campus. The team spent Monday afternoon working together to finalize preparations for the visit.

Both the campus and the district office were very well prepared for the visit. Accommodations for the team at a hotel were comfortable, and an excellent Team Room was made available at the campus. All requests by the team for interviews or documents were addressed promptly and graciously by the campus. The campus employees and students were, in sum, extremely welcoming, and the team's work was greatly facilitated as a result.

All of us on the team conducted a very close study of the campus' Self Study Report and supporting documents, the report of the previous visiting team, audit reports, and the campus' SLO report to the accrediting commission. The campus provided an excellent array of supporting evidence online, on a CD which was mailed to all team members, in the Team Room at the college and then campus staff brought the Team a number of additional documents upon request.

The team conducted on-campus interviews with individuals and groups, including dozens of campus staff, dozens of students, many district staff and three members of the Board of Trustees. Everyone was extremely generous with their time for interviews with members of the team. The team visited over 50 classes, reviewed the campus' distance education courses and services; looked at the facilities, and visited the JFK Middle College High School. We also conducted two Open Forums at which any member of the campus community could meet with the team and dozens of people joined us for those.

Commendations for the campus

The team would like to recognize the outstanding work of the campus and the district with the following commendations.

- The team commends the campus for their collaborative work with the district in order to move to the three college model and for its role in the smooth transition. The campus and the district have taken a deliberate and thoughtful approach to the decentralization process, seeking to establish the appropriate level of autonomy for the campus while at the same time capitalizing upon the economies of scale that can be achieved through appropriate centralization and district wide coordination of some functions. The campus, in concert with the district, is doing a good job of decentralizing functions at the same time as they are integrating processes.
- The team commends the Norco Campus for nurturing a culture of collegial open dialogue throughout the institution. The campus has a strong sense of community, a positive focus on student success, and a healthy trust in the participatory governance process.
- The team commends the campus for the strong partnership with the Corona-Norco Unified School District in the creation of the JFK Middle College High School.

There is excellent communication between the Norco and JFK staff members and the high school students move seamlessly into college classes receiving outstanding support services to help them be successful.

- The team commends the campus for establishing ongoing assessment and improvement processes. Creation of the Associate Dean of Student Success position provides strong evidence of the Campus commitment to multilevel assessment of SLOs throughout instructional and non-instructional areas and to incorporation of SLOs into annual program reviews. The team commends the campus for their impressive progress in relation to student learning outcomes, embedding them in their program review and resource allocation processes. Norco is well down the road to fully meeting the Proficiency level of the ACCJC rubric relative to SLOs by 2012. The campus has profited from starting early in the process over five years ago.
- The Norco Campus has successfully linked program review with resource allocation and produced an effective model in a relatively short period of time.
- The team acknowledges the work of the campus to develop and implement new governance structures that appear to be effective and comprehensible and that will ensure that Norco is able to function as an independent college that focuses on student learning. The new structures provide for inclusion of all constituents.

Recommendations for the campus

Based upon the team's examination of the campus and the district in relation to the standards, the team offers the following recommendations.

- **Recommendation 1:** In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends the campus establish and document a policy for the regular evaluation of its integrated institutional planning, budgeting and decision-making processes and that the results be widely disseminated and used to improved the processes. (I.B.3, 6, 7; III.B; IV.B.3.g)
- **Recommendation 2:** In order to comply with the ACCJC Distance Education policy, for all programs, certificates or degrees where 50 percent or more of the requirements are delivered via distance learning and may be completed at the Norco campus, the team recommends submission of a substantive change proposal. (IIA.1b,d, II.B.1,II.B.2a, II.C.1, IIC.2.c)
- **Recommendation 3:** In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the campus validate all departmental examinations for their effectiveness in measuring student learning and to ensure that they minimize test bias (II.A.2.g)

INTRODUCTION

Norco Campus is a public, two-year, associate degree granting institution in southern California. It is part of the Riverside Community College District, comprised of Riverside City College, the Norco Campus and the Moreno Valley Campus. The campus has been in existence since 1991. Norco Campus (along with Moreno Valley Campus) is seeking initial accreditation.

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RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PREVIOUS EVALUATION TEAM

Campus Recommendations

Campus Recommendation 1: The team recommends that the campus prepare for greater procedural and operational authority as an independent college. This should be demonstrated in several key aspects of student learning programs and services, leadership, and governance. These include preparation for full authority of on-site administration, the development and approval of curriculum, and the process of planning and allocation. (Standards I.B, II.A, II.B, IV.A)

Findings and Evidence: The campus now has significant procedural and operational authority. Student support services have been decentralized and there is an Associate Dean of Student Success located on the campus and reporting to the Vice President at Norco. The job description for the president has been revised to reflect the new autonomy of the institution. Facilities maintenance is now located at the campus with an on site supervisor who reports to the Vice President for Business Services. The governance structures have been revised to support the campus' autonomy and include the Norco Academic Senate, the Norco Strategic Planning Committee, the Norco Academic Planning Council, the Norco Student Services Planning Council, the Norco Administrative Planning Council, and a Norco Curriculum Committee responsible for curriculum offered uniquely at Norco. The Norco Strategic Planning Committee includes four committees which are designed to mirror the ACCJC's four major standards: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness, Student Learning Programs and Services, Resources, and Leadership and Governance. The Resources Committee has the following charge, the utilization of which was validated by the visiting team: "The Resources Subcommittee ensures the systematic evaluation of campus-based strategic initiatives with regard to their financial, physical, human and technological resource implications, and also interfaces with District-level units and personnel for ongoing continuity between District policies and those of the Norco campus."

Conclusion: The campus has met this recommendation.

Campus Recommendation 2: The team recognizes that significant progress has occurred with Student Learning Outcomes. However the team recommends that the efforts be accelerated to expand recurrent cycles of authentic assessment and campus-wide dialogue on results. (Standards I.B, II.A, II.B)

Findings and Evidence: Norco Campus hired an Associate Dean of Student Success responsible for leadership of the campus' work on student learning outcomes, an approach which has resulted in admirable progress on this work. With regard to identification, assessment, and use of assessment results to improve student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees, Norco has done a great deal. Norco identified and assessed course level SLOs in 94 percent of sections by spring 2009. Additionally, in spring 2009, Norco used results for improvements in 73 percent of courses assessed in fall 2008. All support services develop student learning outcomes (SLOs) and/or service area

outcomes (SAOs) and these are updated annually. The Student Services Program Review documents outline the mission, philosophy, staffing, objectives, SLOs, and SAOs for each area. The Student Services Division promotes institutional effectiveness with processes for program review and SLO implementation that parallel those for the instructional services at the program level. The District and Norco have developed general education SLOs and the Norco course-based outcomes align to these general SLOs. Identification of outcomes for six areas of emphasis is complete and implementation of the outcomes has begun. Norco clearly meets the ACCJC rubric relative to SLOs at the Development level and demonstrates many elements of the Proficiency level. They appear to be on track for meeting the Proficiency level by 2012.

Conclusion: The campus has met this recommendation.

Campus Recommendation 3: The team recommends that strategic planning include the total cost of ownership for allocations such as staffing, professional development, technology, and planning for all new facilities and capital projects, including long range planning. (Standards III.A.2, 6; III.B.2.a; III.C.1.b, d; III.C.2; III.D.1.a-d, 3)

Findings and Evidence: Commencing with annual program reviews and working through local and district based strategic planning processes, the Norco campus develops planning and allocation priorities in support of Long-Range Educational and Facilities Master Plans and district strategic initiatives. Further, the Budget Allocation Model (BAM) provides resources for specific programmatic needs including the total cost of ownership of new programs, facilities and technological advances. Evidence validates the assertion that resource allocation prioritization and decisions are campus based, inclusive, comprehensive, and driven by departmental/discipline priorities as reflected in the program review process.

The integrated institutional planning process reflects realistic district and campus assessments of available financial resources. The district and its component campuses engage in a continuous, sophisticated and comprehensive financial analysis of economic conditions and anticipated resource availability. This reasoned forward projecting analysis is coupled with an annual Mid-Range Financial Planning model for human, physical and technological resources inclusive of total-cost-ownership (TCO) obligations and provided to the Norco president and the Norco Strategic Planning Committee to inform local decision-making processes. Hence decisions in support of instructional and student support programs are better informed and well reasoned.

Conclusion: The campus has met this recommendation.

District Recommendations

District Recommendation 1: The teams recommend that the board of trustees and chancellor develop and implement a district strategic plan that will:
- **Align with the district mission statement (Standards IA.1 and IIID.1);**
- **Provide a framework for the college's/campuses' strategic plans (Standard IB.4); and**

- **Drive the allocation of district resources for the college, campuses, and district office (Standard IIID.1; Eligibility Requirement 19). The need to connect budget and planning remains unfulfilled from the 2001 accrediting recommendations.**

Observations and Analysis of Evidence: Riverside Community College District developed a four-year Strategic Plan 2008-2012 that was approved by the Board of Trustees on October 21, 2008. The plan includes a revised mission statement, statements of vision and values, and six strategic themes. Further reading of the themes indicates that they are aligned with the district's mission.

The overarching themes, together with the 32 strategies, and more than 50 outcomes in the plan, provide a framework for the plans of the college/campuses. The planning documents at Norco and Moreno Valley campuses indicate that their plans are aligned with those of the district. Riverside City College does not have a completed strategic plan, but instead has been using annual strategic initiatives; therefore, the alignment could not be ascertained at the time of the visit.

In September 2009, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at the District prepared a report card highlighting the progress made by the district and its three educational entities relative to each of the 32 strategies. The 2008-09 Report Card is the first comprehensive report on outcomes related to the District strategic plan. The report card includes quantitative data, analysis and commentaries related to the outcomes and accomplishments at the district, and the college/campuses. This innovative approach clearly illustrates the interconnectedness and the alignment of strategic planning at Riverside Community College District and its college/campuses.

Interviews (October 19, 2009) with more than 50 persons from various groups representing the Board of Trustees, Chancellor's Executive Cabinet, District Accreditation Team, District Budget Advisory Council, District Strategic Planning Committee, and other members of the college community indicate that there is a well- established process for integration of planning and resource allocation at the district and the college/campuses. Furthermore, examination of the minutes of meetings of the District Budget Advisory Council and the District Strategic Planning Committee indicates that integration of strategic planning and resource allocation is a systematic, ongoing, and dynamic process that involves extensive dialogue among all constituents of the district and college/campuses. The process is evolving and being modified as circumstances dictate. The extensive effort that has taken place since 2007 in establishing a budget allocation model shows a high level of dedication, commitment, and buy-in on the part of the district and college community.

Program review, the centerpiece of integrated planning and resource allocation at Riverside Community College District, includes five sets of reviews: comprehensive instructional program review, annual instructional program review, student services program review, college administrative unit program review, and district administrative program review.

Each one of the program review templates includes a section on the resources needed to

carryout the goals and action plans of the respective units. Requests for resources (human, facilities, technology, etc.) in the program review are compiled and prioritized based on agreed upon criteria established by the District Strategic Planning Committee. The prioritization report is submitted to the Chancellor for approval. In effect, college/campus and district strategic planning processes link program reviews to the allocation of resources. However, it is suggested that program reviews focus more on programmatic improvements and less on becoming a vehicle for annual request for resources.

Conclusion: The district has partially implemented the recommendation. The district has plans that are based on its mission and are linked to the planning processes at two campuses. The program review process is robust and results in evaluating units and programs at the district and at the colleges as well. This process has been evaluated for further improvement. Integration of program review, planning, and resource allocation is taking place and has resulted in a healthy dialogue that permeates the entire organization.   Since the two campuses at Norco and Moreno Valley have strategic plans in place as of October 20, 2009, while Riverside City College has an incomplete strategic planning document, full linkage could not be established.

District Recommendation 2: The teams recommend that the district and college/campuses develop, implement, and assess a resource allocation model that
- **Is open, transparent, and inclusive (Standards IB and IVB.3c);**
- **Is widely disseminated and reviewed periodically for effectiveness (Standards IIID.2b and IIID.3);**
- **Is linked to the strategic plans at the district, college, and campus levels (Standards IA.1, IIID.1a-d, and IVB.3c).**

Observations and Analysis of Evidence: The District provided an effective summary response concerning the activities and processes engaged in during the development and implementation of the new budget allocation model (BAM). The model is aligned with the strategic planning processes at both the District and college/campus levels. By integrating the budget allocation with the strategic planning processes (including program review); the resource allocation model also reflects the initial decentralization of the decision- making authority from the District to the local campuses. As an example, the District reduced the amount of the unrestricted funds to the District offices (from 30% in 2007-08 to 20% in 2008-09) reflective of organizational adjustments necessary to establish the Norco and Moreno Valley campuses as separate colleges on par with Riverside City College. Both the 2008-09 and 2009-10 district budgets provide sufficient evidence that the Budget Allocation Model has been utilized in resource decision making.

The Budget Allocation Model was implemented in 2008 on a district-wide basis and reflected in the final 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets. Development and implementation evidence is provided within the minutes of the District and three campuses Strategic Planning Committee minutes, the District Budget Allocation Council minutes, the Riverside Community College District Function Map and Exhibit G of the 2008-09 and 2009-10 Riverside Community College District Budgets.

For a local college/campus, the budget allocation process now begins at the college level while working within district guidelines. Through local program review, strategic planning and campus administrative review, program planning and budgeting priorities are established and shared with the district for inclusion in the next budget cycle. Local and district needs are discussed and reviewed within the participatory governance process through the three campus Strategic Planning Committees, the District Strategic Planning Committee and District Budget Advisory Council. Individual campus allocation priorities are reflected in the budget and it is left to the campus to implement and effectuate fiscal year priorities. New programs and initiatives are funded under the line item, "New District/College Programs/Initiatives" of the Budget Allocation Model. This is true even within a period of burgeoning financial crisis (2008-09) and greatly decreasing resource availability (2009-10).

A major feature of the board adopted 2008-12 Riverside Community College District Strategic Plan was the adoption of a number of over-arching strategic themes. Strategic Themes Four (System Effectiveness) and Five (Financial Resource Development) are directly and indirectly linked to the development of the Budget Allocation Model. System Effectiveness strategies two and three directly address the linking of program planning and budgeting via the establishment of procedures and processes that "…enhance and institutionalize operational and strategic planning processes that are deliberative, systematic, and data driven; complement the District and campus strategic and master plans; and effectively prioritize new and ongoing resource needs." and, "…Institutionalize a budget allocation model that is data driven and informed by planning priorities." The District has taken this to heart and developed an open, inclusive and widely disseminated budget planning process.

The new budget allocation model is complete, historically developed and based upon clear evidence. That evidence indicates that considerable thought was given to the continuous development of the new budget allocation model at the District and local campus levels. District and campus documents (including function maps, minutes of strategic planning and budget allocation committees) as well as the 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets, helped identify and refine the individual college/campus's allocations.

Conclusion: The District with Norco, Moreno Valley and Riverside City participation has implemented this recommendation.

It is apparent and documented that the new model was utilized in the 2008-09 and 2009-10 budget development processes. Despite the massive state funding crisis, the District will want to provide more evaluative information as to how well the model has worked. This commitment to do so is stated in its Outcome Measure 3 for System Effectiveness Strategies: "…Degree to which the criteria set forth in the budget model are achieved."

District Recommendation 3: The teams recommend that college, campus, and district administrators and faculty delineate, document, and assess:
- **The roles and responsibilities between and among the district's entities (Standard IVB.3; Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems);**

- **The roles and scope of authority of the CEOs at the district and college/campus levels (Standard IVA.2);**
- **A feedback loop between and among the entities on key issues, such as planning, staffing priorities, etc. (Standards IVA.2, IVB.3, IVB.4, and IVB.6).**

Observations and Analysis of Evidence: The district and the college/campuses and divisions within them have organizational charts that delineate the areas of responsibility for positions. The team confirmed that each position has a job description that has been recently reviewed. Administrators from the district and the college/campuses have developed a "function map" that provides in detail the distribution of responsibilities between and among the colleges and the district. Primary, secondary, and shared responsibilities for functions and operations are clearly identified. It was noted in several interviews with district administrators that functions, responsibilities, and positions may be relocated and/or reorganized as the district prepares for becoming a three-college district. The district has purchased a building not located on any campus that currently houses most district administration personnel and related operations and functions. Plans are underway to bring remaining district personnel functions to this location.

The roles and scope of authority of the college presidents and district chancellor have been assessed and delineated. The position descriptions for the college presidents and district chancellor were revised before national searches were conducted. The president position for Riverside City College and the district chancellor position were filled in 2009. Board Policies 6100 and 2430 along with Administrative Procedure 6100 provide for the delegation of authority to the district chancellor and college presidents.

Committees, teams, and structures have been implemented that facilitate feedback between and among the college/campuses and the district for key issues, initiatives, resource allocation, etc. Membership and purpose of district wide committees are documented and undergo annual updates. District-wide committees exist for curriculum, assessment, budget, and program review. The team reviewed minutes of meetings and program review reports that documented communication (feedback) between and among the district and the college/campuses. The team also found evidence that the results of assessments and program reviews have led to staffing changes and decisions about resource allocation.

Conclusion: The district has fully addressed this recommendation.

District Recommendation 4:   The teams recommend that the district clearly specify personnel selection procedures for district administrators including the position of chancellor. These selection processes must include input from the various college/campuses constituent groups (Standard IIIA.1, Standard IIIA.3, and IVB.1).

Observations and Analysis of Evidence: The District has adopted Administrative Procedures (APs) which specify the selection and hiring criteria for all district and college employees. All administrative procedures go through a shared governance process before adoption and implementation.

AP 2431 specifies the chancellor selection. The current AP 2431 reflects the process that was used to select the current chancellor during 2008-09. The district experienced three separate searches before the chancellor was selected. AP 7121 specifies the president recruitment and hiring and includes the selection process. The current AP 7121 was used to select the Moreno Valley and Riverside City presidents during 2008-09. AP 7120 specifies the processes for all other employees. Team interviews confirmed that constituent groups input was included in all searches. In fact, the Board of Trustees modified AP 2431 to be more inclusive of constituents in the chancellor's search process after the first process did not yield a new chancellor. All the hiring procedures are now revised to reflect the new structure of a multi-college district.

The Board of Trustees had previously adopted BP 3420: *Nondiscrimination* to honor its commitment to equal opportunity in education programs, employment and access to institutional programs and activities. In addition, the board adopted a formal process for the periodic review and assessment of all Board Policies/Administrative Procedures (AP 2410).

Conclusion: The district has implemented this recommendation.

District Recommendation 5: As recommended by the 2001 accreditation visiting team, the teams recommend that the Board of Trustees implement its recently approved process for self-evaluation (Standard IVB.1g)

Observations and Analysis of Evidence: In April-July 2008, the Board of Trustees held a consultant guided discussion on board evaluation, the assessment tools, the linkages between strategic themes and initiatives, and the relationship of board and chancellor goals based upon board self-assessment. Board Policy 2745 outlines the general process for assessment but does not specify any one instrument or tool (other than discussion and dialogue) that will be used consistently by the board. The policy outlines four key principles for Board Effectiveness to meet its fiduciary responsibilities and specifies that the self-evaluative dialogue will be structured around seven dimensions of Board Effectiveness. The BP 2745 states: "More formal measurement tools may be incorporated into the process over time."

Each board member completed an anonymous self-assessment instrument in May 2009. The results of the assessment were the basis for discussions held at a special board meeting in May 2009 on board effectiveness. At the June 2009 meeting, the board reported plans and actions based on the results of its self-assessment. The critical difference between the 2008 and 2009 process was in 2009 the board reported to the public the assessment results with its planned actions. The board members interviewed provided the team with examples of how the functioning of the board has improved as the result of the last two assessments.

Board Policy 2745 states, "…It is anticipated that the board will calendar discussions regarding a specific set of the dimensions each year. In keeping with these principles the Board of Trustees establishes a continuous self assessment process to both consider its effectiveness and model its commitment to continuous improvement, and said process will be conducted no less than annually." As a future action plan, the team confirmed that the board of Trustees plans to do a self-evaluation annually in May and report on the results, plans, and

actions in June in an open session.

Conclusion: The Board of Trustees has fully implemented the recommendation. However, the team suggests a revision in board policy stating the specific annual timelines to ensure sustainability of the new process.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Norco Campus meets the ACCJC Eligibility Requirements.

1. AUTHORITY

Norco Campus is a public, two year institution authorized by the state of California and the Riverside Community College District governing board.

2. MISSION

The campus mission is appropriate to the constituency and defines the institutional commitment to student learning. It is reviewed regularly and adopted by the governing board, most recently in 2008.

3. GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board is an independent policy making body and carries out the responsibilities required as evidenced by board policy and interviews of board members.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The president's full-time commitment to the campus is established in the newly revised job description and she does not serve on the governing board.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

The campus has sufficient and appropriate administrative staffing as evidenced by its table of organization and the job descriptions of the administrators.

6. OPERATIONAL STATUS

The campus has been continuously operational since 1991.

7. DEGREES

A substantial portion of the campus's offerings are in programs that lead to degrees. The majority of the students are enrolled in those programs.

8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The campus's programs are aligned with its mission and quality is assured through program review, faculty evaluation and curriculum content review. Most degree programs are two years in length.

9. ACADEMIC CREDIT

Academic credit is awarded in semester units, based upon standards established in the state of California's title 5 regulations and generally accepted standards. Units and hours are identified in the campus catalog.

10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

The mission of the campus includes seven institutional student learning outcomes for students completing degrees. Substantial work has been completed in establishing and assessing SLOs for programs and courses and using the results for improvement. Identification of outcomes for six areas of emphasis is complete and implementation of the outcomes has begun. Norco clearly meets the ACCJC rubric for development level and demonstrates many elements of the proficiency level. They appear to be on track for meeting the proficiency level by 2012.

11. GENERAL EDUCATION

The campus catalog identifies the general education requirements which must be met for the degree. The level of quality and rigor are appropriate to higher education. Many courses are articulated with the University of California, the California State University and other accredited four year institutions.

12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The district has a board policy 4030 on academic freedom which is upheld at the campus.

13. FACULTY

The campus has about 75 full time faculty who are qualified according to the minimum qualifications established through the state's title 5 regulations. Although a larger number of full-time faculty is seen as desirable, the current number is sufficient in size and experience to support the campus's programs.

14. STUDENT SERVICES

The campus offers a wide array of student services and assesses student support needs using both Student Learning Outcomes and Service Area Outcomes.

15. ADMISSIONS

Admissions policy and practice are consistent with the campus's mission and the state of California's establishment of the community colleges as open access institutions.

16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The campus provides onsite and remote access to sufficient information and learning resources.

17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The campus and district resources and plans are sufficient to support the institution and to ensure fiscal stability even during the current fiscal challenges in the state of California.

18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The district undergoes regular audits. It has submitted all required documentation to the ACCJC. Its fiscal standing is sound based on the ACCJC checklist.

19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The campus has documented that it is at the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement level in its planning and evaluation efforts.

20. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The campus meets standards relative to public information in all regards.

21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The campus has maintained good relations with the commission.

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A. Mission

General Observations

The Norco Campus has been working toward accreditation status as an independent college since 2002 when the RCCD Board of Trustees resolved to support the move of the Norco and Moreno Valley campuses toward college status. The Norco Campus community has demonstrated exceptional commitment to this goal. To that end, the campus recently revised its mission statement, which serves as the foundation for key planning processes such as strategic planning and program review.

Findings and Evidence

Norco's revised mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees on December 9, 2008 following an inclusive and participatory review process as evidenced by minutes of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee. The recently revised mission statement defines the campus' broad educational purposes, including higher, career/technical, and continuing education, workforce development, and personal enrichment with emphasis on the development of technological programs. The statement defines the campus' intended population as the diverse community it serves. The statement articulates Norco's commitment to "engaging in self-examination, learning outcomes assessment, ongoing dialogue, planning and improvement." (I.A.1, I.A.2, I.A.3)

The mission statement is published in the Norco Campus section of the schedule of classes, in the Norco Campus catalog, in the Norco Educational Master Plan, and on the campus website. It is prominently posted in campus buildings. Surveys conducted in fall 2008 indicated a high level of awareness of the mission statement among faculty and staff. The campus has a process for the implementation of its strategic plan, which is the mechanism for subsequent review and revision of the mission statement. Minutes show that annual review is conducted by the Institutional Effectiveness subcommittee of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee at its first meeting of the academic year. (I.A.3)

The Norco mission statement is among key planning statements that are the foundation of the RCCD Norco Campus Educational Master Plan. According to the educational master plan, "the Mission expresses what the Campus is; what it does; who it serves; and how it is unique, relative to other institutions."   Comprehensive program review forms for instruction, student services and administrative units require programs and services to link their assessments and evaluations to the mission statement. The master plan and program review are the foundations of the implementation of the Norco strategic planning implementation process, thus ensuring that planning and decision-making are related to the campus' stated mission. The fall 2008 accreditation survey showed that a majority of full- and part-time faculty and classified staff agreed that the mission statement guides the campus' institutional planning. (I.A.4)

Conclusions

The standard is met. The campus has made excellent progress in its efforts to review and revise its mission statement, as well as develop core commitments and a vision statement. It has established effective means for disseminating these statements and incorporating them into decision-making processes to ensure that decisions reflect its educational purposes, its intended student population and its commitment to overall institutional effectiveness and student learning.

Recommendations

None.

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations

Norco's culture supports extensive planning, dialogue and continuous improvement at all levels. Faculty and staff engage in ongoing formal and informal dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning outcomes and institutional processes around these assessments. Norco has established a central function and support for assessment of student learning through the new position of Associate Dean of Student Success. Instructional and administrative units assess learning and/or effectiveness through outcomes assessment. Results are published in annual assessment plans and contain plans for improvement tied to results. All reviews and requests for resources (personnel and equipment) are ranked at the unit level (discipline/administrative function), then peer reviewed and ranked by campus planning committees based on agreed upon criteria, including an SLO rubric established by the District Assessment Committee. The ranking criteria are rubric is evaluated annually and adjusted in response to feedback from constituents.

Findings and Evidence

Norco maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. The campus structures this dialogue through a number of campus entities that include participatory governance committees including the Academic Senate, Norco Academic Planning Council, Norco Strategic Planning Committee, and student services departments. Dialogue topics include: (a) review of information from district planning offices, program reviews, and campus departments; (b) assessment of the Norco Educational Master plan; and (c) improvement recommendations to campus-based programs and services based on input from Strategic Planning subcommittees. The campus uses its Educational Master Plan with the planning committees and program review process to focus its efforts on improvement through goals that are designed to improve student learning. The district strategic plan is a tool to guide the efforts and share information with the college community. The campus engages in dialogue about student learning as evidenced by discipline specific meetings, Academic Council Meeting Minutes, District Assessment Committee Meeting Minutes, and Strategic Planning

Committee Meeting Minutes. Interviews with faculty, staff and administrators confirmed an understanding of the value of these discussions and how they are reflected in course and program improvements. (I.B.1) Priorities stem from the scoring rubric which links to the campus mission statement and assessment activities for student learning and/or service outcomes. At the campus, department, and discipline levels, goals and processes for achievement and assessment of student learning outcomes are set through the program review process for instructional and non-instructional units. The annual program review updates provide information on staffing, facilities, and program needs. The program review process is the primary means of achieving an ongoing systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. (I.B.2)

The Norco campus engages in systematic and cyclic reviews of its assessment, planning and budgeting processes as evidenced by District Assessment Committee minutes, Academic Senate minutes, Program Review documents, and discipline meetings. In discussions with faculty, staff and administrators on the campus, it is clear that analyzing the process occurs regularly and at several stages during the assessment cycle. Norco program review for instructional and administrative units connects to the campus mission statement. Student learning outcomes assessment at the course and program level is embedded in instructional program review and planning demonstrated in the Comprehensive and Annual Program Review documents. Course assessments occur each semester and the campus respects faculty autonomy while encouraging dialogue among faculty. Data generated through the review process drives decisions concerning changes to curriculum, instructional methods, resource allocations, service delivery and the planning and assessment processes. Norco assures the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes through review by employee constituents via the annual program review updates and planning council meetings. (I.B.3, I.B.6)

The Norco campus has greatly enhanced its research capacity with the addition of the position of Associate Dean of Student Success. This position oversees campus-based research with special focus on student learning assessment. The district supports all other types of research functions and report requirements. There is a collaborative and collegial relationship between the district and campus research offices, but the team noted that there is no formal means of communicating research activities among the campuses and between the campuses and the district. The team suggests that the district and campuses work together to develop and implement a means of more systematically encouraging the researchers to exchange information that could result in enhanced research outcomes and prevent unnecessary duplication of effort. (I.B.3)

Participation in the planning process is broad-based including representation from all constituents of the campus. Committees involved in planning and review of results include the District Assessment Committee, Norco Assessment Committee, Norco Strategic Planning Committee and its four committees (designed to mirror the ACCJC's four major standards: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness, Student Learning Programs and Services, Resources, and Leadership and Governance), Norco Planning Councils, and Associated Students meetings. The faculty contract stipulates participation in at least one committee while most faculty participate in two or more as evidenced by faculty committee assignments listed on

the website. Process and prioritization flow charts have been created by the campus. The structure is broad-based and allows for participation of interested parties. Based on allocation flow charts and prioritization models, distribution of resources is applied according to need and tied to mission and outcomes. To integrate dialogue about student learning outcomes, the Academic Senate established a Curriculum Committee, which became active in spring 2008 in communicating between the Academic Senate and district-level Curriculum Committee. The Academic Senate also provides representation to the district Program Review and Assessment Committees, both of which engage in dialogue about student learning and institutional processes. (I.B.4)

Norco produces numerous documents communicating assessment results at the service area, program and course level. These results articulate into planning and budget allocation. The campus uses its planning committees and structure to address and disseminate information about improvement. Program review is a central component of this process. Shared governance structures are vital components in the dialogue and dissemination of information. Results of data collection and analysis are posted to the Institutional Data and Research website. Program review results are available and used in planning and resource allocation. Norco communicates matters of state and federally mandated quality assurance through the district Institutional Research and Reporting offices, and receives institutional data for program review and other purposes from the district Institutional Research Office. Institutional data relevant to student achievement and progress through educational programs include persistence, retention, grades, awards (degrees and certificates) as well as graduation and transfer rates. The Norco Campus Fact Book 2009 provides district wide comparative data as well as overall district summaries. (I.B.5)

The Norco Strategic Planning Committee assures the effectiveness of ongoing planning and resource allocation processes through review of the Norco Educational Master Plan, the Norco Facilities Master Plan and resource allocation needs of all programs and services via annual program review updates. Additionally the Norco Strategic Planning Committee is responsible for reviewing facilities and other campus projects. Initially, informal discussion led to changes in the assessment processes which later evolved to a more formalized process through the use of a survey. During its first year, the Committee established nine subcommittees, each with administrative and faculty co-chairs. During discussion about the effectiveness of this structure, the Committee reduced the number of subcommittees to four. While evaluation of planning and assessment processes exists and is woven into the fabric of these processes, it would be helpful to articulate this evaluative phase explicitly in strategic planning and assessment process documents. (I.B.6)

In spring 2008, the Norco Strategic Planning Committee Institutional Mission and Effectiveness Subcommittee evaluated the effectiveness of the four processes for linking planning, program review, and resource allocation, as well as the extent of faculty and staff participation in these processes. Responses to 68 completed surveys indicated a high level of faculty and staff awareness of and participation in the Norco Strategic Planning Committee processes, as well as satisfaction with administrators' consideration of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee resource prioritizations. Results indicated a belief in the effectiveness of resource allocation based on program review documentation and that this process meets

program needs. (I.B.6)

Embedded within the program/unit reviews is an evaluation of the assessment process. The district and campuses use a Budget Allocation Model that is updated annually and intended to be a flexible, transparent process evidenced through meeting minutes of the Strategic Planning Councils and District Assessment Committee minutes. Workshops on developing and assessing SLOs have provided a venue for informal self-reflective dialogue and raised awareness of the value of assessment in improving student learning. The district Institutional Effectiveness office and campus faculty coordinator in conjunction with the district Assessment Committee and Institutional Research office sponsored the workshops. Norco's Office of Student Success coordinates campus-based assessment cycles in instructional disciplines, the library and student service programs. (I.B.7)

Conclusions

The Norco Campus meets the standard. The mission statement is central to the assessment of student learning and service outcomes assessment and to campus planning and allocation of resources. Faculty, staff, students and administrators articulate the connections and express satisfaction in the transparency of the process. The campus is invested in reviewing its mission and processes as well as integrating assessment and dialogue into its core activities.

The campus is committed to dialogue and broad-based dissemination of assessment results linked to planning and budget that improve institutional effectiveness. Both full and part-time faculty as well as students, staff and administrators participate in dialogue. Ongoing, systematic evaluation of its processes exists and is embedded throughout the process but is implicit. It would be helpful to state this function explicitly as part of the assessment and planning processes.

Recommendations

> **Recommendation 1:** In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends the campus establish and document a policy for the regular evaluation of its integrated institutional planning, budgeting and decision-making processes and that the results be widely disseminated and used to improved the processes. (I.B.3, 6, 7; III.B; IV.B.3.g)

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services

A. Instructional Programs

General Observations

Norco has developed a wide variety of instructional programs, consistent with its mission, to serve its diverse student body as well as address community employer needs. It meets the educational needs of its students through traditional and less traditional means including online, and learning communities and by offering courses at off-campus locations. Norco has a strong partnership with Corona-Norco Unified School District in the creation of the JFK Middle College High School. The Norco and JFK staff members support a seamless transition from high school to college.

The campus uses procedures and data from several sources including the district Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research offices to identify learning needs of its students and assess progress in developing and meeting student learning outcomes through its program review process.

Findings and Evidence

Norco has developed instructional programs that address needs of students in its service area through examination of data from environmental scans, Office of Economic Development Publications, and basic student demographics. Student needs are identified through the integrated program review process which includes student enrollment information, success and retention data, as well as assessment details from student learning outcomes from courses and programs. Establishment of a Norco Office of Student Success headed by an Associate Dean provides campus coordination of measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. Norco publishes information about courses, degrees and certificates as well as learning outcomes in the Norco Campus 2009-2010 Catalog, schedule of classes and on the website. (II.A.1, II.A.1.a)

There are five main components in the annual program review process. The process provides a tool for evaluating effectiveness in improving/supporting student learning. It includes review of relevant program level data. There is a campus-specific plan for assessing course SLOs and using results to plan improvement. There is campus wide dialogue on SLOs, data interpretation, and assessments in relationship to student learning. Program review also includes review and revision of course outlines with development or review of course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs). The assessment of student learning is evident through the extensive work performed by the Office of Student Success. (II.A.1.a)

In addition to the program review process, Norco uses plans and research to assess instructional programs for currency, teaching and learning strategies, and learning outcomes. These include the Norco Educational Master Plan and District Matriculation Plan. The Community College Student Effectiveness Questionnaire is utilized to learn about students'

satisfaction on several campus services and provide some indirect measures of whether students are meeting stated general education SLOs. Additionally, Norco reports using the Open Campus online course student surveys to ensure that distance-learning courses meet the needs of students. (II.A.1.a)

A review of the courses offered online indicated that students are able to earn a certificate or degree by taking 50 percent or more of their courses online. Further examination identified the possibility that for General Education course requirements (28 units), a student could earn 22 units online. Other examples include the Business Administration certificate of 18 units that can be taken entirely online and the AS degree with a Real Estate concentration. The Norco Self Study Report reported that 50 percent or more of 25 certificates (including both Norco's and others in the district) and at least one A.S. degree are available online. The Accrediting Commission, district and campus staff confirmed that a Substantive Change Request had not been submitted to the Commission for the distance education offerings. This is required by the ACCJC Policy on Distance Education. (II.A.1.b.)

There is evidence demonstrated through the online course management system, CurricuNet, that there is extensive faculty involvement with curriculum design, identification of student learning outcomes, and course evaluation. The design and identification of learning outcomes for programs and courses is undertaken by discipline faculty in the process of curriculum review and as part of the instructional program review. Faculty are carefully hired and well-suited to teach the wide variety of courses and programs that the college offers. (II.A.1.c, IIA.2.b, II.A.2.c)

Norco demonstrates its commitment to making education available and accessible to all of its students by offering a variety of instructional modalities. Traditional classes include a variety of media-based enhancements, modes of delivery, pedagogical approaches, and instructional methods and techniques. Distance education formats include web-enhanced, hybrid and online courses, recorded audio-video lectures and Power-Point presentations, real-time online lectures, virtual office hours, review sessions via CCCConfer, and podcast lectures and presentations. There is a pilot project using e-portfolios. In addition, individualized instruction is available through Tutorial Services, Computer lab, Math lab, Writing and Reading Center, Foreign Language lab, and Disabled Student Services and labs. II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d)

With regard to identification, assessment, and use of assessment results to improve student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees, Norco has done a great deal. Norco identified and assessed course level SLOs in 94 percent of sections by spring 2009. Additionally, in spring 2009, Norco used results for improvements in 73% of courses that had been assessed in fall 2008. (II.A.1.c, II.A.2. e, II.A.2.f)

There are 17 programs (6 A.S. Degrees, 11 Certificates) in career and technical education that are unique to the Norco campus in the district. Program level outcomes are identified for all 17 programs, and 3 of 17 programs (18 percent) assessed SLOs in spring 2009. The Office of Student Success, headed by an Associate Dean, supports the Norco ongoing faculty work with district program review, student learning assessment, and curriculum committees. This support has resulted in the promulgation of expanded assessment, program review, and

SLOs-based activities on campus. (II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e,f)

Norco assures quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs through established procedures for designing and evaluating courses and programs that are faculty driven. Quality and improvement of courses depends on faculty collaboration within their discipline throughout the district as well as coordination with campus and district curriculum committees, district program review and assessment committees, campus and district Academic Senate, and designated campus and district educational administrators. As verified through college documents, Norco achieved identification and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level for 73 percent of courses for fall 2008 and 94 percent of courses during spring 2009. Norco clearly meets the ACCJC rubric for development level and demonstrates many elements of the proficiency level. They appear to be on track for meeting the Proficiency level of the ACCJC rubric relative to SLOs by 2012.

Besides assisting on various district and local committees responsible for monitoring the quality and rigor of general education courses and transfer degrees, the campus also promotes career/technical education programs under the guidance of faculty experts and industry advisory groups. A major topic at advisory meetings concerns the extent to which the curriculum meets the workforce needs of the respective industries. The district's Institutional Research Office is working with campus-based career/technical education administrators to develop an instrument to measure employers' perceptions of occupational students and graduates, and results will inform program changes and improvements. (II.A.2.a-c, II.A.5)

Norco uses department examinations in English as a Second Language (ESL), Spanish and Reading. In fall 2007, Matriculation and Institutional Research conducted a consequential validity study for revised Reading placement scores to validate appropriateness of placement from student and faculty perspectives. Both ESL and Spanish instructors have developed common final exams. Biology faculty district wide are developing a common exam which links with SLOs. According to the ACCJC standards, all departmental examinations must be validated for their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizing test biases. Thus all departmental faculty utilizing or planning to utilize common exams should ensure completion of test validation. (II.A.2.g)

Norco awards credit for courses based on student achievement of the course's stated outcomes, adhering to regulations and standards of title 5 and the State Chancellor's Office. Additionally Norco adheres to standards established by the district and campus academic senates and any articulation agreements with other community colleges and institutions to which students transfer. Evaluation of students is for mastery of SLOs and achievement of them is the basis for awarded credit, certificates and degrees is achievement of stated learning outcomes. II.A.2.h, II.A.2.i)

The district and Norco have developed general education SLOs and the Norco course-based outcomes align to these general SLOs. Identification of outcomes for six areas of emphasis is complete and implementation of the outcomes has begun. The general education outcomes include recognition of ethical behavior and effective citizenry and these are incorporated in the Norco mission statement. (II.A.3.a, II.A.3.b, II.A.3.c)

All degree programs at Norco have at least one disciplinary or established interdisciplinary core. The Norco Campus 2009-2010 Catalog lists all degree and certificate program requirement and identifies which are offered at each of the three campuses in the district. (II.A.4)

Norco provides career technical education and technical courses leading to 51 career/technical certificates 11 of which are unique within the district to the Norco campus. Design of these programs undergoes periodic updates through program review and consultation with advisory committees regarding essential employment skills and changes in curriculum. A description of plans to survey employers regarding students and graduates skills is described above in relation to II.A.2.a-c. (II.A.5)

Norco represents itself accurately, clearly and consistently to the community with regard to courses, programs, course cancellation, transfer-of-credit policy, and general policies. This information is communicated in the course catalog, and on the web site. For articulation of courses to four-year institutions, the district adheres to articulation agreements using Title 5 and State Academic Senate guidelines. Norco follows procedures for program discontinuance established by a board approved policy in April 2008. Norco presents itself to constituents with integrity by maintaining a catalog that is updated every year beginning in 2009-2010, and it publishes four schedules of classes each academic year. Faculty are required to submit a copy of the course syllabus for each class taught each semester. Norco works with the District Public Information Office to make available to its constituents and the community information about its mission, programs, and services. (II.A.6.a, II.A.6.b, II.A.6.c)

Norco publishes policies on academic freedom and responsibility and student academic honesty in the college catalog, schedule of classes, and faculty handbook. In addition, the District Board policy 4030, Academic Freedom affirms the protection of the right of the teacher in teaching and of the student's freedom in learning. (II.A.7.a.b)

Standards II.A.7 and II.A.8 are not applicable to Norco.

Conclusions

Norco Campus has met the standard. Norco campus accelerated their actions to ensure full compliance with the recommendations from the previous report through active dialogue, and employee participation effectively addressed the commission's recommendations in relation to strategic planning, program review and the alignment of campus resources while adhering to institutional integrity.

Norco offers a wide variety of instructional programs to serve its diverse student body. The range of courses, programs, and degrees are consistent with Norco's mission and goals. The campus relies on processes and data from several sources including the district Office of Institutional Research. The self-study and documentation for Standard II.A were comprehensive.

Recommendations

> **Recommendation 2:** In order to comply with the ACCJC Distance Education policy, for all programs, certificates or degrees where 50 percent or more of the requirements are delivered via distance learning and may be completed at the Norco campus, the team recommends submission of a substantive change proposal. (IIA.1b.d, II.B.1,II.B.2a, II.C.1, IIC.2.c)

> **Recommendation 3:** In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the campus validate all departmental examinations for their effectiveness in measuring student learning and to ensure that they minimize test bias (II.A.2.g)

B. Student Support Services

General Observations

The Norco Campus Student Support Services offer a commendable set of comprehensive services designed to accommodate its diverse student population. Student support services conduct regular program review and participate in the planning, resource distribution, and evaluation processes of Norco campus. All support services develop student learning outcomes (SLOs) and/or service area outcomes (SAOs).

The Student Services Division promotes institutional effectiveness with processes for program review and SLO implementation that parallel those for the instructional services at the program level. Student services staff engage in ongoing dialogue about their relationship to educational processes at Norco. The Student Services staff participates in a variety of committees including the Norco Strategic Planning Committee, Student Success Committee, Student Services Planning Council, and Associate Students of Norco Campus.

Located in the Student Services building, the services are in very close proximity. Plans are underway to relocate some of the programs (e.g. EOPS, DSPS) to the new Student Success Building when it opens in fall 2010.

There have been significant changes occurring with the "decentralization" of student services from the district office in the past few years. In summer 2008, meetings were conducted to review the function maps and identify ways to flatten the district student service areas in preparation for the creation of the two independent colleges. This process has gone smoothly and changes have been made in staff supervision (e.g. the Matriculation Specialist now reports to the Norco Dean of Students rather than the District Matriculation Coordinator).

Findings and Evidence

Norco Campus incorporates a seamless matriculation process by providing student access to online and onsite support services. The availability of student support resources enhances learning, matriculation, and retention. Student Services programs undergo continual re-

evaluation and assessment to enhance student access, progress, and learning as well as the success of its service areas. All support services develop student learning outcomes (SLOs) and/or service area outcomes (SAOs) and these are updated annually. The Student Services Program Review documents outline the mission, philosophy, staffing, objectives, SLOs, and SAOs for each area. The Student Services Division promotes institutional effectiveness with processes for program review and SLO implementation that parallel those for the instructional services at the program level. (II.B.1)

Norco's matriculation process includes admissions, assessment, orientation, and counseling. Admissions procedures are under Admissions and Records, which is responsible for a variety of functions related to admissions. First-time college freshmen who declare one of four academic or vocational goals must participate in assessment, orientation, and counseling. Assessment testing is conducted for English, reading, and math placement. After completing the assessment process, students can attend group orientations with counselors to develop a one-semester student educational plan (SEP). Norco encourages students to meet individually with counselors to develop their two-year SEP and identify career or personal objectives. (II.B.1)

Counselors refer students to a variety of support services as needed. These services include: Career / Transfer / Job Placement Center, Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSP&S), Educational Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS/CARE), Head Start child care services, health services, Puente program, Student Financial Services, Talented Tenth Program, Student Support Services, tutorial services, and Writing/Reading/Math Centers. To ensure quality of services to students, Student Support Services and counseling faculty collect and review data through student persistence and success rates, retention and transfer rates, student satisfaction surveys, and awards (degrees and certificates).   (II.B.1)

After identifying areas needing improvement, Norco services use a variety of forums for discussion including department meetings, committee meetings, Strategic Planning committee, district Assessment Committee, district meetings, and district wide Student Services vice presidents meetings. Additionally, Student Services relies upon Norco's Educational Master Plan, the Technology Standards, and the District Strategic Plan for guidance in developing and enhancing student learning and student support services. Student Services carefully reviews studies conducted by the district's Institutional Research Office and Norco's Associate Dean of Student Success. (II.B.1)

The Norco Campus 2009-2010 Catalog is the first independent catalog for Norco constituents and includes all the required elements in standard II.2.B.2.a-c. The first section includes general information about Norco including: mission and associated goals, vision, and values; functions of general education and associated student learning outcomes; history and development of Norco Campus; academic freedom statements; accreditation information; district memberships; public affairs and institutional advancement; information about academic year, program length, attendance requirements; admission and registration; matriculation processes; fees/residency requirements; transcripts; military and veteran student and family member assistance and programs; special supportive services; family educational rights and privacy act; statements about commitment to diversity,

nondiscrimination, and prohibition of harassment and retaliation policies. The second section includes descriptions of student life beginning with an academic honesty statement, followed by descriptions of programs and services available to students. Following student life are sections detailing graduation requirements, transfer requirements, curricular patterns, course descriptions, faculty listings, and an index. (II.B.2.a, II.B.2.b, II.B.2.c, II.B.2.d)

Norco researches and identifies the learning support needs of its students through basic data and research results from the district Institutional Research Office as well as a range of measurement tools. These tools include program review from counseling and student services, matriculation plans, online services, student surveys, assessment placements for English, Reading, Mathematics, and ESL, outreach activities, term enrollment and headcount figures, and student demand for various services. (II.B.3a-f)

In addition, Norco has established a variety of appropriate, reliable student services to ensure equitable access to all students. In response to student demand, Norco has increased its efforts to reach out to the community and target specific student populations more effectively. Within the last few years, there has been development of a full range of online web services to enhance comprehensive access for current and prospective students. (II.B.3a)

Norco has a culture that supports the continual use of data and dialogue to expand or modify programs and services as campus enrollments increase and change in order to provide an environment that enhances students' sense of responsibility as well as their intellectual, personal, and aesthetic development. (II.B.3.a)   Fourteen student support services are available to guarantee equitable access to all students. Norco provides a variety of activities, events, workshops, and services that create an environment of civic and social responsibility for its student population. (II.B.3.c)

A variety of activities, events, workshops and services are provided to create an environment of civic and social responsibility for the student population. The Student Activities department and the Talented Tenth Program are examples where the campus is providing an environment that enhances student's development. (II.B.3b)

Norco maintains satisfactory academic advisement programs to support student development and success while planning for future expansion of counseling personnel to accommodate projected enrollment growth. In response to diverse student demographics, Norco offers a wide variety of programs and activities that promote and contribute to student understanding and appreciation of diversity. (II.B.3c-d)

Norco's admissions and placement instruments undergo periodic evaluation by the district Matriculation Office to comply with state regulations. Norco uses placement instruments approved by the California Community College State Chancellor's Office. Student records at Norco are complete and secure, and after three years storage in locked file cabinets, they are scanned for permanent digital storage. (II.B.3e-f)

Norco Student Support Services departments and programs rely on a variety of methods and

resources to assist in the systematic and regular review of program effectiveness. The annual Student Services program review completed in 2008-2009 for 19 programs and services has resulted in the formulation of SLOs and SAOs and assessment measures for all Student Services programs. An effective structure is in place for the evaluation of the performance of Student Services in meeting student needs. The comprehensive program review results informed improvements for Norco's support services to students. Interviews with various student services staff members indicate they all have an understanding of the program review and planning process and genuinely agree that it is important for improving services and in resource allocation. Each month, all of the student services staff meet to discuss how they are doing with respect to their plans. (II.B4)

Conclusions

Norco Campus has met the standard. The overall quality of student support services is of high quality and diversified to support Norco's diverse student body. Norco Student Support Services departments and programs rely on a variety of methods and resources to assist in the systematic and regular review of program effectiveness, and completed comprehensive program review for 16 programs and services in 2008-2009. The comprehensive program review results informed improvements for Norco's support services to students.

Recommendations

See Recommendation 2, page 29 of this document.

C. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations

The Wilfred J. Airey Library supports all programs offered at Norco, and shares resources with the Moreno Valley and Riverside City College libraries. An Associate Dean of Library Services (recently upgraded from Assistant Dean) oversees the library. Librarians update acquisitions with input from faculty. The Instructional Media Center maintains instructional equipment and information services technicians maintain library computers. The library uses multiple tools to evaluate its services and uses results to inform improvements. The tools include satisfaction surveys distributed to faculty and students to determine how well the library is meeting their needs. A program review document completed in May 2009 incorporated these data.

Findings and Evidence

Norco library faculty and discipline faculty acquire materials that support student learning and meet the mission of the Norco Campus. Based on a fall 2006 analysis of the library collection and the degree of faculty participation in its accrual, the campus began implementing a strategic initiative to improve the currency of book holdings and strengthen faculty participation in library book acquisition. With $40,000 the library purchased faculty-

requested new and updated titles and established a collection development process in a variety of areas. These acquisitions and development processes led to significant improvements in faculty ratings of the library. (II.C.1.a)

The library provides ongoing instruction for library users and learning support services housed in the library. Library instruction includes ongoing orientation, reference service, library skills workshops, in-class library instruction, and the Library 1 course (information competency). The library assesses the effectiveness of library skills workshops and information competency instruction through five venues. These include a student survey administered at the start and end of a course; a one-minute-paper assessment; library skills instruction workshop tests; self-reflection journals; and library faculty observation and commentary on student participation and work. Learning support services include Tutorial Services, the Math lab, the CIS computer lab, and the Writing and Reading Center, and there is an Instructional Media Center (IMC). (II.C.1.b)

The library and staff provide services, materials, training, and educational programs to all students and faculty regardless of location, special need, or type of program. According to the Library User Satisfaction Survey of spring 2008, 86 percent of students indicated that the reference faculty librarian exceeded or met their expectations in being knowledgeable and able to answer their questions clearly. There are special computer stations and equipment for disabled students. A testing center featuring adaptive technology is located in the library. The Writing and Reading Center provides lower-level reading materials as well as customized instruction for English as a Second Language and developmental reading students. The district has a Digital Library as well as a large circulating collection that students, faculty, and staff can access through interlibrary loan. The district also has a single online catalog that allows students, faculty, and staff to research the entire district library collection. (II.C.1.c)

The Airey Library provides adequate security of its facilities and materials. Security measures include a security gate at the library entrance, magnetic strips to protect print and non-print media and non-magnetic pieces of equipment, fire-safety measures, and emergency exits that are clearly marked. Consistent with the campus's total-cost-of-ownership approach to equipment acquisition, printers and copy machines are on maintenance contracts, and the centers and labs have maintenance agreements for electronic equipment. Norco information services technicians maintain student and staff computers and update all hardware and software security packages. Multimedia equipment is secured to tabletops to prevent theft. The Writing and Reading Center has an alarmed entrance with a card passkey system. The Instructional Media Center has a routine equipment maintenance schedule. (II.C.1.d)

All contracted services used by the Norco library and the evaluation of these services are coordinated by the Digital Learning Library at Riverside City College (RCC). The Digital Library at RCC has formal agreements with other academic institutions for interlibrary loan services offered to the district faculty. (II.C.1.e)

The library program and learning support services are evaluated through an annual program review process that includes an analysis of program goals, student learning outcomes, enrollment data, and projected need in the areas of personnel, instructional materials,

equipment, software, and facilities. Student Learning Outcomes, data are collected for the Library 1 course. As indicated in the self-study, additional work is planned to improve the SLOs for the course. In an interview with the library Associate Dean, the development of SLOs for the Library services was suggested. (II.C.2)

Conclusions

Norco Campus has met the standard. The library procures books based on faculty input and assesses faculty satisfaction with its collection and services. The library offers a variety of information competency instruction, houses several learning support centers and labs, and provides adequate security and maintenance. It evaluates the quality of its services through multiple tools and uses results to inform improvements.

Recommendations

See Recommendation 2, page 29 of this document.

Standard III: Resources

A. Human Resources

General Observations

All aspects of the Human Resources component are well defined and documented as to policy, position descriptions, minimum qualifications, prioritizations and recruitment processes. This is reflective of an integrated strategic planning and budgeting system. Consistent with all Standard III component areas there exists a combination of shared district/campus decision-making authority as well a clear division of labor as to district and local campus Human Resource responsibilities. Working within well established district policy guidelines, the Norco campus has very clear diversity and human resource responsibilities and decision-making authority.

Findings and Evidence

Norco and the district have policies and processes in place that allow for the effective identification of position need and recruitment of a qualified and diverse faculty, staff and administration. Of note is the evaluation component that allows for the measurement of faculty participation in the development of student learning outcomes (SLO). Through newly integrated strategic planning and budget allocation processes, the local campus has gained more responsibility relevant to the identification, prioritization and acquisition of needed faculty and staff. Through an overall shared responsibility with the district, the Norco campus now possesses increased decision-making authority relevant to human resource planning and funding. The district and the campus have a well developed personnel evaluation process for all personnel including full and part-time faculty, confidential and classified staff and administrators. Evaluation status is tracked on the district's Datatel system by the Diversity and Human Resources department. Board policy and procedure address codes of conduct, academic freedom, ethics and equity standards. (III.A.1a, III.A.1.b, II.A.1.c, III.A.1.d).

Norco and district data suggest that the Norco campus employs sufficient number of qualified teaching faculty and support staff. Instructional program human resource need is established via the program review and planning processes and relates to enrollment, course section growth and, integrated strategic planning and budget allocation models. Evidence and faculty, staff and administrative interviews and further on-site analysis verified staffing adequacy relevant to program size and structure. Through the decentralized planning and decision-making processes, the Norco campus has an improved opportunity to address resource needs. (IIIA.2).

Fairness in all employment categories is substantiated by established written policies and procedures. The District Office of Diversity and Human Resources oversees and supports Norco in the administration policies and procedures as well as providing requisite security and confidentiality of employee personnel files. The Norco campus adheres to fair employment practices of the district, the federal and state governments. (III.A.3a-b).

The Norco campus and the district meet the standard for equity and diversity by the establishment of written policies and practices designed to support diverse personnel. The Norco campus and the district's Office of Institutional Research maintain and evaluate personnel records and data substantiating efforts to attract and maintain diversity and equality in employment practices. The district *Fact Book* includes measurable data used to assess diversity and equity. The Norco campus and the district adhere to regulatory policies and laws, collective bargaining agreements, education code and federal, state and local labor laws which assure the campus is enabled to hire qualified staff who respond to needs of students and district constituents of diverse backgrounds. (III.A.4.a, III.A.4.b, III.A.4.c).

The Norco campus and district provide substantial professional development activities including teaching skill development, course based assessment, vocational education in-service training, intersegmental exchange programs, new faculty and staff orientation programs as well as technology training opportunities. Professional development programs are evaluated and results utilized as the basis for improvement and currency. (III.A.5.a, III.A.5.b)

Human resources planning at the Norco campus has been enhanced via the recently instituted and integrated strategic planning and budget allocation processes. Decentralization of these activities has provided the Norco campus with the capability of identifying, prioritizing, recommending staffing through a variety of entities including several on-campus committees, the Norco Strategic Planning Committee, the campus president as well as the District Strategic Planning Committee and the District Budget Advisory Council. The total cost of positions, including benefits, is identified and earmarked within the district budget and the local campus retains the discretionary decision-making to enact acquisition practices within annual funding tolerances. An analysis of the 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets reflects Norco integrated planning and allocation processes that culminated in the funding of needed program staffing and addressed the total cost of program operation and ownership. (III.A.6)

Conclusions

Norco campus has met this standard. Human Resources planning is well integrated with the Norco and district institutional planning processes. Norco campus leadership (President, core planning and operations committees) have appropriate decision-making authority and discretion when addressing human resources. The Norco campus, through its integrated planning and budget allocation processes will conduct an on-going review and evaluation of the needs of the campus's diverse and future program based staffing needs.

Recommendations

None.

Physical Resources

General Observations

The Norco campus resides on a 141 acre site with nineteen instructional and student support facilities (15 permanent) containing 125,863 assignable square feet and 186,204 gross square feet. As part of the Riverside Community College District, the Norco facilities planning process is linked to the campus's program review, strategic planning and budgeting processes then further integrated with district-wide planning and allocation processes. Facilities are maintained and cleaned by Norco facilities maintenance staff and district police provide on-campus security. The Norco campus long-term capital outlay program is updated annually and submitted to the California Community College System as a significant portion of the Riverside Community College District Five Year Capital Outlay Program. When planning new academic and support facilities, Norco develops projected construction, equipment and operational costs in adherence to total cost of ownership principles. Plans articulate with the adopted long term Educational and Facilities Master Plans. The focus of Norco physical planning is development of instructional and support facilities which provide sufficient program balance and capacity.

Findings and Evidence

Physical resource development is a shared responsibility between the Norco campus, the district and the California Community College System. Plans for instructional and student support facilities are based upon State mandated space and utilization standards. Facilities planning, at the Norco campus, commences with program review where space needs are identified and developed and submitted and reviewed through the campus strategic planning process. Once identified as a Norco facilities priority, future capital construction projects are included in the district's annual Five Year Capital Outlay Program and submitted to the California Community College System upon review and approval by the Board of Trustees. Campus facilities plans articulate with the existing Educational Master Plan (2008) and Long-Term Facilities Master Plan (2008).   Justification for new or reconstructed facilities projects is based upon current Norco campus space utilization and projected enrollment growth in conformance with California Community College capacity/load ratios (standards). (III.B.1.a)

Norco campus facilities are planned, designed and constructed in conformance with the Division of the State Architect (DSA) standards for accessibility, safety and security. Norco maintenance and operations staff maintains and clean facilities, thus assuring the campus community of a healthy and safe learning and working environment. The campus has an active scheduled and deferred maintenance program which is funded by a combination of state and local bond funds. (III.B.1.b)

Utilizing a facilities planning process which incorporates program review, strategic planning and linked budgeting to identify, plan, design, construct and maintain buildings, Norco's physical plant continues to respond to program balance and student population growth needs. The Norco campus clearly identifies and funds facilities total cost of ownership (including

utilities, staff and equipment). As part of its integrated planning and budgeting process, Norco and the district allocate sufficient resources to construct and maintain its facilities. The Norco campus has an established recordof utilizing its instructional and support facilities in an efficient manner while serving a growing student population. The campus facilities plan responds to ever increasing growth in the instructional and support programs. Further evidence of articulated planning is the recent occupancy of the Industrial Technology building (34,000 sf), the planned occupancy (2010) of the Student Success building and the design and development of the Norco Campus Operations Center. These three facilities address program balance and growth needs and increase student capacity. All three projects were identified in previous program review processes, supported and prioritized through the Norco strategic planning process and were influenced by the Educational Master Plan as well as the Long-Term Facilities Plan. They were further integrated into the district and state five year capital plans outlay programs. The campus and district budget allocation processes have identified and funded operational related costs (utilities, equipment and human resources) in adherence to principles of total cost of ownership. (III.B.2.a, II.B.2.b).

Conclusions

Norco campus has met this standard. For a growing campus, Norco is responding to expanding needs. Long-term, the campus will be challenged by program access needs (external roadway access infrastructure) which may ultimately limit capacity and force the campus to consider the acquisition and development of an off-campus educational center.

Recommendations

None.

C. Technology Resources

General Observations

As part of the continuous need for technology to support and enhance student learning and staff operations and communications at the Norco campus, with district support, technological resources are updated and maintained. Technology resource needs are identified through Norco program review processes and evaluated through the Norco and district integrated strategic planning and budgeting processes. The Norco Strategic Planning Committee's sub-committee on Technology Resources assists in the evaluation of need and allocation of capital expenditures for new technology. Most Norco classrooms are considered "smart classrooms" equipped with multi-media equipment. Much of the technology infrastructure and instructional and administrative support is district based yet campus mediated. The Norco campus is provided district support for technology services through the Information Services Office, Academic Information Architecture and Web Services, Open Campus (technology mediated instruction, distance and on-line class software). Additionally, the Norco campus technology resource requirements are supported through the Instructional Media Center, library technology upgrades, learning support services and facilities operations. On-site district staff are dedicated to the support of the

Norco Instructional Media Center and full-time instructional support specialist. The district maintains a District Help Desk which serves all campus personnel for desktop, laptop and network and instructional laboratory support.

Findings and Evidence

Norco campus, with district support, provides technology resources which directly enhance institutional effectiveness. Norco works through its integrated strategic planning and budgeting processes to plan and implement technology resources in support of the instructional program, campus and district-wide communications, and operational support systems. The Norco Campus is developing its programs on a career technology basis with a focus on technology; hence, the need is for current technology equipment, systems and operations. The Norco campus plans, designs and manages its technology systems on a district supported basis. District level departments, including Academic Information Architecture, Information Services, Open Campus, Instructional Media Center, Library Technology, Learning Support Services, Public Relations and Facilities are responsible for supplying administrative, academic and student support systems to the Norco campus. The Norco campus does maintain four full-time district level staff on-campus in support of the instructional and student support operations. (III.C.1.a)

Norco technology resource needs (infrastructure, hardware, administrative software, network) are identified through the program review process. Instructional, student support and administrative operational requirements are further developed and prioritized through the strategic planning process and included within the budget allocation process. Instructional program software needs are identified and selected by Norco faculty and decisions on acquisition and implementation remain under the local campus decision-making process. Instructional Media Center support staff report to the Norco Assistant Dean of Library Resources. Instructional Support Services support staff report directly to the Norco Dean of Instruction. (III.C.1.a)

Through district and Norco Campus technology training opportunities, instructional faculty, student support staff and administrators maintain currency in software and hardware program applications. Training and upgrading opportunities are provided through district and campus FLEX activities, district Open Campus and Norco Information System Services. Additionally, the Help Desk operation directly assists faculty and staff in resolving software and hardware issues. Institutional surveys indicate improved satisfaction with district and campus training opportunities. (III.C.1.b)

The Norco campus, with district support, plans, acquires and maintains its technology infrastructure and equipment through its program review, planning and budget allocation processes. Technology needs are reviewed and updated on an annual basis and are funded through a combination of instructional equipment grants and general obligation bond monies (Measure C). As part of its integrated strategic planning process, the Norco Strategic Planning Committee's Resources Sub-Committee helped develop and then adopted District Technology Standards and the Information Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Standards. These guidelines assist in the identification and acquisition of necessary system

architecture, hardware and software conducive to the support of instructional and non-instructional program activities. The Norco campus technology resource needs are scrutinized and prioritized through the linked planning and budgeting processes and are ultimately expressed within the adopted district budget. (III.C.1.c)

Through the district, the Norco Campus has a secure DataTel administrative system suite of information support services. The system supports instructional and non-instructional related technology services. The distribution and the utilization of information resources is district implemented yet campus mediated. Upgrades and expansion of hardware/software services are integrated within the campus and district linked planning and budgeting processes. The campus and district have resolved to stay current in their technology resource planning, acquisition and training activities. The Norco campus technology resources reflect its continuing program expansion and response to student enrollment growth. (III.C.1.d)

Technology planning has been integrated with the campus and district linked strategic planning and budget allocation processes. Planning clearly emanates from the local campus level and is a part of instructional and administrative program review. Norco identifies, justifies and prioritizes its technology resource needs through its local planning processes. These needs are then identified and prioritized within the district strategic planning and budget allocation processes. Additionally, through the integrated planning/budgeting processes, the campus identifies total cost of ownership for it technology systems and hardware/software equipment needs. The outcome of the Norco technology resources planning processes have been expressed through allocations received within the adopted 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 budgets. (III.C.2)

Conclusion

Norco campus has met this standard. Norco has developed a well integrated technology resources planning process which serves the instructional and administrative needs of campus students and instructional and non-instructional operations. Through infrastructure upgrades and equipment acquisitions, the campus is keeping current with resource needs. Identification of technology resource needs via the program review process informs the strategic planning and budgeting processes, has clarified and has supported systematic planning and acquisition efforts.

Recommendations

None.

D. Financial Resources

General Observations

A major thrust and overarching theme of the 2007 evaluation team's analysis of Standard III was the lack of a clearly integrated planning and budget allocation process both at the campus and district levels. The Norco 2009 self-study utilized the previous analysis coupled

with responses to the 2007 campus and district recommendations as the major focus of its current quest for accreditation as a single college within a multi-college district. It is clear that much thought has been given to how best to integrate strategic planning and budget allocation systems at both the local and district levels while achieving greater operational decision making autonomy for Norco programs and services. Submitted evidence and on-site interviews suggest that the Norco campus has achieved both the integration of planning and budgeting while obtaining more authority and autonomy at the local level.

Upon the review of integrated strategic planning function maps, core planning and budget development committees' minutes and presented data, it is clear that the linked planning/budgeting process has been expressed in outcomes delineated in the adopted 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 district and Norco campus budgets. Further, it is clear that the various Norco campus constituent groups are conversant with and utilize the integrated planning processes to the institution's advantage. District board actions have defined and granted appropriate levels of authority to the campus president in controlling the development and allocation of Norco's resources and expenditure budgets.

Findings and Evidence

The district and the Norco campus have revised and realigned their institutional mission statements and a linked integrated strategic planning and budget allocation model has been implemented. With the adoption of the 2009/10 district budget, two planning/budgeting cycles have been completed. Further, the district and Norco are participating in the development of a mid-range financial resource analysis that projects the impacts of short-range financial plans on long-term financial priorities thus leading to reasoned financial stability. (III.D.1)

With the revised Norco mission statement and the adoption of an integrated strategic planning and budgeting processes in 2008, the Norco campus and the Riverside Community College District implemented an articulated institutional program review and program based planning process that provided a clear path for financial planning to support institutional planning. Commencing with annual program reviews and working through local and district based strategic planning processes, the Norco campus develops planning and allocation priorities in support of Long-Range Educational and Facilities Master Plans and district strategic initiatives. Further, the Budget Allocation Model (BAM) provides resources for specific programmatic needs including the total cost of ownership of new programs, facilities and technological advances. Evidence validates that resource allocation prioritization and decisions are campus based, inclusive, comprehensive, and driven by departmental/discipline priorities as reflected in the Program Review Process. (III.D.1.a)

The integrated institutional planning process reflects realistic district and campus assessments of available financial resources. The district and its campuses engage in a continuous, sophisticated and comprehensive financial analysis of economic conditions and anticipated resource availability. This reasoned forward projecting analysis is coupled with the five-year Mid-Range Financial Planning model for human, physical and technological resources inclusive of total-cost-ownership (TCO) obligations and provided to the Norco

President and her Norco Strategic Planning Committee to inform local decision-making processes. Hence decisions in support of instructional and student support programs are better informed and well reasoned. (III.D.1.b)

Integrated planning and budget allocation processes have further assisted the campus and district in addressing long-term liabilities (medical, statutory benefits, etc) by appropriating sufficient annual funding for these continuing costs. Plans for payment of long-term liabilities and future obligations are incorporated in the annual district budget reports, planning documents and expressed in both the 2008-09 and 2009-10 adopted budgets. (III.D.1.c)

The integrated and linked strategic planning and budget allocation processes are controlled by appropriate board policies and procedures including planning/budgeting guidelines. Established policies, procedures and guidelines are easily accessible to all campus constituent groups and are utilized by core planning groups throughout the campus and district institutional planning process. (III.D.1.d)

Review of district financial documents including the 2007-08 independent audit reflect appropriate budget allocation and utilization of district and campus resources. When necessary, the district's responses to external audit findings (general fund, restricted and unrestricted including general obligation bond resources) have been timely, exacting and communicated in an appropriate manner. As previously indicated, all appropriate financial information is accessible by departmental chairs, support program managers and campus planning and budgetary groups. (III.D.2.a-b)

The district and its campuses have consistently maintained adequate and appropriate cash reserves thus indicating continual financial stability. The district and the Norco campus have consistently carried over sufficient ending fund balances to help in the allocation of subsequent budget year resources. Given the recent state fiscal crisis and its impact on California Community Colleges, the Riverside District and its component campuses were well served during 2008-09 and into 2009-10 by its previous conservative financial practices. (III.D.2.c)

The Norco campus budget represents a significant portion of the district-wide financial planning and budgeting process. The district continues to practice effective oversight of financial practices while providing local campus presidents increased budgetary decision-making authority and autonomy. As it moves towards a multiple-college institution from a single college, multi-campus district, several district financial practices have become more appropriately decentralized while appropriate internal district audit and contractual functions remain centralized in their support to the local campuses. Hence, established board financial policies and procedures serve as budgetary guidelines and expenditure control measures for all individual campuses. These practices and processes are viewed as supporting local campus decision-making authority and ensuring adherence to generally accepted accounting principles. (III.D.2.d-f)

Norco and the district are developing revised processes to effectively evaluate integrated planning and financial management practices. The linked strategic planning and budget allocation model is still a relatively young and significantly changed process. It is clear that the newly integrated processes are reflected in the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 adopted budgets. However, district and Norco campus administrative personnel and planning group participants acknowledge that further development of evaluation strategies measuring effectiveness of the linked planning/budgeting processes is required. Development of new evaluation tools is under discussion at the Norco Strategic Planning Committee and District Budget Advisory Councils. (III.D.2.g)

The evaluation of financial resources is a shared district and Norco campus responsibility. Currently and as in the past, several district based oversight mechanisms are utilized when assessing the effective use of financial resources. As the Norco campus has moved towards greater financial autonomy, it has established its own business office and appointed a new, permanent Vice President for Business Services. This operation provides planning and budgeting assistance to the Norco Strategic Planning Committee and the 2009 campus budget emergency reduction committee. As previously noted, in concert with the district, the Norco Business Services Office is commencing the development of evaluation tools to assist in the measurement of the effectiveness of the young integrated planning and budgeting processes. The Norco campus plans to continue to identify budgetary priorities and conduct periodic analysis of the effectiveness of integrated planning and budgetary practices. (III.D.3)

Conclusions

Norco campus has met this standard. Through the implementation of the integrated planning and budget allocation processes over the past two budget cycles, the Norco campus has met the overall requirements of Standard III and its four component resources (human, physical, technology and financial). It has achieved planning and resource allocation integration at both the campus and district levels while obtaining greater local program planning and budgetary authority. This is a significant accomplishment as the campus proceeds forward on its quest to be accredited as a collegiate level institution. It has met the Standard III requirements and has provided evidence which validates its assertions. Given that the integrated planning and budgeting processes are still relatively young, the Norco campus, in concert with the Riverside Community College District, needs to provide further and continuous evaluation of the linked processes. Though implementation of the new integrated planning system may be deemed successful given it has been expressed in the adopted 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets, its long-term effectiveness is yet to be ascertained.

Recommendations

See Recommendation 1, page 24 of this document.

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Observations

The district and the Norco Campus have been working towards accreditation of the Norco campus as a college since 2002 when the Board of Trustees resolved to support the move of the Norco and Moreno Valley campuses toward college status. It is clear the Norco campus and the district have attempted to demonstrate that participatory governance, integrated planning and budgeting are decentralized sufficiently to provide the Norco campus necessary authority and autonomy in development, administration and operation of its program and services. (IV.A.1)

The Norco campus environment is impressively positive and collaborative and equally positive and collegial relationships between the campus and the district are evident. It is clear that all constituencies work together for the good of the institution and participation among campus groups in governance and planning at both the campus and the district is high. There is a strong understanding and appreciation of the unique qualities of the different communities served by the two campuses and college within the district. The faculty, staff, and administration of Norco and the Chancellor and Board of Trustees demonstrate a common commitment to meeting the needs of the community served by the campus.

Findings and Evidence

The district and the Norco campus are in the process of decentralizing several program planning, curricular review and budgeting processes to effectuate greater local authority and autonomy requisite for a stand-alone college.   District and Norco shared governance processes have been restructured and revised to ensure more local participation in planning and decision making processes. The functioning Norco Academic Senate was formed in 2005; the Norco Curriculum Committee was established in 2006. The Norco Academic Planning Council and Norco Strategic Planning Committees (with strong faculty participation) are of more recent vintage, yet play important roles in the program planning and review processes. Multiple Norco decision-making processes have been established and ensure active faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation. As indicated in the self-study, a significant majority of Norco faculty indicate that they participate in shared governance through membership on the Norco Strategic Planning Committee and in the Academic Senate. Thus, there is evidence of active faculty knowledge and support for the revised organizational structure and planning processes that have brought increased authority and autonomy to the local campus. Even so, there is some lack of clarity about the governance and planning structures and the campus has developed a planning agenda for the development of a governance orientation and handbook. (IV.A.1)

By policy, procedure and the integration of planning and budgeting processes, Norco has a clear pathway for faculty, staff, administrator and student participation in leadership and governance decision-making. Both through the differentiation of District and Norco

Academic Senate roles, including the Curriculum Committee, and decentralized planning processes, evidence confirms that defined roles exist for participation in strategic planning, the development of the Budget Allocation Model (as expressed through the District Budget Advisory Council) and in the determination of institutional policy and direction. (IV.A.2a).

It has been substantiated that faculty, through Senate representation on various planning and operations committees, actively participate in student learning programs and services. The Norco Academic Senate, the Norco Strategic Planning Committee and the Student Services and Administrative Planning Councils are mechanisms through which faculty may make recommendations regarding student learning programs and services. The majority of faculty survey responses are positive when faculty are questioned about the adequacy and effectiveness of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee and the Norco Academic Senate relevant to institutional planning and decision-making. According to the Academic Senate President, the Senate is in the process of evaluating its subcommittees in order to ensure optimum articulation. (IV.A.2.b)

Through the process of decentralization, revised strategic planning and the development of the budget allocation model, it is apparent that both the district and the Norco campus have sought to improve local control over campus program planning, operation and maintenance. Faculty, staff and administrator roles and processes have been refined both at the district and local levels. While organizational structures and decision-making accessibility have been revised and improved, there may still exist confusion as to "who is responsible for what" and, hence the campus notation in the self-study that a governance orientation and Norco Campus governance handbook may be needed for clarification. (IV.A.3)

Both the Norco campus and the district assert that the campus both advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationship with external entities. They further assert that the Norco Campus, as part of the Riverside Community College District has met and/or exceeded all recommendations (District and Campus) made by the previous (2007) accreditation visiting team. The bulk of those recommendations related to decentralization, revised strategic planning and budget allocation issues. Analysis of the evidence provided and interviews with faculty, staff and administration confirm that the Norco campus and the district have met or exceeded those recommendations. District and campus responses to 2007 accreditation recommendations and revised planning and budgeting processes that decentralize previous institutional decision-making have been implemented during both 2008/09 and 2009/10. (IV.A.4)

The administrative structure of the campus has been revised to strengthen the campus' ability to function independently. The position of provost was redefined to president and three additional administrative positions have been added to support the library, student success, and specially funded programs. (IV.B.2.a)

The governance and decision-making structures have been revised and implemented and evaluation of their effectiveness has occurred. A survey of all the members of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee was conducted in spring 2009 for their assessment of campus processes linking planning, program review and resource allocation. Examples of processes

that have been or will be revised include program review. The 2008-09 program review annual report, dated October 20, 2009, summarizes the program review activity for that year. The Program Review Committee evaluated the process and identified the need to better manage the workload and flow of information for the next cycle. Options for modifications were developed and are under consideration.   Another example is the Academic Senate's plan to review the campus' resource allocation process and committee structure in light of the need to establish an emergency budget advisory committee this past year to identify budget cuts. Other processes may need to be evaluated. The district budget allocation model is entering its third cycle. Interviews with Norco faculty, staff and administration demonstrate that the campus is generally satisfied with the budget allocation model and appreciates its transparency. (IV.B.3.c) However, there is no evidence that the model has been formally evaluated by all entities, including district financial management. (IV.A.5)

Conclusions

The Norco campus has met the standard. The institution has demonstrated through its participatory governance structures and integrated planning and decision-making processes that it is able to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve. The campus has demonstrated that it has in place the administrative structures and processes to support an independent college. The team noted the broad and collegial participation of all constituencies in these processes and the college wide commitment to student learning and success.

Recommendations

None.

B. Board and Administrative Organization

General Observations

The Norco campus is one of two campuses and a college in the Riverside Community College District. The district offices and operations are located at three different sites, some miles distant from the Norco campus. The district is governed by a five-member elected board. Two members take office in one even-numbered year and three members in the next succeeding, even-numbered year. A student-elected trustee represents students from all three campuses. The Norco Associated Student Body President reported that the District Student Senate has recently revised its constitution to ensure adequate representation of the three campuses.

Findings and Evidence

The Board of Trustees has been well informed and has been an active participant in the decision making processes which have led to the development of the "Three College Project," revised planning and budget allocation processes, a new strategic planning process, organizational restructuring and decentralization of decision-making authority. It maintains

board committees on governance, planning, resources, and teaching and learning. In addition to two trustees, the membership of each committee includes the Chancellor, faculty, staff, and students. These committees provide the board with broad-based input and information. (IV.B.1.a) The board develops, approves and revises district policies in an appropriate fashion. (IV.B.1.b, IV.B.1.e) Through its review and approval of educational programs and financial operational budgets and acceptance of audit reports leading to approved changed processes, the board demonstrates its educational, legal and fiscal integrity. (IV.B.1.c, IV.B.1.d) The district provides an orientation to all candidates for board seats. Board members attend workshops, such as those sponsored by the League, to expand their knowledge of board duties and responsibilities and the board conducts annual retreats (IV.B.1.f) The board has revised and reinstituted its self-evaluation practices; however, the board should consider establishing a more specific time line for the self-evaluation and incorporating it into board policy. (IV.B.1.g) The board has a policy that defines its code of ethics and standards of practice and provides a process for dealing with violations. (IV.B.1.h) The district and the Norco campus have provided evidence of the Board of Trustees' knowledge about and participation in the accreditation process. (IV.B.1.i) It has a role in the selection and approval of the Chancellor and the College/Campus Presidents and has established policies for these processes. (IV.B.1.j)

The President is a former Provost of the Norco Campus and has served the campus for 16 years, thus providing a high degree of stability and fostering an environment of trust and cooperation.   She is actively involved in the community. (IV.B.2.e) Her role as President appears to have been strengthened as a result of the decentralization of decision-making authority (district to campus/college) and the quest to certify Norco as a stand-alone college. This is reflected in the revision of the job description for the president within the past year. It is also reflected in the granting of more autonomy in program planning and decision-making at the local level and includes the expansion of Academic Senate and Presidential roles, local planning and budgeting structures and processes. (IV.B.2.b) Clarity of roles and strengthened communication links between the district and the Norco President have emerged from the revitalized and integrated planning and budgeting processes. The Norco President has revised and strengthened the campus' administrative structure to reflect the campus' increasingly autonomous status, its purpose, size, and complexity. (IV.B.2.a) The President confirmed that she has primary responsibility for the quality of her institution and the authority to administer her campus in all respects to assure the implementation of all statutes, regulations and board policies and to ensure that institutional practices are consistent with mission and policies. (IV.B.2.c, IV.B.3.e) The Norco President anticipates the need to plan for more decentralization of student support services as a function of local program control._The President has demonstrated effective control of the campus budget and expenditures and relies on the campus' integrated and participatory planning processes to provide her with the necessary information to effectively allocate resources. (IV.B.2.d)

As indicated previously, the district and the Norco campus have been engaged in revising several district policies and processes designed to provide improved local campus control over program planning and operations since at least 2005. As part of the decentralization process and the move to a three college district, local planning and decision-making roles and practices have been enhanced while the district continues to provide functional support.

(IV.B.3.b) The Function Map, provided by the District and the Norco campus, is useful in ascertaining where local campus control begins and district support ends. (IV.B.3.a) Of necessity, there are a number of shared functions including Admissions & Records archiving and record-keeping, technical support, facilities planning, strategic planning and budget allocations. It is apparent that the district acts as the liaison between the campuses and the board and employs effective methods of communication. The team noted the collegial relationship between the district and the campus as they implement significant organizational change in the movement toward a multi-college district. (IV.B.3.f) While the standard has been met as to the organizational structure, strategic planning and fair distribution of resources (IV.B.3.c), it may be a number of years before the district/campus may be able to ascertain how effective the changes have been and whether they have benefited the institution and its students. (IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.c) Hence, it is recommended that continuous and definitive evaluations of decentralized processes and decision-making occur on a regular basis. It is noted that the campus has recognized the need for such evaluations in the development of two related planning agendas (IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b, IV.B.3.g). Reviewing pre-2008 expenditure processes and budgets, the district and Norco campus have been able to control expenditures and return substantial ending fund balances to the district/campus for subsequent year budget allocations. (IV.B.3.d) Given the present state fiscal crisis, the district/Norco campus will be challenged to keep programs and operations intact.

Conclusions

Norco campus has met the standard. The institution recognizes the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for its effective operation. As a member of a multi-campus district, its organizational role has been clearly defined even as the system works toward status as a multi-college district and the campus aims to achieve status as an independent college.   This assessment is based upon the demonstrated decentralization of program, planning and operational administration and the establishment of integrated planning and budgeting processes sufficient to support an independent college.

Recommendations

See Recommendation 1, page 24 of this document.