

Institutional Self Study for Reaffirmation of Accreditation 2012



College of the Sequoias

College of the Sequoias
Institutional Self Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and
Institutional Effectiveness

In Support of Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Submitted by:

College of the Sequoias
915 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277

To:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Submitted Schools and Colleges

July 24, 2012



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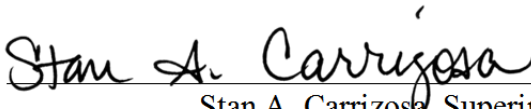
Date: July 24, 2012

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Stan A. Carrizosa, Superintendent/President
College of the Sequoias
915 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277

This Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness is submitted to the ACCJC for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institution's accreditation status.

I certify that there was broad participation by the campus community, and I believe the Self Evaluation Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

Signature:  _____
Stan A. Carrizosa, Superintendent/President

Governing Board Certification Page

Date: July 24, 2012


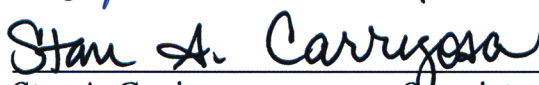
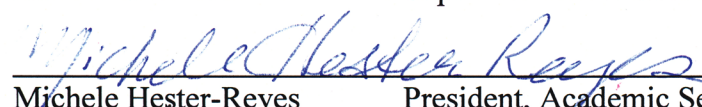
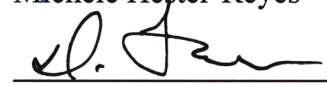
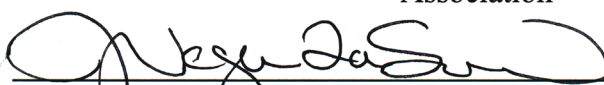
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We certify that we read the final Institutional Self Evaluation Report and that we were involved in the self evaluation process.

Signed

	7/24/12
Greg Sherman	President, Board of Trustees
Date	
	7/24/12
Stan A. Carrizosa	Superintendent/President
Date	
	7/24/12
Michele Hester-Reyes	President, Academic Senate
Date	
	7/24/12
Dianna Favour	Vice - President, Classified Employees Association
Date	
	7/24/12
Jennifer Vega La Serna, Ph.D.	Accreditation Liaison Officer
Date	

Acronyms

AA	Associate of Arts Degree
AA-T	Associate in Arts for Transfer
ACCJC	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
ACHA	American College Health Association
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AERO	Aeronautical and Aviation Technology
AI	Augmented Instruction
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AP	Administrative Policy
ARCC	Accountability Report for Community Colleges
AS	Associate of Science Degree
ASB	Associated Student Body
ASSIST	Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer
AS-T	Associate in Science for Transfer
ATB	Ability to Benefit
ATD	Achieving the Dream
AV/TV	Audio Visual/Televised
AVMA	American Veterinarian Medical Association
Bb	Blackboard
BERP	Banner Enterprise Resource Planning
BICS	Business, Industry, and Community Services
BP	Board Policy
BSI	Basic Skills Initiative
B-STARS	Black Students Taking Action to Reach Success
CAA	Career Advancement Academy Grant
CACT	Center for Applied Competitive Technologies
CalWORKs	California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids
CAPTE	Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
CARE	Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education
CCCApply	California Community Colleges Apply
CCLC	Community College League of California
CCCCO	California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
CCSSE	Community College Survey of Student Engagement
CD	Compact Disc
CEIS	College Extended Information System
CELSA	Combined English Language Skills Assessment
CENIC	Corporation for Educational Network Initiatives in California
CHSPE	California High School Proficiency Examination
CLASS	California Leadership for Advancing Student Success
CNA	Certified Nurse Assistant
CO	Course Outline
COLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
COP	Certificates of Participation
COR	Course Outline of Records
COS	College of the Sequoias

COSAFA	College of the Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association
COSTA	College of the Sequoias Teachers' Association
COUN	Counseling
CPT	Computerized Placement Test
CS	Computer Services
CSC	Customer Service Committee
CSEA	California School Employees Association
CSET	Community Services Employment Training
CSU	California State University
CTE	Career and Technical Education
DAS	Department of Apprenticeship Standards
DEC	Distance Education Coordinator
DECOS	Distance Education at College of the Sequoias (Academic Senate sub committee)
DMV	Department of Motor Vehicles
DPH	Department of Public Health
DRC	Disability Resource Center
DSA	Division of the State Architect
DVD	Optical Disc Storage Format
EDC	Economic Development Corporation
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EEOAC	Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee
ELI	Essential Learning Initiative
EMS	Energy Management System
EOPS	Extended Opportunity Programs and Services
ESC	Equity-Driven Systems Change
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETP	Employment Training Panel
EXPO	Exposition
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FCI	Facilities Condition Index
FEC	Faculty Enrichment Committee
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FLEX	Flexible Calendar
FOG	Fiscal Oversight Group
FPP	Final Project Proposal
FPU	Fresno Pacific University
FSBPT	Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy
FT	Full-Time
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FTES	Full-Time Equivalent Students
FYE	First Year Experience
GB	Gigabyte
GE	General Education
GED	General Educational Development Test
GEO	General Education Outcomes
HEART	Pro Youth Heart
HEC	Hanford Educational Center

HSI	Hispanic Serving Institution
IC	Instructional Council
ID	Identification
IO	Institutional Outcomes
IPC	Institutional Planning Committee
IPEC	Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
IPP	Initial Project Proposal
IPRC	Institutional Program Review Committee
IS	Interdisciplinary Studies
ITV	Interactive Television
JAWS	Screen Reading Software
JM	John Muir
JMB	John Muir Building
JPA	Joint Powers Agency
K-12	Kindergarten through 12 th Grade
LCD	Liquid Crystal Display
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community
LHE	Lecture Hour Equivalent
LLN	Latina Leadership Network
LRC	Learning Resource Center
LS	Learning Skills
MDTP	Math Diagnostic Project
MEChA	Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan
MESA	Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement Program
N/A	Not Applicable
NASW	National Association of Social Workers
NCHA	National College Health Assessment
NCLEX-RN	National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses
NILOA	National Institute for Learning Outcome Assessment
NIMS	National Incident Management System
OAC	Outcomes and Assessment Committee
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalog
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PACE	Professional Association of Classified Employees
PASEO	Promoting Achievement and Scholarship with Enrichment Opportunities
PC	Personal Computer
PDF	Portable Document Format
PERS	Public Employees Retirement System
PIQE	Parent Institute for Quality Education
PLO	Program Level Outcomes
POST	Peace Officer Standards and Training
PPA	Program Participation Agreement
PT	Part Time
PTA	Physical Therapy Assistant Program
RAM	Random Access Memory
ROP	Regional Occupational Program
RTG	Registration-To-Go

SAO	Service Area Outcomes
SB	Senate Bill
SENSE	Survey of Entering Student Engagement
SEP	Student Education Plan
SEQUOIAS	Student Excellence, Quality, Opportunity, Initiative, and Success Project
SETA	Science, Engineering, Technology Association
SFID	School Facilities Improvement District
SHPE	Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers
SI	Supplemental Instruction
SIMS	Standardized Emergency Management System
SLO	Student Learning Outcomes
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SRTK	Student Right To Know
SSS	Student Support Services
STEM	Science, Technology, and Mathematics
STEPS	Student Transition Enrollment Process System
SYE	Second Year Experience
TAACCCT	Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training
TAGS	Transfer Admission Agreements Between Two Campuses
TANF	Temporary Assistant to Needy Families
TBA	To be Arranged
TCC	Tulare College Center
TCWIB	Tulare County Workforce Investment Board
TEAS	Test of Essential Academic Skills
TJUHSD	Tulare Joint Union High School District
TLC	Teaching and Learning Center
TMC	Transfer Model Curriculum
TOP	Taxonomy of Programs
TRAN	Tax Revenue Anticipation Note
UBMS	Upward Bound Math and Science
UC	University of California
UPHS	University Preparatory High School
US	United States
VA	Veterans Administration
VRAM	Video Random Access Memory
VTEA	Vocational Technical Educational Act Funds
VUSD	Visalia Unified School District
WASC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges
WSCH	Weekly Student Contact Hours



Introduction

INTRODUCTION

History of the Institution

Located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley in Central California, College of the Sequoias (COS) rests at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Founded in 1926, COS serves the residents of Tulare and Kings Counties as a center for higher education and vocational training. COS has occupied its current location since 1939. The district is continuing to change, and in the last six years it has seen the completion of new and renovated buildings and facilities on the Visalia campus (the S. Thomas Porter Field House gymnasium, the Hospital Rock nursing building, a track, and the softball team room and dugouts); renovations to Sequoia Building-north wing, John Muir building, Moro gymnasium, Kern and Tule buildings, the theater; completion of the new Hanford Educational Center; and, the groundbreaking of the Tulare College Center which is near completion.

COS Mission

COS is a comprehensive community college focused on student learning that leads to productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement. COS affirms that our mission is to help our diverse student population achieve its transfer and/or occupational objectives and to advance the economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry within our region. COS is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing programs and services that foster student success.

COS Philosophy

The philosophy of the COS is based upon a belief that all individuals are innately valuable and entitled to develop their full potential; that a healthy and vigorous society benefits from an informed appreciation of the cultural, racial and socioeconomic variations among its members; that a democracy depends upon a critical, questioning and informed citizenry; and, that through its programs the District serves the individual, the community and society.

COS Goals

2011 – 12 COS Board Priorities:

1. Attain center status for the Hanford Educational Center.
2. Plan for a three campus District.
3. Follow through on the plans for strengthening the Agriculture program and for bringing the Tulare Joint Union High School District Agriculture program to the COS Tulare College Center.
4. Stay fiscally stable and maintain a 5 percent minimum general fund reserve.
5. Maximize reimbursements for the Tulare College Center and secure agreements with the City of Tulare.
6. Annual program review presentations by faculty chairs and/or other program leaders.
7. Receive an annual report on outcomes in the Strategic Plan, especially related to student success.
8. Set up a process for updating the Education and Facilities Master Plan.
9. Receive a report on existing and potential activities with the high schools to improve college attendance.

COS Vision

The entire COS community works in an environment of mutual respect to realize the following vision:

- COS students achieve their full educational potential. The District provides an educational pathway for every student without regard to background, disability, location, culture, learning modality, and preconceived time frames.
- COS has an environment that creates a positive attitude among COS employees that carries over to the students and into the community.
- COS is a community leader whose contributions positively impact the lives of the population it serves.
- Educational programs at COS are aligned to meet the rapidly emerging economic and workforce development needs of the community through partnerships with business, government, industry and labor.

COS Offerings

- Associate in arts and associate in science degrees and certificates
- Preparation for transfer to another college, university, or postsecondary institution
- Career education, training, and services
- Basic skills, English as a Second Language
- Leadership skills, student development, and student support services to promote student success
- Business and community development and training

COS Success Measures and Institutional Outcomes

In 2009, the Institutional Planning Committee (now the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee, or IPEC) adopted the following Institutional Outcomes (IO) for COS students:

- Quantitative Reasoning: Apply quantitative and symbolic reasoning to obtain objective solutions to problems and equations.
- Writing and Reading: Write coherently and effectively, adjusting to a variety of audiences and purposes, while taking into account others' writings and ideas.
- Creative/Analytical Thinking: Use appropriate creative and analytic methods to interpret ideas, solve problems, and present conclusions.
- Oral and Listening Skills: Communicate effectively for a given purpose within the specific context of a communication event.
- Informational Literacy: Locate, evaluate, and use information from a variety of sources to take action or make a decision.
- Social Interaction: Demonstrate effective self-management and interpersonal skills with people from a variety of backgrounds to seek consensus, resolve conflicts, and take responsibility.
- Health and Wellness: Participate in active living and self-care practices that support health and wellness.

- **Cultural Competency:** Demonstrate awareness, respect, sensitivity and understanding needed for participating successfully in a diverse local and global society.

COS Commitment to Diversity

COS is committed to providing an educational environment that enables students in its diverse population to achieve their transfer and/or occupational objectives. The Student Equity Plan (SEP) focuses on the goals for access, retention, degree and certificate completion, English as a Second Language (ESL), basic skills completion, degree and certificate completion, transfer, and a positive campus climate for each historically underrepresented group. Since the initial development of the SEP in 1994 and the analysis of its progress in 1996, and again as recently as the 2010 – 11 Academic Year, the District community has been involved in planning activities to achieve its student equity goals, resulting in success for students. These planning efforts have focused on not only the achievement of student equity goals but also the achievement of the Strategic Plan, as well as the Institutional Master Plan.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee (EEOAC), formerly known as the “Faculty and Staff Diversity Committee,” was established in 2010. The mission of the EEOAC is to assist the District in implementing the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan. The EEOAC assists in promoting an understanding and support of equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination policies and procedures. The committee may also sponsor events, training, or other activities that promote equal employment opportunity, nondiscrimination, retention, and diversity. When appropriate, the advisory committee makes recommendations to the governing board, the superintendent/president, and the equal employment opportunity officer. The EEOAC meets a minimum of four times per fiscal year, with additional meetings if needed to review Equal Employment Opportunity and diversity efforts, programs, policies, and progress. The EEOAC includes a diverse membership, composed of three faculty members, three classified members, three administrators, two students, and two community members.

COS Commitment to the Community

COS plays a central role in education, training and support for the community. The COS Strategic Plan focuses on six major areas: student access, students’ success in completing their education, students’ mastery of basic skills, efficient and effective college practices, students as citizens of a global community, and economic growth of Tulare and Kings Counties.

Major Developments Since the 2006 Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review

FACILITIES

COS has undergone massive construction, expansion, and restructuring of buildings and facilities since 2006 due to the passage of bond measures throughout the COS service area.

Hanford Educational Center

The new COS Hanford Educational Center (HEC), which took the place of the former Hanford facilities and opened in fall 2010, was made possible by Measure C, a \$22 million bond approved by Hanford voters on November 7, 2006. The campus is part of a joint project of the City of Hanford and Hanford Joint Union High School District. Transfer, job preparation, developmental, and community education courses are offered at HEC. Faculty and staff work collaboratively to assist students both inside and outside the classroom. Currently, HEC serves about 1,700 students each semester.

Once a walnut orchard, today the property houses Sierra Pacific High School, a softball complex, and the HEC. The three entities share more than just the land; they regularly share facilities. Several examples of this partnership are apparent on a smaller scale as well. For example, because chemistry labs are very expensive to build, it was not efficient to build two labs, one for the high school and one for the District. After Sierra Pacific built the chemistry lab, COS upgraded it so that college-level chemistry classes could be taught there.

Tulare College Center

Construction of the Tulare College Center (TCC) is nearing completion; classes will begin in the spring 2013 semester. The center is funded in part by the 2008 Measure J bond and a state match. Initial course offerings will include the entire agriculture, architecture, graphic design, drafting, and welding programs, along with a full complement of general education courses. State and local bonds funded the \$128 million dollar project, which is designed to involve four phases and will eventually consist of a 120-acre campus serving 20,000 students from the southern portion of the COS District.

Hospital Rock (Visalia Campus)

The Hospital Rock building, funded by the state, opened in spring 2010. This new building houses the expanded registered nursing program with approximately 300 students. It also houses a number of new allied health programs. These programs include nurse assistant, emergency medical technician, pharmacy technician, and physical therapy assistant, the newest degree program. This building provides state of the art skills labs including a simulation lab, a large computer classroom, large lecture room, and numerous standard classrooms.

Dr. S. Thomas Porter Field House (Visalia Campus)

The Porter Field House opened in fall 2010. This state-of-the-art building was primarily budgeted through state funds and a donation from the local family of the late Dr. S. Thomas Porter. This gymnasium is an improvement upon the previous gym because it provides increased seating capacity, court dimensions that follow standard regulations, men's and

women's locker rooms, treatment rooms, and concession and ticket office capabilities. This facility also houses physical education classes and is available to community organizations.

Track and Field (Visalia Campus)

Funded through local passage of Measure I, the new track and field was opened in fall 2011. The old track and field was a safety concern as well as being unsuitable for competition. The new facility includes quality artificial turf and new all-weather track, as well as lighting, fencing, and equipment. Though the funding did not allow for expansion of the track for competition, the field is now in compliance for soccer games. The track is available to community members during established times and is well utilized for physical education classes, football practice, soccer practice and games, and practice for the track and field teams.

Theater (Visalia Campus)

The grand opening of the newly-remodeled theater was in fall 2009. The remodel was funded through local Measure I for \$800,000. The lighting and sound systems were overhauled and upgraded along with new seating, motors for the electrics and grand drapes, and a remodel of the bathrooms and greenroom.

John Muir Building (Visalia Campus)

The Science Division moved into the John Muir building (JMB) in July of 2008. The JMB offers many new and improved facilities including a larger storage and laboratory preparation area, modern greenhouse, improved lecture halls with advanced audio visual equipment, and needed lab support equipment such as fume hoods, deionized water apparatus, instrumentation rooms, and specimen storage. Upgraded equipment and supplies have ensured that students have access to state-of-the-art instructional experiences. The lab preparation area allows the science technicians easy access to all labs to assist with both setup and live laboratory support. More efficient heating, venting, and air conditioning systems allowed for a healthier learning environment. New JMB safety features include eyewashes, showers, and well-ventilated chemical storage. Science faculty offices are in proximity to the lecture halls and labs, allowing students easy access to instructor help. Two computer labs are available to students for laboratory statistical and graphical analysis or for online research. Additionally, the Mathematics Engineering and Science Achievement program (MESA) is housed in the JMB. Over the last two years, the area to the south of the building has been converted to a botanical garden. To date, more than 60 native California plant species have been planted in the botanical learning lab. Future plans include the addition of geological specimens in the garden for geology courses, soil science and geography laboratories.

School Facilities Improvement District Bonds

Since 2006, citizens within the COS service area have passed three School Facilities Improvement District (SFID) bonds: Measures C, I, and J. These historical votes, which show incredible support from the District's surrounding communities, demonstrate these communities' commitment to improving educational opportunities for students living outside the Visalia area of the District.

Measure C

On November 7, 2006, Hanford voters approved Measure C, a SFID bond to build a permanent educational center in Hanford by acquiring, constructing, and equipping buildings, sites, libraries, classrooms, and science and computer labs. This new Hanford Educational Center (HEC) will prepare students for university transfer and for law enforcement, firefighting, and other skilled jobs, as well as providing other vocational programs. The HEC opened its doors in fall 2010 and serves more than 1,700 students. Through this measure, the District was issued \$22 million in bonds, at legal rates, with citizen oversight.

Measure I

On November 4, 2008, voters in Visalia, Farmersville, Exeter, Woodlake, and other surrounding communities approved Measure I, a SFID bond to refurbish and upgrade facilities on the Visalia campus and provide for future growth.

Measure I funding was based on the following:

- Fund nursing technology and equipment for the Nursing program. Currently, COS trains almost 75 percent of all the nurses working in the area's medical facilities.
- Fund up-to-date computers and technology to ensure that education is current, while also improving distance learning.
- Fund security upgrades on campus including code blue emergency phones and exterior lighting.
- Fund the \$5.5 million local match required for receiving \$12.5 million in state funds to modernize instructional buildings that house the social science, language arts, and business/computer classrooms.
- Pay the remaining \$4.3 million debt on the science building (John Muir).
- Fund acquisition of land for parking and expansion to meet long-term needs.
- Lease classroom space for the Health Professions Continuing Education program.
- Provide the required \$1.2 million in matching funds for upgrades and repairs ranging from roofs to plumbing.
- Replace systems with more energy-efficient technology for an estimated annual savings of \$100,000.
- Renovate the COS Theatre and replace or repair aging 1970s equipment.
- Fund the local matching requirement of \$1.3 million for the new gym in order to receive \$14.4 million in state money.

Measure J

On November 4, 2008, voters in Tulare, Lindsay, Corcoran, and surrounding communities approved Measure J, a SFID bond to build the Tulare College Center, constructing and equipping buildings, sites, libraries, classrooms, and science and computer labs. This Center will help prepare students for university transfer and skilled jobs, as well as providing vocational programs. The goals of Measure J are as follows:

- Build 93,000 square feet of academic buildings in Phase 1 of the Tulare College Center with almost \$60 million in state funding. The Center will offer both general

and vocational education, and it will allow students to gain certificates and degrees or transfer to a four-year university.

- Provide parking, library, food service, and other student services funded with almost \$13 million in local money. This is the local match required for the academic building.
- Create a Vocational Education Complex to be built in Phase 2, funded with \$27 million in state money and \$2.7 million in local matching funds. Courses here will focus on training students for high-demand jobs such as welding and farm equipment repair.
- Build a Farm Animal Complex using \$14 million in state funds and a \$13 million local match. Facilities will be shared by agricultural programs through COS and Tulare Joint Union High School District (TJUHSD).
- Provide classrooms and farm animal buildings housing agriculture career training courses including animal science and diagnostics; ornamental horticulture; and dairy, equine, and plant sciences.
- Provide computers and health education programs for the city of Lindsay.
- Fund projects in Corcoran such as equipment for the Technology Learning Center, renovation of science labs, or a correctional officer training program.

GRANTS AND PROGRAMS

COS has received numerous additional grants allowing the District to increase student programs and services that promote student success.

Achieving the Dream

In 2009, COS was selected as one of the first two California community colleges to participate in the Achieving the Dream (ATD) initiative. The District's selection for participation in this long-term national initiative was based on the goal of helping more college students achieve success—particularly those students who traditionally face the most significant barriers. The COS core team participated in the national strategy institute in February 2010 and developed five challenge questions including topics of mandatory orientation, mandatory student success courses, On-Course curriculum, a no-late-registration policy, and enhanced research capacity. The campus underwent a year-long discussion focused on these five issues and alignment with the Strategic Plan. COS is no longer an active participant in the ATD initiative due to the high cost of participation, but COS has and will continue to incorporate strategies learned and developed through the two years of participation.

Essential Learning Initiative

The Essential Learning Initiative (ELI) was established in 2007 with support of statewide basic skills funding. During the 2007 – 08 academic year, the entire campus participated in an in-depth self study focused on four areas of basic skills education: organizational and administrative practices, program components, staff development, and instructional practices. The ELI self-assessment has been aligned with the COS Strategic Plan. The ELI steering committee meets monthly to discuss challenges and progress on improvement in basic skills education and to assess current projects.

TRiO

COS received its two first TRiO grants with Upward Bound Math and Science (UBMS) in 2007 and Student Support Services (SSS) in 2010. The UBMS program is funded from 2007 to 2012 and supports 50 high school students at \$250,000 per year to ensure the smooth transition from high school to college. Students participate in workshops and counseling and attend summer classes at the District. SSS is funded from 2010 through 2015 to support 140 COS students with \$220,000 annual funding. First-generation, low-income, and under-represented students receive advising and counseling support to ease the transition to the first year of college and to assist in the transfer process to four-year colleges and universities.

Nursing and Allied Health Grants

Over the last 6 years, millions of dollars in state and federal grants have given the Nursing and Allied Health division the ability to increase capacity, provide student support services, recruit faculty, purchase state-of-the-art equipment, and provide seed money to plan and implement new health careers programs. The following are only a few examples of the positive outcomes from these grant awards: the division implemented a Physical Therapy Assistant associate degree program; increased capacity of the Registered Nursing and Pharmacy Technician programs; purchased high fidelity and state-of-the-art simulation equipment; and, provided tutors for students as well as computer assisted support. These grants have made a tremendous positive impact on this division, its students, and the health care community.

Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement

The Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) program is a statewide initiative designed to assist underrepresented and low income students in the completion of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) degrees. The MESA program consists of a study center (in JM 124) that provides tutoring, group-study facilities, supplemental instruction, enrichment opportunities, and science counseling. The students in the program also participate in the Science, Engineering, Technology Association (SETA), a student body club open to all students interested in meeting bimonthly to exchange ideas in STEM fields. In addition to helping many science majors transfer to California universities, both MESA and SETA have been instrumental in assisting COS students in attending national conferences (Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, American Association for the Advancement of Science) and in applying for and participating in internships. MESA has also been the recipient of a technology award that provides each of its students with a laptop. MESA recently won recognition at the state level as the winner of the MESA Mathematics Competition campus award in 2010 and an individual top performance award for 2011. Four MESA students have been awarded National Science Foundation Science, Technology, and Mathematics (STEM) scholarships and two MESA students have also been recipients of the \$30,000 Jack Kent Cooke scholarships to UC Berkeley and Merced.

Title V-Hispanic Serving Institution Grants

COS has received two Title V HSI grants since 2006, the Student Excellence, Quality, Opportunity, Initiative, and Success (SEQUOIAS) grant and the Promoting Achievement and Scholarship with Enrichment Opportunities (PASEO) grant.

Title V SEQUOIAS Grant

The SEQUOIAS Project (\$5.1 million-dollar grant from the federal government) is currently in year three of its five-year term. This project has produced successful data with regard to basic skills math and English, as well as in retention. The SEQUOIAS Project directly funds both the First-Year Experience (FYE) and Second-Year Experience (SYE) Programs, which include several staff and faculty and a computer lab. In addition to direct student impact, the SEQUOIAS project has impacted faculty development and management and evaluation in a significant manner. In the past two years, approximately 100 faculty and staff members have been provided with On-Course training. Faculty members have also been given the opportunity to collaborate and develop through faculty inquiry groups, summer work groups, and workshops provided both face-to-face and online. Additionally, the SEQUOIAS Project funded COS' new online orientation which was fully implemented in spring 2012.

Title V PASEO Grant

The Promoting Achievement and Scholarship with Enrichment Opportunities (PASEO) Program (a \$3.5 million grant from the United States Department of Education Co-op Title V) was successfully established on the COS and the Fresno Pacific University (FPU) campuses beginning October of 2010. Transfer Admission Agreements (TAGS) between the two campuses for all math and science majors have been approved. Incoming STEM students participate in a summer residential Summer Bridge program at FPU. Peer mentors provide effective Supplemental Instruction (SI), and the amount of SI provided in the MESA Center has increased by 20 percent, while tutoring has increased by 50 percent. Specialized STEM counselors have increased their presence in the MESA center by 20 percent. An emphasis on service learning ensures that the broader community benefits as well.

Enhancement of the teaching of STEM classes was a top priority of this grant. In order to accomplish this, STEM faculty helped select much-needed equipment to be purchased: Netop Vision 6 software to help math students visualize problems; mechanical equivalent of heat apparatus for physics classes; books for developing the summer bridge program, specifically targeting improvements in college science instruction; and, additional textbooks to be kept in the MESA Center for use by science students. Robotics kits were purchased for integration in science and physics labs and for use in competition among students, promoting applied science skills that complement the more mathematical/theoretical nature of the first two years of college. New periodic table charts providing additional information for first-year students were purchased for chemistry classes. Also purchased were document cameras for use in math classes to promote audiovisual teaching techniques, as well as science laboratory equipment that will help raise the standard of instruction at COS and FPU.

Career Advancement Academy Grant

The District is completing its first year of the Career Advancement Academy (CAA) grant and has been funded for next year. The grant focuses on integrating basic and contextualized skills in reading, writing, and mathematics in Career/Technical Education (CTE) programs. A pilot project of automotive, welding, graphic design, environmental control technology, and architecture was designed to provide a toolkit to CTE instructors to improve student success.

Central California Community Colleges Committed to Change (C6) Consortium

COS, in partnership with West Hills Community College District and a number of other regional colleges, is part of the \$20 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the United States Department of Labor. The grant will train more than 3,000 participants in a variety of high skill jobs in the Central Valley. COS will concentrate its efforts with regard to this grant on its manufacturing, food processing, welding, and physical therapy aid programs. www.doleta.gov/taaccct/

CURRICULUM

New courses have been developed via the curriculum process that serve students in all academic areas and provide additional student support with a goal of increasing student success and transfer rates.

CurricUNET

COS adopted the CurricUNET system for curriculum approval and development in 2006, and the system went into live production and use in fall 2007. Use of CurricUNET streamlined the curriculum approval process and allowed for focused discussion on curriculum across campus. In summer 2010, an outcomes and assessment module was added allowing the District to track course and program outcomes and assessments each year.

Curriculum Coordinator Position

In fall 2010, COS hired a curriculum/outcomes coordinator. This faculty position supports the curriculum process, chairs the Curriculum Committee, maintains CurricUNET, and coordinates outcomes development and assessment. Major accomplishments include creation and implementation of a campus system for outcomes and assessment work, creation and approval of a new General Education (GE) plan, adoption of a new content review policy for pre-requisites, creation of a campus wide Outcomes and Assessment Committee, restructuring of the Program Review format for a better report of outcomes/assessment work, ongoing training of faculty in CurricUNET for course and assessment work, and creation of GE outcomes and work toward an assessment process.

Counseling 110

In 2007, the Freshman Seminar Course (Counseling 110) was successfully piloted under COS' SEQUOIAS Title V Grant. This course was then fully implemented into the First-Year Experience program's learning communities as a linked course associated with an English course. This Freshman Seminar Course is unique in that it is taught by counseling faculty and has its own custom textbook based upon the On-Course principles. This three unit course is transferrable to 23 state universities in California.

Augmented and Supplemental Instruction

Augmented Instruction (AI) and Supplemental Instruction (SI) began in fall 2010, also funded out of the Title V SEQUOIAS grant. COS hosted six AI and eight SI sections in spring 2012. Scheduled for fall 2012 are 11 AI and 15 SI sections. AI is a unique offering loosely based on the traditional SI model out of the University of Missouri, Kansas City model. SI provides student-led voluntary study groups that meet outside of class time without credit. AI differs in that it is linked to a math or English course; is offered as noncredit; and,

students are required to participate. The faculty member from the linked course and a student facilitator are present in the AI session. Initial data for AI is extremely promising, and a description of the program was published by the Center for Community College Student Engagement in “A Matter of Degrees: Promising Practices for Community College Student Success” (2012).

Agriculture Transportation Certificate

In 2008, Labor market demand for truck drivers prompted the District to establish an agriculture transportation program providing students with an opportunity to learn skills that would help them pass the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) exam for a commercial driving license. The program is very successful, with a 95 percent pass rate on the DMV exam after completion of the agriculture transportation certificate program.

Veterinary Technology (AS Degree)

In 2011, the District received approval from the Chancellor’s office for the establishment of an associate’s degree for veterinary technology in addition to the achievement certificate that has been in place for approximately ten years. The new degree is one of the steps needed to get accreditation by the American Veterinarian Medical Association (AVMA) allowing students who successfully complete the program to take the AVMA exam to become a Registered Veterinarian Technician after completing 4116 hours in a veterinary clinic or office under the direction of a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Electrical Program

A new law requires every electrician in California to be certified by the Department of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) as of 2007. The District applied to DAS and became a certified school to provide electrician certification training. The program is very successful with over 600 students enrolled or completing the certificate program.

Physical Therapy Assistant Program

Based on labor statistics, the number of physical therapists in the community, and the lack of Physical Therapy Assistant programs in the Central Valley, COS initiated and implemented a plan to offer a Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) degree program. The program was approved through the standard community college processes and received preliminary approval in August 2010 from the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). In May 2012 CAPTE awarded the PTA program full accreditation for five years, which is the maximum number of years allowed. The first cohort of 25 graduated in May 2012. All 25 students from the first cohort were offered jobs after graduation.

Aeronautical and Aviation Technology Program

In 2009, the District embarked on an Aeronautical and Aviation Technology (AERO) program for training helicopter pilots. This program arose in response to labor market demand, with job openings expected to increase by more than 20 percent over the next ten years. The District completed the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) substantive change approval process for degree and certificate requirements. Approval by the Veteran’s Administration for financial assistance means that the program has a large number of veterans receiving full funding for the \$80,000 cost of the program.

Noncredit Program for English as a Second Language

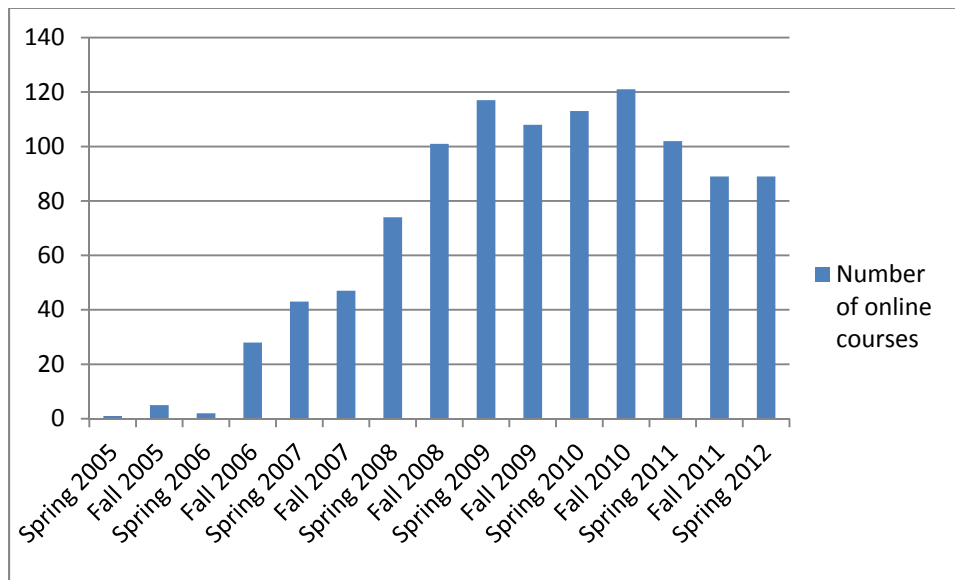
The English as a Second Language (ESL) noncredit certificate program was approved in 2008. The noncredit program was developed as a way to incorporate the large number of students seeking to audit ESL classes each semester. Noncredit courses were developed to mirror the credit program, along with three certificates of completion in advanced, intermediate, and beginning levels. Noncredit courses are also offered at five community sites in conjunction with several community based agencies.

Transfer Model Curriculum degrees

In June 2011, COS completed three Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) degrees that align with the California State University's (CSU) offerings in communication studies, psychology, and sociology. Work on developing additional TMC degrees is ongoing.

Online Course Offerings

The use of online courses at COS has increased dramatically since 2006, with a mere two online courses in spring 2006 and reaching a high of 121 courses in fall 2010. Currently, COS hosts 89 online courses per semester, ranging across all subjects. In addition, Blackboard 9.0 was adopted in fall 2009 to improve the online course quality.

**Distance Education Coordinator**

The distance education coordinator position was filled in fall 2007. The coordinator was hired to design, implement, coordinate, and evaluate the COS distance education delivery; assist faculty in converting courses from face-to-face to online modalities and implementing instructional technology; identify distance education resources for faculty; and, provide direction to the District in its development and support of distance education. The coordinator developed the required training for online teaching and offers three trainings during the calendar year. Additionally the coordinator has been the District's liaison with Blackboard, a learning management system used at COS.

Distance Education at College of the Sequoias

The mission of Distance Education at College of the Sequoias (DECOS) is to extend educational opportunities to a diverse population of the District's service-area students who prefer or need alternative methods of delivery. These approaches to instruction outside the traditional classroom setting provide greater opportunities for students to obtain the education they need to achieve their goals, while continuing with demanding personal and employment schedules. In support of the agreement between the faculty union and the District, DECOS developed an in-house online teaching certification program to provide COS instructors with an opportunity to be certified to teach online or hybrid classes at COS. Over 30 faculty members have successfully completed the training.

Business, Industry, and Community Services Training Center

The District opened the Business Industry and Community Services (BICS) Training Center in 2010 after receiving several grants for workforce training. BICS also serves as the Center for Applied Competitive Technologies (CACT), one of several centers that are part of statewide initiatives through the Chancellor's office. Featuring programs in machining, agriculture transportation, electrician certification, and short-term industry skill training, the center has been a valuable asset to the District during the downturn in the economy and reduction of Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES) allocations by offering avocational instruction to the District's communities, and providing specific workforce training with partnering businesses.

Faculty Training and Development

The Faculty Enrichment Committee (FEC) was reinstituted in 2008-2009. The FEC coordinator develops a monthly workshop schedule and submits the yearly Flexible Calendar (FLEX) certification document to the Chancellor's office. The FEC plans topics for FEC workshops and the summer institute, which is a one-day FLEX activity. In 2011, COS hosted the third annual Summer Institute on Teaching and Learning. The goal was to provide faculty with training in basic college and instructional technology. The FEC coordinator also provides orientation for new faculty and a peer-to-peer mentoring program, funded out of the Title V SEQUOIAS grant.

FLEX

In fall 2004, faculty FLEX hours were removed from the College of the Sequoias Teacher's Association (COSTA) contract. In 2008 – 09, faculty FLEX hours were reinstated on a voluntary basis and included back in the contract for the 2009 – 10 academic year. Currently, faculty have an annual 20-hour FLEX obligation – with eight to be fulfilled through the mandatory fall and spring convocations and the other 12 hours completed through various activities during the year. Compliance of FLEX hours are coordinated jointly between FEC and the District.

On-Course Program

On-Course is a program that educates university and community college instructors in ways to help students achieve greater academic success and retention. It is a one-stop resource for educators across the curriculum who want to empower their students to become active, responsible, and successful learners. COS adopted On-Course as a guiding principle to

teaching especially in its student success courses in 2009. COS has trained 112 faculty in three On-Course workshops since 2010. Faculty and staff have incorporated On-Course principles into their courses and interactions with students. Managers were also trained in On-Course in 2010.

First-Year Experience Center

Currently operating in its third year of the SEQUOIAS Project, the First-Year Experience (FYE) Program is fully operating and continuing to expand. This is the third Title V HSI program grant that COS has received for continuing the First-Year Experience Program. Expansion under the current Title V grant includes the addition of Augmented Instruction (AI) to both basic skills and non-basic skills math and English classes, Supplemental Instruction (SI), and the Transfer/Career Readiness Course (Counseling 115). In addition, the Second-Year Experience (SYE) offers university visits, transfer workshops, and application/graduation assistance.

Writing Center

The Writing Center began in 2007–08, located in a small corner of the Learning Resource Center. Initially, a few teachers staffed the Center for 17-21 erratically scheduled hours per week, other professional work permitting. Still, more than 430 student hours were logged that year. As of last year, the Writing Center acquired a well-furnished room in the Learning Resource Center, a 20-percent faculty coordinator, two part-time classified supervisorial staff, and 20 extraordinary student consultants. All consultants enroll in a training class for the entire time they work in the Center, learning new strategies for working with student writers. The Writing Center, now also available in Hanford, is open 40 regularly scheduled hours per week. During fall semester 2011, the center logged approximately 4,800 student contact hours, averaging more than 8,000 student contact hours per year. According to Writing Center data, students who use the Center complete and pass their English classes 20 percent more successfully than their peers. This trend holds true from developmental through advanced classes. In a recent semester, the Writing Center served students from more than 180 different courses in approximately 60 departments.

Math Lab

The Math Lab was developed in 2006, although it had existed in various forms in the past. The current Math Lab is housed in the Learning Resource Center and staffed by the full-time math faculty and student tutors. In 2006, the math 401 course began providing positive attendance credit for students utilizing the services of the math lab.

Electronic Transcripts

In November 2010, the District received mini-grants for a start-up in the use of electronic transcripts, and as of spring 2012, it is beta testing the system with area colleges and universities.

Electronic Student Educational Plan

In spring 2012, the counseling division launched an electronic Student Education Plan (SEP) that will streamline the process for establishing and accessing a student's educational plan.

This change will greatly enhance counseling services, giving students more access to their educational plans.

Early Alert Initiative

The Early Alert Initiative provides a standardized format within Banner for all faculty to report mid-term grades and progress for their students. At institutions of higher learning nationwide, the use of Early Alert has increased student retention and persistence rates. Early Alert empowers students to make more informed decisions about their education by encouraging them to seek help in improving their overall academic performance. Students are able to view their progress reports via Banner Web, and they also receive a Early Alert message through their COS e-mail accounts.

Early Alert Statistics for Spring Semester 2011

- 4,044 Early Alerts were submitted by faculty and adjunct faculty.
- 101 COS faculty and adjunct faculty members submitted Early Alerts.
- 258 classes had Early Alerts submitted
- 2,847 COS students received at least one Early Alert.
- 49 percent of students whose instructors suggested they drop the course actually did so prior to the course withdrawal deadline.
- 40 percent of students who received a “D” Early Alert letter grade passed their classes with a “C” or better final letter grade.
- 39 percent of all students referred to the Disability Resource Center (DRC) received support services from the DRC.
- 30 percent of all students referred to the COS Tutorial Center and Math Lab actually met with a tutor or mathematics department faculty member.

Student Bus Pass

California State Bill 82 and Education Code Section 76361.1 provide the statutory authority for the District to charge a mandatory and non-waivable fee for transportation, if voted upon and approved by students of the District, after approval by the Board. As such, in an effort to provide students with affordable transportation solutions, encourage public transit use and to alleviate traffic congestion and sever parking challenges, the Board of Trustees approved implementation of this fee. Per regulations, On September 30, 2010, a majority of COS students who voted at the Associated Student Body election affirmed and approved the Board’s implementation of this fee. Today, students enjoy unlimited ridership on the following routes: Tulare County Transit, Visalia City Transit and Kings Area Rural Transit for \$5 a semester. With a transit sticker placed on each student’s college ID card when the fee is paid, a student has unlimited rides for the semester.

Orientation

Orientation is a required component of matriculation to facilitate a successful transition into college and to assist students toward completing their educational goals. As per Administrative Procedure 5050, orientation and pre-orientation services are designed to provide information regarding campus procedures, academic expectations, financial assistance, and other matters related to the District. COS offers orientation to students in a variety of formats: online, individual/group appointments, and First Giant Step Orientation –

the large face-to-face orientation event hosted during August of each year. First Giant Step orientation started in 2007 with 280 students in attendance. In 2011, more than 1500 students participated in First Giant Step. The new interactive online orientation, funded through Title V SEQUOIAS grant, launched in January 2012. To date, 1,560 students have completed the online orientation, and a total of 2,400 students have accessed the online orientation. Students receive 0.5 credits for completing orientation as part of their matriculation requirement. Students must complete orientation prior to registering for classes for their second semester. Students who do not complete this requirement have a registration hold placed on their records.

Priority Registration

Through a participatory governance process, COS modified Administrative Procedure 5055 on enrollment priorities to comply with recent legislative changes in the Education Code and Title 5. In addition, the District adopted new criteria to reward students who have demonstrated progress in their program of study, completed orientation, and met with a counselor to develop a Student Education Plan (SEP).

As required by Education Code, priority enrollment is first provided to military, veterans, and foster youth and former foster youth. Also required by Title 5, the second tier of priority is for students who are served by our Disability Resource Center (DRC) and Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS). The shared governance bodies designated student athletes, Associated Student Body officers, and Honors Program students to receive the third tier priority. Continuing students are assigned the next priority tier, based on a point system which analyzes the number of units completed, the cumulative grade point average earned, SEP status, and the completion of Student Orientation.

The District partners with two Early College High Schools and students in those programs receive priority registration after continuing students. In addition, high school seniors are eligible to participate in a newly developed program, which once completed, provides priority registration over open enrollment students.



Institutional Demographics

Demographics

COS utilizes demographic data to analyze and support decision making processes. The district's application of planning data is evident in the Strategic Plan and Program Review components.

Key demographics of the COS student population include, but are not restricted to:

Key indicators - enrollment and success data:

District Student Characteristics (Fall 2011)

- Over 11,400 students were enrolled at COS in Fall 2011.
- Over one-third (38 percent) of COS students are full-time and the average load carried by a student is 8.88 units.
- Over half (56 percent) of the COS student body is female.
- Just over half (52 percent) of the student body is age 21 or younger.
- Well over half (55 percent) of COS students are Hispanic.
- More than half (56 percent) of COS's students have earned 30 units of credit or more.
- Over one-third (38 percent) of COS students place into a transfer level math course.
- Almost half (40 percent) of first-time students place into a transfer-level English course.
- Population by Age Group (Tulare and Kings County combined)
- Annual Enrollment by Age Group
- Population Participation Rate by Age Group
- Headcount Enrollment (Unduplicated)
- Socio-Economic Data (2010 Census)
- Unemployment Rates
- Tulare & Kings County by Ethnicity
- Student Enrollments by Ethnicity
- Success Distribution by Ethnicity
- COS Success vs. Statewide Success
- Student Progress and Achievement Rate
- Student Success and Improvement
- Fall to Fall Persistence of First-Time Students
- Fall to Spring Persistence of First-Time Students
- Transferred to a Four-Year Institution Within Six Years
- Student Graduates
- Employees by Job Classification
- Full-Time Faculty by Ethnicity
- Part-Time Faculty by Ethnicity

COS District and Community Data

Since 2006, the adult population (20 years or older) of Tulare and King's County has grown by over 42,000. COS enrolls almost three percent of the adult population and three percent of the population aged 19 years or less.

Population by Age Group	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Tulare County and Kings County (combined)					
19 or less	201,385	204,901	208,448	211,761	215,996
20 – 24	53,605	54,078	54,827	56,019	57,680
25 – 49	205,245	210,151	214,938	219,423	224,958
Over 49	130,580	134,975	139,422	144,225	149,164
<i>Source: Tulare and Kings County data from State of California, Department of Finance, Population Projections 2000 – 2050.</i>					

Over one-third (34 percent) of COS students are aged 19 or less followed by one-third (34 percent) enrollment of students aged 25-49 years. The student population has grown steadily since 2006 in all age groups except for the population over age 49.

Annual Enrollment by Age Group	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
College Enrollment					
19 or less	5,576	6,181	6,933	6,789	6,324
20 – 24	4,142	4,373	4,842	5,412	5,458
25 – 49	5,495	6,006	6,624	6,730	6,229
Over 49	902	1,019	968	979	715
<i>Source: Enrollment Data – Accountability Report for Community Colleges (ARCC), Chancellor's office</i>					

The participation rate of Tulare/Kings County remained relatively constant over a five year period with a 1.8 percent increase of 20-24 year olds. The 2010/2011 participation rate shows a slight decrease from previous years. The decrease in enrollment for 2010-11 may be contributed to the impact of budget cuts resulting in course cuts across the district.

Population Participation Rate by Age Group	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Population Participation Rates					
19 or less	2.8%	3.0%	3.3%	3.2%	2.9%
20 – 24	7.7%	8.1%	8.8%	9.7%	9.5%
25 – 49	2.7%	2.9%	3.1%	3.1%	2.8%
Over 49	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%
Population Participation Rate: is defined here as the number of students enrolled at the District per the population of the service area. The service area is currently defined as Tulare County and Kings County. <i>Source: Tulare and Kings County data from State of California, Department of Finance. Population Projections 2000 – 2050. Source: Enrollment data from ARCC (Chancellor's office).</i>					

The annual unduplicated enrollment at COS grew from just under 10,000 in 2006 to a high of almost 13,500 in 2008-2009. Enrollment in 2010-2011 has remained steady; however, the annual enrollment has declined since 2008-2009. Due to budget cuts, the district has cancelled summer school for two years along with course cuts in the fall and spring semesters. The enrollment is expected to decline in 2011-12.

Headcount Enrollment (Unduplicated)	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
College Enrollment					
Fall Enrollment	9,959	11,697	13,449	13,322	13,470
Annual Enrollment	16,115	17,561	19,367	19,969	18,820
FTES	8,930	8,210	10,160	10,615	10,562
<i>Source: ARCC Report, Chancellor's Office</i>					

In 2010, Tulare and Kings County remain significantly below the statewide rates for all socio-economic indicators. Only 13 percent of Tulare and 12 percent of Kings County residents have a bachelor's degree, which is significantly lower than the stateside average of 30 percent and only 67 percent and 70 percent respectively are high school graduates, compared to 81 percent statewide. The poverty level in Tulare County is 23 percent and 19 percent in Kings County which is substantially higher than the statewide rate of 14 percent. In addition, the population in Tulare and Kings Counties has continued to grow by 20 and 19 percent respectively, compared to only 10 percent statewide.

Socio-Economic Data (2010 Census)	Tulare County	Kings County	Statewide
Socio-Economic Data			
High School Graduates	67%	70%	81%
Bachelor's Degree	13%	12%	30%
Persons Below Poverty Level	23%	19%	14%
Population Growth 2000 - 2010	20%	18%	10%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau.			

The unemployment rate in Tulare County is 17 percent and in Kings County is 16 percent, significantly higher than the statewide unemployment rate of 12 percent.

Unemployment	Tulare County	Kings County	Statewide
Unemployment Rates			
2011 Annual Unemployment	17%	16%	12%
Source: United States (U.S.) Census Bureau.			

Over one half (55 percent) of the population of Tulare and Kings County is Hispanic, followed by over one-third (36 percent) White population. The COS student body reflects the diversity of its surrounding communities.

Tulare County & Kings County by Ethnicity	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Tulare County and Kings County Ethnicity Distribution					
Hispanic	53%	54%	57%	55%	55%
Asian	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Pacific Islander	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
African American	3%	3%	1%	3%	3%
Native American	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
White	38%	38%	36%	37%	36%
Multi-race	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
<i>Source: Tulare and Kings County data from State of California, Department of Finance. Population Projections 2000 - 2050.</i>					

College of the Sequoias 2010-2011 student population reflects the diversity of Tulare and Kings County's population. The Hispanic population at COS has grown over 10 percent since 2006, which is reflective of the diversity of the surrounding communities. It is important to note the format for indicating ethnicity in the COS and statewide application system changed in 2010, so students who may have indicated multi-race in 2009 were better able to identify ethnicity in 2010.

Student Enrollments by Ethnicity	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
College of Sequoias Ethnicity Distribution					
Hispanic	42%	44%	45%	42%	52%
Asian	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Pacific Islander	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
African American	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Native American	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
White	37%	35%	33%	29%	34%
Multi-race	10%	10%	12%	20%	6%
<i>Source: COS Planning & Research</i>					

Asian, Pacific Islander and White students continue to have a higher course success rate than other population groups. African American and Native American students have the lowest success rate. However, African Americans have a comparable or higher transfer rate than other identified population groups.

Success Distribution by Ethnicity	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Success Distribution by Ethnicity					
Hispanic	63%	63%	63%	64%	65%
Asian	72%	74%	71%	72%	72%
Pacific Islander	64%	72%	62%	57%	77%
African American	52%	56%	56%	57%	57%
Native American	56%	55%	63%	66%	61%
White	71%	71%	71%	71%	72%
Multi-race	65%	66%	68%	66%	65%
Success Definition: Percentage of students who receive a passing/satisfactory grade, credit courses only, aggregated by ethnicity. <i>Source: COS Planning & Research</i>					

The district has seen a two percent increase in course completion over a five year span and the district remains above the state average for the completion rates. The COS student success rate remains steady at 67 percent, which is comparable to the state average of 68 percent.

COS Success vs. Statewide Success	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
COS Success vs. Statewide Success					
COS Course Completion Rate	87%	88%	89%	89%	89%
State Course Completion Rate	84%	83%	85%	85%	85%
COS Success Rate	67%	67%	67%	66%	67%
State Success Rate	67%	67%	67%	68%	68%
Course Completion Definition: Percentage of students who do not withdraw from class and who receive a valid grade. <i>Source: Chancellor's Office Data Mart</i>					

The Student Progress and Achievement Rate has remained relatively constant over the past five years.

Student Progress and Achievement Rate	2001/2002 to 2006/2007	2002/2003 to 2007/2008	2003/2004 to 2008/2009	2004/2005 to 2009/2010	2005/2006 to 2010/2011
Student Progress and Achievement Rates					
Student Progress and Achievement Rate	52%	48%	49%	49%	48%
Student Progress and Achievement Rate Definition: Percentage of first-time students who showed intent to complete and who achieved any of the following outcomes within six years: Transferred to a four-year college, earned an AA/AS, earned a Certificate (18 units or more), achieved "Transfer Directed" status, or achieved "Transfer Prepared" status. <i>Source: ARCC Report, Chancellor's Office.</i>					

Vocational course success rates remained relatively stable during a five year span. The basic skills success rate and improvement rate both increased, six percent and percent respectively. The improvement rate has increased proportionately to the success rate, indicating that students are striving to obtain a college-level education rather than a basic skills education. English as a Second Language (ESL) improvement rates have increased seven percent over a five year span.

Student Success and Improvement	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Student Success and Improvement					
Vocational Course Success Rate	75%	76%	74%	74%	74%
Basic Skills Success Rate	54%	56%	58%	58%	60%
Basic Skills Improvement Rate	45%	44%	47%	48%	48%
ESL Improvement Rate	49%	44%	57%	42%	56%
Improvement Rate Definition: The improvement rate cohorts consisted of students enrolled in a credit basic skills English or Mathematics course who successfully completed that initial course. Students who successfully completed the initial course were followed across three academic years (including the year and term of the initial course). The outcome of interest was that group of students who successfully completed a higher-level course in the same discipline within three academic years of completing the initial course. ESL courses are not included in the basic skills success or basic skills improvement rates, as they have their own line item. <i>Source: ARCC Report, Chancellor's office</i>					

Over the past five years, the overall fall to fall persistence rate increased 4 percent. The persistence rate increased significantly for Hispanic, Native American, and African American students. The district has spent significant efforts on improving persistence rates for full-time students through programs and grants such as Title V HSI, First-Year Experience and Puente.

Fall to Fall Persistence of First-Time Students	Fall 2006 - Fall 2007	Fall 2007 - Fall 2008	Fall 2008 - Fall 2009	Fall 2009 - Fall 2010	Fall 2010 - Fall 2011
Fall to Fall Persistence of First-Time Students					
Hispanic	49%	52%	52%	48%	53%
Asian	78%	86%	69%	65%	67%
Pacific Islander	33%	67%	36%	40%	25%
Black / African Amer.	39%	32%	36%	46%	42%
Native American	37%	41%	37%	54%	50%
White	51%	52%	57%	55%	53%
Multi-race	43%	42%	36%	51%	57%
Total Persistence	49%	51%	53%	51%	53%
Persistence Definition: Percentage of first-time students who are enrolled as of census for an initial Fall term and a subsequent Fall term. <i>Source: COS Planning & Research.</i>					

Over the past five years, the overall fall to spring persistence rate also increased by six percent. There has been a significant increase in persistence from fall to spring for Hispanic, Pacific Islander, Native American, and multi-race students.

Fall to Spring Persistence of First-Time Students	Fall 2006 - Spring 2007	Fall 2007 - Spring 2008	Fall 2008 - Spring 2009	Fall 2009 - Spring 2010	Fall 2010 - Spring 2011
Fall to Spring Persistence of First-Time Students					
Hispanic	63%	62%	71%	67%	70%
Asian	78%	88%	80%	77%	82%
Pacific Islander	33%	100%	64%	50%	63%
African American	58%	52%	62%	68%	54%
Native American	56%	59%	59%	69%	67%
White	69%	66%	74%	70%	71%
Multi-race	57%	57%	74%	67%	69%
Total Persistence	64%	63%	72%	68%	70%
<u>Persistence Definition:</u> Percentage of first-time students who are enrolled as of census for an initial Fall term and a subsequent Spring term. <i>Source: COS Planning & Research.</i>					

The overall transfer rate of transfer velocity cohort students has remained relatively constant over a five year span, with over one-third (36 percent) of students transferring to a four year college within six years. The transfer rate has increased by over three percent for Hispanic and over 12 percent for multi-race students.

Transferred to a 4-Year Institution Within 6 Years	Cohort 2001/2002	Cohort 2002/2003	Cohort 2003/2004	Cohort 2004/2005	Cohort 2005/2006
Transferred to a 4-Year Institution Within 6 Years					
Hispanic	27%	26%	25%	32%	30%
Asian	35%	29%	24%	22%	42%
Pacific Islander	38%	39%	50%	68%	30%
African American	45%	29%	50%	32%	44%
Native American	35%	31%	45%	13%	31%
White	41%	40%	41%	35%	40%
Multi-race	32%	35%	44%	40%	44%
Overall Transfer Rate	35%	33%	34%	33%	36%
<p>Transfer Velocity Cohort: is defined by evaluating all first time freshmen six years after their entry. Those students who have completed twelve credit units and attempted a transfer level math or English course are included in the Transfer Velocity Cohort. Transfer rates for years three, four, and five are retrospective and cannot be reported until the cohort is finalized at the completion of the sixth year after initial enrollment. Students with multiple college enrollments are reported as members of the Transfer Velocity Cohort for each college attended.</p> <p><i>Source: Chancellor's office Data Mart.</i></p>					

The amount of Degrees/Certificates has increased by 29 percent over a five year span. Similarly, the District FTES has increased 18 percent. The increase in degrees awarded can be tied to the increased capacity of the Registered Nursing Program which increased from 98 degrees in 2007 to 170 degrees awarded in 2011. Degrees awarded in the Transfer Studies field also increased by 100 degrees awarded from 2007 to 2011 (436 to 536).

Student Graduates	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Student Graduates					
Degrees Awarded	752	824	736	852	1000
Certificates Awarded	544	281	451	763	672
Graduates: is defined here as any student who was awarded a degree or certificate <i>Source: Extended Information System.</i>					

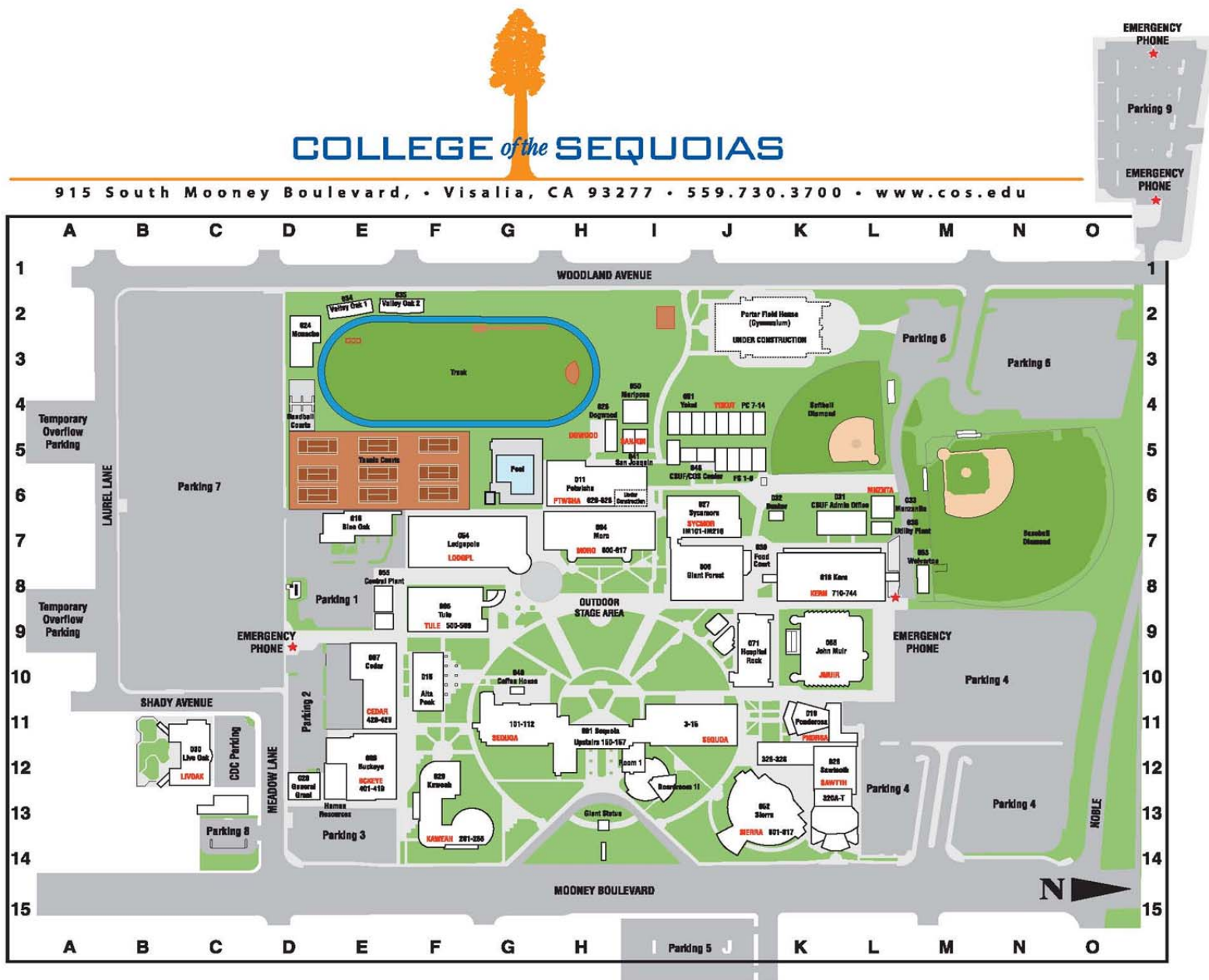
The amount of all faculty and staff has decreased over the past five years. The number of administrators decreased by six since 2007 and classified staff has decreased by 13. There has been a steady decrease in fulltime and adjunct faculty over the past five years. The, number of faculty reached a high in 2008, during the time the District reached a peak in FTES. The decrease in fulltime faculty in 2009 was due to several retirements. As courses have been cut, due to the budget crisis, the number of adjunct faculty has decreased accordingly.

Employees by Job Classification	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011
Employees by Job Classification					
Administrator	40	38	40	40	36
Classified Staff	209	219	220	209	196
Full-Time Faculty	174	185	170	174	163
Adjunct Faculty	315	325	306	315	264
<i>Source: National Center for Educational Statistics – (IPEDS)</i>					

The ethnic breakdown of full-time faculty at COS shows that 63 percent identify themselves as white and 16 percent identify as Hispanic. Part-time faculty identify themselves as 70 percent white and 15 percent Hispanic.

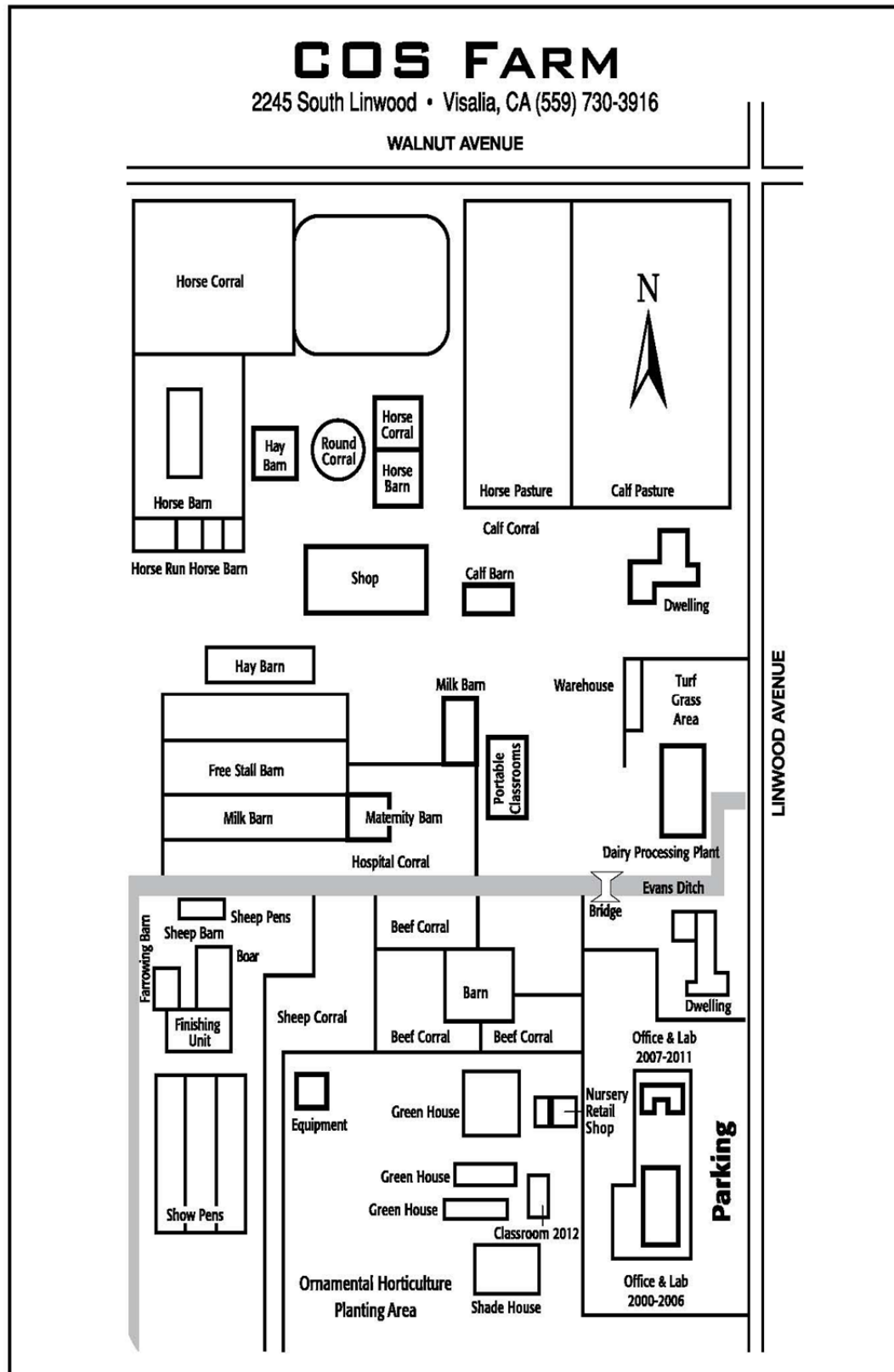
Full-Time Faculty by Ethnicity	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Full-Time Faculty by Ethnicity					
Hispanic	14%	14%	12%	14%	16%
Asian	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Pacific Islander	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
African American	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%
Native American	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
White	65%	64%	64%	63%	63%
Multi-race	12%	13%	15%	14%	14%
<i>Source: COS Planning & Research.</i>					

Part-Time Faculty by Ethnicity	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Part-Time Faculty by Ethnicity					
Hispanic	12%	12%	14%	14%	15%
Asian	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Pacific Islander	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
African American	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Native American	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
White	72%	72%	70%	69%	70%
Multi-race	13%	11%	11%	12%	10%
<i>Source: COS Planning & Research.</i>					



ALPHBETICAL LIST	Bldg. No	GRID		Bldg. No	GRID	NUMERICAL LIST	GRID
Academic Services	001	I-12	MESA	001	I-11	001 Sequoia	H-11
Adaptive P.E.	028	H-5	Payroll	001	I-12	004 Moro	H-6
Admissions & Records	001	G-11	Physical Education Division	004	H-6	005 Tule	F-8
Allied Health Division	071	J-10	Planning & Research	001	I-11	006 Buckeye	E-12
Art Gallery	029	F-13	Pool		G-6	007 Cedar	E-10
Assessment & Testing	001	H-11	President's Office	001	I-12	008 Giant Forest	J-8
Athletics	004	H-6	Puente	005	F-9	011 Potwisha	H-6
Board Room	001	I-12	Purchasing	001	I-12	015 Alta Peak	F-10
Bookstore	008	J-8	Receiving	016	E-7	016 Blue Oak	E-6
Box Office	026	K-14	Room One	001	I-12	018 Kern	K-7
Business Division	018	K-8	Scholarship Services	020	D-13	019 Ponderosa	K-11
CSUF Admin. Offices	031	L-7	Science Division	056	L-10	020 General Grant	D-12
Cafeteria	015	F-10	Social Science Division	027	J-6	024 Monache	D-3
CalWORKS Program	033	L-6	Student Activities/Affairs Office	008	J-8	026 Sawtooth	K-13
Campus Police	016	E-7	Student Development Center	033	L-6	027 Sycamore	J-6
Career/Transfer Center	001	G-11	Student Services	001	G-11	028 Dogwood	H-5
Cashier's Office	001	G-11	Tech Prep	020	D-13	029 Kaweah	F-13
Child Development Center	030	C-12	Tennis Courts		E-5	030 Live Oak	C-12
Coffee House	040	G-10	Theatre	026	K-13	031 CSUF Admin Office	K-7
Computer Services	053	M-8	TRIO	050	I-4	032 Bunker	K-6
Consumer Family Studies Div.	005	F-8	Tulare Federal Credit Union	008	J-8	033 Manzanita	L-6
Contract Education	050	I-4	Tutorial Center	054	F-7	034 Valley Oak 1	E-2
Copy & Mail Services	016	E-7	University High School	001	I-11	035 Valley Oak 2	E-2
Counseling Center	001	H-12	Vocational Education Admin.	020	D-12	036 Utility Plant	L-7
CSUF/COS Center	048	J-5				039 Food Court	J-7
Disability Resource Center	027	J-6	Building Name	Banner Code		040 Coffee House	G-10
EOP&S	001	G-11	ALTA PEAK	ALTAPK		041 San Joaquin	I-5
Emergency Phone	★ D-9, L-8		BLUE OAK	BLUOAK		048 CSUF/COS Center	J-5
Facilities and Operations Office	016	E-7	BUCKEYE	BCKEYE		050 Mariposa	I-4
Financial Aid	001	G-11	BUNKER	BUNKER		051 Yokut	J-4
Fine Arts Division	052	J-13	CEDAR	CEDAR		052 Sierra	J-13
Fire Tech	027	J-6	DOGWOOD	DGWOOD		053 Wolverton	M-8
First Year Experience	001	I-11	GENERAL GRANT	GRANT		054 Lodgepole	F-7
Fiscal Services	001	I-12	GIANT FOREST	GIANT		055 Central Plant	E-8
Food Court	039	J-8	HOSPITAL ROCK	HOSPRK		056 John Muir	L-10
Food Service	015	F-10	JOHN MUIR	JMUIR		071 Hospital Rock	J-10
Foundation Office	020	D-13	KAWEAH	KAWEAH		★ Emergency Phone	
Graphics	016	E-7	KERN	KERN			
Gymnasium	004	H-6	LIVE OAK	LIVOAK			
Health Center	008	J-8	LODGEPOLE	LODGPL			
Human Resource Services	006	E-12	MANZANITA	MNZNTA			
Industry & Technology Div.	006 & 007	E-11, 12	MARIPOSA	MARPSA			
Information Desk	001	I-12	MONACHE	MNACHE			
Language Arts Division	005	F-8	MORO	MORO			
Lecture Hall	019	K-11	POTWISHA	PTWSHA			
Learning Resource Center	054	F-7	PONDEROSA	PNDRSA			
Mailroom	027	J-6	SAN JOAQUIN	SANJQN			
Math Division	029	F-13	SAWTOOTH	SAWTTH			
Media Services	027	I-6	SEQUOIA	SEQUOA			
			SIERRA	SIERRA			
			SYCAMORE	SYCMOR			
			TULE	TULE			
			VALLEY OAK 1	VOAK1			
			VALLEY OAK 2	VOAK2			
			WOLVERTON	WLVRTN			
			YOKUT	YOKUT			





College of the Sequoias Trustee Boundaries

Adopted October 10, 2011

Fresno



Legend

Current Wards

Scenario3R
Ward

1

2

3

4

5

Kings

Tulare

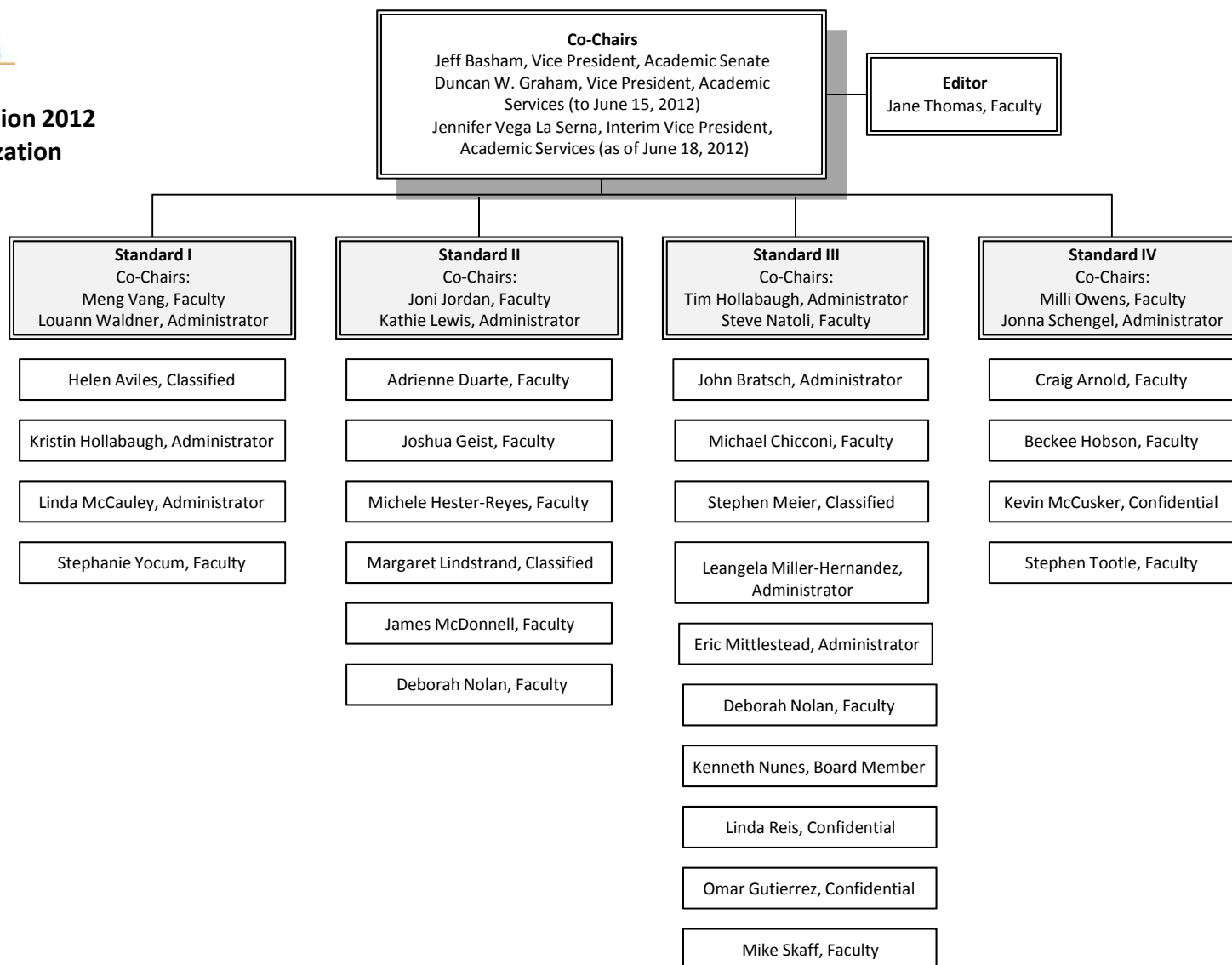
Kern



Accreditation Organization



Accreditation 2012 Organization



Accreditation Calendar and Timeline

Fall 2010

Identify four Standards Chairs from faculty

Core Team

Accreditation Liaison Officer: Duncan W. Graham (through June 15, 2012)

Jennifer Vega La Serna, Ph.D. (as of June 18, 2012)

Institutional Planning Committee: Jeff Basham, Co-Chair

Editor: Jane Thomas

Standard I: Louann Waldner, Meng Vang

Standard II: Kathie Lewis, Joni Jordan

Standard III: Tim Hollabaugh, Steve Natoli

Standard IV: Jonna Schengel, Milli Owens

Start collecting data and documentation to SharePoint site (under “Academic Services”)

Select the self-evaluation standards teams (six to eight members per team)

Spring 2011

Organizational Schema

Establish timeline for fall 2011 self-evaluation and fall 2012 visit

Core team become familiar with 2006 self-evaluation recommendations and our 2009 mid-term report

Develop: process, accountability benchmarks, templates, create website

Strategic Plan feedback forums

Core faculty team members attend the state-wide

Academic Senate Accreditation Institute March 18, 2011 - March 19, 2011

Fall 2011

Administer campus climate survey

Start self-evaluation based on Accreditation Standards, continue data and documentation collection; align documentation with standards, write self-evaluation to be completed by spring 2012.

Spring 2012

Draft to constituent groups/Academic Senate by April 15, 2012
Draft form of Self-Evaluation to Board of Trustees for review/feedback for
June 2012 meeting
Start preparations/logistics for team visit

Summer 2012

Finalize layout and cosmetics of self-evaluation
Finish editing and hyper-links
06/25: send final self-evaluation to Board of Trustees for approval
07/09: Board approval
07/15: send hard copies and electronic format to Accrediting Commission for Community
and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)
Continue preparations/logistics for team visit
Send copies to visiting team; establish intranet/internet access for visiting team

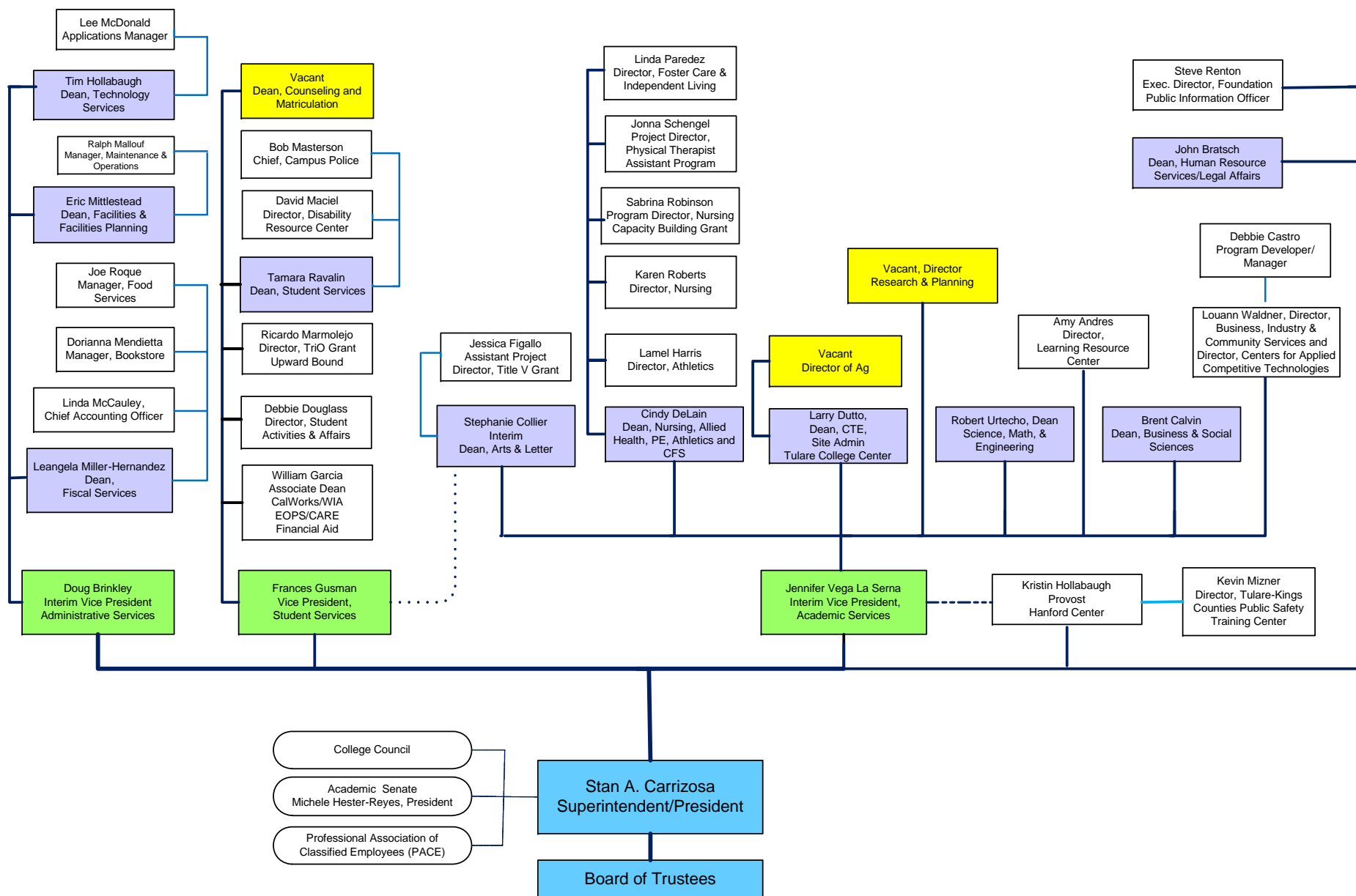
Fall 2012

Early September: visit from team leader
Continue preparations for team visit
October 8-11, 2012: team visit



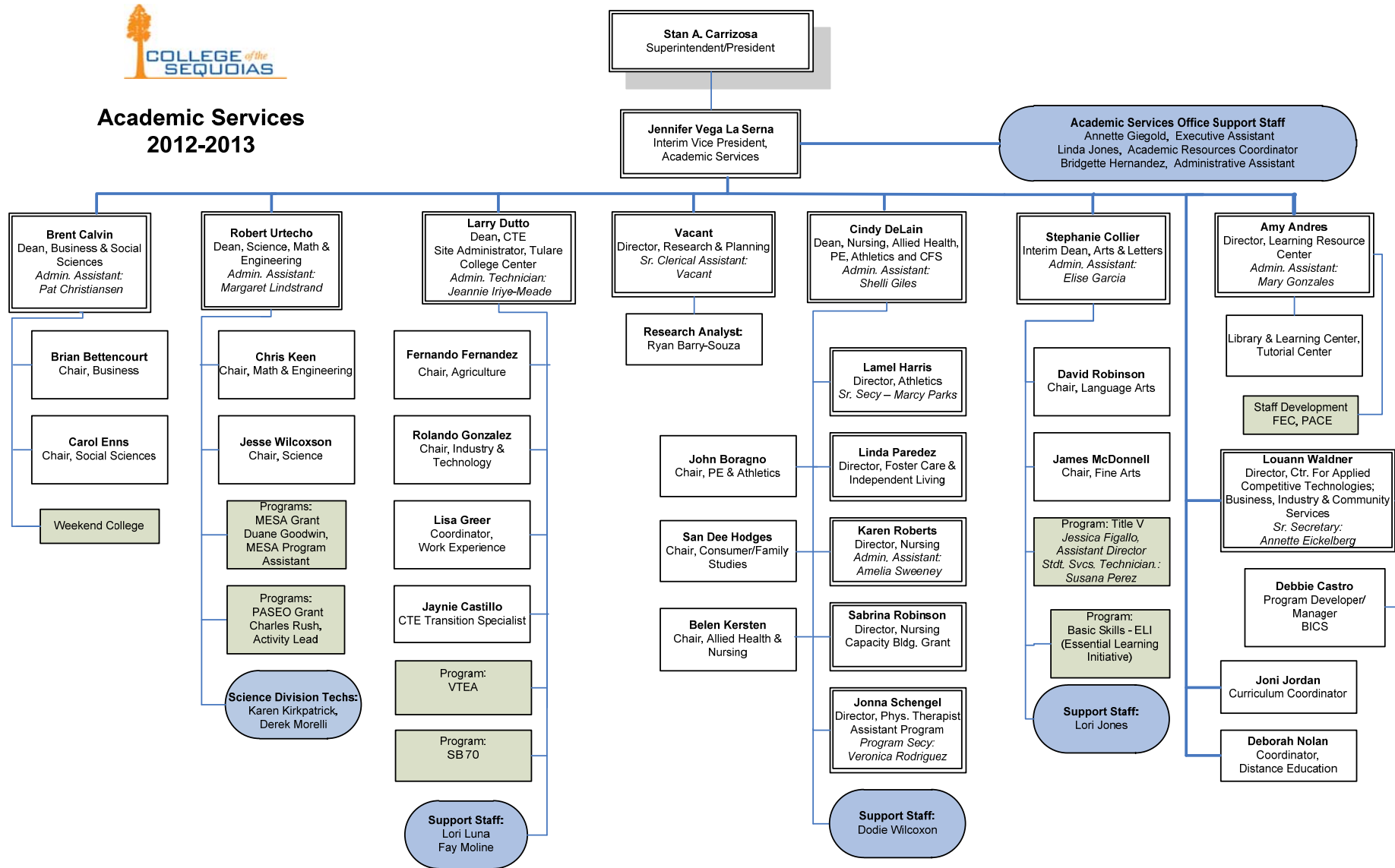
Organizational Information

College of the Sequoias Community College District Organizational Structure, August 1, 2012

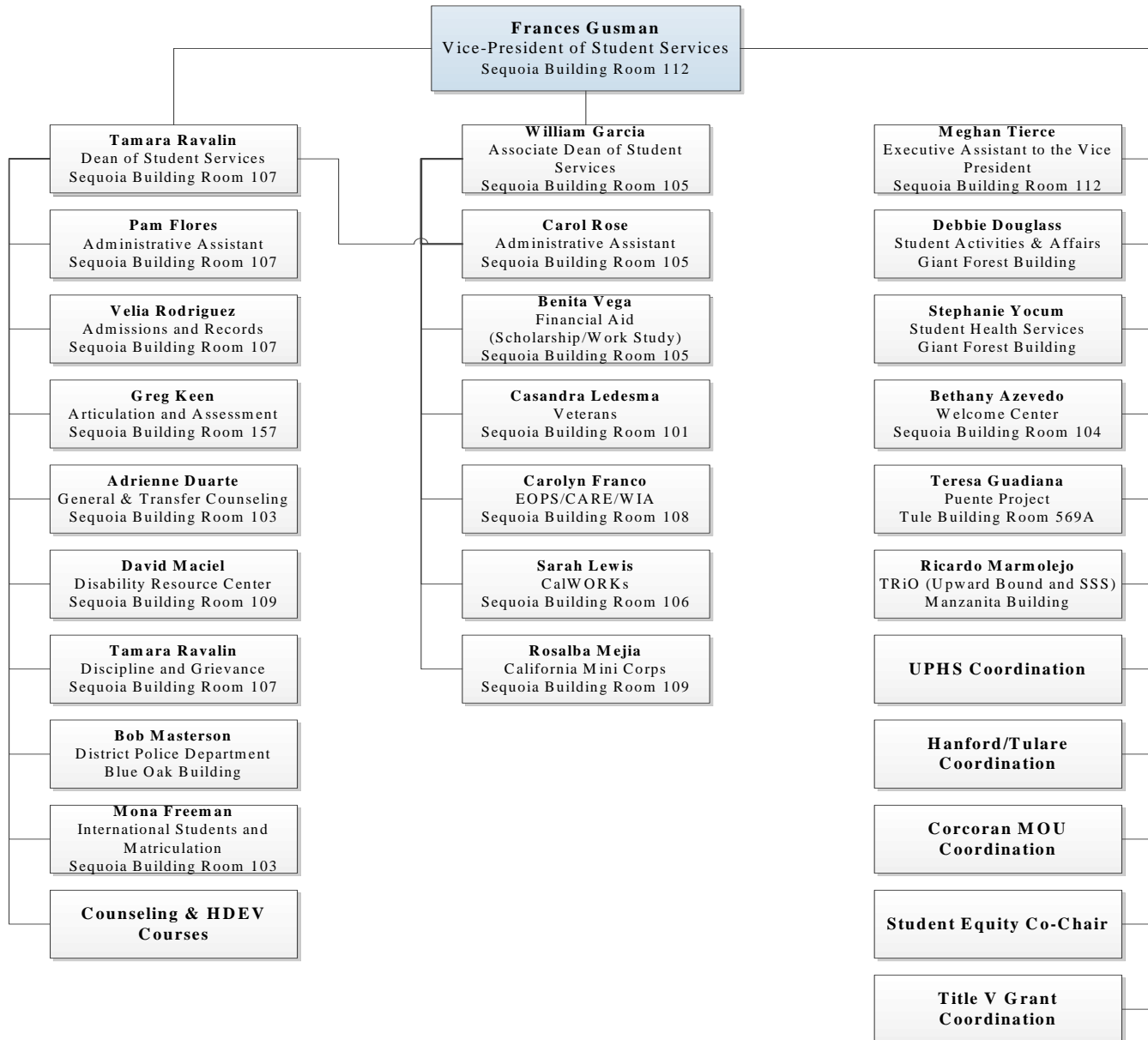




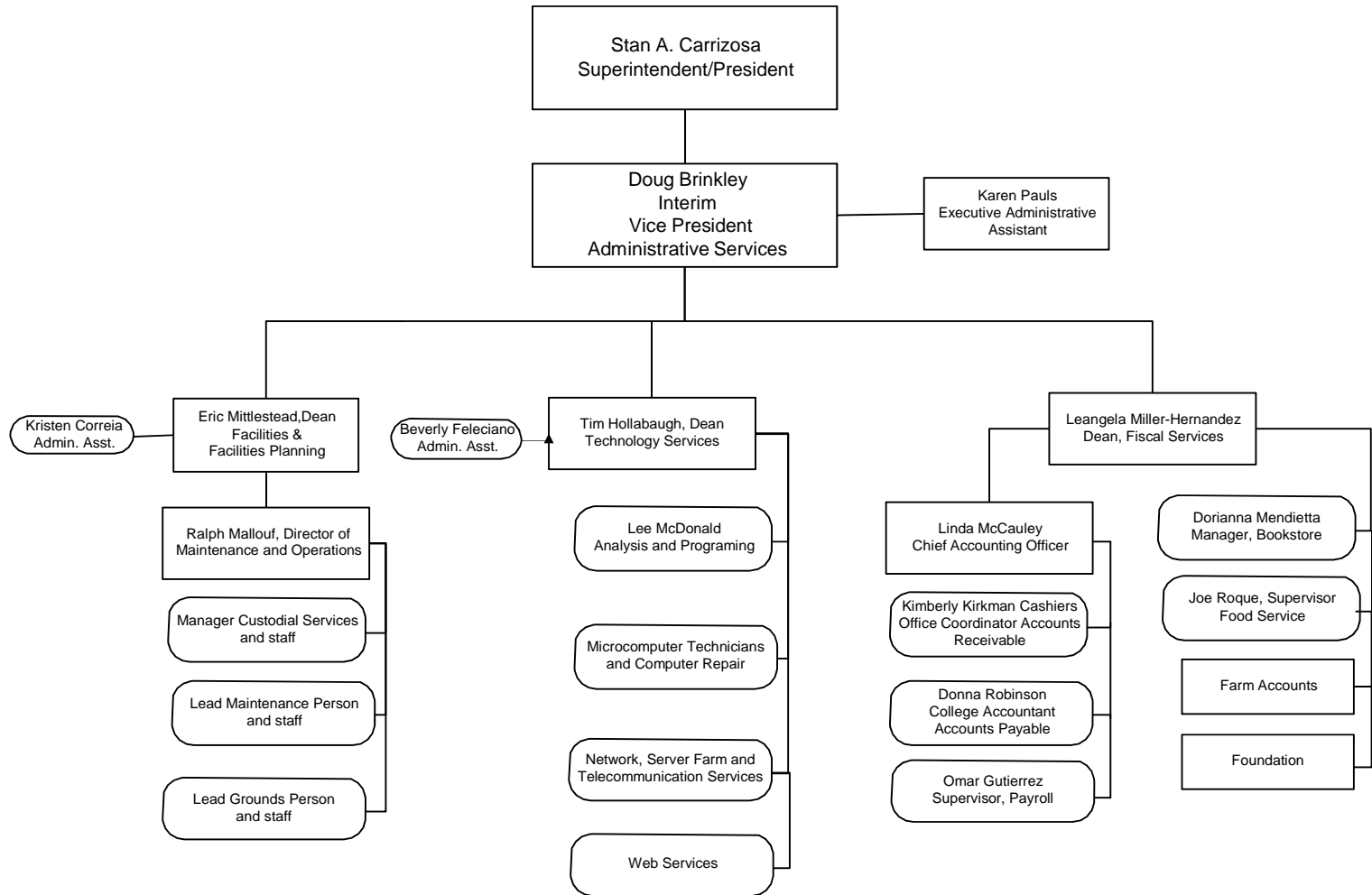
Academic Services 2012-2013



Student Services 2012 - 2013

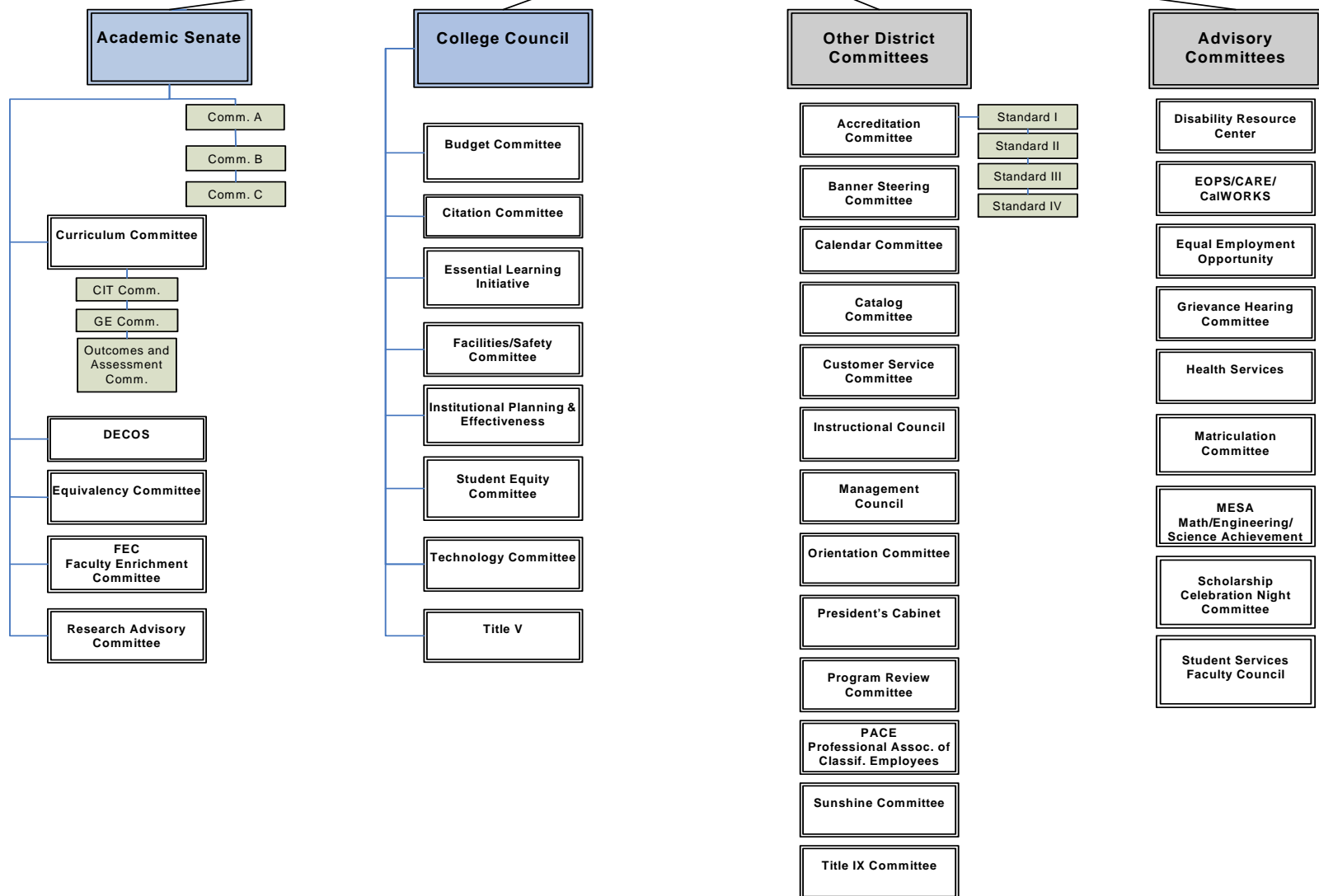


College of the Sequoias Administrative Services



Committees

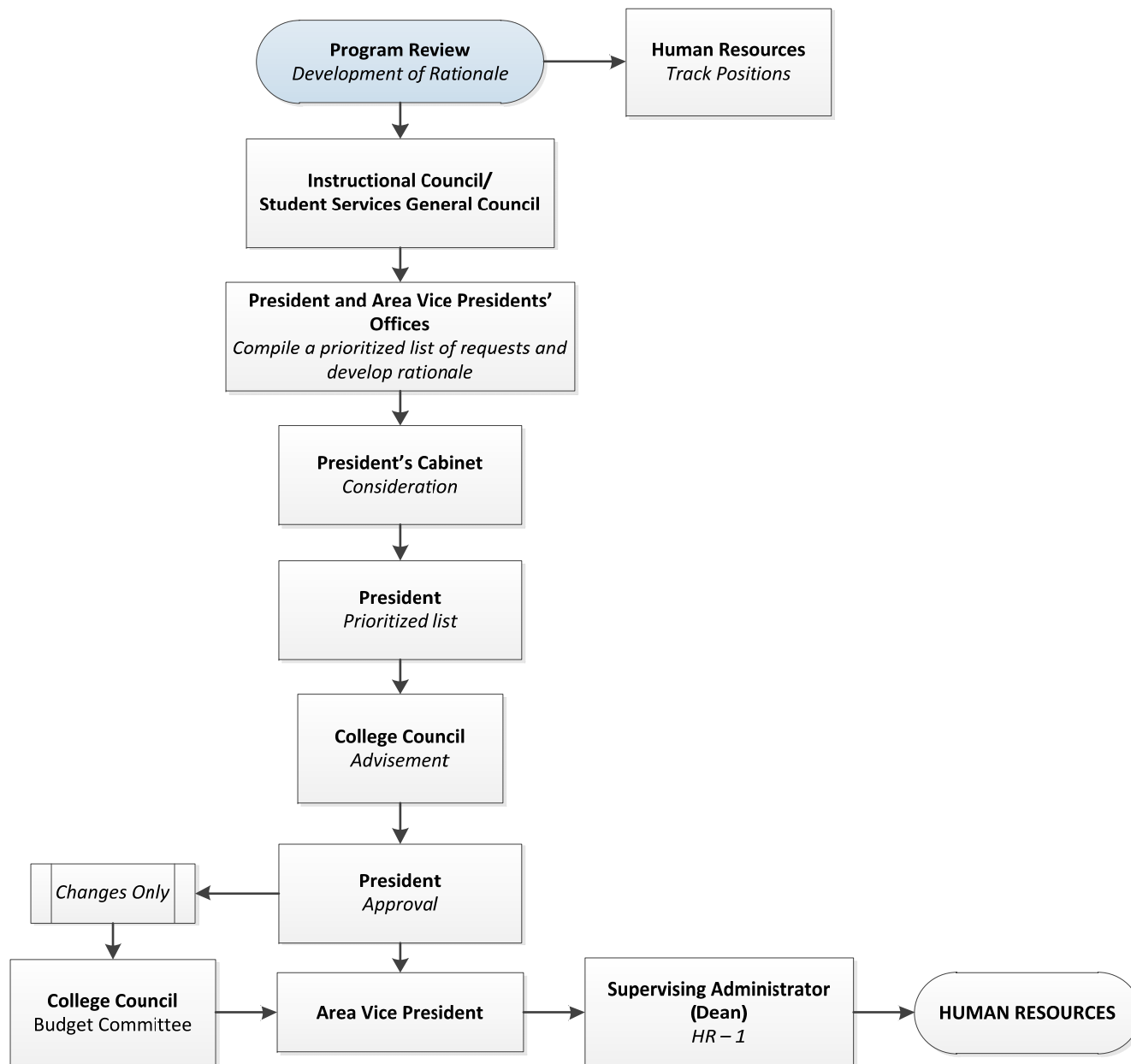
(Alphabetical order)
2011 - 2012



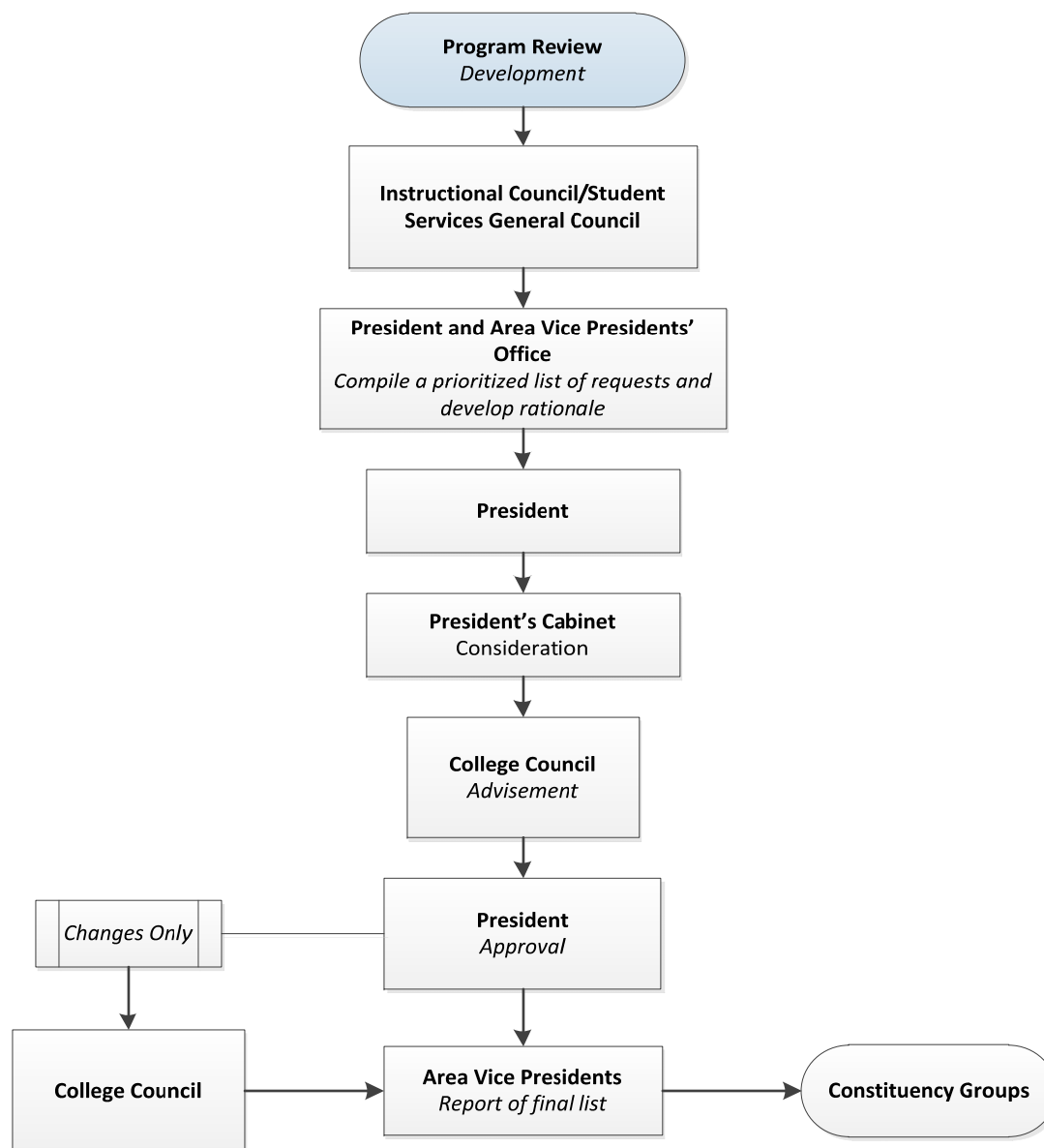


Procedural Flowcharts

Flow Chart for AP 3261-C New and Changed Classified/Confidential Positions

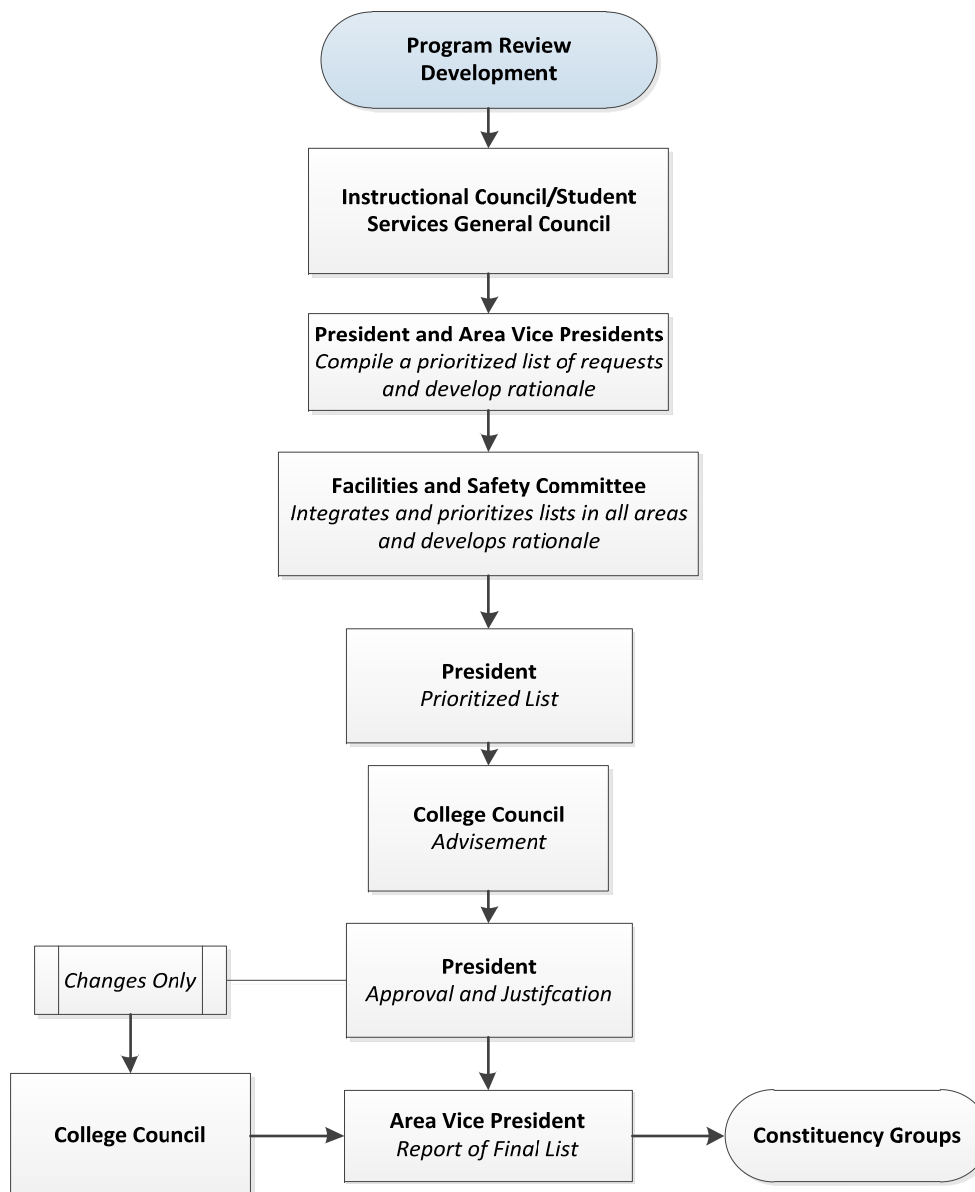


Administrative Procedure 3261 – D
Flow Chart for Budget Augmentations
(Supply Budgets, Maintenance Budgets, Equipment Budgets, etc.)



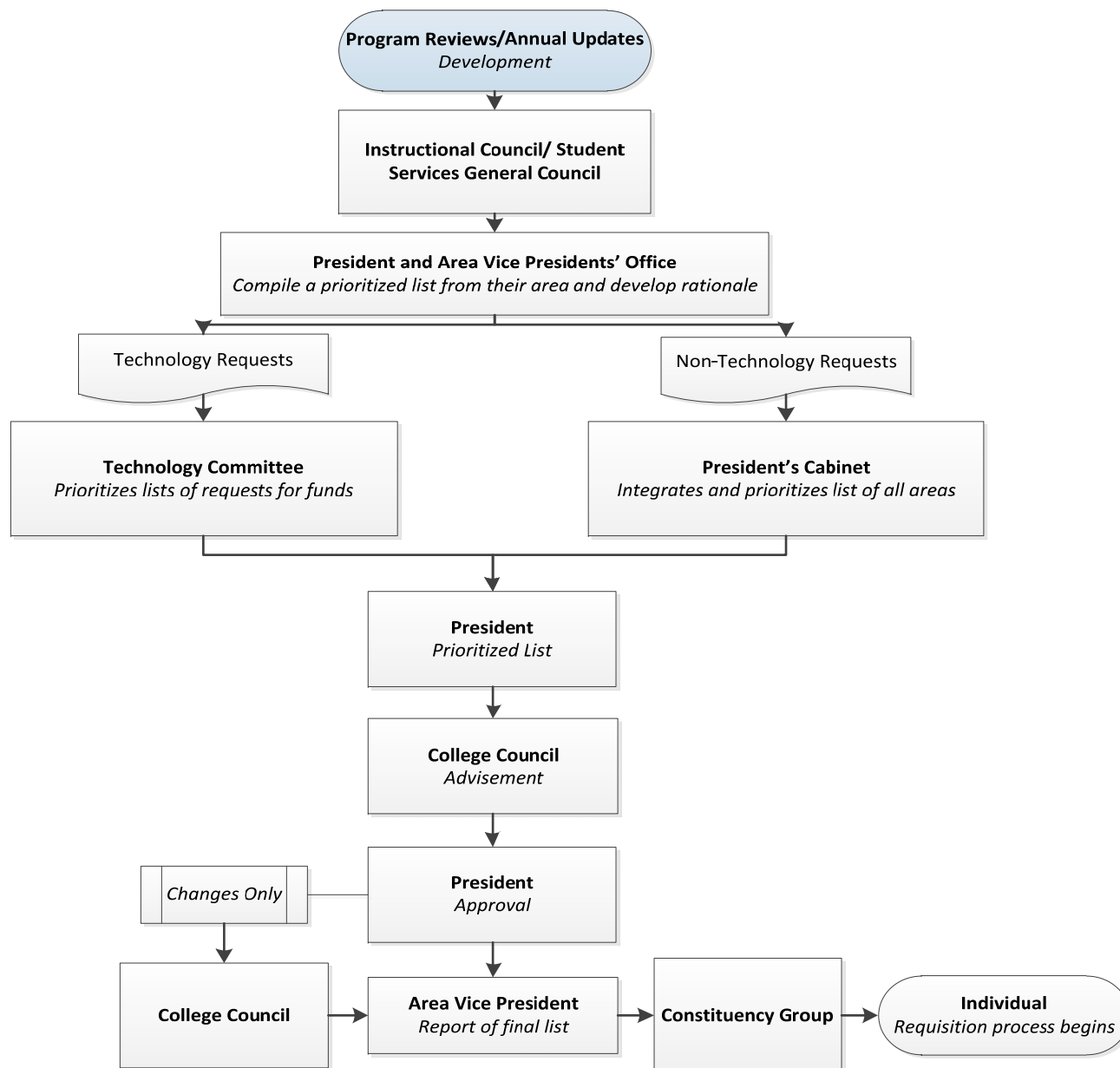
Administrative Procedure 3261 – E

Flow Chart for Facility Requests (Remodels, Upgrades, Space Allocations, etc.)



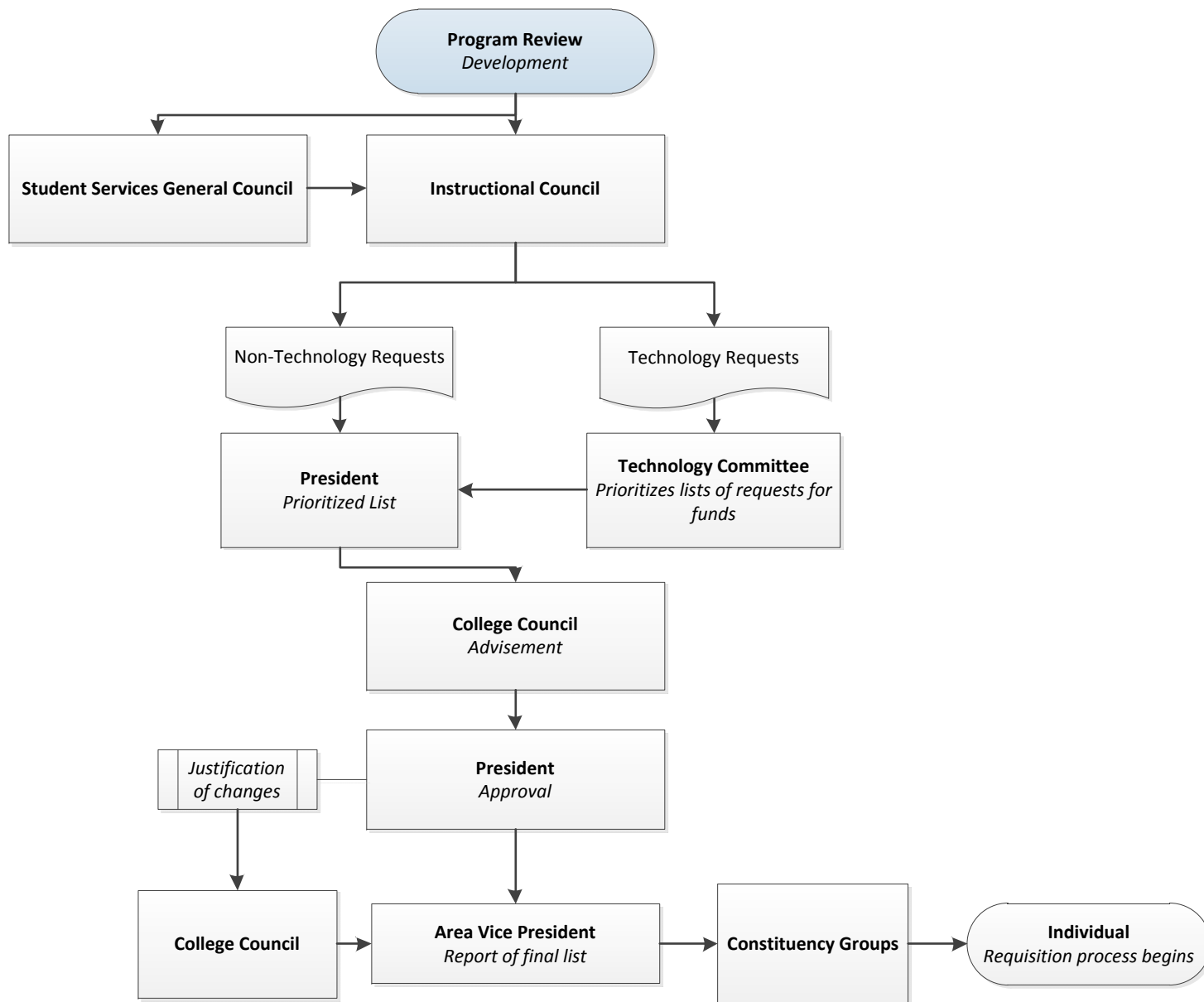
Administrative Procedure 3261 – F

Flow Chart for Above-base Non-Instructional Equipment Requests



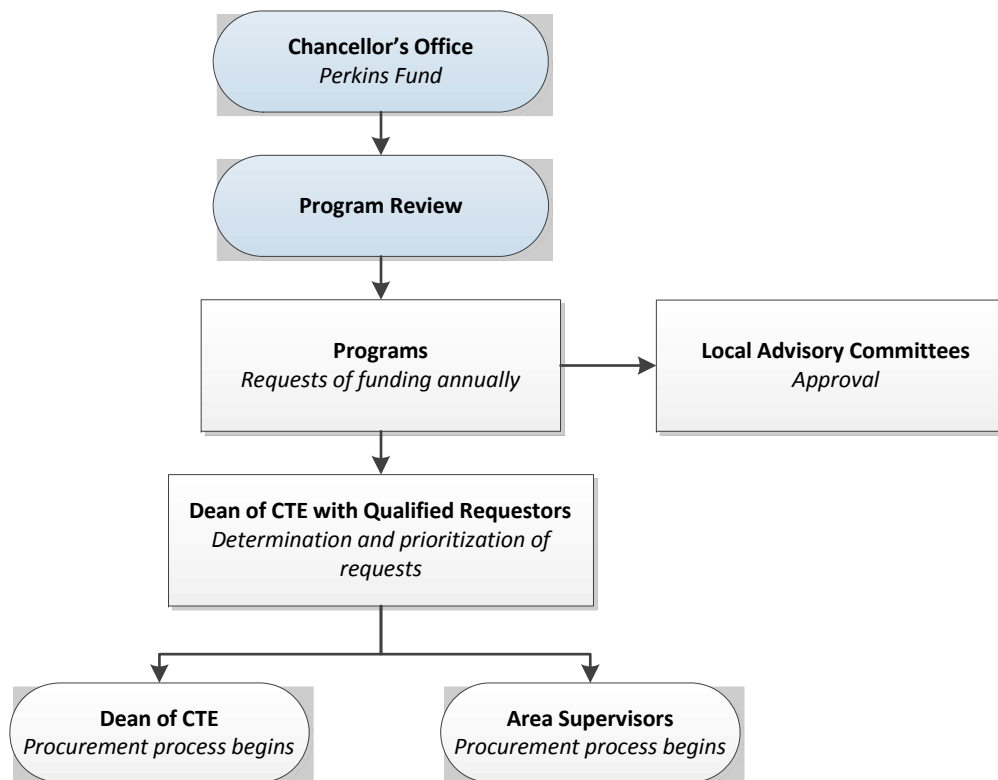
Administrative Procedure 3261 – G

Flow Chart for Above-base Instructional Equipment Requests

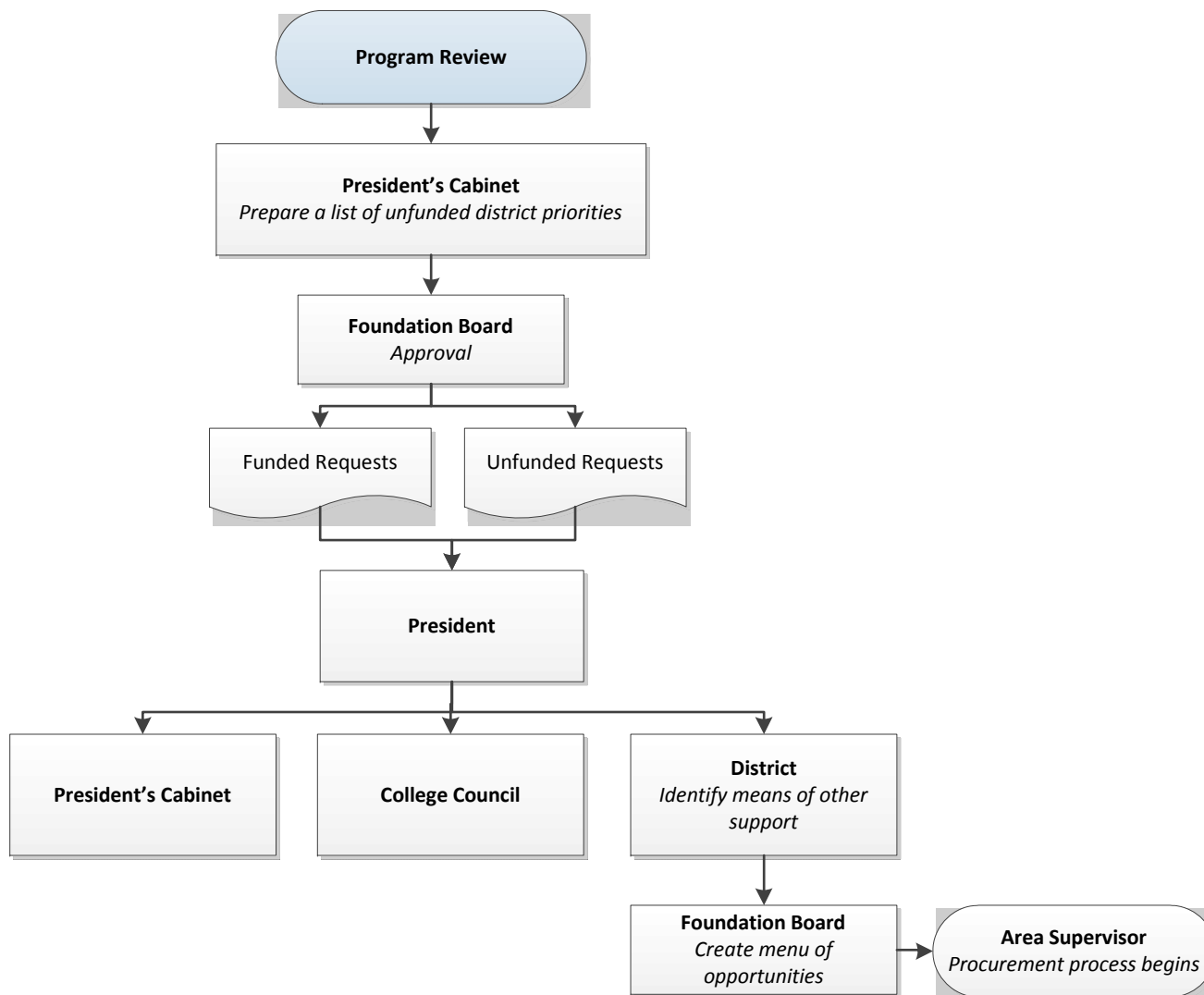


Administrative Procedure 3261 – H

Flow Chart for Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) Funds Request

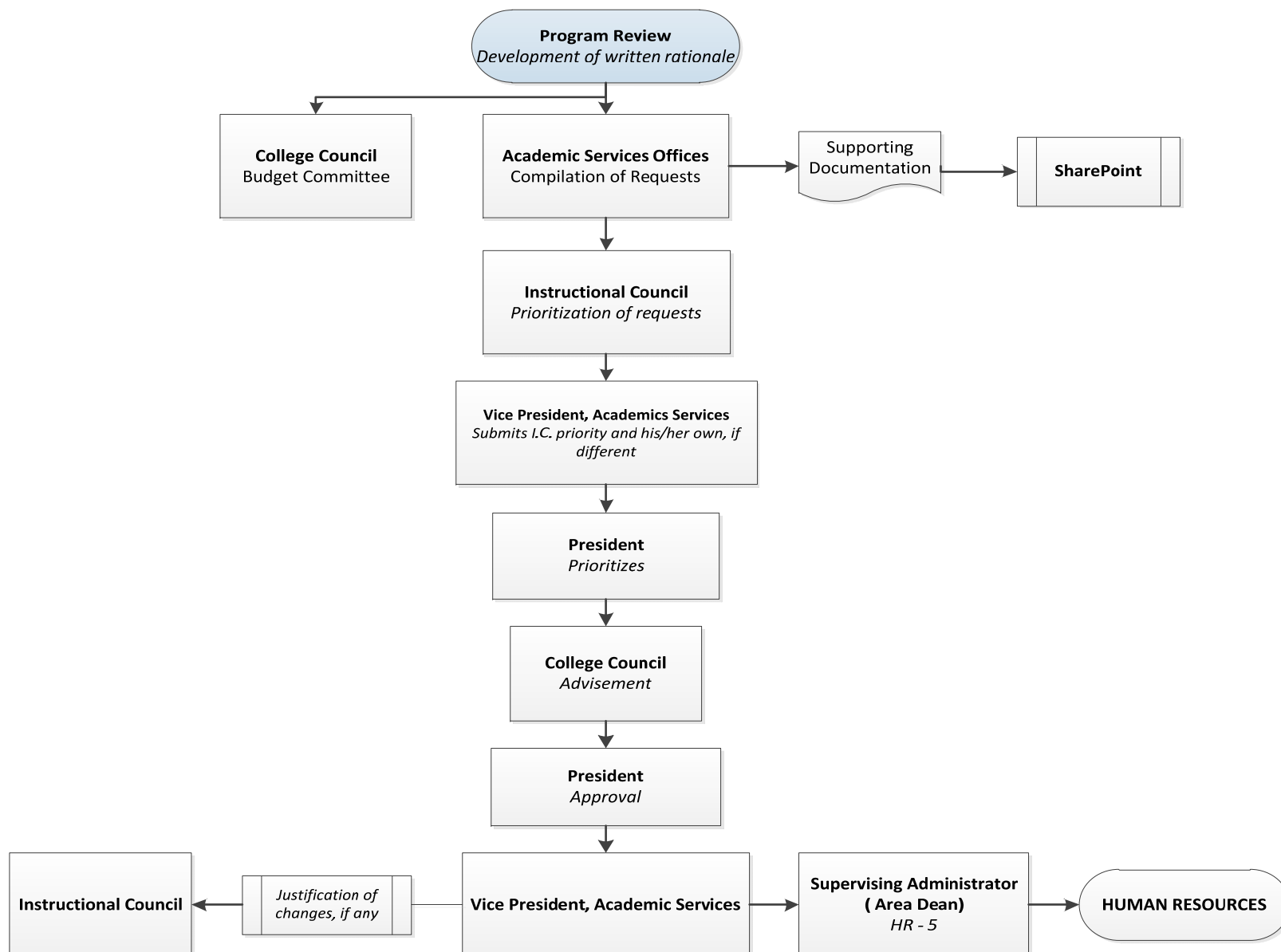


Administrative Procedure 3261 – I
Flow Chart for Foundation Funding Requests
(after Above Based Budget Request process is complete)



Administrative Procedure 3262

Flow Chart for Instructional Full-Time Faculty Positions – Academic Services Requests





Eligibility Requirements

Certification

Continued Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation

1. Authority

The College of the Sequoias is a fully accredited comprehensive two-year community college, accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. College of the Sequoias is listed in the directories of the United States Office of Education, American Council on Education and is a part of the California Community Colleges system. The University of California and the California State University systems, as well as other public and private colleges and universities, grant credit for transfer courses completed at College of the Sequoias. The additional offering of online degrees and certificates does not adversely impact the authority of COS.

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/acadvcs/accreditation/Shared%20Documents/Accreditation%20Visiting%20Team%20Report%20Jan.%202008.pdf>

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/acadvcs/accreditation/Shared%20Documents/Accrediting%20Letter%20Jan.%202010.pdf>

2. Mission

The College of the Sequoias mission statement is as follows:

College of the Sequoias is a comprehensive community college focused on student learning that leads to productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement.

College of the Sequoias affirms that our mission is to help our diverse student population achieve their transfer and /or occupational objectives and to advance the economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry within our region.

College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing programs and services that foster student success.

The mission statement was adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2007. The mission statement is published in the General Catalog and the District website and is displayed in many offices around campus. It is reviewed annually under the process outlined in Administrative Procedure 1201. Because the District serves a very large geographical region in the Central Valley of California, a robust offering of online degrees and certificates is designed to serve students in remote locations of the service area who would not otherwise have adequate access.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/MissionStatement/Pages/default.aspx>

http://www.cos.edu/ImageUpload_Links/07%20May%2014%20Brd%20Minutes.pdf

3. Governing Board

The Board of Trustees of the College of the Sequoias consists of five elected representatives from the five geographical wards that comprise the District. The Board of Trustees is the policy making body of the District. The Board of Trustees *Policy Manual* contains policies,

duties, responsibilities, ethical conduct requirements, and structure and operating procedures for the Board. The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing the policies that ensure the quality and effectiveness of student learning programs and services and for maintaining the financial stability of the District. No member of the Board of Trustees is employed by the District.

Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed by the District and Board to ensure alignment with the District mission.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch%202-Board-of-Trustees.aspx>

4. Chief Executive Officer

COS has a district superintendent/president who is appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees delegates to the superintendent/president the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board and executing all decisions of the Board under the Education Code 70902 and 72400, Title 5 regulations, and Board Policy 2430.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/President/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%202430-%20Delegation%20of%20Authority.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202430%20-Delegation%20of%20Authority%20to%20Superintendent.pdf>

5. Administrative Capacity

The administrative staff is outlined in the organizational charts for the District. The District has sufficient administrative capacity. All administrative personnel meet or exceed the minimum qualifications for the positions they hold.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/President/Documents/Org%20Charts/COS%20Org%20Chart%203-2012.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>

6. Operational Status

The District is in its eighty-sixth year of operation. The District offers courses at the Visalia campus, the District Farm (soon to be the Tulare College Center), the Hanford Educational Center, and in various high schools and community centers throughout the District. In fall 2011, COS served more than 13,000 students (unduplicated headcount), including over 3,000 enrollments in distance education classes.

http://banweb.cos.edu/prod/hzsched.p_search

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Accreditation%20Survey%20Results/Trend%20Data%20for%20Accreditation.pdf>

7. Degrees

COS offers 163 Associate of Arts/Science degrees and certificates. The requirements for these degrees and certificates are available through the General Catalog, the District's website, and the "Major Sheets" created by the Counseling Division. The District has been approved by the Accrediting Commission to offer 23 degrees, with more than 50 percent of the courses available online.

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>
<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>

8. Educational Programs

All certificate and degree programs at COS are listed in the General Catalog. These programs have been developed by specific departments and approved by the Campus Curriculum Committee, the Academic Senate, the Board of Trustees, and the State Chancellor's Office. Each program is in a recognized postsecondary field of study and contains sufficient content and rigor. In addition, each program meets the mission of the District "to help our diverse student population achieve their transfer and/or occupational objectives and to advance the economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry within our region." The District also provides instruction in English and mathematics, basic skills and in English as a Second Language. These courses help the District meet its mission of "supporting students' mastery of basic skills" and "providing programs and services that foster student success." Distance education is integrated into existing degree and certificate programs congruent with the District mission. New programs go through the COS curriculum committee approval process and all academic programs are evaluated through Program Review.

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>
<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>

9. Academic Credit

COS awards credit for coursework using the Carnegie Standard as a minimum, as defined in Title 5 of the California Education Code. Generally, one unit of academic credit is awarded for one hour of lecture/discussion per week. A minimum of three hours of laboratory per week is equivalent to one unit of credit. Distance education courses require the same rigor and transferability for academic credits and credits are reported according to the Alternative Accounting Method. Board Policies 4090 and 5070, along with Administrative Procedure 4090, outline unit/credit hour configurations for lecture, distance education, and non-lecture modalities.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-4-Academic-Services.aspx>
<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-5-Student-Services.aspx>

10. Student Learning Achievement

COS develops and assesses student learning outcomes for its courses and programs as part of the Program Review process. Program Review is tied to resource allocation. Required analysis of student learning as part of the Program Review process is designed to lead to continuous quality improvement. In 2010-11, the District created and staffed a full-time faculty coordinator position to lead curriculum and student outcomes efforts across the entire College.

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>
<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/presidentsoffice/ProgramReview/Pages/Program%20Review.aspx>

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/presidentsoffice/ProgramReview/Shared%20Documents/Program%20Review%20Templates%20-%20Approved/Academic%20Services%20Program%20Review%20Templates/III.%20Outcomes.docx>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203261-%20Requests%20for%20Personnel%20Budget%20Augmentations%20Facilities%20and%20or%20Equipment.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203260%20-%20Program%20Review.pdf>

11. General Education

All degree programs at COS require the completion of nineteen units of general education. At least three units are chosen from each general education area: Written Communication; Oral Communication and Analytical Thinking; Natural Science; Humanities; and Social/Behavioral Science. Nine units are chosen from subject requirements: Information Competency; Dance, Intercollegiate Athletics or Physical Education activity courses; and Health and Wellness. The Campus General Education and Curriculum Committees are responsible for the approval of courses that meet these requirements. Courses that meet these area requirements are listed in the General Catalog. The General Catalog also includes the District's philosophy of general education. Distance education courses support students earning their General Education credits by offering alternative modes of delivery, increasing student access and success.

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>

<http://www.curricunet.com/cos/>

12. Academic Freedom

The District affirms and supports the basic principles of Academic Freedom as enumerated in the Association of American University Professors 1940 Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom, Sections (a), (b), and (c) and as approved by the Academic Senate on April 14, 1999, outlined in Board Policy 4030 and Administrative Procedure 4030.

a. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

b. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious

or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of appointment.

c. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public might judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

These academic freedom principles are also exercised and respected through the District's distance education courses.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP-4030%20Academic%20Freedom.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%204030%20-%20Academic%20Freedom.pdf>

13. Faculty

As of spring 2011, the COS employed 158 full-time and 440 part-time faculty. All faculty meet the minimum qualifications for employment as outlined in the Hiring Policy and the Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges handbook. All full-time faculty and their degrees are listed in the General Catalog. Full-time faculty duties and responsibilities are described in the COSTA Master Agreement (distributed to each faculty member and available online).

Eighty full-time and adjunct faculty are already qualified to teach online classes. The District and COSTA agreed to an online teaching certification requirement in April 2009. The certificate can be obtained through an in-house training program. This requirement, supported by both the District and the faculty, demonstrates the District's commitment to quality distance education.

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/C%20O%20S%20T%20A.pdf>

14. Student Services

COS provides a comprehensive set of student services to all students, including online students and students at the Hanford Educational Center. The District will provide comparable student services at the Tulare College Center when it opens in 2013. These services are described in the General Catalog, the District's website, and through the three options for mandatory orientation. The District offers many programs that serve the general student body (Academic Counseling, Financial Aid, Student Health Center, Transfer/Career Center), as well as specialized services designed for certain student populations (Disability Resource Center, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services/Cooperative Agencies Resource for Education, CalWORKs). The student services support student learning and assist students with their matriculation.

Distance Education students have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support their learning. Student Services information such as financial aid, admissions and records, and counseling are available to students online. Students can apply to the District, register, apply for financial aid, contact a counselor, and order transcripts online. The District's General Catalog is available online. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) also provides students with online access to the Catalog, to online full-text articles and e-books, and to librarians through the "Ask a Librarian" service. Online tutoring began in the fall 2011 semester. The District has also established a Student Computer Helpdesk available online and staffed during LRC hours.

The District has an online orientation to distance education at COS and an online survey of distance education learning readiness (*Is Online Learning for Me?*) to assess whether a student has the background, knowledge, and technical skills required to undertake and successfully complete a distance education course.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/Admissions/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%205140%20-%20Disability%20Resource%20Center.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%205140%20-%20Disability%20Resource%20Center.pdf>

15. Admissions

COS' admissions policy and procedures are clearly outlined in the General Catalog, the Schedule of Classes, and on the District's website. Any graduate of an accredited high school may be admitted to COS. Also, any person having successfully completed the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE) or the General Educational Development Test (GED) with scores of 45 overall and with no subtest lower than 35 may be admitted.

The District may admit other persons 18 years of age or over when the evidence indicates that the individual will benefit from college level instruction. Students are encouraged to complete high school prior to enrolling in college. The same admissions and registration policies apply to distance education students, who may apply and register online.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%205010%20-%20Admissions.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%205010%20-%20Admissions%20and%20Concurrent%20Enrollment.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/Admissions/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/acadsvcs/accreditation/Shared%20Documents/Admissions%20and%20Records%20Personnel.pdf>

16. Information and Learning Resources

COS has a Learning Resource Center (LRC) on the Visalia campus. This center includes a library, Tutorial Center (including online tutoring), Computer Commons, Writing Center, computer classroom, and distance education classroom for interactive television classes. A

Math Lab is available to students as part of the Tutorial Center. A satellite library with computers and reference books is maintained at the Hanford Educational Center, as is a Writing Center, tutoring, computer commons, and two distance education classrooms for interactive classes.

The LRC also provides online access to students for catalog searching, access to online full-text articles and e-books, access to librarians through the “Ask a Librarian” service, and online tutoring. A Student Computer Helpdesk is available online, staffed during LRC hours.

<http://www.cos.edu/Library/Pages/default.aspx>

17. Financial Resources

COS is a publicly funded institution. The majority of the unrestricted financial resources at the District’s disposal are derived from a state-mandated revenue limit. Financial resources arrive in the form of local taxes, student enrollment fees, and an apportionment from the state. The District has an established budget development process that includes the publication of a *Budget Book*, which is the final budget. The Vice President of Administrative Services, the President’s Cabinet, and the Institutional Budget Committee are involved in this process.

Other funding for students comes through financial resources that are restricted in their use, such as federal financial aid. The District has also been the recipient of numerous state, federal and privately funded grants. The COS Foundation raises funds to be used by various programs, scholarships and services.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/default.aspx>

18. Financial Accountability

COS undergoes an annual external audit. The audit reviews both funds and processes in order to determine compliance with established accounting and reporting standards. The most recent audit, June 2011, noted no “material weaknesses” in internal control of financial reporting and only one exception of operations with regards to To be Arranged (TBA) hours, which is currently being corrected. The audit found that the District “complied in all material respects” to federal and state laws and regulations.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/acadsvcs/accreditation/Shared%20Documents/NSLDS%20-%20Cohort%20Default%20Rate%20History%20List.pdf>

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

In fall 2009, the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) (now renamed the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC)) was charged with developing a five-year Strategic Plan for the COS. In order to make this a participatory process, the IPC sought input and feedback from faculty, staff, students, and community members, holding meetings in four of the communities served by the District: Corcoran, Hanford, Tulare, and Visalia.

The IPC used the six goals, which had been previously set as Institutional Goals, for 2006 – 09. In December 2009, the IPC assembled about 40 COS employees to refine and define those six areas of focus: Student Access, Students’ Success in Completing their Education,

Students' Mastery of Basic Skills, Effective and Efficient College Practices, Students as Citizens of a Global Community, and Economic Growth for Tulare and Kings Counties. These six areas formed the foundation of the Strategic Plan.

In January 2010, the spring convocation at COS focused on gathering faculty and staff input on developing objectives and measureable outcomes for the six areas of focus. Over the course of the next five months, the plan was augmented based on input from college groups, as well as from community and student forums held during February through early April.

One of the driving tenets for the Strategic Plan was that it is dynamic foundation for how the District establishes goals down to the program level for the next five years. In doing so, the Strategic Plan is a framework for creating tactical plans that establish how the Strategic Plan will become operational. The tactical plans are assigned to different committees, work areas, initiatives, and grants across the campus that are responsible for developing action plans within the scope of their work to accomplish the Strategic Plan's measureable outcomes. Work on the overall tactical plan began with the Administrators' Retreat in early June 2010 and has been implemented via IPC.

Additionally, as a dynamic document, the Strategic Plan is reviewed annually by all College participatory groups, students, and associated communities. Based on input from these groups, the plan may be modified by the IPC and approved by the District Council as needed.

Because of the District's focus on student success, there are overlapping themes addressed in more than one of the plan's six areas of focus. Interestingly, many of the goals, objectives, and outcomes developed in the strategic planning process parallel to those developed separately through the "Achieving the Dream" process, suggesting that the District constituencies as a whole is united in thought. Inquiries and discoveries from "Achieving the Dream" have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

The IPEC has aligned the Strategic Plan's objectives and outcomes to the Accreditation Standards of the ACCJC. This alignment will help facilitate the District's accreditation self-evaluation and visit. Additionally, all programs will align with the Strategic Plan during their biennial and six-year comprehensive Program Reviews.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Documents/COS%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf>

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/committee/collegecouncil/tc/COS%20Technology%20Plan%20Working%20Documents/Technology%20Plan.doc>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Sequoias%20CCD-Five%20Year%20Plan%207-26-11.pdf>

20. Public Information

The College of the Sequoias strives to present itself accurately in all of its printed and electronic publications. The *General Catalog* is published biennially and contains all key information students require to enroll and matriculate through the District. There is an extensive review of the catalog prior to publication to ensure currency and accuracy. The District's website is updated frequently as needed. The District no longer prints a schedule of

classes because using the COS website gives more accurate and current information regarding which classes are open and available, along with providing details on times, locations, and instructors. The information traditionally found in a schedule of classes is located on the website under Registration Information. The District has a public information officer who coordinates the dissemination of information to District constituencies. Both the searchable schedule and the catalog are available online. Printed catalogs are available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore and in the Reserve Area of the LRC.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203300%20-%20Public%20Records.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203300%20-%20Public%20Records.pdf>

21. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

COS is committed to adhering to all ACCJC accreditation eligibility requirements and standards and to accurately portraying itself to the Commission. The District publishes a general statement of accreditation in its General Catalog, and on the District website.

The vice president of academic services is the accreditation liaison officer and is responsible for ensuring that all necessary reports, documentation, and evidence of compliance are provided to ACCJC in a timely fashion. COS has responded to all recommendations and requests for reports from ACCJC.

Some programs at the District undergo their own accreditation processes. Examples are the nursing program, which is reviewed by the State Board of Registered Nurses, the Police Academy, is reviewed by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), and the Physical Therapist Assistant program is reviewed by the Commission Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education.

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>

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<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/PTA%20Program%20Accreditation.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/Board%20of%20Registered%20Nursing%20Accreditation.pdf>

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Shared%20Documents/POST%20Certification.pdf>

Certification of Continued Institutional Compliance with Commission Policies

College of the Sequoias is in full compliance with the following Commission policies by establishing a Board Policy (BP), and where appropriate an Administrative Procedure (AP) has been created to implement the policy.

Policy on Distance and on Correspondence Education

AP 4105 addresses several areas within distance education: course quality standards, instructor contact, faculty selection and workload, course approval, ongoing responsibility of district, and reporting. <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-4-Academic-Services.aspx> Additionally, COS and COSTA established “Qualifications to Teach in an Online Mode” as part of the COSTA master Agreement, which requires faculty to complete an online teaching certification course in order to teach online. <http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Pages/Master-Agreements.aspx>

Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV

BP 5130-Financial Aid Services and AP 5130 establish policy and procedure to comply with applicable federal regulations in order for COS students to be eligible for federal financial aid. <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-4-Academic-Services.aspx>

Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

COS maintains accreditation status and informs the public of all accreditation activities according to BP 3200 and AP 3200. <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-3-General-Institution.aspx>

Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits

The District has approved BPs and APs for institutional degrees and credits. AP and BP 4020 establish guidelines for program development, approval and modification and AP 4022 established curriculum and course development, modification and approval. BP and AP 4025 establish the philosophy and criteria for associate degrees and general education. BP and AP 4090 establish the unit and credit hour configuration and BP and AP 4100 outline graduate requirements for degrees and certificates. <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-3-General-Institution.aspx>

Policy on Integrity and Ethics

The Following BPs and APs address integrity and ethics for the District Board of Trustees members and employees: BP 2710/AP 2710/AP 2712 (Conflict of Interest) , BP 2715-Code of Ethics-Standards of Practice <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch%202-Board-of-Trustees.aspx> , and AP 3050 (Institutional Code of Ethics) <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-3-General-Institution.aspx>.

Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations

The District has established procedures for developing contractual relationships with non-regionally accredited organizations. Institutional service agreements are approved by the Board of Trustees and include information on performance, enrollment, tuition, student recruitment and field agents. Memorandums of understanding for such relationships are found in the approved board minutes.

United States Department of Education Requirements

Incentive Compensation

COS does not compensate any individual for student recruitment.

Misrepresentation made by the District

COS takes pride in the truthful representation of information given to students, the public, and the ACCJC and that is available on our website. Administrative Procedure 4100 guarantees that degrees and certificates, including required and recommended courses meet all Education and Title 5 requirements as certified by the vice president of academic services and are submitted to the District Curriculum Committee, the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor's Office. <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-4-Academic-Services.aspx>

COS has filed four Substantive Change Proposals to the ACCJC over the past four years, and files all required reports.

Our website explains in great detail the qualification requirements for financial aid and makes no guarantees that any student will receive financial aid.

<http://www.cos.edu/FinancialAid/Pages/default.aspx>

Degree and Certificate catalog descriptions give an honest statement about what students can expect from successful completion of a certificate or degree. For example the description for the AS degree in Registered Nursing states:

The Registered Nursing Program is approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, and successful completion of the requirements qualifies the graduate to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

Additionally the COS degree in Veterinary Technology states:

Additional training or work experience will be required to become a Registered Veterinary Technician. For more information, see the California Veterinary Medical Association website: <http://www.cvma.net/doc.asp?id=1350>.

Gainful Employment

The COS Financial Aid Office with the assistance of Computer Services is in compliance with the Gainful Employment requirement by submitting Gainful Employment data to the U.S. Department of Education in the fall 2012 prior to the deadline. The District updated the Program Participation Agreement (PPA) with the Department of Education, and the Gainful Employment Certificate Disclosure spreadsheet is posted on the District website

<http://www.cos.edu/FinancialAid/Regulations/gainfulemployment/Pages/default.aspx>.

Credit Hour

Board Policy 4090 and Administrative Procedure 4090 establish how the District determines Credit Hour and how it is applied.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-4-Academic-Services.aspx>

State Authorization

As a fully accredited community college through the ACCJC and Western Association of Schools and Colleges, COS currently complies with the federal government's definition of State Authority. COS informs students of their right to complain with an outside agency (ACCJC and the State Chancellor's Office) in the Course Catalog and on the COS website under Students Right to Lodge a Complaint

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>.



Accreditation Themes

Accreditation Themes

The Self-Evaluation is divided into the Standards for Accreditation outlined by the Commission. However, throughout and across the Standards, consistent themes are presented and supported with evidence.

Institutional Commitment

COS is committed to its students and community. As the only open-access institution within a 30 mile radius in a rural, isolated region, the importance of the District cannot be overstated. It is the primary choice for many students and the only option for many more who want the advancement of their educational, professional, and personal goals. The District is a strong anchor for intellectual and cultural activities for the communities of Tulare and Kings Counties and helps to sustain involvement, and enhance the quality of life through its programs and activities. The District commitment to student learning is not just a topic for discussion; it is an integral part of the District's mission and to the community by providing access and opportunity to students in search of their educational goals and advancement in their careers. The District is very committed to its business and industry partners and the office of Business Industry and Community Services (BICS) has several partners particularly with the Workforce Investment Boards and with training programs with local businesses and municipalities.

In addition, the District is committed to the goal of continuous improvement of its educational programs and services through evaluation and planning focused on student learning. The District achieves this goal through its organizational structure made up of dedicated faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees.

Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

As discussed in Standard I, the District defines its commitment through its mission and the integrated planning processes that support the mission. These processes are designed through participatory governance through discourse and participation that leads to the improvement of institutional effectiveness. The newly formed Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC) is charged with ensuring institutional effectiveness through the implementation and ongoing assessment of the strategic plan. A growing culture of evaluation and assessment that drives evidence-based decision-making is part of these processes, as evidenced by robust program review and planning processes, as well as the established and evolving student learning outcome assessment process. Throughout the Self-Evaluation, descriptions of these processes and examples of their results in the form of tangible outcomes are documented.

Student Outcomes

As described in the responses to the recommendations from the 2006 Self Study, the District has made strong progress toward the complete implementation of student learning outcome development, assessment, and revision in order to improve programs and services. Although the District is not on track to reach the level of

proficiency as described in the ACCJC Rubrics by the 2012 deadline for Program and Institutional Outcomes, it will be evident throughout the Self-Evaluation that the District does have a plan of reaching proficiency outlined in the Standards. Student learning outcomes exist for courses, programs, and the institution overall. The assessment process is established and takes place on a regular cycle, is embedded in program review, and has led to changes designed to improve student learning. The District demonstrates its commitment not only through engagement in the process but also through significant resource commitments. The process remains faculty driven, which will ensure its longevity.

Organization

COS is one of the few rural colleges in the California Community College System, and serving all of our communities is both a strength and a challenge. In order to maintain an organizational structure to support the educational programs and services of the District, COS has opened a permanent facility in Hanford (a community 20 miles west of the Visalia campus), and will open a college center in Tulare in spring 2013 semester. To ensure effective governance and decision-making, and adapt to a dynamic educational environment, the District relies on the commitment and dedication of its faculty, staff, and administration. While commitments and committees proliferate, human and financial resources do not. Thus, there is great importance placed on thoughtful planning and resource allocation to maximize the efficient use of its available resources to meet the needs of students and achieve the mission of the District.

Dialogue

The culture of the District is evolving and growing with regards to dialogue. There is ample evidence in the form of committee memberships, meeting agendas, minutes, where information is shared, and decisions are made. The major committees where general information is shared are: College Council, Instructional Council, President's Cabinet, the Academic Senate, and Management Council. General information is shared via email which is the official means of communication for the district. The governance structure promotes participation from all constituent groups, including faculty, staff, students, and administration, in the planning and decision-making processes, which was evident in developing the Strategic Plan.

Institutional Integrity

The District strives to represent itself honestly and accurately both internally and externally to the community it serves. The Accreditation Self-Evaluation structure and process is evidence of this commitment to integrity. Faculty, staff, students, administrators, and a trustee were represented throughout the Accreditation Committee Standard Teams. Co-chairs were identified on the basis of expertise and responsibility over the areas covered by the Standard. The Accreditation Executive Team represented faculty, staff, and administration, and engaged in a lengthy process of review, editing, and dialogue with the District community to ensure that the information contained in the Self-Evaluation accurately represents the institution.

Furthermore, the District demonstrates its integrity through the established processes and structures dedicated to the evaluation and assessment of programs and services that ensure the needs of students are being met in order to support their learning, success, and achievement. These themes are evident throughout the Standards presented hereafter.



Responses to Recommendations

Responses to Recommendations from 2006 Accreditation Site Visit

The following six recommendations were made as a result of the October 15-19, 2006 Accreditation Team visit. The ACCJC reaffirmed COS's full accreditation following our 2009 mid-term report. Topics of response are reflected in the points that follow each recommendation and include updates from the COS 2009 mid-term report.

Recommendation 1

The team strongly recommends that the college establish a positive campus climate through an inclusive dialogue that embodies a culture of respect, civility, and trust to improve institutional decision-making, planning, and effectiveness. (Standard IB.1; Standard IIIA.1d, IIIA.4c; and Standard IVA.2, IVA.2a, IVA.2b, IVA.3, and IVA.5)

The District has followed this recommendation and meets these standards. The level and quality of communication are outstanding as exemplified by the activities cited below. This high level of dialogue and the positive campus climate has enabled the District to make major advancements in planning and decision-making.

Dialogue: College Council, Board Reports, Conversations

The College Council annually reviews and revises as needed the mission statement and governance process. College committees actively develop recommendations to the College Council which debates issues and makes recommendations to improve policies and practices.

Campus Climate: Budget Decisions, Negotiations, President's Evaluation

The District follows an agreed-upon process of budget development that culminates in debate at the College Council and a recommendation to the superintendent/president regarding expenditures for the coming fiscal year. The District meets regularly with representatives of the exclusive bargaining units for full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and classified staff. The superintendent/president functions as chief negotiator with the aid of the dean of human resources and selected members of the administrative team. Relationships between the District and the unions through 2010 have been positive, constructive, and collegial; however, over the past two years the relationships have been strained mostly due to budget cuts from the state that have negatively affected negotiations. The District is currently at the fact finding stage in negotiations with COSTA, which are expected to be resolved by fall 2012. The District president has traditionally undergone a regular 360 degree evaluation; however, one has not been done since 2009. COS had an interim superintendent/president during the 2011 – 12 academic year, who was not required to complete an evaluation. A new superintendent/president has taken office as of July 1, 2012. The lack of a performance evaluation is addressed in the 2012 Accreditation Self-Evaluation report.

Weekly/Monthly Board Report

The former superintendent/president sent a weekly report to the Board of Trustees on activities and news from the campus community, and shared this "Weekly Board Report" with the District via email. The interim superintendent/president has continued this practice but changed to a monthly report. This simple, but innovative concept was a new communication vehicle for the campus and has provided the District community with up-to-

date news and activities. The report tends to feature a “top ten” review of the most important fiscal, educational, and personnel information. It includes meetings that the superintendent/president has attended in the community and gives a quick synopsis of the challenges and opportunities that COS faces in the short and long term. Distributing this report via the campus email system is one example of being paperless and supports the superintendent/president’s emphasis on “going green.” It is widely read and gives a quick overview with respect to campus news.

Cultural Heritage Celebrations

The Cultural Heritage Celebrations project was initiated in fall 2008. For six months during the academic year COS holds a series of events focused on particular groups whose heritage reflects the diverse culture of our campus and the United States. A budget was established to fund supplies and marketing as well as stipends for twelve individuals, six to coordinate the events and six to work with faculty to research and disseminate material to be used in classrooms relative to the heritage group being featured that month. This project is under the auspices of the Student Equity Committee (SEC). The chair of the committee is assigned as the budget administrator. At the end of the spring 2009 the SEC decided to have the Cultural Heritage Celebrations established as a standing sub-committee. The sub-committee consists of two co-chairs and the event coordinators. The Cultural Heritage Celebrations were recently renamed as COS Diversity Celebrations.

Handling of Difficult Decisions

Occasionally, stakeholders do not reach consensus on a particular issue. In such cases, it is the practice of the District to slow down the process, collect more information, reflect on options, and seek compromise on the outcome. Two examples illustrate this attitude.

In the fall of 2007, the District superintendent/president suggested that a vacant campus police officer position be replaced with a community security position. Debate in College Council demonstrated a lack of agreement on the issue. The District arranged for a consultant to come to campus, collect information, interview a cross-sections of the staff, and make recommendations. As a result, the District 1) replaced the vacant position with a sworn officer, 2) increased the police chief position from half-time to full-time, 3) placed facility and lighting projects on the Measure I general obligation bond list to improve the physical security of the campus, and 4) secured the agreement of the College Council that additional personnel could be hired in the classification of community security positions.

A second issue arose in the fall of 2008. Budget shortfalls in the operation of the Child Development Center led the District to recommend that the Center be taken over by the Tulare County Office of Education. Based on input from College staff, community members, and parents at the center, the District pursued alternatives. Through negotiations with the California School Employees Association (CSEA), the personnel structure of the Center was revised, and the center operations expanded to twelve months with mandatory five-day-per-week child care agreements at an increased market rate. These interest-based actions had the result of bringing the center budget into balance and retained the center as a College-operated facility.

Professional Development

The Faculty Enrichment Committee's (FEC) mission statement and activities provide examples of efforts across campus that support the objective of nurturing a positive campus climate through inclusive dialogue and planning. Although each department and division embraces this objective, FEC serves as a mechanism to integrate the autonomous groups and events under one comprehensive program that extends beyond staff development training for faculty and includes training for the Professional Association for Classified Employees (PACE), the Customer Service Committee, Human Resources Department, and so on. Through collaborative needs assessments and program evaluations, an extensive set of workshops, classes, campus "brown bag" discussions, and training programs allows staff from all areas of the campus to co-mingle according to themes and areas of interest. During the academic year of 2007–08, five campus wide workshops were offered to all COS employees. In January 2008, FEC offered five workshops which exceeded expectations that had been set for a half-year program. Beginning in September 2008 until May 2009, a total of fifty-eight workshops were presented to the District, and offerings have continued to increase over the past three years. The FEC remains a vital link for employees and professional development.

Customer Service Initiative

The campus-wide Customer Service Committee (CSC) was formed to help institute and sustain excellence in customer service. In 2008-09, it was chaired by the vice president of student services, but in June 2009, the new dean of student services assumed the chairmanship. Members are represented from Academic Services, Student Services and Administration areas. The CSC meets on a monthly basis.

With the president's support, the CSC has taken steps to involve the entire District in its efforts to maintain and improve the service provided to its customers. The CSC will continue to identify, discuss and pursue new and innovative ideas to meet future training needs. Past customer service training performed by the CSC includes cross training within departments, discussions on the importance of customer service in retail, managing stress in the workplace, ethics in the workplace, and conflict resolution strategies. The CSC conducts workshops collaboratively with FEC and PACE.

Board Policies and Administrative Procedures Revising Process

The COS BPs and APs have been reviewed and updated. The initial process began in September of 2006 and finished during the fall 2009 semester. Since that time, the review has continued, and in spring 2012, AP 7120 was approved and outlined the process by which BPs and APs are developed, reviewed, approved, and posted on the COS website. The cabinet parcels out sections for review among different stakeholders in five areas: District/General Institution, Board of Trustees/Personnel, Academic Services, Student Services, and Administrative Services. The COS Academic Senate, Human Resources, Academic Services, Student Services, and Administrative Services participate by creating, reviewing and deleting BPs and APs after discussion and agreement with their constituents. The discussions are very rich and complex, and they help COS see how all the pieces fit to create the District. Under a new process, each year a section of the BPs and APs will be reviewed, ensuring the District is true to its policies and procedures. It also provides the

community with a template of how COS functions.

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-7-Human-Resources.aspx>

Recommendation 2

The team recommends that the College engage all campus constituent groups in an institutional decision-making and planning process, which is linked and central to the College mission. The process should be an ongoing, effective, and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, research, and re-evaluation. This cycle should include such processes as curricular development, program review, and assessment and allocation of technological, physical, financial, and human resources. (Standard IA.4, IB.3, IB.4, IB.6, IB.7; Standard IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB3, IIB4, IIC2; Standard IIIA6, IIIB2, IIIC2, IIID1, IIID.2g, IIID3)

The District has continued to meet the referenced standards for several years. Over the last three years, the District has significantly improved its evaluation, planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes to the point that the District exceeds the referenced standards. In 2007, the District developed a budget development and resource allocation model that is aligned with the mission statement and driven by Program Review results. This process prioritizes activities based on costs in personnel, equipment (both instructional and non-instructional), technology, and facilities. Identified committees review budget requests in these areas and make recommendations to College Council. These recommendations are debated and voted upon as recommendations to the superintendent/president. This process was enhanced during the 2008-09 academic year through collaboration between the District and the Academic Senate resulting in a revised decision matrix and an improved Program Review process. In 2010 the District launched a five-year Strategic Plan, updating the previous 2008 plan under which the District had been operating.

Program Review

In spring 2008, Academic Senate convened an ad-hoc committee to review and revise the Program review processes and format. The committee consisted of the Academic Senate president and vice president, eight faculty members including many current and former division chairs and the last accreditation chair. The committee reviewed program review processes and formats from across California and discussed purposes and uses of program review. The committee decided on a format for program review that mirrored the current Accreditation Standards in May 2008 and then developed a full template for program review in fall 2008.

The committee decided that funding processes needed to be clearly identified and agreed upon based on assessed needs from the program review process. In addition to identifying the processes for funding, AP flow charts were created in spring 2012 that stipulate the use of program reviews as the source of information to evaluate the funding requests from programs. This format includes standardized data and evaluation criteria for each section. The format includes annual updates that will be appended to the corresponding sections of the full program review. This allows programs to be focused on their plans and allow assessment and potential modifications for their progress.

This new Program Review was presented to the Academic Senate and was approved in December 2008. The newly modified Program Review Committee began to implement the new format in spring 2009. Instructions and timelines were developed and also placed on the Intranet. Training sessions were held for programs undergoing full Program Reviews. Instructions for programs which only had annual updates were developed and distributed to Instructional Council and respective departments. The make-up of the second level review committee was developed and implemented.

In the fall 2012 semester, the Institutional Program Review Committee (IPRC) completely revamped the program review process based on assessments and feedback from the campus community. The program review process is robust and definitely drives above base budget allocation of resources; it is also integrated with the Strategic Plan.

Student Services Program Review

A committee of student services staff was established to review various Student Service models and templates to create a program review process specifically designed to review services to students and was implemented by COS in the spring 2011 semester. This committee worked closely with the Institutional Research department to develop a template that parallels the instructional program review model. This process will allow student services to engage in an institutional decision-making and planning process directly linked to the mission of the District. What the District discovered was that this template based on Academic Services was not a good fit for Student Services, so a different template was developed in fall 2011 and spring 2012.

Budget Allocation Flow Chart/Matrix

In the 2008-09 academic year, the ad hoc Senate Committee working on a major revision of the Program Review procedure agreed that one of the chronic problems associated with the old process was the lack of accountability regarding fiscal decisions. One committee would rank new faculty positions one way and another committee would re-rank them and forward the recommendation to the superintendent/president without even a written rationale. The same scenario was followed with equipment and facilities recommendations. During the 2008-09 academic year, a new process was established by the ad hoc committee and the District superintendent/president. Newly created AP flow charts that are unambiguous, cogent, and accountable were implemented. If any changes occur after the initial decision, a written rationale must be provided by the superintendent/president. The number of committees tasked with ranking has decreased. This accountability matrix strengthens program review as the essential baseline for resource allocations in a vital and easy to understand way. Although these processes were developed, documentation and flow charts were not readily available. During the 2011-12 academic year three APs (3261, 3262, 3263) were developed and approved. This action codified the processes for above base budget requests, and the accompanying flow charts give a good graphic representation of the processes.

Planning Process

In spring 2008, the committee established seven Institutional Outcomes (IO): 1) Quantitative Reasoning, 2) Writing and Reading, 3) Creative/Analytical Thinking, 4) Oral and Listening

Skills, 5) Information Literacy, 6) Social Interaction and 7) Health and Wellness. In the 2009–10 academic year, the IPC (now the IPEC) in conjunction with the office of Institutional Research and Planning developed a Five–Year Strategic Plan with measurable goals/benchmarks based on existing institutional outcomes, a culture of evidence and focused plans presented in a metrics format. Through a comprehensive participatory governance process, the development of the new Strategic Plan modified those Institutional Outcomes to the following six areas of focus that formed the foundation for the Strategic Plan: 1) Student Access, 2) Students’ Success in Completing Their Education, 3) Students’ Mastery of Basic Skills, 4) Efficient and Effective College Practices, 5) Students as Citizens of a Global Community, 6) Economic Growth of Tulare and Kings Counties. The plans to be reviewed or created and aligned to Institutional Outcomes as part of the Strategic Plan are Accreditation and Self Study, Educational Master Plan, Technology, Matriculation, Student Equity, Staff Development (FEC), Basic Skills (ELI), Five-Year Facility, Hanford/Tulare Centers, Individual Program Reviews (Unit Plans), Initiatives (FYE, ESC, ATD), Enrollment, Staffing, Marketing, and Distance Education.

Linking Planning and Budgeting

Planning and budgeting are linked through the participatory governance process driven by Program Review. All new faculty positions are reviewed based on identified program needs by division, and positions are prioritized by the Instructional Council. New non-instructional positions identified in departmental Program Review are allocated through the College Council which identifies, prioritizes, and recommends the positions to be filled.

While the recommendations for faculty and classified staff positions are reviewed by management in President’s Cabinet, the recommendations of the Instructional and College Councils are usually followed. The purchasing of technology or equipment is directed through Program Review. Faculty and staff delineate the equipment in the Program Review as something needed to enhance SLOs and student success for the instructional program. Instructional equipment that is funded by the state is prioritized by Instructional Council and all requests are reviewed to ensure that they have been identified as needs in the department’s Program Review. Recommendations go to College Council and final decisions are made by the superintendent/president.

Recommendation 3

The team recommends that the college develop, review, and measure student learning outcomes in all of its courses, programs, degrees/certificates, the general education pattern, and institution-wide practices. (Standard IB.1, Standard IIA.1c, IIA.2a, IIA.2b, IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.2g, IIA.2h, IIA.2i, IIA.3, IIA.6a, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1a, IIC.2; Standard IIIA.1b, IIIA.1c; and Standard IVA.1, IVA.2b, IVB.1b).

During the 2008–09 academic year, the District, led by the Academic Senate, revised the Program Review process to include Student Learning Outcomes (SLO). This revision takes advantage of the extensive work done on developing and assessing course level SLOs. Recognizing the need for more extensive program level SLOs, the District and The Academic Senate launched an initiative in this area for the 2009–10 academic year. To more effectively utilize the results of SLOs in student services programs, the IPRC, with shared

governance committee approval, modified the existing Program Review template to more specifically address the Program Review needs. During the 2007–09 academic years, the Academic Senate developed institutional student learning outcomes. To facilitate the assessment of these outcomes, the Curriculum Committee formed a subcommittee to review general education requirements for the associate degree and how general education courses are developed and reviewed. The committee also reviewed the institutional student learning outcomes and made recommendations for their assessment. The District is in the process of adopting the newly revised general education (GE) requirements as the institutional outcomes. This transformation will be complete in the fall 2012 semester. The District does not meet the current level of performance (proficiency) on the student learning outcome process as specified by the Commission, but the Self-Evaluation addresses the District's plan to reach that level.

Program Review (with levels of completion in the template)

The revised Program Review process was discussed under Recommendation 2, which includes a description of process by which program staff develop and assess course and program SLOs, data compiled on the SLO assessment results, mapping of course level outcomes to both program and institutional level SLOs, a discussion and analysis of SLO results, and a plan for future work on SLOs.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Data from 2009 Annual Report

In 2009, 70 percent of the COS courses has SLOs, with 45 percent having ongoing assessment; these courses had a course currency policy in place with benchmarks and deadlines that included having SLOs in place by spring 2010. Although 20 percent of the District's programs had SLOs with about 8 percent utilizing ongoing assessments, COS gave reassigned time to a faculty member to work with division chairs and program directors to adopt program-level SLOs in all of our programs, with the ultimate goal of aligning course SLOs and program SLOs with institutional SLOs. These institutional SLO have now been established, and the Institutional Planning Committee will refine them and develop an implementation plan during the 2009–10 academic year.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Initiative

COS has made great strides in its course SLO and its Institutional Student Learning Outcomes, but the need to focus on program SLO led to the following initiative: In May 2009, the Academic Senate initiated a college-wide workshop on program SLOs. Afterwards, Academic Senate leadership, in conjunction with the superintendent/president, discussed the need to energize the initiative by selecting one faculty member from the SLO Committee to work closely with the division chairs to create program-level SLOs during the 2009-2010 year. Additional reassigned time was provided and the position was created and staffed. In fall 2009, the program SLO coordinator and the Academic Senate developed and adopted a working definition of "program." With the addition of an institutional researcher, a higher priority on data collection was instituted. In fall 2010 the District, in conjunction with COSTA, developed a new faculty position of curriculum coordinator as a 100 percent assignment.

The curriculum coordinator is a full-time faculty position reporting to the vice president of academic services. This position has three primary functions, acting as chair of the Curriculum Committee, the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee, and the CurricUNET Committee. As chair of the Curriculum Committee, the curriculum coordinator leads the Curriculum Committee in determining that courses meet quality standards for articulation, critical thinking and college level rigor. The curriculum coordinator reviews pre-requisites for all courses; reviews existing courses to maintain course currency; and, determines associate degree requirements and the COS GE pattern for all courses. The curriculum coordinator brings courses for approval to the Academic Senate, and while working with the Articulation Office, recommends courses for transfer and articulation.

The curriculum coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day operation, upgrades, maintenance, and training of CurricUNET. Additionally, the curriculum coordinator is to update and maintain the curriculum website with state and local information.

With support from institutional research, the curriculum coordinator 1) oversees all aspects of learning outcomes and assessments at the course, program, and institutional level, 2) provides faculty and staff development training, program planning, and research design and implementation, and 3) meets regularly with the vice president of academic services and the Academic Senate to report on progress, plans, and strategies to meet established deadlines.

General Education Committee

In the spring 2009 semester, after several years of inactivity on GE areas, the Academic Senate formed the General Education Committee as a sub-committee of the District Curriculum Committee. The General Education Committee meets regularly and has redone all of the GE requirements for degrees. The committee sent an AA/AS degree requirements proposal to the Curriculum Committee in fall 2011. This proposal is on the docket for the Academic Senate to approve in the fall 2012 semester. The plan is to have a review of Institutional SLO during fall of 2012 pending approval by the Academic Senate of the new GE requirements, and to then confirm that the GE requirements will become the Institutional SLOs.

Recommendation 4

The team recommends that the College provide the full range of support and instructional services to all students and staff in all of its learning environments. The College must devote appropriate staff, facilities, and budget resources to support instruction, learning, and staff development. It must provide training for staff in diversity awareness, technology applications, and distance education. Additionally, the institution must improve the quantity, currency, depth, and variety of its library resources. (Standard IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.4, IIB.1, IIB.3a, IIC.1a, IIC.1c, IIC2, Standard IIIA.5a, IIIA.5b, IIIA.5, IIIB.2, IIIC.1, IIIC.1b, IIIC.1c)

The District has significantly expanded support services in a wide range of learning environments, including online and at the Hanford Educational Center. The budget development process has prioritized this effort, and the District has sought and obtained significant supplemental funding for these purposes. The District has invested in a new

library technology system and made significant improvements in the scope and accessibility of library electronic databases. The District meets or exceeds these standards. The following examples illustrate initiatives that have addressed these issues.

Staffing and Support in Learning Environments:

The District's FYE will undergo a transformation based on assessed success and a newly acquired Title V grant. Although the state budget is creating shortfalls in categorical funding, COS is committed to maintaining strong programs in our Writing Center, the MESA program, the Math Learning Skills Lab, and Tutorial Center.

The English Department opened the Writing Center in 2006. The Writing Center assists all COS students in developing their writing abilities by allowing them to work on writing tasks one-on-one (or in small groups) with peer-tutors or writing instructors. The Writing Center currently provides support for over 4,000 student hours per year and its use is growing rapidly. It is open 39 hours per week (a one-hour reduction this year due to the Library closing at noon on Fridays) for 15 weeks each semester. Writing Center services have been expanded to the Hanford Educational Center.

The Writing Center is currently staffed by English department faculty, a part-time ESL paraprofessional, two part-time instructional specialists and student tutors. The faculty work in the Writing Center on a paid basis at the faculty activity rate or by holding office hours in the Writing Center.

The MESA room is open Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., with times allocated for tutoring in a variety of areas in the math and sciences.

The Tutorial Center is located within the LRC, and services are available to students 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 7:30 a.m. to noon on Fridays. The Tutorial Center Coordinator recruits and trains student tutors to work with students who need help with their studies. The tutors must have completed the course(s) they tutor with a grade "B" or better and be recommended by their instructors. Tutorial Center students are served on a drop-in basis.

The Math Lab tutoring program began in February of 2006 and is housed in a room right off the Tutorial Center. It is open the same number of hours as the Tutorial Center and has a math instructor present the hours it is open, as well as student tutors and an instructional assistant. Desktop and laptop computers are available for student use which house *My Math Lab* and *Math Compass* programs. *My Math Lab* software is also available on 24 computers in Kaweah 202A. Beginning fall 2011, online math tutoring services were offered on a limited basis. During fall 2011, 2,976 students used the Tutorial Center and Math Lab for a total of 17,539 hours; 3,526 students took advantage of these same services during spring 2012 for a total of 18,126 hours.

Distance Education Training

Since fall 2007, the Distance Education coordinator oversees the training of faculty through online and face-to-face workshops on campus. Topics have included student retention and

online teaching pedagogy. To support the adoption of the newest version of Blackboard, the coordinator provides multiple workshops throughout the year. The coordinator scheduled thirteen additional training sessions for the first two weeks in September of 2009, and will continue scheduling and facilitating training sessions throughout the academic year based on recommended practices and faculty need. The Distance Education for College of Sequoias (DECOS) committee advises the coordinator concerning training topics and resources. In fall 2009, DECOS prepared a distance education teaching certificate curriculum and a training program that faculty must successfully complete in order to teach through a distance education modality.

Library Resources

The librarians developed SLOs for the three library classes that are offered for credit. Since that time, the librarians have been working on program-level SLOs. The program-level SLOs and accompanying assessment plans have been created and submitted to the SLO committee. Although it has not been possible to increase the budget for materials to support the students, the librarians have concentrated on using the District's existing monies to enlarge the electronic collection of e-books both in reference and in the non-fiction collection. COS continues to work on promoting outstanding web sites and links to full-text books available for free through internet resources.

Teaching and Learning Center

During the academic years of 2007-09, multiple departments and programs across campus collaborated in the development of a Teaching and Learning Center (TLC). Effective fall 2009, the TLC became fully operational to provide resources to faculty in the forms of equipment, software programs, a library, technology to develop the most innovative instructional and student support delivery modalities in a classroom/counseling/library support environment (virtual or real), and a conference room. Any group whose mission is to develop and train faculty is allowed access to the equipment or facility on an "as needed" basis or through drop-in access unless the room has been reserved for another activity requiring the full use of the room. Groups utilizing the TLC include the Student Equity and Diversity Committee, Faculty Enrichment Committee, Essential Learning Initiative, First-Year Experience program, Customer Service Committee, Human Resources, Distance Education at College of the Sequoias, Learning Resource Center, and English department portfolio assessment.

Recommendation 5

The team recommends that the College focus on the needs of its diverse populations both on-campus and in the community, including new students, non-traditional populations, and persons of limited English ability. The College must pay particular attention in all of its learning environments to the needs of persons with disabilities, including access to facilities, services, instructional materials, and print and electronic media. The College should ensure that its public representations are universally accessible. (Standard IA.1, Standard A.1a, IIA.1b, IIA.2d, IIA.6c, IIB.3a, IIB.3b, Standard IIIA.4a, IIIA.4b).

Since the fall of 2006, the District has vigorously pursued improvements in meeting the needs of students from groups historically under-represented in higher education. The

District now exceeds the referenced standards as exemplified by the initiatives discussed below.

Achieving the Dream

Achieving the Dream (ATD): Community Colleges Count, is a national initiative aimed at helping increased numbers of community college students who succeed. COS was one of 20 community colleges in seven states that joined the initiative in 2009. With the addition of these colleges, the initiative has grown to include 102 institutions—98 colleges and four universities—in 22 states.

ATD is a long-term national initiative that focuses on those students who traditionally face the most significant barriers to success, including low-income students and students historically underrepresented in higher education. The initiative is built on the belief that broad institutional change, informed by student achievement data, is critical to significantly improving student success rates.

As part of joining ATD, COS made a two-year commitment to focus its efforts on closing performance gaps among students in targeted populations. ATD colleges are identifying methods for increasing student success and implementing interventions to create institutional improvements for all students. Due to budgetary constraints, COS did not rejoin ATD in fall 2011, but the District has incorporated six student success initiatives into its five-year Strategic Plan. The six initiatives are:

- Require college success course for selected populations
- Develop and implement mandatory orientation – online
- Implement new student success practices such as eliminating late registration, enhanced use of sep's, degree audit
- Create an efficient progression through basic skills sequence
- Refocus and expand counseling and advising systems
- Enhancing the teaching and learning culture

California Tomorrow: Campus Change Network, Student Voices

The Student Voice Project addressed several student realities:

- Students are not deeply or systematically involved in the planning or change efforts of institutions,
- Students' day-to-day experiences in navigating college systems in the context of their complex and demanding lives are often not understood by those more intimately involved in college planning efforts,
- Avenues for colleges to systematically and cyclically gather and learn from the perspectives of students on campus are not provided,
- A vehicle for students to build their capacity to be change agents in the evolution of colleges' planning efforts to improve student success is not provided,
- Students from California who come from the lowest income group in the nation fall in the ranking as the highest proportion of students of color in the nation and who are part of the 65 – 80 percent of California community college students who work an average 32 hours a week.

Through the Student Voices Project, students learned what equity means for community college students; how to define a policy and evaluate a policy using a set of questions; how to conduct community college research through surveys and interviews; and, how to communicate effectively and make presentations on their research.

The insights COS learned from our students' voices is used to examine policies and barriers that our students have identified as problematic in achieving success.

Student Equity Plan

The Student Equity Plan (SEP) has gone through two major revisions since 2005. Written originally in January 2005, it languished after it was turned in to the Chancellors' office. Identified as an institutional priority in 2006, the Student Equity Committee was reformed in 2006 to include faculty, administrators, students and classified staff. COS contracted with California Tomorrow which over the last six years has provided valuable input as the plan was updated.

In response to a 2007 summit with approximately 50 stakeholders, the SEP was redesigned to incorporate new suggestions that came out of the summit. The plan instituted large scale initiatives such as First-Year Experience, the COS Diversity Celebrations, the Early Alert Program, Safe Zone training, and the addition of a second Puente cohort. Smaller, but still important gains have been made in student orientation and translation of materials into other languages. COS uses the SEP (and many other action plans) to choose from three to five objectives that will help improve efforts to greet, teach and evaluate all students equally.

Registration-to-Go

Registration-to-Go (RTG) was a program that registered new graduating high school students into fall and/or summer classes. COS brought all of the registration and testing resources to area high school campuses so that the students could apply for admission and register for classes at their high school. Staff administered placement testing, assisted students with the COS application, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), on-line orientation and setting up their COS e-mail. The high school seniors receiving RTG orientation were therefore prepared to register for classes. Admissions and Records personnel, counselors, financial aid personnel, First-Year Experience personnel, outreach personnel and student ambassadors were a part of RTG in order to assist the graduating high school student with creating their first semester Student Educational Plans, building their class schedules, finalizing financial aid, registering for a FYE cohort and registering for summer and/or fall semester classes.

These services were especially helpful for the District's diverse student populations that include many first generation college students; or who are not familiar with the steps required to register for college; who have limited English abilities; or, those who have transportation issues. In fall 2011, the District decided to stop RTG because the demand for classes was so high that students in the last high school visited experienced limited class offerings. COS replaced RTG with the Student Transition Enrollment Process System (STEPS). Rather than going out to the high schools, COS now invites the high schools to attend one of two STEPS days where the same services were offered by RTG are now offered on campus. By having

the high schools come to the COS campus or Hanford Educational Center, a more equitable system of student enrollment is possible.

First-Year Experience

The First-Year Experience (FYE) Program was initiated in May 2007. The focus of the program is to enhance the success, retention and persistence of students with fewer than 30 completed college units. The program has expanded from six learning communities of 25 students per community, to nine communities for fall 2012. A First-Year Experience seminar course has also been added, with the course incorporated into all learning communities beginning in the fall 2009 semester. The program focuses on developmental level (remedial) students, and formulates half of the District's learning communities based on developmental English and Math courses. Key program efforts ensure that students needing assistance are referred to campus resources and services that will give them the best opportunity for academic success. Learning communities have also been formed around specific populations of students, including athletes, career and technical education students, and African American students.

Giant Step Orientation/Parent Orientation

COS First Giant Step Orientation program has been consistently growing. During orientation, students are exposed to different aspects of campus life and resources, including diverse campus clubs and student safety. First Giant Step Orientation is open to all incoming freshmen and anyone who has not completed their admissions orientation requirement. As mentioned earlier, orientation is now mandatory and available in three different formats for incoming students who have completed fewer than six units of college course work. The parent orientation program has also seen increased attendance, starting with 25 attendees in 2008 and growing to well over 150 parents in fall 2011. Parents are invited to learn about the different resources available, including financial aid, transfer programs, campus safety, and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws. All information presented during orientation is available online and on campus.

Community Based ESL Non-Credit Courses

COS began offering community based ESL classes in fall 2007. Currently the District has more than 200 students participating in the offsite classes. This community-based program reaches out to non-traditional students with limited English ability who would not otherwise have access to the main college campus. The classes have been offered in collaboration with several nonprofit agencies and the Visalia Unified School District in nine communities:

- Hanford— Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room (2 classes)
- Goshen—Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Visalia Oval—Community Services Employment Training (Community Services Employment Training (CSET))
- Visalia—Manuel Hernandez Elementary School (Visalia Unified School District)
- Pixley— Community Services Employment Training (CSET)
- Earlimart— Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Farmersville—Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Woodlake—Proteus

The classes focus on the diverse needs of students including farm workers, displaced workers, parents wanting help to understand the educational system, those seeking citizenship and adults wishing to improve their employment potential. Each spring, COS busses in over 250 community ESL students and their families to participate in the annual college open house. The students learned about the District and all of the opportunities available to them as students. A major goal of the community ESL program is to promote transfer into the on-campus ESL program and eventually into the vocational education programs or degree and transfer programs. Community ESL students also receive a certificate of achievement when they complete the beginning, intermediate or advanced level courses.

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) responds to the needs of students and the community to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided access to campus facilities, services, and instructional material. To ensure that the campus is physically accessible to individuals with disabilities, the DRC routinely brings issues to the attention of the facilities/safety committee that might require mitigation. DRC staff participate on the Room Utilization Committee in order to review classroom configurations and make recommendations so that classrooms are accessible to students with disabilities and that there is ease of access and egress from each classroom. DRC staff and faculty provide technical assistance to the campus to ensure that learning environments are accessible to persons with disabilities.

The DRC provided a faculty enrichment presentation at the beginning of the fall 2008 semester in order to collaborate more effectively with faculty on the provision of accommodations and services to students with disabilities. Additionally, a committee comprised of the vice president of Student Services, access specialist, Distance Education coordinator, director of the Learning Center, and the director of the DRC developed a resource guide on providing accessible instructional material that complies with sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. The material is posted on the COS intranet.

Accessibility Initiative

In the spring of 2009, a small task force convened to develop and recommend a set of procedures and resources for faculty to facilitate section 508 compliance for electronic instructional media. The efforts of the task force comprise the elements of the accessibility initiative. During spring and summer 2009, the task force developed a resource guide for faculty that explains faculty responsibility, along with the procedures established to support faculty efforts. The resource guide was distributed campus wide in the fall 2009 semester. Additionally, the team secured subscriptions to licenses and accessible streaming video repositories to support faculty in adopting accessible videos. The LRC director and the Distance Education coordinator serve as resources for faculty concerning alternate media selections.

Instructional Media Services and DRC staff also plays a role in providing direction and services to faculty who are fulfilling their responsibility to provide accessible instructional media to their students. The task force made a presentation at the fall 2009 campus wide

convocation, explaining the basic elements of the accessibility initiative. Subsequent training and information sessions have been scheduled periodically for all divisions.

Surveys of Student Engagement

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*), a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, is a well-established tool that helps institutions focus on good educational practice and identify areas in which they can improve their programs and services for students. CCSSE asks about institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. In conjunction with the University of Texas-Austin, COS administered this survey to returning students during the spring 2009 and spring 2011 terms. In spring 2009, 53 courses were randomly sampled with an additional nine courses selected for oversampling. In spring 2011, the survey was conducted using 58 randomly sampled courses with no oversampling. The CCSSE data points to areas needing improvement and provides COS benchmarks against which the District can measure the effect of its engagement strategies over time. The District plans to administer the CCSSE again in spring 2013 to assess and compare any change over time.

The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*), a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, helps community colleges discover why some entering students persist and succeed and others do not. Administered during the fourth and fifth weeks of the fall 2010 academic term, *SENSE* asks students to reflect on their earliest experiences (academic and services-related) with the District. In fall 2010, 63 courses were sampled by the University of Texas-Austin.

The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (*CCFSSE*) elicits information from faculty about their perceptions regarding students' educational experiences, their teaching practices, and the ways they spend their professional time—both in and out of the classroom. The results are compared to the student's responses for the same questions, and results are presented to faculty for discussion. In spring 2011, approximately 107 faculty members participated in the survey. COS plans to administer the CCFSSE again in spring 2013 in order to analyze any change over time. All three surveys are funded by the Title V SEQUOIAS grant.

Tech Prep Expo

In collaboration with the Tulare and Kings County Office of Education, Kings and Tulare County ROPs and Visalia Unified School District, COS holds the Giant Tech Prep Expo every spring. Giant Expo was held on the COS campus in Visalia and includes 34 different vocational and academic competitions. This annual event is well attended and in spring 2012, the District had over 600 high school student attendees compete for prizes. Included was a program for middle school students which allowed them to explore different career pathways; more than 180 middle school students visited the COS campus in Visalia. The Giant Tech Prep Expo has a strong business connection that is quite successful in introducing students to career options, as well as rewarding them for their career/technical education success.

Documents in Spanish

In an effort to reach the high percentage of the area's underrepresented non-English speaking or ESL student population, the District has agreed that there is a great need to provide information and services in Spanish in order to inform more students about policies and procedures. In 2007, the vice president of student services initiated this process and used Rescribe, a translation service, to translate standardized forms utilized by Student Services administrators and staff into Spanish. This process is ongoing with new forms being submitted for translation as the need arises. Once in Spanish, it is then the responsibility of each department to annually update their individual forms. The future plan is to have all these forms made available on the COS website. The following documents have been translated into Spanish: Letter to High School Students & Parents; Registration Checklist; Semester Schedule of Classes; Add/Drop Classes Form; Application for Associate Degree; Financial Aid Notations for inclusion on documents; and, Application for Counseling Services.

Involvement with Parent Institute for Quality Education

In the spring of 2007, members from ProYouth HEART (HEART), Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE), Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) and COS embarked on a collaboration to provide parenting classes for parents of grade school children. The PIQE program provided the curriculum and instruction for this project. The curriculum emphasized strengthening the school to home partnership role of parents in their children's education. The PIQE program coordinators and staff are bilingual and cross-cultural English/Hispanic and provide instructional materials in English and Spanish. The HEART program funded the PIQE classes and provided child care at the school sites. VUSD school site administration and staff assisted PIQE in the program setup and coordination.

The role of COS was to provide a 0.5 unit of college credit for parents successfully attending the program. The majority of parents attending the classes had never enrolled in a college course. After the first semester of classes it was found that numerous parents did not register for the course due to the application form being only available in English and due to residency issues. To overcome these barriers, the application has been translated into Spanish and a non-credit course has been written, approved, and implemented. In spring semester 2009, 117 parents were awarded 0.5 unit and 165 parents completed 12 hours of non-credit course work.

TRiO/Upward Bound Math & Science

A six-week Summer Academy marked the completion of the fifth of five years for the TRiO Grant/Upward Bound Math & Science Program (TRiO/UBMS). TRiO/UBMS has not only focused on serving its targeted population but it has also stressed the advantages pursuing a STEM degrees/careers. During the summer academy, students earned high school and college credit by completing three college level courses. TRiO/UBMS is currently serving 50 total students. As part of its agreement with the US Department of Education (USDE), this program provides these 50 students with the following additional services of weekly after school tutorials at each of the four high schools; monthly educational Saturday sessions at COS; college/university campus visits; and cultural, educational and recreational field trips.

Puente Project

The Puente Project is a transfer readiness program co-sponsored by the University of California and the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The mission of the Puente Project is to increase the number of educationally underserved students who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn degrees, and return to the community as leaders and mentors to succeeding generations. Puente has four main components: 1) In the first year a student takes two English classes, English 251(pre-collegiate) and English 1. The content of both courses focuses on Latino authors and issues. Students also take a study skills class, Human Development 120AB, each semester for the first year; 2) Students work consistently with their Puente counselor each semester to develop and monitor an educational study plan and receive personal counseling until they are ready to transfer; and 3) Students are matched with community members from various professions who share their knowledge and experience with the students.

Puente students take educational field trips to universities each year and attend an annual statewide Puente Student Conference. Also, the Puente Club helps students develop leadership skills by networking with local community members, attending professional conferences, participating in cultural events and providing community service.

The Puente Project is a national, award winning program that has helped thousands of educationally underserved students succeed in school and college through teaching, counseling, and mentoring. Puente currently serves students in 54 community colleges and 35 high schools throughout California.

University Preparatory High School

Beginning in fall 2009, COS has hosted an early college high school, called University Preparatory High School (UPHS). This project, run by the Tulare County Office of Education, is a collaborative effort between the two institutions. Currently enrolling 145 high school students, UPHS offers those students the opportunity to complete high school and earn sixty transferrable units all within four years. With a focus on the helping professions, UPHS emphasizes occupations in the areas of health, education, social work, criminology, and business. In spring 2012, UPHS held commencement exercises for the first graduating class.

Latina Leadership Network

In the 2006-07 academic year, 45,624 Hispanic/Latino students statewide dropped out of high school, a rate of 5.2 percent. To address this issue, COS supports the newly developed chapter of the Latina Leadership Network (LLN) established in 2007. LLN focuses on helping promote higher education and professional development of Latinas.

LLN hosted its first Latino Youth Leadership Academy on the COS campus in Visalia in November 2008. The goal of this event was to bring awareness to youth that college can be a part of their future and to establish a positive mentor relationship for each student. The event was funded in cooperation with COS and Tulare County Office of Education. Among the volunteer presenters were instructors, doctors, authors and keynote speakers such as the VUSD superintendent, Visalia mayor, and a Superior Court judge. Over 200 at-risk middle

school aged boys were handpicked to participate in the Academy. The full day of breakout sessions included career choice planning, music, science, writing, self-esteem and respecting others. Lunch, shirts, and certificates of participation were distributed. Parents were also welcomed to attend a parenting session. COS hosted its fourth annual Latino Youth Leadership Academy in October 2011. In addition, COS hosted the annual Latina Leadership Network and California Community College's 23rd annual Conference March 11-13, 2010.

National College Health Survey

During the spring of 2009, COS participated in the American College Health Association's (ACHA) National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey. Approximately 600 students were surveyed and the results were sent back to ACHA for compilation. The results were returned to COS in both electronic format in the form of a compact disc (CD) and in hard copy format. The sample included students who were very representative of the COS population. When survey demographics were compared with the COS population with regard age, gender and ethnicity, the percentages were very close, lending validity to the results. The survey has been made available to all COS faculty with the intent of supplying the District as a source of information that will provide a clearer picture of the students served.

Psychological Services at the Student Health Center

The counselors and staff of the Student Health Center's psychological services are deeply committed to meeting the needs of the District's diverse population. The psychological services supervisor, who coordinates the services and recruits counseling interns for the program, actively seeks bilingual and bi-cultural interns so that the District is prepared to meet the mental health needs of our diverse students. In addition, the interns working within the psychological services program are trained to practice their counseling skills within the guidelines of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. Section 1.05 of the NASW Code of Ethics specifically addresses the District's response to cultural competency and social diversity. Efforts are made to make counseling services available and accessible to non-traditional students by providing outreach presentations to various classes and clubs on campus.

Recommendation 6

The team recommends that the College develop a process by which all policies are regularly reviewed and updated to meet Accreditation Standards, including, but not limited to tenure review; hiring & evaluation processes (management, classified, and faculty); employee professional ethics; board policy concerning ethics policy violation; boardmanship training & development; accommodations for students and staff; academic honesty policy

(Standard IB.1, II.B.1, II.B.2c, Standard IIIA.1d, IIIA.4, IIIA.4c, and Standard IVA2, IVA2a, IVA2b, IVA.3, IVA.5. IVB.1f)

Even before the visiting team arrived in the fall of 2006, the District had established a process for the review, development, and updating of all board policies and administrative procedures. The goal is to review and revise forms that implement these procedures and

create electronic versions of each form, complete with web based review, approval, and electronic signatures. This forms review project is scheduled for completion by fall 2012 semester. Additionally the District approved AP 7120 which establishes the process for review, revising, and posting BPs and APs.

Board Policy Updates

The creation of needed policies and the revision of existing Board Policies began in spring 2007. Appropriate administrators, along with committees comprised of Academic Senate and CSEA members, addressed their individual areas of expertise. Specific areas, responsible administrators and the Board of Trustees approval dates follow:

- District and Board of Trustees - Bill Scroggins, superintendent/president – Fall 2007
- District and General Institution - Kristin Hollabaugh, executive director, Foundation/Institutional Advancement - Spring 2007
- Academic Services – Duncan W. Graham, vice president, Academic Services – Fall 2009
- Student Services - Frances Gusman, vice president of Student Services – Spring 2008
- Business and Fiscal Services - Rod Frese, vice president of Administrative Services – Fall 2007
- Human Resources - John Bratsch, dean, Human Resource Services/Legal Affairs – Fall 2007

The policy development process was expedited in most instances by the use of templates provided by the Community College League of California Community's (CCLC) Policy Service. As drafts were completed, they were reviewed, revised if needed, and approved by: 1) area councils, 2) the President's Cabinet, 3) College Council, 4) Academic Senate for academic affairs, and, 5) the Board of Trustees. A complete area review will be conducted each semester, along with addressing the suggested current updates from CCLC. Coordination of the effort is provided by the president's office.

Administrative Procedure updates

The revision/creation of Administrative Procedures began in conjunction the Board Policy process. While the administrators listed above assumed direct responsibility, individuals most directly involved with the implementation of the corresponding Board Policy prepared draft procedures. These were reviewed, revised if needed, and approved by 1) area councils, 2) the President's Cabinet, 3) College Council, and, 4) Academic Senate for academic affairs. Administrative Procedures were provided to the Board of Trustees as information items only. Completion dates for each section follow:

- District – No Administrative Procedures
- Board of Trustees – Fall 2007
- General Institution – Spring 2009
- Academic Services – Spring 2009
- Student Services – Fall 2008
- Business and Fiscal Services – Fall 2008
- Human Resources – Fall 2008

A complete area review will be conducted each semester, along with addressing the suggested current updates from CCLC. Coordination of the effort is provided by the President's Office.

Form Review

In a continuing effort to become a paperless organization, review of all forms is in process. A study group was established to review each form and discuss it with the administrator and staff which originated the form to determine current use and continued use. The goal was to eliminate some forms and make others more accessible while being ever aware of efficiency and student /staff ease of use.

The process has been to review each form and initially relate it to either a Board Procedure (BP) or an Administrative Procedure (AP). Some forms do not have a related procedure, and the District will need to be determined whether a new procedure should be created or the form eliminated. The final result will be that every form will be electronic and online, associated with an AP or BP if necessary, and a date will be posted of when it was adopted, the sequence of approval on the form, and the final filing location. The forms will be posted as both internal and external documents on SharePoint and will be accessible by either students or local constituencies as appropriate.

Annual Board Retreats

Each winter the governing board of the District holds a two-day retreat. This retreat serves several purposes. Through the District planning and evaluation process, the Board receives updates on progress in all College programs—academic, support, and administrative. The Board also reviews and updates the District's vision statement as needed. The meeting presents an opportunity for the Board to set District priorities for the coming year. The Board conducts its annual review in public sessions leading up to the retreat and then utilizes the retreat for more in-depth discussion of improvement of board practices. Since 2009, the Board has participated in the California Leadership for Advancing Student Success (CLASS) project. This project involves Board discussion of data on student success, reports on College analysis of this data, progress on interventions to improve student success, and reflection on College policies that may inhibit student success. It is anticipated that these data-driven collegial discussions will assist the Board and the District in making student success an even greater priority.



Standard I

Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

The institution demonstrates strong commitment to a mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning and to communicating the mission internally and externally. The institution uses analyses of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished.

STANDARD I.A. Mission

The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning.

STANDARD I.A.1.

The institution establishes student learning programs and services aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population.

Description

COS has established student learning programs and services that are aligned with its purposes, its character, and its student population.

Since the District's 2006 accreditation self-study, the mission of the District has been revised to reflect the institution's updated educational purposes and current student population needs and its commitment to student achievement. The previous COS Mission Statement was:

College of the Sequoias is a comprehensive community college focused on student learning.

College of the Sequoias affirms that our mission is to help our diverse student population achieve their transfer and/or occupational objectives and to advance the economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry within our region.

College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing programs and services that foster student success.

Therefore, our mission focuses on preparing students for productive work, lifelong learning, and community involvement.

On May 14, 2007, the Board of Trustees adopted the current COS Mission [I.A.1]. The current Mission reads:

College of the Sequoias is a comprehensive community college focused on student learning that leads to productive work, lifelong learning and community involvement.

College of the Sequoias affirms that our mission is to help our diverse student population achieve its transfer and /or occupational objectives and to advance the economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry within our region.

College of the Sequoias is committed to supporting students' mastery of basic skills and to providing programs and services that foster student success.

The current mission statement serves to synthesize the language of the previous mission and at the same time re-emphasize the focus on student learning that leads to productive work, lifelong learning, and community involvement.

Students attend COS for a variety of reasons. The academic and support programs offered at COS are geared toward meeting the needs of its students' academic and career goals by providing opportunities for students to take course work required for transferring to four-year baccalaureate institutions, to earn an associate degree or career technical certificate, to develop basic skills and English as a Second Language (ESL) proficiency, and to participate in fee-based community education for enhancing career skills or exploration.

Currently, COS offers 163 degree and certificate programs (2011-2013 General Catalog). The Catalog Committee and articulation officer have recently revised and categorized the various associate degrees at the District so that students will better understand which degrees are appropriate for transfer-bound students and which are not. As a result, the associate degrees in the various majors have been divided into two categories: Associate for Transfer and Associate Not for Transfer. A major reason for this revision was to clarify different pathways that exist within the same majors for the student population so that there are both vocational and transfer options available. This revision has also helped the Institution to meet the requirements in SB 1440 [I.A.2], which enables the California Community Colleges and California State University to collaborate on creation of the Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) and Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degree programs. This new law requires community colleges to grant an associate degree for transfer to a student once a student has met specified general education and major requirements for the degree. Upon completion of the associate degree, the student is eligible for transfer with junior standing into the California State University (CSU) system. At this time, the District has been approved to offer three transfer degrees that meet the legislative requirements of SB 1440. The District is currently working on submitting future degree proposals aimed at streamlining the course requirements and transfer process for students transferring to a CSU.

COS continues to offer ESL and basic skills courses in mathematics and English to meet the needs of the diverse students from the multi-cultural and often under-prepared student population in Tulare and Kings Counties. To better serve this population, COS offers free, non-credit ESL courses at strategic locations within the District's service area to reach those who might have difficulties coming to campus.

COS continues to promote student success in other sectors of the student population with the aid of grant-funded programs such as First-Year Experience (FYE) [I.A.3], Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) [I.A.4], Promoting Achievement and Scholarship with Enrichment (PASEO) [I.A.5], TRiO Student Support Services Program [I.A.6], Puente Project [I.A.7], and the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), known at COS as the Essential Learning Initiative (ELI) [I.A.8]. For example, funding from ELI has supported many proposals

[\[I.A.9\]](#) and programs that promote student success. This funding made it possible for the District to implement the Early Alert system, which allows instructors to notify students of their progress prior to the end of the semester. ELI has funded other tutorial and academic support programs supporting student success.

The District is currently designated as a Hispanic Serving Institute (HSI) [\[I.A.10\]](#) because it serves a large population of Hispanic students. By definition, an HSI is an institution of higher education that is an eligible institution and has an enrollment of at least 25 percent Hispanic undergraduate full-time-equivalent students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application. The current Hispanic population at COS is 52 percent. Presently, COS has two Title V HSI grants, which are directly tied to this designation. Again, this designation has allowed the District to apply for grants and establish programs that benefit its Hispanic population as well as helping improve success for all students.

In addition, COS provides a variety of student support programs. Recently, COS has revised and improved the required orientation process for new students. Traditionally, students were able to complete the orientation process by watching a video online and answering a set of questions. To improve this process, the District has devoted extensive funding and personnel to revamping orientation. Currently, the District offers live orientation sessions called the “First Step Giant Orientation” to groups of students at the beginning of each semester. Parents are also invited to attend orientation with their students. To accommodate all students and improve the original online orientation component, COS outsourced the creation of a new interactive online orientation program to a private professional group. This new online orientation has an interactive interface with a modernized environment and updated information includes programs and services offered at the Hanford and soon-to-be-open Tulare Centers. Accountability checks are built into the system to make sure students fully understand one topic before moving on to the next. These changes are aimed at improving the District’s orientation and matriculation processes so that student learning programs and services will be better aligned with the District’s purposes, its character, and its student population.

Additional support for helping students achieve their educational goals is provided by Academic Counseling [\[I.A.11\]](#), Financial Aid [\[I.A.12\]](#), Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) [\[I.A.13\]](#), and Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) [\[I.A.14\]](#), as well by the Disability Resource Center (DRC) [\[I.A.15\]](#), Welcome Center [\[I.A.16\]](#), Veterans Program [\[I.A.17\]](#), Mini Corps [\[I.A.18\]](#), Student Health Center [\[I.A.19\]](#), Writing Center [\[I.A.20\]](#), and Tutorial Center [\[I.A.21\]](#). Many of these services are reviewed through College wide program review [\[I.A.22\]](#), which uses an ongoing systematic process to ensure that programs meet the needs of all students.

COS continues to meet the needs of its diverse student population by following the recently updated and adopted July 2011 SEP [\[I.A.23\]](#), which aims to ensure that all students, regardless of their background and skill levels, have the opportunity to achieve their educational goals. Staff and faculty members on the Student Equity Committee have worked extensively to bring cultural awareness to the District. This committee has instituted monthly

Cultural Diversity/Heritage celebration activities to educate and showcase the rich multitude of diversity that exists within the District's student population and the community at large. The District's library staff has assisted efforts by posting instructional resources for faculty to utilize in the classroom when appropriate. The SEP continues to serve the District in promoting activities that support student equity goals, resulting in success for students.

Because advancement of economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry in the region is a direct mission of the COS, the District has made strides to reinvigorate its direct service to business and industry by reestablishing (in 2008) its contract education [I.A.24] and community education [I.A.25] efforts through the Business, Industry and Community Service (BICS) division. This unit works cooperatively with all units, but it strategically ties in with Career/Technical Education efforts to:

- 1) Develop networks and partnerships that allow for information exchange and increased opportunities to bring needed workforce resources to the region.
- 2) Deliver not-for-credit customized training and consulting services that provide a return-on-investment for the business or industry served.
- 3) Offer continuing fee based education or interest-based community services courses, workshops, or special events that promote life-long learning.

The BICS unit has worked very intentionally to establish networks, develop partnerships, and exchange information with individuals, agencies, cities, associations, economic development corporations, industry groups, chambers, community-based organizations, etc. COS has been able to bring multiple grants and externally funded training programs to the area as a result of having a division whose job or function is to make connections, manage the resources, and deliver the training. For example, 460 individuals were trained through a contract with the Tulare County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB) in 2009-10. In 2010-11, a partnership between the TCWIB, COS, and the local manufacturing community provided for a successful Employment Training Panel (ETP) contract from the state, which has resulted in industrial-based and supervisory training for a consortium of employers within the manufacturing sector. These efforts are beginning to build the reputation of the District as a trusted resource and conduit for businesses that are in need of customized training/skill upgrades for incumbent workers as evidenced by this comment:

“Thanks so much! I realize the work involved in executing a program as this. Yourself (BICS) and others involved in making it happen have done a great job/service to employers, employees, industry and the community. The impact a program like this can have, if we are able to do it annually, **equates to real dollars to business.** As these skills not only reduce the need for outside, very high priced contractors (most out of county) but, downtime and costs to correct can and is the difference between success or not, for many businesses.”

--Kevin Rowland, HR Manager, Provisions Food Company

The Community Education part of the BICS unit has grown in the last two years to offer numerous not-for-credit, fee-based classes promoting skill upgrades or life-long learning, with 1078 people served in 2010-11. A Kids College was piloted that same year and received excellent reviews from parents in the community.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The mission of the District guides the development of programs and services that are aligned with its purpose and with the communities served. Programs and services at the District are designed to help students succeed. According to the 2011 Accreditation Survey, 89.2 percent of the individuals surveyed agreed that the mission statement is appropriate for the District.

4.1) The Mission Statement is appropriate for our College (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
28.4% (66)	60.8% (141)	4.7% (11)	2.2% (5)	3.9% (9)

4.2) The Mission Statement is appropriate for our College (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
51.6% (115)	36.8% (82)	8.1% (18)	1.8% (4)	1.8% (4)

In addition, 88.4 percent of the surveyed population felt that the mission statement was of great-to-moderate importance to the District. Only a small percentage, 4.7 percent, disagreed that the mission was appropriate, and 1.8 percent thought that the mission was not important at all. The majority of faculty, administrators, and staff surveyed tended to agree that the mission is appropriate and important for establishing the District's student learning programs and services.

COS has demonstrated that it provides learning programs and services that are aligned with its purposes, character, and student population. Programs such as FYE, Puente Project, MESA, Honors Program [I.A.26], EOPS, Promoting Achievement & Scholarship with Enrichment Opportunities (PASEO), and others have been established to help students be successful in their educational endeavors at the District. The District's 163 degree and certificate programs, ranging from academic transfer degrees to vocational training and certificates, help prepare the District's diverse student population for productive work, lifelong learning, and community involvement by providing students with a variety of options.

Finally, through reestablishing the contract education and community education units on the campus, the District has renewed its connections with the workforce system in Tulare and Kings County, as well as developing partnerships with business and industry that can improve their ability to be competitive in the region.

Plans for improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.A.2

The mission statement is approved by the governing board and published.

Description

The District's current mission statement was approved by College Council, the District's shared governance committee, on September 27, 2011 [I.A.27], and the Board of Trustees reaffirmed it on November 14, 2011 [I.A.28]. The mission statement is currently published in the electronic catalog, on the College's website [I.A.29], in all planning documents, and in College information pamphlets, as well as being displayed in many offices on campus.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The mission statement has been approved by the governing board and published in a variety of formats; it is thus widely accessible to all students, staff, and community members. During this self-study, it became clear that different published versions varied slightly in wording. The District understands the importance of consistent language and has further formalized procedures and protocols for future review cycles of the mission statement by instituting a new Administrative Procedure (AP 1201) [I.A.30] to incorporate formal procedures for reviewing, approving, and publishing the statement. As a result of this new AP, which was approved by the board on February 13, 2012 (page 140-142) [I.A.31], the District has made extensive efforts to meet the requirements of this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.A.3

Using the institution's governance and decision-making processes, the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary.

Description

With the passage and adoption of Administrative Procedure 1201, the District has established formal procedures for reviewing, revising as necessary, and approving the mission statement on a regular basis. This new AP has provided improved structure and clarity in the mission statement review process. It also establishes formal procedures and ensures that all institutional governance bodies and their constituencies (for example, College Council, Academic Senate, etc.) have appropriate input into review and revisions of the mission statement.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. In the last few years, the District's mission statement has been reviewed through the institution's governance and decision-making processes. Although the mission statement has been regularly reviewed, this process has not been

formally documented. The District recognizes this fact and has implemented AP 1201 to ensure that its mission statement will be reviewed at the first College Council meeting of every academic year. AP 1201 also specifies that changes must be approved by a majority of the voting members of College Council, and the Board of Trustees will have final approval with regard to adopting the revised mission statement. The newly established AP 1201 has addressed the need for reviewing the mission statement on a regular basis by institutionalizing the mission statement review process into the annual operations of the District. It ensures that the College Council and all campus constituencies will have input into any review and revisions of the District's mission.

Currently, the Outcomes and Assessment Committee is submitting a proposal [I.A.32] to the Academic Senate to revise the mission statement. This example shows how the shared governance and decision making process at the District can lead to recommendations for mission statement revisions.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.A.4

The institution's mission is central to institutional planning and decision making.

Description

The institution's mission of focusing on student learning, serving the area's diverse population, and promoting student success has been a driving force in the development of the COS 2010-2015 Strategic Plan [I.A.33]. Starting in the fall of 2009, the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness committee (IPEC), then known as the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), was charged with the task of developing a five-year Strategic Plan for the District. In this developmental process, the IPC gathered input and feedback from faculty, staff and students. In addition, community members from across the District were invited to meet in the cities of Corcoran, Hanford, Tulare, and Visalia and talk with the committee. The IPC established six areas of focus: Student Access, Students' Success in Completing Their Education, Students' Mastery of Basic Skills, Effective and Efficient College Practices, Students as Citizens of a Global Community, and Economic Growth for Tulare and Kings Counties. These six areas of focus, which form the foundation of the Strategic Plan, stem directly from the institution's mission statement. The Strategic Plan provides a tactical and measurable course of action for the District to follow and implement in the next five years.

In addition to the Strategic Plan, the District's road map, departments and programs on campus also must ensure that their programs and services are focused on the District mission. The program review process at COS was revised in 2008 and the new format [I.A.34] was instituted in 2009 to ensure better alignment with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) standards based on the 2009 midterm report. This revised Program Review model mirrors the ACCJC standards and has served as the source of information for the institution to evaluate the funding requests from each program based on assessed needs. The revised format also allows for standardized data to be presented and

evaluated in each section, hence helping the individual programs measure the progress and quality of their programs. Program Review also allows for the assessment of potential future modifications in each program's planning processes. Departments or programs that received satisfactory Program Review ratings are eligible to request funds for personnel, equipment, and other financial needs. With this current Program Review model, all programs at the District are directed to focus on how their progress, decision making, and planning processes are directly related to the District's mission. Instituting this revised Program Review model has also made the institution's mission statement a central driving force in the institutional integrated planning and decision-making process at the program level.

Evaluation

The institution's mission continues to serve as the driving force and unifying theme for all institutional planning and decision making processes. The five-year Strategic Plan is based on the main tenets of the District's mission. It is reviewed on an annual basis by all College participatory groups and students, and is available for members of the community to determine the currency and effectiveness of the institution's programs and services. Therefore, at the institutional level, the District's mission is integral for its planning and decision making processes.

There is one area of concern for the District regarding planning and decision making. Many of the District's committees that participate in planning and decision making lack a clear committee mission statement to connect committee work to the institutional mission. The alignment between committee work and the District's mission could be improved.

At the program level, the District mission is essential to the planning and decision-making process. The fact that each program has to review whether its services and programs are centered around the institution's mission means that the mission statement is prominently involved in planning at this level. Programs have to show that their services and actions are relevant to the mission statement and in compliance with it. Each program evaluates its own mission, explaining how it is connected to the overall institutional mission. This component is built into the current Program Review format, and it ensures that all programs are cognizant of the mission statement and using it in all program planning and decision-making processes.

Since this year's accreditation survey asked only whether the mission statement guided the Board in developing new programs and services, many respondents said they were confused. The Board does not actually develop new programs and services, which are developed by faculty, administrators, and staff. Perhaps because of this potentially confusing wording, only about 42.6 percent of respondents agreed that the mission statement guides the Board in program and service development, while a significant 38.7 percent marked "Don't Know." On the other hand, a strong majority, 83.9 percent, thought that the mission *should* be guiding the Board with regard to new programs and services. In the future, the District's accreditation team will use a more appropriate question to assess views of whether the mission statement guides development of new programs and services.

52.1) The Mission Statement guides the Board in development of new programs and services. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10.2% (23)	32.4% (73)	10.7% (24)	8.0% (18)	38.7% (87)

52.2) The Mission Statement guides the Board in development of new programs and services. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
53.5% (116)	30.4% (66)	3.2% (7)	1.4% (3)	11.5% (25)

Plans for Improvement

1. The accreditation leadership team will revise the Self-Evaluation survey to more accurately measure views on how well the mission statement serves as a guide in the development of new programs and services at the District.
2. The campus committees will develop or revise their mission statements to be in alignment with the mission of the institution and Strategic Plan. The IPEC will develop a template that aligns each committee's work to an accreditation standard and the Strategic Plan. It will also develop a mechanism for annual updates to be instituted. This will help each committee to focus on the standard(s) that it addresses, the charge that it is given, and how its actions are aligned with the mission, Strategic Plan, and Accreditation Standards.

STANDARD I.A. Evidence List

I.A.1 COS Board Policy 1200 Mission

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%201200%20-%20Mission%20-%20Adopted%205-14-07.pdf>

I.A.2 SB 1440 – Associate Degree for Transfers <http://www.sb1440.org/>

I.A.3 First Year Experience (FYE)

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/FYE/Pages/FYE-Mission-Statement.aspx>

I.A.4 Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA)

<http://www.cos.edu/Academics/MathEngineering/MESA/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.5 Promoting Achievement and Scholarship with Enrichment (PASEO)

<http://www.cos.edu/Academics/MathEngineering/PASEO/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.6 TRiO

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%201/TRiO%20SSS%20Flyer.pub>

I.A.7 Puente Project

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/Puente/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.8 Essential Learning Initiative (ELI)

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/ELI/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.9 Essential Learning Initiative (ELI) Proposals

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%201/ELI%20Proposal%20Flyer%20Fall%202012%20%20Spring%202013.docx>

I.A.10 Hispanic Serving Institute (HSI) <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/idadeshsi/index.html>

I.A.11 Academic Counseling

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/Counseling/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.12 Financial Aid <http://www.cos.edu/FinancialAid/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.13 Extended Opportunity Programs and Services

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/EOPS/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.14 Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE)

<http://www.cccco.edu/ChancellorsOffice/Divisions/StudentServicesandSpecialPrograms/CARE/tabid/589/Default.aspx>

I.A.15 Disability Resource Center (DRC)

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/DRC/Pages/DRC%20Home.aspx>

I.A.16 Welcome Center

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/WelcomeCenter/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.17 Veterans Program

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/VeteranServices/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.18 Mini Corps

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/minicorps/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.19 Student Health Center

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentHealthServices/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.20 Writing Center

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/presidentsoffice/research/ProgramReview/Pages/Template.s.aspx>

I.A.21 Tutorial Center

<http://www.cos.edu/Library/Services/TutorialCenter/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.22 Program Review

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/presidentsoffice/research/ProgramReview/Pages/Template.s.aspx>

I.A.23 Student Equity Plan

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/committee/collegecouncil/StudentEquity/Student%20Equity%20Plan/Student%20Equity%20Plan%20July%202011.docx>

I.A.24 Contract education <http://www.cos.edu/BICS/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.25 Community Education

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/CommunityEducation/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.26 Honors Program

<http://www.cos.edu/Academics/AcademicSupport/HonorsProgram/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.27 College Council Meeting Summary – September 27, 2011

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/committee/collegecouncil/CollegeCouncil/Document%20Library/20111025/unapproved%20minutes%20from%209-27-11.docx>

I.A.28 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – November 14, 2011

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Minutes/2011/Minutes%20Board%2011-14-11.pdf>

I.A.29 COS Mission Statement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/MissionStatement/Pages/default.aspx>

I.A.30 Administrative Procedure 1201

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%201201%20Mission%20Statement.pdf>

I.A.31 Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda – February 13, 2012

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Packets/2012%20Board%20Packet/Board%20Packet%2002-13-11.pdf>

I.A.32 Outcomes and Assessment Committee proposal

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%201/Justification%20for%20change%20to%20Mission%20Stmt-proposal%20by%20Outcomes-Assess%20Committee.docx>

I.A.33 COS Strategic Plan

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Documents/COS%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf>

I.A.34 Program Review new format

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/research/ProgramReview/Instructional%20Programs/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fdepartments%2Fpresidentsoffice%2Fresearch%2FProgramReview%2FInstructional%20Programs%2F2011%20Templates%20%2D%20Instructional%20Programs&FolderCTID=0x012000998D7FE7F01A8D4DB747E9535B6F705E&View=%7b9C7534ED-5FE7-408F-886A-AAAFDF3D4298%7d>

STANDARD I.B.***Improving Institutional Effectiveness***

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

STANDARD I.B.1

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

Description

Administrators, faculty, and staff have the opportunity to engage in dialogue about continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes in both formal and informal settings. Formal dialogue about student learning at COS occurs in a number of different campus committees such as the Curriculum Committee, the Outcomes and Assessment Committee (OAC), the Institutional Program Review Committee (IPRC), and IPEC.

The Curriculum Committee is responsible for reviewing and acting upon all proposals from the divisions to establish new programs, add new courses to existing programs, or make changes to existing courses or programs. This committee includes the curriculum/outcomes coordinator who serves as chair, representatives from the academic divisions, an ad hoc representative from financial aid, and the distance education coordinator, articulation officer, police academy director, academic resource coordinator, vice president of academic services, deans of academic divisions, and a student representative.

Division faculty members are actively engaged in justifying new programs and identifying student learning outcomes prior to submitting the curriculum for review by the committee. In the Student Services division, units establish Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) within the program review process and address and update those outcomes every two years. These SAOs, which are written as measurable outcomes, are an example of an intentional effort to establish the correlation between student service programming and student learning.

In 2010, the District hired a faculty member as the curriculum coordinator to oversee curriculum and outcomes. This role was created by combining the SLO chair with the CurricUNET coordinator and curriculum chair. One of the new duties of the coordinator was to create the Outcomes and Assessment Committee (OAC), which is responsible for the District's outcomes and assessment. Since 2010, this committee has worked with faculty, division chairs, and relevant committees to lay the groundwork for campus-wide outcomes

assessment at the course level. In 2011, this committee began to work with divisions in developing the first program outcome assessment for all programs in the COS District.

In the 2011-12 academic year, this committee has worked hard toward understanding, creating, and supporting a “culture of assessment” at the institution. The committee also has proposed changes to the District’s mission statement to include a focus on assessment and improvement. These changes have been proposed to the Academic Senate and will likely be scrutinized in great detail. However, since the goal is to promote a culture of assessment, this proposal is likely to spark serious dialogue and reflection regarding assessment at COS. Most recently, the Committee has launched a blog called “Outbursts” [\[I.B.1\]](#) to share ideas, discuss best practices, and strategize ways to overcome obstacles. This blog is intended to encourage a campus-wide dialogue and promote self-reflection.

The Institutional Program Review Committee and program review processes also encourage each division to give adequate consideration to course outcomes and COS Program Level Outcomes (PLO). The Program Review process specifically holds each program accountable for writing and assessing SLOs or SAOs. This process ensures that SLOs are written and consistently improved for each course and program. In the most recent update of the Program Review template, academic programs are required to track how course outcomes connect to program outcomes. Programs also are asked to reflect on the effectiveness of their work in mapping the connection between course and programs outcomes.

The General Education Committee of the Academic Senate is also collaborating with the OAC to create new Institutional/General Education Outcomes to reflect the qualities that the institution desires for students who complete degree and certificate programs. This latest outcome effort will be discussed as a possible addition to the effectiveness mapping in the program review process.

The IPEC is a standing committee of the College Council, and its mission is to monitor and assess the ongoing effectiveness of the integrated institutional planning processes through the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The objectives of the IPEC are as follows:

- Develop and implement a five-year strategic planning process.
- Report the progress of the Strategic Plan annually to constituent groups and the COS community.
- Provide recommendations and process models that improve institutional planning and effectiveness.
- Ensure District compliance with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges standards for accreditation with accurate and timely submission of required accreditation reports.
- Review and recommend short and long range institutional plans to the College Council.
- Assess progress towards accreditation recommendations, and report on that progress.
- Provide a comprehensive annual report to the College Council and Board of Trustees that assesses the state of College planning and effectiveness.

The current integrated planning approach of the District is anchored by the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, which was created with the help of various inputs from the District community and beyond. The committee facilitated multiple discussion sessions at the beginning of the strategic planning process, followed by campus-wide sessions to gain input and focus, as well as community forums. All of these activities allowed dialogue and reflection about the future direction of the District. The current Strategic Plan is also reconsidered by divisions on at least a bi-annual basis, since prompts about the plan are embedded into the Program Review process. Finally, each part of the Strategic Plan is assigned to a “lead” in the appropriate area. Leads meet periodically with IPEC to update the committee on the status of work in their areas of the Strategic Plan: what is working, what is not working, or what issues need attention.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. COS is actively improving assessment efforts through strategic planning and campus-wide self-reflection. The District has designated a faculty coordinator to coordinate changes in the Course and Program Level Student Learning Outcomes, and it is integrating a mapping process to show effectiveness of the District’s outcomes and assessment efforts. Significant progress has been made in setting up systems, putting procedures in place, igniting dialogue in a variety of campus settings, and supporting self-reflection. All of these efforts are relevant to growing the culture of greater consciousness regarding quality and assessment.

Since accreditation emphasizes that improvement of learning quality is continuous rather than a unique event every six years, it is essential for the planning process to remain integrated and be monitored for effectiveness. This concern is reflected in the recent renaming of the Institutional Planning Committee as the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness committee (IPEC). Through this committee, structured, intentional conversations about the effectiveness of assessment and planning processes are happening on an ongoing basis.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended.

STANDARD I.B.2.

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

Description

The IPEC, for the last two years, has spent a significant amount of time and effort on developing and implementing the COS Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan serves as the foundation for how COS will establish goals down to the program level; it also serves as the

framework for monitoring integrated planning and measuring the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.

The IPEC focused on faculty, staff, student, and community member input to develop objectives and measurable goals for six areas of focus: Student Access, Students' Success in Completing Their Education, Students' Mastery of Basic Skills, Effective and Efficient College Practices, Students as Citizens of a Global Community, and Economic Growth for Tulare and Kings Counties. Input from faculty, staff, students, and community members in various forums during the spring of 2010 led to the development of the five-year Strategic Plan. The goals within the Strategic Plan have multiple objectives and measurable outcomes. Once the five-year Strategic Plan was approved and adopted, it was published in hard copy and electronic format on the web, where it is widely available to all stakeholders.

At the institutional level, goals in the Strategic Plan were established for a period of up to five years. The progress of achieving these goals and assessing their measurable outcomes will be evaluated and recorded annually by various campus committees, programs, or individuals who were assigned these tasks for various focus areas. Once these results are recorded and evaluated, a tactical plan progress report [\[I.B.2\]](#) will be available for all constituencies to view. In the annual review of these goals and objectives, some goals and outcomes may need to be refined to meet the current needs of the institution. The Strategic Plan is a dynamic document. Therefore, review of the plan's measurable outcomes is a necessary step to ensure that the institution is working toward achieving these goals to improve institutional effectiveness. In addition, the goals within the Strategic Plan are linked directly to the ACCJC accreditations standards. For example, the cross-linked document [\[I.B.3\]](#) will show that Goal IA: Enhance institutional access through technology in the Strategic Plan is linked to Standard III.C Technology Resources in the ACCJC Accreditation Standards.

At the program level, individual programs are required to identify how their programs and services are aligned with the goals of the Strategic Plan in their Program Review reports. This requirement means that each program needs to become familiar with the Strategic Plan and to determine where it fits within the plan. It is thus vital for all members of the institution to understand the plan's goals, since they are working collaboratively toward achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan and their own programs at the same time. This is an integrated planning process in which the individual programs set their own goals while also incorporating them within the larger Strategic Plan.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Institution-wide goals are integrated and developed through a collaborative effort involving faculty, staff, students, and community members. These goals contain multiple objectives and measurable outcomes that are readily available to everyone via hard copies and electronic format. Based on regular updates from various campus committees, the IPEC evaluates progress on these goals [\[I.B.4\]](#), posting results on SharePoint. This ongoing systematic cycle of evaluation allows all stakeholders to view, review, and widely discuss the District's current progress in achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Since all goals within the Strategic Plan are linked and cross-walked [I.B.5] with one of the four appropriate ACCJC accreditation standards, the District continually reviews the accreditation standards in its planning processes according to the mission. This review helps improve institutional effectiveness. As a result of this connection between the District's Strategic Plan and the ACCJC accreditation standards, the District sets goals for improved effectiveness that are consistent with its mission, and institutional members are aware of these goals; hence, they work collaboratively toward achieving them.

Plans for Improvement

No Plans for Improvement is recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.B.3.

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

Description

With the development and implementation of the five-year Strategic Plan beginning in the fall of 2009, the goals and objectives within this document have become the institutional road map for the 2010-15 calendar years. This plan contains six areas of focus with a total of 20 goals. Each of the 20 goals has multiple objectives and measurable outcomes to help the institution assess and review its planning, implementation, and re-evaluation processes regarding these goals. As the driving force for the institution, the Strategic Plan is reviewed regularly by the IPEC [I.B.6], and progress toward the plan's various goals is recorded and reported to College Council and constituency groups.

Improving institutional effectiveness is a major component of the Strategic Plan, and is directly addressed in each of the plan's six focus areas. As a result of these connections, the Strategic Plan has had a direct impact at the program level by requiring administrative, academic, and student service programs to analyze and review how goals and program effectiveness are related to the Strategic Plan. This helps to ensure that programs at the District are in alignment with the Strategic Plan. This requirement is a crucial part of the Program Review model. Each program on campus is required to evaluate its program or service based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data in the Program Review narrative. In this systematic cycle of evaluation, all programs submit annual program updates to indicate their progress in meeting their stated goals. With the start of the 2012 year, the current Program Review model is undergoing revision (revision plan) [I.B.7], and the timeline for Program Review update submission has been extended to once every two years. These changes, aimed at improving the process and the effectiveness of Program Review, have come about through a thorough assessment of the current process by the IPRC and other shared governance structures. The extended time granted for update submissions will allow programs to more effectively implement their goals and realistically measure outcomes, improving each program's evaluation component, with a two-year cycle proving to be a much more feasible time line. The template for the 2011 academic Program Review

[I.B.7] has been significantly revised. The 2012 academic Program Review templates [I.B.8] have been improved to further clarify the questions. These changes will allow the IPRC to more efficiently and effectively evaluate the write-ups and determine whether the programs are achieving their stated goals. These changes are part of the systematic cycle of evaluation aimed at improving institutional effectiveness.

Since Program Review is tied directly to resource allocation, programs have a strong incentive to make sure they have satisfactorily met all criteria. This new model requires more depth and rigor in the analysis and self evaluation process. As a result, many programs that received an unsatisfactory rating by the IPRC have been required to go back to review, update, and revise their Program Review narratives, which is part of an effort to improve institutional effectiveness and elevate all campus programs toward achieving stated goals. This Program Review model mirrors the ACCJC accreditation standards, and it assists campus programs to focus on the goals in the Strategic Plan. This helps the overall institution to assess its progress toward the institutionally stated goals.

In this cyclical system starting with the Strategic Plan, the institutional goals in the plan are reviewed, supported, and reaffirmed by the individual Program Reviews at the program level. Programs with satisfactory ratings on their Program Review are allowed to submit requests for personnel, personal equipment, etc., to the District's resource allocation process through the appropriate institutional budget request channels such as Instructional Council, College Council, President's Cabinet, Student Services Council, and the president/superintendent. At this level, the Strategic Plan is reviewed again to determine whether the decisions on the resource allocation requests would support the institutional goals and improve institutional effectiveness according to the plan. Through these procedures, the institution has a thorough process of integrated planning for assessing its progress toward goals and decision making with regard to improving institutional effectiveness.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The implemented Strategic Plan serves as a vehicle by which the District effectively assesses its progress toward achieving its institutional goals and improving the decision-making process related to institutional effectiveness. Because of the Strategic Plan, the District has an improved system for conducting an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation from the institutional level down to the program level. The link between the Strategic Plan and the Program Review model has allowed all bodies within the District to review their respective progress toward institutional goals and effectiveness. The use of a systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation is built into the Program Review model. For example, the resource allocation processes for academic services, student services faculty, classified personnel, instructional equipment, non-instructional equipment, facilities, Vocational Technical Educational Act Funds (VTEA), COS Foundation, and budget augmentations all begin with Program Review (APs 3261, 3262, 3262). Satisfactorily rated campus programs are eligible to put in requests for resource allocations. Therefore, all programs are striving to make sure that they are implementing and using a systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation in their respective programs.

Since the District is continuously re-evaluating its practices for improving institutional effectiveness, the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) has recently adopted a new name, Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC), and a modified mission as stated earlier in standard 1B.1 above. The District appreciates the fact that the Accreditation process encourages continuous and sustainable improvement of learning quality, rather than a unique event that happens every six years; this process ensures that the integrated planning process remains integrated and is regularly monitored for effectiveness. What was previously missing at COS was an overall ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the planning processes, with a way to ensure that the Accreditation Standards and Accrediting Commission recommendations were being met continuously. With this new change to the IPEC, COS will benefit from having a participatory governance body that is responsible for monitoring the District's planning processes and how well they align with the Accreditation Standards rubric.

Plans for Improvement

No Plans for Improvement is recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.B.4.

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

Description

COS employs a participatory governance model in its planning process. The planning process is conducted by College Council, the governance body of the institution. College Council is composed of the various representative groups such as faculty, classified, administration, adjunct faculty, and students. The IPEC is a subcommittee that reports directly to College Council and is in charge of the broad-based planning process for the District.

Since 2009, the IPEC under the direction of College Council has been diligently working on implementing and reviewing the five-year Strategic Plan for the District. As stated above, the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan involved the input and cooperation of all constituency groups on campus along with members of the communities served by the District. The planning process during the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan has been broad based since the plan itself is the culmination of hundreds of hours of discussion, dialogue, surveys, and feedback from all participatory groups. Even though the IPEC took on the leadership role in this planning process, all appropriate constituent groups were consulted and surveyed for the input used in the plan's development.

The Strategic Plan contains multiple measurable outcomes to help the institution gauge its progress toward meeting the plan's goals and objectives. Since the implementation of the Strategic Plan, appropriate campus committees and individuals have been assigned the tasks of initiating these goals, keeping track of progress toward their fulfillment, and reporting back to the IPEC.

For example, the Faculty Enrichment Committee (FEC) has been assigned Strategic Plan Goal IIIC-5: Offer professional training opportunities that incorporate successful pedagogy and delivery methods, specifically targeted for basic skills students [I.B.10]. The FEC chair and committee members have reviewed the specific goal and developed a strategy to address this need. As a result, the chair has consulted with the District's Title V HSI coordinators and staff members about offering appropriate FEC workshops for providing instructors with training for helping basic skills students succeed. Since the District requires all fulltime faculty members to accumulate 20 Flex hours each year, faculty members can earn some of these required hours by attending these monthly professional development workshops. Appropriate resources are made available to the trainers or presenters leading these workshops.

The Strategic Plan encompasses the District's broad-based planning process; all appropriate constituency groups were given the opportunity to provide input into the plan's development, and the plan is used as a guideline for resource allocation requests, leading to an improvement in institutional effectiveness.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Its planning is broad based and allows for input from all appropriate constituency groups. Through College Council, the representative body of all constituency groups on campus, the District has instituted an action plan [I.B.11] that includes planned activities for measuring the achievement of each goal or objective. This progress report on the tactical plan has allowed the District to measure goals with key indicators at the level of planning objectives in the Strategic Plan. In addition to the macro level of institutional goals, the District's current Strategic Plan is the result of broad-based planning with input from all constituent groups. As explained above, resources are allocated to programs and services according to Program Review and the Strategic Plan in an effort to improve institutional effectiveness.

Plans for Improvement

No Plans for Improvement is recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.B.5

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

Description

College of the Sequoias has become a data driven institution where decisions at all levels, from the institutional level down to everyday program-level operations, are based on the use of data. At the institutional level, ARCC data, student demographic information, fulltime equivalent student (FTES) numbers, program retention success rates, student assessment services, financial aid records, staffing reports, and other related reports are posted on the COS website for all staff, faculty, students, and community members to view. This information is uploaded on a regular basis to the California Community Colleges

Chancellor's Office website as public information. Therefore, there is transparency in the sharing of College information with all interested parties. [\[I.B.12\]](#)

In addition, institutional research data such as the Community College Survey on Student Engagement (CCSSE) is made available to both the staff at the District and the public in general. The CCSSE survey helps the District better serve its students by providing insight into the level of student engagement. The CCSSE has helped the institution determine areas needing improvement, and it also provides COS with benchmarks for measuring the effect of current versus future engagement strategies. [\[I.B.13\]](#)

At the program level, the institution's Program Review model requires each program to analyze the quality and effectiveness of its programs or services using data compiled by the District's Office of Research and Planning. This analysis is put into the Program Review narrative and submitted to the IPRC for review. Once reviewed, the narrative is graded, receiving an "excellent," "satisfactory," or "unsatisfactory" score. After the IPRC has had the opportunity to review all submitted Program Reviews, the graded Program Review results are shared with the respective programs, directors, deans, vice-presidents, and the superintendent/president. The results of the Program Reviews have also been made available to all interested individuals outside of the institution. These public results can be found on the District's website. [\[I.B.14\]](#)

At the program level, various programs (for example, ELI, DRC, EOPS, CalWorks, CARE, and Financial Aid) must report to outside governmental agencies to meet specific regulations for program evaluation. These programs also utilize documented data and assessment results to communicate quality assurance matters with appropriate constituencies.

For instance, ELI publishes its annual End of the Year Report to highlight student success programs ranging from faculty training sessions to student tutoring workshops [\[I.B.15\]](#). ELI's extensive report includes data and figures that speak to the number of faculty and students served by ELI, along with the effects of these programs in improving the District's student success rates. ELI funds are monetary resources that are available for faculty members to initiate creative programs to help with student success through the annual proposal process [\[I.B.16\]](#).

For example, ELI funds made it possible for the District to test an Early Alert program where instructors can send early alert notices regarding a student's progress in class. This program provides students with another tool for gauging their progress and improving success. The following numbers from the 2009 ELI annual report show the impact of Early Alert on student success:

1,663 students received an Early Alert letter grade of A, B, C, D or F and...

- 266 students were failing their classes of which 77 students (29 percent) ended up completing their classes with a passing grade
- 173 students were receiving a D of which 85 students (49 percent) ended up completing their classes with a grade of C or better

- 352 students were receiving a C of which 123 students (35 percent) ended up completing their classes with a grade of B or better
- 400 students were receiving a B of which 107 students (27 percent) ended up completing their classes with a letter grade of an A

Early Alert information is regularly shared with faculty members via workshops aimed at improving student success. This program has also been useful for counselors meeting with students to discuss academic progress. In some cases, a student with an Early Alert will choose to withdraw, avoiding failure; in other cases, referral to tutorial services can help students succeed rather than fail a course.

Other academic programs use documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance. The COS nursing program is required by the California Board of Registered Nursing to assess and evaluate the total program annually, including admission and selection procedures, attrition and retention of students, and performance of graduates in meeting community needs. Each fall semester, the nursing faculty reviews the total program evaluation for the previous year. The Board of Registered Nursing reviews the evaluation plans during the four-year interim and eight-year continuing approval visits.

The nursing evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the total educational program, including the effectiveness of the evaluation plan as a quality improvement tool. The nursing faculty as a whole analyzes data collected and makes appropriate changes based on that input and the continuing evolution of nursing/health care theory and practice. Nursing faculty utilize a system to track problems and responses over time. Their written assessment, tracking, and response to the evaluation plan are submitted to the nursing program director.

The annual report of the total program evaluation includes:

- Attrition rates and patterns
- Surveys from students, graduates, and employers
- NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) pass rates for the past five years
- Any student issues or complaints

The annual written report includes evaluation of patterns and trends, faculty analysis, and outcome analysis (change, resolution) of the above-mentioned criteria in an effort to continually and systematically improve nursing program effectiveness while sharing matters of quality assurance with all appropriate constituencies.

Outside of the District level, the District's counterparts—its local area feeder high schools—are given reports on incoming student assessment results in mathematics and English during the annual high school counselors' meeting [I.B.17]. This helps the high school counselors and administrators as they plan for incoming students, with the goal of increasing the number of students who are eligible for college-level course work in math and English. These documented assessment results are also reviewed by the dean and respective division chairs for math and English departments to better gauge how many sections of each course to offer.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. In any given school year, the District as a whole has collected and compiled various documented assessment results for both internal and external use. These results are available from the Office of Research and Planning and specific programs that are mandated to assess and keep track of such information. Where appropriate, this information is shared with faculty and staff during convocation, through committee work, and through various workshops during the year.

Many campus programs collect and compile their own quality assurance data, which is made available to interested individuals. Programs such as EOPS, DRC, BICS, etc., have their own advisory boards composed of faculty, staff, and community members; quality assurance results are regularly shared with these boards. Meetings like these allow programs at COS to remain current in meeting the needs of the community it serves.

Program review statistics for each program or service area at the District are also shared with appropriate constituencies. The thoroughness of the Program Review models currently in place communicates quality assurance to the College, the students, and the community at large. Through the use of Program Review and its complementary cross linkage with the accreditation standards, the College has improved its use of quantitative and qualitative analysis of each program's effectiveness and efficiency. The statistics provided to each program for use in their Program Reviews are prepared by the office of Research and Planning.

Despite the variety of documented results that the College has gathered, assessed, and disseminated, a sizable percentage of the population surveyed in the self-evaluation survey still felt that the College needs to improve its communication with regard to providing evidence of program performance and distributing information about institutional performance.

6.1) The District provides evidence of program performance (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
18.2% (42)	58.9% (136)	13.0% (30)	0.9% (2)	9.1% (21)

7.1) Information about institutional performance is distributed and available to all staff (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
15.2% (35)	43.5% (100)	22.6% (52)	3.5% (8)	15.2% (35)

The large percentage that either disagreed or didn't know about the District's institutional and program performance indicates that the institution needs to look at ways to improve its communication with faculty, staff, administrators, and students. It is difficult to assess

whether the survey results were due to a lack of participation on the part of individuals, or to a failure by the District to communicate these matters to all constituencies.

Plans for Improvement

The District will look into additional ways of engaging staff, faculty, administrators, and students in an effort to improve collection, dissemination, and use of data.

STANDARD I.B.6.

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

Description

The institutional planning processes of the District are addressed in Administrative Procedure 3250 (AP 3250) [I.B.18], and are guided by the vision, mission, and core value statements of the District. These documents are developed through College-wide collaborative efforts, and the implementation and evaluation of the integrated planning efforts are facilitated by the Committee for IPEC.

As a standing committee of the College Council, IPEC's mission is to monitor and assess the ongoing effectiveness of the integrated institutional planning processes through the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Since accreditation emphasizes that quality improvement of learning should be continuous rather than a unique event every six years, it is essential that this process remains integrated and is monitored for effectiveness, which is one of IPEC's main goals.

Supporting the District's mission statement, the District's integrated planning approach (as managed by IPEC) is anchored by the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. The goals and plans (Facilities Plan, Student Equity Plan, Basic Skills Initiative, etc.) throughout the District address at least one of the measureable outcomes of the Strategic Plan and/or Areas of Focus, including Program Review. Additionally, each objective of the Strategic Plan is cross-walked to one of the four Accreditation Standards. This connection allows the District to continually update progress toward accreditation based on the Strategic Plan.

Divisions contemplate the Strategic Plan on at least a biennial basis during the comprehensive Program Review. Divisions or units are asked to link their current measurable outcomes with specific Strategic Plan goals or objectives wherever possible.

Institutional effectiveness research is a vital component of Program Review and individual unit plans. The resulting information analysis and plans are key to ensuring each unit in the District is evaluating effectiveness and strategizing how that unit fits into the institution's strategic mission.

The District's research analyst is a member of both IPEC and the IPRC. The analyst's membership on these key committees ensures that research and data collection are considered as these groups make decisions. Membership also allows the analyst to learn first hand the types of research and data needed by faculty, staff, or administrators as they make decisions and plans. These interactions allow the analyst to be more proactive in providing surveys,

tools, and resources for future District needs. Gathering data, compiling and analyzing results, and drawing conclusions are ongoing processes.

At the end of the 2011 Program Review cycle, the IPRC determined that major changes were needed to the process. After three years of utilizing the original process and the academic template, the IPRC had identified a number of issues with templates and rubrics and had received recommendations for improvement from programs. The group felt that substantial changes were needed to make the process more streamlined and to allow more time for reflection and implementation of plans.

The recent changes in the Program Review process implemented by the IPRC were aimed at encouraging programs to move beyond past practices of simply describing their program and what they did. Instead, programs are now being asked not only to describe their program, activity, or effectiveness measures, but to discuss and analyze data, and draw conclusions about why things worked or did not. Additionally, each template now requires the program to come up with a six-year plan and measureable outcomes for each of the sections (Mission and Description, Effectiveness and Efficiency, Institutional Planning and Outcomes, Resources, Leadership and Governance). Similarly, programs were requested to provide justification for plans. As a result, the Program Review process now includes a comprehensive, data driven evaluation of programs that focuses on Accreditation Standards and provides a meaningful basis for resource allocations.

The IPRC also has systematically reviewed and modified its processes for gathering input from units and divisions involved in Program Review. As this self-reflection tool is used by all divisions on a biennial basis, it is vital that all stakeholders receive information on how the process can be more effective for planning within the divisions. In short, all programs undergoing Program Review are surveyed at the end of the process for input regarding training, templates, processes, and assistance from the IPRC. In addition, the IPRC holds question and answer sessions for those undergoing Program Reviews, which provides feedback on procedures, templates, prompts, or evaluation rubrics. One result of this evaluation has been the addition, in 2010-11, of numbers on the evaluation rubric templates so that programs can more easily identify which evaluation criteria are being applied to each prompt. Another change in response to feedback has been the expansion of the IPRC membership to include additional representatives from Student Services and Administrative Services.

Program Review is used as primary support in initiating all requests for staffing, monies, or facilities. Administrative Procedure 6300 (B) [I.B.19] addresses the way Program Review is used to determine resource allocation for budgeting. Administrative procedures 3261 [I.B.20], 3262 [I.B.21], and 3263 [I.B.22] were developed to clearly delineate how various funding processes would be implemented. For all processes, there is a clear and direct connection to Program Review.

The District reviews Board Policy and Administrative Procedures on an ongoing basis. At the time this document was written, at least 30 APs were in the process of being reviewed and updated [I.B.23].

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Through IPEC, COS has a designated participatory governance body to evaluate planning processes on an ongoing basis. IPEC ensures that the District's Strategic Plan is evaluated continuously and is tied directly to Accreditation Standards and Accrediting Commission recommendations. Each part of the Strategic Plan is assigned to a "lead" contact, who periodically shares updates with IPEC. Furthermore, Program Review allows divisions to consider their connections to the Strategic Plan on at least a biennial basis.

Through IPEC, planning and resource allocation efforts are systematically reviewed to ensure they are effective for all divisions and units.

Accreditation survey respondents recognized the importance of connecting educational planning with resource planning; 88.4 percent of respondents indicated this issue should have "great" or "moderate importance" (see below).

56.2) The President ensures that educational planning is integrated with resource distribution to achieve Student Learning Outcomes. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
60.5% (130)	27.9% (60)	2.3% (5)	0.9% (2)	8.4% (18)

While 54.9 percent of respondents agreed that the institution is effective in connecting planning and resource allocation, 35.4 percent answered "don't know" (see below). Respondents may have had difficulty responding because the prompt referenced "the President," and COS was led by an interim superintendent/president at the time of the survey. On the other hand, tying above base resource allocation to Program Review is a relatively new process, and some parts of the District community may not completely understand this connection.

56.1) The President ensures that educational planning is integrated with resource distribution to achieve Student Learning Outcomes. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
17.7% (40)	37.2% (84)	5.3% (12)	4.4% (10)	35.4% (80)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended.

STANDARD I.B.7.

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

Description

Program Review is the evaluation mechanism that assesses the effectiveness of instructional programs, student support services, learning support services (including the library), administrative services, and interdisciplinary programs. Since the 2006 WASC Accreditation, the Program Review process at COS, led by the IPRC, has been an excellent example of the District's efforts to have continuous, ongoing and integrated planning processes and an intentional process for self-reflection and review.

The IPRC is made up of administrators, faculty, classified and confidential staff from the functional units of academic services, student services, and administrative services. This diversity ensures that the Program Review process is effective for every functional division or unit in the District.

Below is a history of the changes of the IPRC and the Program Review process since the 2006 self study which shows how the District has systematically assessed its internal evaluation processes, leading to a very comprehensive Program Review process that results in a comprehensive data-driven evaluation of programs, that focuses on Accreditation Standards (especially student learning outcomes and assessments), and that provides a meaningful basis for resource allocations.

As a result of the recommendations from the 2006 self-study, the Academic Senate convened an ad hoc committee to review Program Review and its connection to funding allocations. The committee was initially comprised of only faculty members, mainly current or past division chairs, who seemed most likely to understand the current process and the changes that should be made. The entire focus of this committee was on the academic program review process and templates. Toward the end of the process, two administrators joined the committee, an academic dean and the director of planning and research.

One early step was to base the Program Review templates on the Accreditation Standards. Areas in the previous Program Review templates were adapted or deleted, while additional areas were developed. One substantive change was to include evaluation rubrics for each section of Program Review to provide guidance and show expectations for each section. There were three main goals in producing templates and processes:

- 1) to produce a template that would provide for a comprehensive, data-driven evaluation of programs,
- 2) to produce a template that would keep programs focused on Accreditation Standards (especially student learning outcomes and assessments), and
- 3) to provide a meaningful basis for resource allocations.

During the development of the templates, the committee invited the superintendent/president to help review progress and discuss tying program review to resource allocations. As a result, the committee developed a Board Policy BP 3260 [I.B.24]. Ultimately several Administrative Procedures (AP 3261 [I.B.20], 3262 [I.B.21], and 3263 [I.B.22]) were written that clearly delineate how various funding processes are implemented. For all funding processes, there is a clear and direct connection to Program Review.

By the end of the committee's tenure, the entire program review process, templates, and committee had been restructured. The Program Review Committee had previously been a sub-committee of the IPEC, a standing committee of the College Council. The IPRC was separated from the IPEC and made a separate entity. The membership of the new committee was expanded, with the IPRC given the charge of implementing Program Review across the campus and reviewing and evaluating all Program Reviews and annual updates. All processes, templates, policies, and the committee structure were approved by the Academic Senate and eventually the College Council.

The committee implemented the initial academic program review template in 2008-09. That year, the other areas of the District (student services and administration) utilized the old program review templates. The IPRC decided to develop new templates for each of these areas and phase them in, with Student Services being first. Members of each area were consulted during the development of these new templates. The template for Student Services was first created and phased in and finally one for Administration and Interdisciplinary Services. After three years, all new templates were implemented for the fall 2011 Program Review cycle.

The IPRC instituted evaluation of its processes from its inception. All programs that undergo comprehensive program reviews are surveyed at the end of the process. All aspects of Program Review are addressed including training, templates, processes, and assistance from the IPRC.

In addition, the IPRC holds question and answer sessions for those undergoing program review; these sessions also provide feedback on problematic procedures, templates, prompts, or evaluation rubrics. One result of this evaluation has been the addition, in 2010-11, of prompt numbers on the evaluation rubric templates so that programs can more easily identify which evaluation criteria are being applied to each prompt. Another change in response to feedback has been the expansion of the IPRC membership to include additional representatives from Student Services and the administration.

At the end of the 2011 program review cycle, the IPRC determined that major changes were needed to the process. After three years of utilizing the original process and the academic template, the IPRC had identified a number of issues with templates and rubrics and had received recommendations from programs undergoing review. One of the major concerns was that the workload for reviewing and writing the Program Reviews was very challenging and time-consuming for division chairs and the IPRC. The group thus felt that substantial changes were needed to make the process more streamlined and to allow more time for reflection and implementation of plans.

As a result of discussions with Academic Senate and analysis of this feedback, the IPRC recommended a change to the Program Review calendar with comprehensive reviews being completed every six years, instead of every five years. In addition, the updates would be biennial instead of annual. In revising the calendar, the IPRC ensured that every year, one of the three main comprehensive templates (Academic, Student Services, and Administration & Interdisciplinary Studies) would not be in use, thus allowing that template to be reviewed and altered as needed without disrupting the overall process.

The Academic Program Review template was revised at the end of the last comprehensive Program Review cycle in fall 2011. The IPRC made changes to every section and altered all evaluation rubrics based on evaluations of the template and feedback from numerous sources, including Instructional Council members, Academic Senate members, and programs that had used the templates. The new template was presented to the Academic Senate in December 2011 and approved on January 25, 2012 [\[I.B.25\]](#).

The IPRC is currently working on revisions to the Student Services templates, since no Student Services programs are currently undergoing comprehensive Program Review. In 2013, the Administration & Interdisciplinary Studies template will be reviewed and revised.

The program review process now includes consequences for programs that do not work to self-reflect, improve, and document their improvement. However, these consequences are not meant to be punitive. The ultimate goal is for continual refinement and improvement of program practices, resulting in appropriate improvements in student achievement and learning. Thus, programs that do not pass Program Review have the opportunity the next year to address their issues and refocus or rewrite their Program Reviews to more accurately describe activities that reflect improved student performance and activity outcomes.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The changes in the program review process made by the IPRC were an attempt to move programs away from merely describing their activities. Instead, programs now analyze data and draw conclusions about what is and is not working. Additionally, each template requires a six-year plan and measureable outcomes for each section, with justification provided for all plans. As a result, the District now has a process that includes a comprehensive, data-driven evaluation of programs that focuses on Accreditation Standards and provides a meaningful basis for resource allocations. As described, the process continues to be evaluated for effectiveness and is adjusted as the need arises

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD I.B. Evidence List

I.B.1 Outbursts Blogspot <http://www.cos.edu/OA/default.aspx>

I.B.2 Tactical Plan Progress Report

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/SP/Shared%20Documents/TACTICAL%20PLAN%20UPDATES.docx>

I.B.3 Cross – linked Document

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Documents/Strategic%20Plan%20X-Walk%20to%20ACCJC%20Standards.pdf>

I.B.4 Tactical Plans

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/SP/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fdepartment%2Fpresidentsoffice%2FSP%2FShared%20Documents%2FTactical%20Plans&FolderCTID=0x012000430A1A8D7C158645AF8DA333BF2625C2&View={82118962-2CFA-4D01-B8DE-2E3EB35FB74C}&InitialTabId=Ribbon%2EDocument&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence>

I.B.5 Strategic Plan and Accreditation Standards

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Documents/Strategic%20Plan%20X-Walk%20to%20ACCJC%20Standards.pdf>

I.B.6 Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee meeting minutes

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/committee/collegecouncil/Planning/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fdepartment%2Fcommittee%2Fcollegecouncil%2FPlanning%2FShared%20Documents%2FInst%2e%20Planning%20Meeting%20Summaries&FolderCTID=0x01200054427F3B1A5F5842BE259098D0B426AF>

I.B.7 Program Review revision plan proposal

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%201/Program%20review%20steering%20committee%20proposal%20for%20changes.doc>

I.B.8 2011 academic program review template

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/research/ProgramReview/Instructional%20Programs/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fdepartment%2Fpresidentsoffice%2Fresearch%2FProgramReview%2FInstructional%20Programs%2F2011%20Templates%20%2D%20Instructional%20Programs&FolderCTID=0x012000998D7FE7F01A8D4DB747E9535B6F705E&View=%7b9C7534ED-5FE7-408F-886A-AAAFDF3D4298%7d>

I.B.9 2012 academic program review template

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/research/ProgramReview/Instructional%20Programs/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fdepartment%2Fpresidentsoffice%2Fresearch%2FProgramReview%2FInstructional%20Programs%2F2012%20Templates%20%2D%20>

[0Instructional%20Programs&FolderCTID=0x012000998D7FE7F01A8D4DB747E9535B6F705E&View=%7b9C7534ED-5FE7-408F-886A-AAAFDF3D4298%7d](http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentoffice/SP/Shared%20Documents/Tactical%20Plans/Faculty%20Enrichment%20Committee.docx)

I.B.10 Faculty Enrichment Committee (FEC) Tactical Plan

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentoffice/SP/Shared%20Documents/Tactical%20Plans/Faculty%20Enrichment%20Committee.docx>

I.B.11 Strategic Plan Action Plan

http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentoffice/SP/_layouts/xlviewer.aspx?id=/departments/presidentoffice/SP/Shared%20Documents/Strategic%20Plan%20Documents/Action%20Plan-2009%20Strategic%20Plan.xlsx&Source=http%3A%2F%2Fintranet%2Ecos%2Eedu%2Fdepartments/presidentoffice%2FSP%2FShared%2520Documents%2FForms%2FAllItems%2Easpx%3FRootFolder%3D%252Fdepartment%252Fpresidentoffice%252FSP%252FShared%2520Documents%252FStrategic%2520Plan%2520Documents%26FolderCTID%3D0x012000430A1A8D7C158645AF8DA333BF2625C2%26View%3D%7B82118962%2D2CFA%2D4D01%2DB8DE%2D2E3EB35FB74C%7D&DefaultItemOpen=1&DefaultItemOpen=1

I.B.12 ARCC Reports <http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Pages/Reports.aspx>

I.B.13 Community College Survey on Student Engagement (CCSSE)

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentoffice/research/Pages/CCSSEData--2009.aspx>

I.B.14 Program Review Results

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Program%20Review/Program%20Review%20Results%202009-2017.pdf>

I.B.15 ELI annual end of the year report

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/ELI/Documents/2009-2011%20End%20of%20year%20report.pdf>

I.B.16 ELI Annual Proposal

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%201/ELI%20Proposal%20Flyer%20Fall%202012%20%20Spring%202013.docx>

I.B.17 COS Fall 2012 High School Counselors meeting agenda

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%201/COS%20Fall%202011%20High%20School%20Counselors%20Meeting%20Agenda.docx>

I.B.18 Administrative Procedure 3250

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203250%20-%20Institutional%20Planning.pdf>

I.B.19 Administrative Procedure 6300

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%206300%20-%20Fiscal%20Management.pdf>

I.B.20 Administrative Procedure 3261

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP 3261 - Requests for Personnel, Budget Augmentations, Facilities and or Equipment.pdf>

I.B.21 Administrative Procedure 3262

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP 3262 - Submitting and Ranking Tenure Track Instructional Faculty Vacancies.pdf>

I.B.22 Administrative Procedure 3263

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP 3263 - Submitting and Ranking Tenure Track Student Services Faculty Positions, Both Instructional and Non Instructional.pdf>

I.B.23 Board Policy Review

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/Lists/Board%20Policy%20Review/AllItems.aspx>

I.B.24 Board Policy 3260

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203260%20-%20Program%20Review.pdf>

I.B.25 Program Review Assessment and Changes

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Program Review/Program Review Assessment and Changes-adopted 2012.docx>

I.B.26 Substantial Change Proposal – Hanford Educational Center

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/Hanford%20Center%20Sub%20Change-final%2007-11.pdf>



Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Services

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated student learning outcomes. The institution provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.

STANDARD II.A.

Instructional Programs

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.

STANDARD II.A.1.

The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.

Description

Throughout the District, COS offers instructional programs to meet the needs of its students. The instructional programs focus on the three major mission areas of the California Community College mission: basic skills, career and technical education, and transfer/degree and certificate completion.

All of the instructional programs are revised by faculty and monitored by the campus-wide Curriculum Committee and ultimately approved by the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees. Courses are on a five-year review and approval rotation. After languishing during the CurricUNET startup and implementation, degree and certificate programs are targeted for a two-year cycle of approval. Divisions are working to input programs and set up review cycles for the programs and courses that support them. Courses that are offered via distance education are monitored by each division through regular procedures. Course outlines for these courses include a distance education addendum that specifies the ways in which the course will maintain quality and integrity of instruction, in addition to providing comparable and effective contact between instructors and their students. In the subsequent years since the last self-study, the District has filed a successful substantive change proposal with the ACCJC for the COS Hanford Education Center where the District addressed meeting student needs at the Hanford Educational Center. [I.B.26]

Additionally, all campus programs undergo a comprehensive program review every six years and submit biennial updates to the IPRC. At the instruction level, program reviews include information about how the program meets the District mission, the program's effectiveness and efficiency, currency in course/program revisions, outcomes assessment, and information about the various resources that support the program.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. Additionally, the processes that have been put into place since the previous self study (comprehensive program evaluation, curriculum approval processes, outcomes mapping) will ensure that those responsible for creating and implementing instructional programs continue to connect those programs to the District's stated mission.

The current mission statement guides the processes on campus, and that is certainly true of instructional programs. As the community college mission has narrowed in the past three years to focus in a more limited way on basic skills, transfer, and Career/Technical Education, COS has also put greater emphasis on the parts of the mission statement that most reflect those areas. This more limited emphasis has also served as a catalyst for a review and possible revision of the current mission statement to reflect the narrowing of the mission of community colleges in the state.

In the campus survey, when given the statement "Degrees and certificates are reviewed routinely for relevancy and effectiveness in meeting the District's mission," most of those involved in creating and approving instructional programs (administrators and full-time faculty) overwhelmingly agreed (see table below). Not too surprisingly, large numbers of adjunct faculty and classified staff answered "Don't Know"; these groups are less involved with the work of creating and approving curriculum.

20.1.1) Degrees and certificates are reviewed routinely for relevancy and effectiveness in meeting the District's mission. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	28.0% (7)	29.4% (25)	22.4% (11)	10.8% (7)
Agree	36.0% (9)	42.4% (36)	32.7% (16)	32.3% (21)
Disagree	12.0% (3)	7.1% (6)	6.1% (3)	3.1% (2)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	2.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.1% (2)
Don't Know	24.0% (6)	18.8% (16)	38.8% (19)	50.8% (33)
Total Counts	25	85	49	65

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.1.a.

The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with their educational preparation and the diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The institution relies upon research and analysis to identify student learning needs and to assess progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes.

Description

COS meets the varied educational needs of its students through a variety of educational programs. Between enrollment and the second semester of attendance, all students are required to attend an orientation to help them to understand both the rigors of the programs into which they are entering and the myriad services the District offers to support their learning and success. Several programs are offered by the District to support students in their progress, including:

CalWORKS – The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program at COS is dedicated to providing students who are currently receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash aid with coordinated student services such as academic counseling, work study, workforce preparation assistance, child care, and advocacy. The goal is to guide students through a successful educational journey that will help them achieve long-term self-sufficiency. [\[II.A.1\]](#)

CARE Program – The Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) Program at COS serves Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) students who are single parents receiving TANF. The mission is support students by offering general advisement, peer support, resource information, advocacy, and other collaborative services in an effort to help them achieve their educational goals and transition into economically self-sufficient individuals. [\[II.A.2\]](#)

DRC - The Disability Resource Center (DRC) supports COS students with a variety of disabilities through services such as counseling, note-taking, interpreters, and alternative media. [\[II.A.3\]](#)

Early Alert Referral System – Early Alert provides a standardized format within Banner for all faculty to report mid-term grades and progress for their students. Early Alert has been proven to increase student retention and persistence rates at institutions of higher learning nation wide and empowers students to make more informed decisions pertaining to their education by encouraging them to seek services from on-campus entities to improve their overall academic performance. [\[II.A.4\]](#)

ELI - The Essential Learning Initiative (ELI) addresses the need to provide basic skills education to students underprepared for college-level work. ELI develops, finances, implements, and assesses effective and meaningful improvements in students' foundational skills across the curriculum. [\[II.A.5\]](#)

EOPS - The Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) Program is dedicated to recruit and successfully retain college students of educationally and socioeconomically

challenged backgrounds from Kings and Tulare Counties. The primary purpose of the EOPS Program is to prepare students to transfer to a four-year university, complete an associate degree or vocational certificate in order to acquire desirable career-related skills to attain rewarding employment as a result of their educational experience. [\[II.A.6\]](#)

FYE - The First-Year Experience (FYE) program, funded by the Title V HSI grant, works with students who are new to college by offering linked classes, counseling services, workshops, peer mentors, and more to help students achieve graduation and/or transfer to a four-year university. [\[II.A.7\]](#)

MESA - The Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) program provides support to community college students who are majoring in science, technology, engineering, and math areas so they can excel academically and transfer to four-year institutions. Support is offered through counseling services and academic excellence workshops. [\[II.A.8\]](#)

Orientation – Orientation provides information to help students prepare for college success, learn about COS programs and services, and hear from others on how to be a successful and prepared college student. [\[II.A.9\]](#)

Puente Project - The mission of the Puente Project is to increase the number of educationally underserved students who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn degrees, and return to their communities as leaders and mentors to succeeding generations. Support is offered through counseling services, linked courses, and a mentoring program. [\[II.A.10\]](#)

TRiO/Student Support Services – TRiO/SSS provides low-income high school students, who are potential first-generation college students, with opportunities for academic development, assists them with basic college requirements, and motivates them toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Support is offered through counseling services, field trips, workshops, and a summer institute. [\[II.A.11\]](#)

PASEO - The PASEO program (Promoting Achievement and Scholarship through Enrichment Opportunities) is funded by a Title V HSI Grant from the U.S. Department of Education as a partnership program between COS and Fresno Pacific University. PASEO helps new science and math students by connecting them to the resources at COS and elsewhere that will help them succeed in their challenging courses. [\[II.A.12\]](#)

Veteran Services – The veterans office assists military veteran students with eligibility questions and benefits applications, along with informing them of responsibilities in choosing to accept benefits. Services include:

- Providing Certification of Enrollment for Veterans Administration (VA) education benefits
- Assisting with work-study placement
- Helping with fee deferments for Chapter 31 and 33 students
- Requesting military transcripts and other documents for students

- Processing Cal Dependent fee waivers for dependents of veterans
- Keeping students updated on veteran-related issues via email
- Providing priority registration for students who have separated from the military within the last two years
- Assisting military veterans and their eligible dependents

In 2011-12, the Student Services area began developing and measuring Service Area Outcomes (SAO). These outcomes were created and stored in CurricUNET and, as the year progressed, work commenced on measuring and analyzing the outcomes. Previously, Student Services did not have a systematic way of creating, storing, and analyzing data. With the new system in place, Student Services has started the process of transitioning to developing SAOs. [II.A.13]

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. However, while the District clearly has in place a series of vibrant, valuable programs to address the array of student needs, the use of research and the collecting of data has begun to be a serious part of the equation in determining success and needs for students campus-wide. The research office was recently restructured and is much further on the way to providing reliable data for campus needs. This development has encouraged groups to ask for and incorporate data into plans and goals more than has been the case historically. As the research office continues to provide relevant information, the culture of data usage and dependency will grow on campus.

Plans for Improvement

1. Campus entities and support groups will systematically connect the data relating student needs and demographics to planning.
2. The District will support growing needs for research and data by fully staffing the research office.

STANDARD II.A.1.b.

The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.

Description

Decisions about modes of instruction are an integral part of each division's course review processes. While most courses are delivered in traditional, face-to-face classrooms, an increasingly significant number of courses (103 sections in fall 2011) are taught fully online or as hybrid courses (partially online or with significant support from the campus-wide course management system, Blackboard) (see table below). Each division evaluates the success and challenges of its online offerings through its program review process.

The in-house online teaching certification program was developed in spring 2011 and offered for the first time in summer 2011 and again in fall 2011 and spring 2012. Thirty-three full-time and adjunct faculty have successfully completed the program as of February 2012.

Notably, adjunct faculty who completed this certification did so on an uncompensated, voluntary basis. Plans are to offer the program three times each year. Once an instructor has become qualified, he or she can discuss scheduling options within the divisions. The distance education coordinator provides consultation concerning effective adaptation of face-to-face courses to online or hybrid formats.

Divisions have individually decided to discontinue offering correspondence courses. The last correspondence course was scheduled in spring 2011 but was not actually offered.

A small number of interactive television (ITV) classes are offered every semester. There are two ITV classrooms on the Visalia campus and one in Hanford. One ITV classroom is being built at the Tulare campus. The ITV equipment is rather complex and only a handful of instructors have been willing to learn how to use it. The advantage of the ITV class is that students in Hanford can take a class through ITV when normally a class would not have been offered on their campus. Decisions about offering an ITV class are made within a division. ITV is a synchronous mode of distance education and not as popular as asynchronous online classes.

Online/Hybrid Sections Offered Spring 2005-Fall 2011		Total DE Courses Spring 2005-Fall 2011	
Semester		Semester	
SP 05	1	SP 05	1
F 05	2	F 05	5
SP 06	1	SP 06	2
F 06	18	F 06	28
SP 07	23	SP 07	43
F 07	26	F 07	47
SP 08	53	SP 08	74
F 08	82	F 08	101
SP 09	100	SP 09	117
F 09	113	F 09	120
SP 10	108	Sp 10	114
F 10	120	F 10	123
SP 11	102	Sp 11	102
F 11	103	F 11	103

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. According to the recent campus survey, most faculty agree that the standard is being met, though agreement from administration was somewhat lower. The question asked in the survey may have shifted the focus from the delivery systems to the curricular processes, which may account for the difference between faculty and administration in understanding the connection between delivery methods and course objectives. It would be helpful to explore why so many administrators and classified staff felt that they didn't know whether this standard is being met. It could be that respondents in the administrator and classified staff category have duties so far removed from academic

activities that they would be unlikely to come across the necessary information as part of their duties. It could also be that there is no venue for reporting on this activity on a regular basis.

25.1.1) The curriculum process ensures that delivery methods are appropriate to course objectives and content. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	16.0% (4)	32.9% (28)	30.6% (15)	13.8% (9)
Agree	28.0% (7)	41.2% (35)	36.7% (18)	24.6% (16)
Disagree	16.0% (4)	9.4% (8)	8.2% (4)	3.1% (2)
Strongly Disagree	4.0% (1)	3.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.1% (2)
Don't Know	36.0% (9)	12.9% (11)	24.5% (12)	55.4% (36)
Total Counts	25	85	49	65

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended.

STANDARD II.A.1.c.

The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.

Description

Divisions have been identifying course-level outcomes for several years. These outcomes have been a part of the course outlines since 2005. Approximately two years ago, the District began a more concerted effort for identifying program outcomes and creating assessment cycles for both the course and program learning outcomes. The District is currently assessing at least one outcome per course per year (as advised by ACCJC staff during the initial accreditation training session) and has completed the first cycle of program assessment.

Some divisions have embraced learning outcomes and assessments and have completed both for all of their courses. Others are moving a bit more slowly. In order to facilitate faculty work on outcomes and assessment, an ad hoc college-wide committee on outcomes and assessment was created as part of the Curriculum Committee.

In fall 2010, an assessment module was created in the District's CurricUNET program. This module was deemed to be too complex for the purposes of assessments and was therefore recreated in summer 2011. The new assessment is more flexible and less complicated, allowing for course, program, and institutional learning outcome assessments.

Currently, while institutional outcomes do exist and are referenced in course outlines, there is no means for assessing them. This is an issue that the Outcomes and Assessment and the General Education Committees are addressing. Discussion is underway to change the institutional outcomes to general education outcomes, thus creating a structure in which assessment would be more easily accomplished. The new General Education Outcomes (GEO) are in draft form and are being reviewed through shared governance processes. They will be approved by early fall 2012 with assessment procedures to follow shortly. The first assessments of the GEOs will occur in spring 2013, with further assessments during each subsequent spring.

Evaluation

According to the rubric, “Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness—Part III: Student Learning Outcomes,” the District does not meet the standard at the proficiency level. COS is between development and proficiency for this standard, according to the rubric. Course outcomes exist for virtually all active courses, and assessment cycles for those outcomes are in their second year. Program outcomes have been developed as part of the program review process for several years, but 2011-12 is the first year of their assessment cycle. The District has set up policies and procedures to ensure that these cycles occur annually. For instance, reporting on assessments is now a part of program review and curriculum approval. As assessment results become more plentiful and faculty members gain experience with creating and assessing outcomes, this information will be used to inform campus decision-making. Currently, outcomes and assessment work does affect decisions made in program review, which affects additional decisions about funding for projects, facilities, and personnel and feeds into the Strategic Plan.

While not all faculty are involved in the creation of outcomes, most faculty are involved in some fashion in assessing those outcomes in their courses, and in subsequent dialogue and decision making. This is work that has traditionally been accomplished less formally, of course, but the increasing attention to outcomes and the new demands it places on faculty have spurred some contention on campus, particularly involving COSTA (College of the Sequoias Teachers Association), Academic Senate, and the District.

The campus continues to have a side discussion about outcomes work as part of faculty’s negotiated contract. Under the current contract, participation in outcomes assessment at any level is not required of faculty. Moreover, the contract establishes that instructors are expected to “[deliver] to students what is stipulated in the course outline of record.” Because course outcomes have been removed from course outlines, the language of the contract does not specifically require faculty to embed those outcomes within their curriculum.

This incompatibility between the current negotiated contract and the requirements for accreditation is an obstacle. Moreover, as the COS Board of Trustees and COSTA have come to an impasse and are in fact finding on other issues, a prompt resolution of this incompatibility seems increasingly unlikely at this time.

As the following table from the survey notes, most faculty and administrators recognize that COS has a process to determine student achievement for certificates and majors. Additionally, most also agree that such processes are important to the District:

22.1.1) There is a process to determine student achievement in certificates and majors. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	20.0% (5)	23.8% (20)	16.7% (8)	10.6% (7)
Agree	44.0% (11)	32.1% (27)	43.8% (21)	37.9% (25)
Disagree	8.0% (2)	3.6% (3)	4.2% (2)	3.0% (2)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	4.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.0% (2)
Don't Know	28.0% (7)	35.7% (30)	35.4% (17)	45.5% (30)
Total Counts	25	84	48	66

22.2.1) There is a process to determine student achievement in certificates and majors. (Level of Importance)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Great Importance	52.0% (13)	46.3% (38)	53.3% (24)	56.3% (36)
Moderate Importance	40.0% (10)	41.5% (34)	37.8% (17)	26.6% (17)
Little Importance	0.0% (0)	3.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.6% (1)
No Importance	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.6% (1)
Don't Know	8.0% (2)	8.5% (7)	8.9% (4)	14.1% (9)
Total Counts	25	82	45	64

Most faculty and administrators agree that course and program outcomes assessments are used to improve courses and that this is of great importance as well.

28.1.1) Course Outcomes assessment is used to improve courses. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	16.0% (4)	22.4% (19)	22.4% (11)	10.8% (7)
Agree	40.0% (10)	41.2% (35)	51.0% (25)	26.2% (17)
Disagree	0.0% (0)	17.6% (15)	12.2% (6)	3.1% (2)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	8.2% (7)	0.0% (0)	3.1% (2)
Don't Know	44.0% (11)	10.6% (9)	14.3% (7)	56.9% (37)
Total Counts	25	85	49	65

28.2.1) Course Outcomes assessment is used to improve courses. (Level of Importance)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Great Importance	40.0% (10)	40.5% (34)	57.8% (26)	55.6% (35)
Moderate Importance	40.0% (10)	42.9% (36)	33.3% (15)	19.0% (12)
Little Importance	8.0% (2)	7.1% (6)	4.4% (2)	0.0% (0)
No Importance	0.0% (0)	4.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Don't Know	12.0% (3)	4.8% (4)	4.4% (2)	25.4% (16)
Total Counts	25	84	45	63

29.1.1) Program Outcomes assessment is used to improve programs. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	16.0% (4)	18.8% (16)	17.0% (8)	12.5% (8)
Agree	48.0% (12)	37.6% (32)	44.7% (21)	29.7% (19)
Disagree	4.0% (1)	21.2% (18)	6.4% (3)	6.3% (4)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	4.7% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.1% (2)
Don't Know	32.0% (8)	17.6% (15)	31.9% (15)	48.4% (31)
Total Counts	25	85	47	64

29.2.1) Program Outcomes assessment is used to improve programs. (Level of Importance)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Great Importance	36.0% (9)	35.0% (28)	46.5% (20)	58.1% (36)
Moderate Importance	52.0% (13)	45.0% (36)	44.2% (19)	21.0% (13)
Little Importance	0.0% (0)	7.5% (6)	2.3% (1)	0.0% (0)
No Importance	4.0% (1)	5.0% (4)	2.3% (1)	0.0% (0)
Don't Know	8.0% (2)	7.5% (6)	4.7% (2)	21.0% (13)
Total Counts	25	80	43	62

While there is clearly much work to do and some building left to complete in the area of outcomes and assessment, systems and policies have been developed for ensuring that the District will be proficient in this area by fall 2013. Course outcomes assessment will move into its third year in 2012-13. Program outcomes will be identified and plans for assessment for all programs will be in place by the end of 2012-13, with full program assessment occurring during 2013-14. General Education Outcomes (currently being created) will undergo their first assessment in spring 2013.

Plans for Improvement

1. Divisions will assess outcomes for all programs (including degree programs) in an annual cycle: identifying and planning in the fall, with implementation, analysis, and results in the spring semesters.
2. The General Education (GE) and the Outcomes and Assessment Committees will develop and implement GE/Institutional outcomes and assessment cycles.
3. The District will find a way to address outcomes as part of the contract.
4. COS will be at proficiency and reach the goal of continuous and systematic quality improvement in assessing outcomes at all levels by spring 2014.

STANDARD II.A.2.

The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.

Description

COS offers the typical array of course types that might be expected in any comprehensive California community college. These include traditional college courses, developmental, pre-collegiate, continuing and community education, short-term courses, contract education, and other boutique offerings for specialized programs.

The need for new curriculum evolves in a variety of ways. Often, a faculty member will recognize a growing need in the area or field of study that is not being addressed with the current curriculum. New thinking or developments in the various fields of study serve as catalysts for re-thinking curriculum by faculty or divisions. In the Career/Technical Education (CTE) areas, advisory groups request new training or apprenticeship courses for students in order to meet a plethora of industry needs or changing market trends. Finally, community members or other business leaders may request courses to help their employees, to improve targeted skill areas, or just to continue patterns of lifelong learning.

Once a need is identified for a credit or non-credit course or program, a division determines how the course will fit into the current offerings and begins to write the course/program in CurricUNET. The process of inputting the proposal in CurricUNET asks the authors of the course/program to justify the proposal, determine needs and resources, create the course outline of record (COR), and gain support for the proposal from the division and college-wide curriculum committees, as well as other College officers and administrators, with final approval by the Academic Senate, Board of Trustees and Chancellor's Office.

Courses are then modified every five years to ensure currency. Programs, which have only been available for processing in CurricUNET since fall 2010, are on two-year review cycles, though many are currently being reviewed for their initial input into the CurricUNET program. Course modifications are initiated by a department member and approved by the department/division, dean, articulation officer, Curriculum Committee, Senate, vice president

of Academic Services and the Board of Trustees. They are then activated by the campus curriculum technician, after approval by the Chancellor's Office, if appropriate.

The Course Currency policy enacted by the Curriculum Committee and adopted by the Senate several years ago has served to bring courses into compliance with regular reviews. Courses that have not been reviewed in more than six years are removed from the schedule of courses, with faculty given one final chance at reviewing the course before it is ultimately made inactive in CurricUNET and pulled from the catalog. [II.A.14]

Courses outside of the "regular" curriculum – e.g., contract, community education, or fee-based learning – have a somewhat different approval and review process.

The process for approving contract education courses offered as "not-for-credit" training is as follows: ("Not-for-credit" refers to classes, including community services classes, that are offered without credit and that are not eligible for apportionments pursuant to Section 84757).

1. Orientation meeting: Business, Industry and Community Services (BICS)/ Center for Applied Competitive Technologies (CACT) staff conducts an orientation meeting with company/agency representatives (client) to gain understanding of the request, assess the need as defined by the client, and talk about available training programs and the commitment necessary for success.
2. Needs analysis: If BICS staff members determine there is a need that can be met by COS-BICS and there is the requisite support for the training by the decision makers, a subject matter expert trainer is identified and a relevant need analysis is conducted. Outcomes of the needs analysis might include assessment of trainees and identification of skill gaps of trainees.
3. Refine training objectives: BICS staff establishes a meeting that includes BICS staff, subject matter experts, and client representatives (often supervisors of the group being trained) to refine training objectives based on identified needs.
4. Training proposal submitted: A training proposal is submitted based on Steps 1-3 which includes proposed training outline/objectives and suggested curriculum based on identified skill gaps.
5. Training proposal accepted, rejected, modified by employer: The training proposal is reviewed by the client and the curriculum is either accepted or modified based on employer/client feedback.
6. Evaluations: Evaluations are conducted at the end of each training course to assess the satisfaction of the trainees and employer regarding content, pacing, and delivery. This feedback is used for subsequent curriculum development and delivery.

Contract Education: Credit Courses

The process for approving contract education courses offered for "credit" is as follows: ("Credit" refers to any class offered for community college credit, regardless of whether the class generates state apportionments.)

1. Credit courses offered through contract education ("Contract education" means those situations in which a community college district contracts with a public or private entity

- for the purposes of providing instruction or services or both by the community college) require the same level of approval of any other course that is offered for credit by COS.
2. If an outside agency/organization requests the opportunity to contract for a credit course, the BICS staff would visit with the dean of the area to confirm that the requested course is current and up-to-date through the District's curriculum processes.
 3. If a new course is requested, the BICS staff would work with the appropriate dean and division to investigate the opportunities for creating a new credit course. If deemed appropriate, BICS staff would work with division staff to create the course and get it approved through the normal COS credit/curriculum processes.
 4. Throughout the process, the industry/business representative would be contacted to confirm that the contract education program is addressing the issues/gaps identified in the needs analysis.

Community Education (fee based, not-for-credit) courses:

The process for approving community education courses:

Short-term courses/workshops/Kid's College:

1. Instructor completes a "course proposal form" for each class/workshop, including a short description of the course, a course outline, and objectives for the class/workshop.
2. BICS staff reviews the class proposal and determines whether the course will be marketable and the objectives relevant to the identified target audience.
3. BICS reviews the proposal with the prospective instructor and confirms the individual has qualifications related to the course outline and objectives.
4. BICS staff consults outside resources/advisors to review any questions/concerns about the proposal.
5. BICS staff approves or rejects the proposal.

Career/Skill Upgrade courses, workshops, or certifications (example: Notary certification, Electrical Recertification, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) safety, Sexual Harassment training)

1. Instructor/contractor/vendor completes a "course proposal form" for each class or workshop, including a short description of the course, a course outline, and objectives for the class or workshop.
2. BICS staff reviews the class proposal and determines whether the course will be marketable and the objectives are relevant to the identified target audience.
3. BICS reviews the proposal with the prospective instructor and confirms the individual has qualifications related to the course outline and objectives.
4. BICS staff consults outside advisors to review any concerns about the proposal; BICS also reviews relevant certification requirements (state, federal, industry), labor market data, local placement data, industry reports relevant to the course/training/workshop being proposed.
5. BICS staff approves or rejects the proposal and forwards it for next level of review.
6. Career/Technical Education dean reviews the proposal and either approves or rejects it.

Finally, the Program Review process requires course and program currency, acting as a carrot to ensure that faculty and divisions keep their curricula up to date, regularly assessing

the effectiveness of courses and programs.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. With the use of CurricUNET and greater attention to course/program development, courses and programs receive ongoing and cyclical scrutiny for quality. The processes allow for more transparent review and input from a wider variety of campus constituents than has been the case historically. Additionally, the Program Review process ensures that all courses, certificates, programs, and majors are regularly reviewed and revised as necessary. The Course Currency policy has effectively removed a backlog of critically old courses and helped maintain a more vibrant and current catalog.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.2.a.

The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.

Description

The learning outcomes and assessment movement has developed over many years at COS. Originally, one instructor was given release time to begin work on SLOs and to research current thinking surrounding the initiative. Subsequently, an SLO committee of members representing each division was formed to begin the work of working with divisions to create outcomes. The Curriculum Committee became involved in 2006 when it agreed to begin requiring SLOs in course outlines. That move brought the conversations around outcomes to a wider constituency and made them part of the campus culture in at least a peripheral way.

Because the District is committed to using a faculty-driven process for creating and constantly improving curriculum, a new full-time faculty position (a curriculum/outcomes coordinator) was created in fall 2010 to focus on and oversee the burgeoning work of both the Curriculum Committee and outcomes and assessment. In spring 2011, the campus-wide Outcomes and Assessment Committee was formed to begin the process of connecting course outcomes to program and institutional outcomes and to facilitate assessments at all levels. The curriculum/outcomes coordinator chairs this committee.

While setting up these institutional structures to more effectively and efficiently tackle the work of outcomes and assessment, the District has been using Program Review requirements and curriculum approval processes to ensure that course outcomes are moving toward assessment cycles. At this point, virtually every course and most programs have identified outcomes. Faculty members have created assessments and completed the cycle for one outcome in each course and will have completed two years of assessments at the course level by spring 2012. Additionally, in fall 2011, faculty embarked upon program assessment cycles. Though program outcomes had been identified in program reviews previously, there had not been pressure to begin assessments in any meaningful way until fall 2011.

There has been ongoing dialog about how to work through and store assessments. In fall 2010, the curriculum/outcomes coordinator worked with the campus president and the CurricUNET Implementation Team to create a mechanism in CurricUNET for housing assessments. However, the subsequent assessment module was deemed far too cumbersome in its processes and execution and was significantly revamped in summer 2011. Currently, the campus is enjoying a streamlined and more flexible assessment module as part of CurricUNET that will allow for the development and cataloging of course/program/service area/GE outcomes and assessments.

In fall 2011, the Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate voted to uncouple the course outcomes from the course outlines of record. This was a procedural decision to resolve the conflict between annual ongoing and continual outcomes assessment and five-year reviews of course outlines. Because changing the outcomes in a Course Outline Record (COR) meant revising the whole outline, faculty were reluctant to make changes to outcomes because it would trigger a full course outline review. The conflict in reviewing cycles was resolved by moving outcomes into the outcomes assessment module in CurricUNET, where they can be more easily reviewed, changed, reassessed, and documented. This decision will be some years in implementation. As courses come up for review, faculty will decide to move the outcome statements out of the COR and into the assessment module; some faculty, however, may decide to leave outcomes where they are, particularly where departments have scaffolded their outcomes sequentially, thus avoiding the need for annual changes. Over the next five years, it is expected that the course outcomes will shift from most CORs to the assessment module in CurricUNET.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. COS has made considerable strides in institutionalizing structures and procedures for establishing and improving courses and programs through the creation of outcomes and assessment cycles. The District has created guidelines and a path toward continual cycles for outcomes creation and assessment, and these processes are creating an atmosphere of more public reflection and dialogue regarding courses, services, and programs.

As noted in the table below, most faculty agree that current curriculum processes ensure quality across courses and programs, though it is interesting that administrators were less certain about this. It may be that only a few of the administrators have a hand in the curriculum processes, so those who are less aware of these processes are unfamiliar with the criteria used. Likewise, adjunct faculty and classified staff who are less involved with curriculum processes seem to be less aware of criteria used to create courses and programs.

27.1.1) The curriculum process uses criteria that ensure consistent breadth and depth across courses and programs. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	16.0% (4)	27.1% (23)	20.4% (10)	9.2% (6)
Agree	24.0% (6)	40.0% (34)	36.7% (18)	26.2% (17)
Disagree	12.0% (3)	11.8% (10)	4.1% (2)	3.1% (2)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	2.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	1.5% (1)
Don't Know	48.0% (12)	18.8% (16)	38.8% (19)	60.0% (39)
Total Counts	25	85	49	65

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.2.b.

The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.

Description

COS relies on the years of experience and knowledge of its faculty to create outcomes for its courses and programs. As the outcomes and assessment movement has taken root on campus, each department has met to determine the best ways to identify and measure outcomes for the various degrees and certificates. The ways in which those determinations are made vary somewhat between departments, but generally follow the path noted by the Outcomes and Assessment Cycle for Approval. This document guides departments through the annual (course outcome assessment) and biennial (program outcome assessment) cycles for planning, implementing, gathering data on, and evaluating outcomes assessments and using that information for ongoing planning on a College-wide basis. [\[II.A.15\]](#)

Career/Technical Education programs at COS are partially funded by Vocational Technical Education Act (VTEA; Perkins IV) funding which requires that each CTE program maintain an active industry-based advisory committee. The committee meets periodically to assist faculty with modifying course outlines and certificate programs to ensure students will be receiving relevant, industry-specific instruction. Measurable student learning outcomes are matched to industry job entry-skill competencies. As part of the VTEA funding process, CTE programs are measured in five core indicator areas including student achievement, retention, employment, traditional students, and non-traditional students; each program evaluates the courses in their Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) code area and uses funding to improve performance indicators.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. While the campus is in the early stages of outcomes assessment (as noted elsewhere), outcomes for courses and programs are largely in place;

assessment cycles are in their second year for courses, and most programs have completed one cycle. The systems that allow for and encourage this review are firmly in place and allow for good forward progress. As part of the review for programs (degree and certificate, vocational, and academic), information about advisory committees is recorded, including the names of the members and summaries of recent meetings and discussions. This helps the divisions keep track of important changes in fields of study and ensures that the learning outcomes being measured are appropriate and current.

Also, faculty groups meet regularly to discuss and record outcomes data and, particularly after the first couple of cycles of course outcomes assessments, there is a flurry of re-thinking regarding what was being asked of students and how it was measured. As the campus continues to grow into these annual cycles and gain confidence and comfort, there is no doubt that the conversations and work on assessment will broaden and deepen.

Plans for Improvement

The District will create ongoing assessment cycles at all levels.

STANDARD II.A.2.c.

High-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning characterize all programs.

Description

The development of programs begins with work in a division. Each division at COS has a curriculum process through which courses and programs are vetted, either by a formal or informal committee or by a curriculum specialist. Faculty experts provide information about the need for a program (developed in conjunction with College and/or local community need), as well as information about breadth, depth, and rigor. Once approved at the division level, programs are sent to the Curriculum Committee for approval. This work is typically done through CurricUNET, the District's electronic submission and approval process. The approval process allows for all stakeholders to review and comment on the program, directing questions to the program's author and requesting necessary changes.

The Curriculum Committee receives ongoing training during monthly meetings and in department/division workshops throughout the year about course and program quality, regulations, and place in the curricula of both the District and transfer institutions, as appropriate. Additionally, recent changes at the state level in the wake of SB 1440 and reduced budgets have prompted ongoing conversation and renewed scrutiny of many of the District's programs. Last year, as programs were input into CurricUNET and the catalog was also in production, virtually all programs were reviewed on some level for currency and their ability to meet current educational/training needs.

Divisions and departments also scrutinize programs as part of their ongoing work in Program Review. Every six years, each academic and CTE program is reviewed for quality and improvement. Program Review requires information about how the program connects from the course to the degree/certificate level and also includes information about learning

outcomes. Each program review is read and evaluated by the IPRC which returns scores, recommendations, and commendations about the programs to the divisions.

As part of their evaluations, all faculty members are required to reflect on teaching practices and continuously improve instruction. These evaluations include peer observations and student evaluations, in addition to review by deans and the vice president of academic services. The evaluation process and attendant discussions facilitate ongoing improvement of the courses and programs.

Finally, each year, the District communicates changes in curriculum to the universities and they choose to review the course outline of record or not. Typically, they will review if there are documented content changes, prerequisite/co-requisite changes, or unit changes. That COS continues to enjoy articulation agreements with a number of campuses attests to its development of sustained high quality instruction.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Currently being put into place is a process for program creation and approval in CurricUNET that will help the District, along with its divisions and departments, create consistent and correct programs that can be used in planning courses and that will be formatted for direct output into the College catalog. This process should be ready by the beginning of fall 2012. Having all the current and correct programs functioning in CurricUNET will go a long way toward helping the District sequence and evaluate the effectiveness of its programs.

The District is now doing a substantially better job than it has in the past in terms of reviewing programs in a timely fashion and setting up ongoing approvals that allow the Curriculum Committee and others to assess the effectiveness of a program and how well it fits into curricular plans.

Plans for Improvement:

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.2.d.

The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students.

Description

COS offers a variety of delivery techniques, such as traditional on-campus lecture/discussion courses, laboratory application courses, and distance education courses. Within the context of these delivery modes, different strategies are employed, including learning communities, small group instruction, individualized learning, classroom assessment of learning styles, to name a few. Many instructors use a variety of instructional techniques and classroom delivery methods based on student needs.

The District offers a number of different types of distance education courses. COS had more than 106 scheduled distance education courses in the spring 2012 semester. These include

interactive television, hybrid, and online courses. Interactive television courses are held to accommodate the needs of students in Hanford. There are two Interactive TV classrooms on the Visalia campus allowing instructors to broadcast to Hanford's one classroom. Instructors are able to see and hear students in the remote location, where students can also see and hear their distant classmates and the instructor. Hybrid classes are a combination of one or more face-to-face meetings and online instruction and communication. Totally online classes are conducted without any face-to-face meetings. The District's online platform for hybrid and online classes is Blackboard, which provides for the integration of media into the learning environment to meet the multiple and diverse needs of learners. The Campus Curriculum Committee requires the submittal of a separate distance learning addendum for any course that will be offered in a distance education mode.

Since the reinstitution of four days of Flex hours per semester, COS faculty have had many opportunities to explore new teaching methodologies or to attend on-campus classes on assessing student learning styles. Faculty who wish to instruct in an online environment must obtain certification through some outside or in-house training process. The COS certification course for online training has been developed by the distance education coordinator, who also instructs the certification courses throughout the year and during summer breaks. In the past two years, many faculty members have taken part in On-Course training, a nationally renowned teaching strategies program that centers on learner awareness and development of specific skills. This training has added considerably to the campus dialogue about teaching and learning.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Serving a large rural area demands flexibility in teaching styles. Students vary in the experiences and differences they bring to campus; thus a variety of techniques and tools are made available to instructors to help reach student needs. In the survey, nearly all participants agreed or strongly agreed that COS instructors use a variety of teaching methods. Additionally, in spite of budget cuts and limited funds for professional growth, the College has an active Flex/distance education coordinator who provides a wealth of opportunities for obtaining experience with new teaching methods. The grant programs on campus also provide such training, as does the Essential Learning Initiative (ELI), the campus's Basic Skills committee.

32.1.1) Instructors use a variety of teaching methods, including simulation, individual coaching, lecture, discussion, and group activities. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	32.0% (8)	56.5% (48)	57.1% (28)	12.1% (8)
Agree	40.0% (10)	35.3% (30)	34.7% (17)	47.0% (31)
Disagree	4.0% (1)	3.5% (3)	8.2% (4)	0.0% (0)
Strongly Disagree	4.0% (1)	3.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.5% (1)
Don't Know	20.0% (5)	1.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	39.4% (26)
Total Counts	25	85	49	66

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.2.e.

The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an ongoing systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.

Description

Each academic and CTE program undergoes Program Review every six years, with biennial updates (this policy was recently changed from a full review every five years with annual updates). As part of this review process, divisions and departments review all courses and programs for currency, relevancy, and success in meeting student needs. The Program Review process facilitates the development of continuous improvement goals in the area of curriculum, as well as in learning outcomes and program development.

In 2008, the District adopted a policy for course currency to combat a decades old problem of out-of-date curriculum. The Curriculum Committee proposed the Course Currency Policy which was subsequently approved by Senate and adopted and supported by administration. This policy has been very effective in motivating faculty to revise outdated courses, remove unnecessary courses, and identify courses that no longer serve programs [II.A.14]. A similar policy is currently being developed for programs, as the program module in CurricUNET has become active. Programs will now have a systematic way to be created, monitored, and revised for quality, effectiveness, and currency.

While divisions have made great strides in identifying and assessing learning outcomes for courses, the progress is beginning to be evident at the program level. Program Review gives divisions and departments an opportunity to define program outcomes, so those programs that have undergone full program review in the past few years now have outcomes identified. Beginning in fall 2011, divisions started work on creating outcomes for each program, and the assessment for those outcomes began in spring 2012. The process for creating, assessing, and evaluating program outcomes has been instituted across the campus and promises to yield important data in the near future.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. In the previous self-study, the District was struggling with this standard. While some divisions had ongoing systematic ways of dealing with course approvals, courses in others were chronically out of currency. All divisions struggled with program creation, assessment, approval, and evaluation processes, largely waiting until a catalog deadline forced a flurry of helter-skelter activity.

In subsequent years, however, processes and systems have been put into place to help faculty meet the goal of continuous assessment and improvement for courses and programs. Although it has taken some time to set up and implement the procedures, first for courses and more recently for programs, confidence is high that the necessary tools are in place for orderly, thorough, and cyclical evaluation of all curriculum, which will allow the District to

address future needs and institutional plans. Course outcomes assessments are in their second cycles (in spring 2012), and annual cycles for their ongoing assessment are in place. Program outcomes will undergo the first assessment cycle in spring 2012, subsequently falling into a biennial assessment cycle that complements program review.

Plans for Improvement

The District will continue to work toward full proficiency in meeting outcomes creation, assessment, and review.

STANDARD II.A.2.f.

The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.

Description

In a recent paper for the National Institute for Learning Outcome Assessment (NILOA), Margaret Miller wrote that instituting an outcomes and assessment plan on a campus was akin to Elizabeth Kübler-Ross's stages of grief: *denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance*. If that is so, COS is currently somewhere between anger and bargaining, though there are certainly pockets of assessment that have moved into acceptance. For too many years, the campus experienced denial, effectively sidelining attempts at institutionalizing the work of outcomes and assessment. However, a change in leadership and increasing pressure from outside agencies moved discussions and work ahead. Currently, though the District is not as far along as some campuses, there is systematic work being accomplished and plans exist for continuing to develop and assess outcomes at all levels.

In the previous self study, outcomes were largely limited to courses, with few assessment projects in place. There was little or no discussion about outcomes at the program level or higher. Since 2006, though, there has been a more concerted effort to work on ensuring that all courses not only had outcomes, but were also being assessed. In 2009, the District hired a full-time curriculum coordinator (a non-instructional faculty position) who helps to coordinate the work of outcomes and assessments. In 2011, an outcomes and assessment module was added to the CurricUNET program to help faculty and others track outcomes and assessments at the course and program level. Also in 2011, a campus wide Outcomes and Assessment Committee was formed to help support this work. The committee hosts a blog of best practices, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and general cheerleading, as well as considering the more thorny issues of creating a culture of assessment on a campus that has traditionally shunned any evaluative effort.

Recently, conversation on campus has involved the public availability of outcomes assessment. Thus far, assessment results are available only to members of the department being assessed. That is, no other campus entity and certainly no off-campus entities can view these assessments. In part, this shield of privacy was created to allow free exploration of outcomes assessments without the specter of public and administrative scrutiny. A previous

Program Review process asked for assessment results for use in public reporting (results are reported by course, and are normally not identifiable by faculty). In response to much dialogue, the Program Review process now asks only for outcomes assessment conclusions, without requiring actual assessment results.

Currently, the faculty is working through a second year of course outcomes assessment and has begun inputting and tracking program outcomes (tracking for some program outcomes is also accomplished via the Program Review process). As the assessment work has grown, some faculty have begun to see beyond the additional work that it requires and have found their initial outcomes in need of revising, focusing on what is most meaningful for teaching and learning. Others continue to find fault with the entire concept, and there is much dialogue about the place of outcomes and assessment. Nevertheless, the systems in place ensure that the work is going forward.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard, although there is ongoing work to continue. Course outcomes have been created and, for the most part, cycled through assessment twice. Program outcomes are being input into CurricUNET's outcomes/assessment module; in some cases, these are being created for the first time, though because most programs have undergone program review, outcomes are already in place. These outcomes are being assessed in spring 2012, with reporting in early fall 2012. The cycle for outcomes and assessment will be to plan for the assessment work in the fall, complete the assessments in spring, and complete the assessment evaluations in late spring or early fall of each year.

While the District has yet to implement an outcomes and assessment cycle for General Education (GE) outcomes (which will replace institutional outcomes), this is partly due to the effort of revising the GE pattern for the first time in nearly a decade. The ongoing work of creating a new GE plan trumps the creation of outcomes, though the GE Committee is committed to creating the outcomes as part of the final plan. Assessing those outcomes has yet to be explored.

With its aversion to any type of public evaluation, the District is not yet meeting the standard of making its results available to a range of constituencies. It is hoped that as the work moves forward and begins to gain more acceptance, sheer academic curiosity may temper nervousness about discussing and sharing assessment results.

Since the previous self study, the District has taken measured and sure steps toward a climate of systematic creation and assessment of learning outcomes. No longer can this work be seen as a mere academic exercise within a few divisions; now, each department and division participates to a greater or lesser extent. Further, there are processes and procedures in place to ensure that the work will continue to grow upward through the various levels of learning.

Plans for Improvement

GE outcomes will be developed and assessed on an annual basis. Course and program outcomes will be assessed annually at a minimum of one outcome per course or program per year.

STANDARD II.A.2.g.

If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.

Description

Departmental examinations currently in use at COS typically are those created and validated by state agencies. The various paraprofessional programs on campus, such as nursing, truck driving, cosmetology, and others, use departmental exams that are part of the state licensing or certificating processes. Some of the specific programs that use such pre-validated tests are below:

- Students in the electrician program have to take a state certified test that is developed and governed by the state.
- The Truck Driving program students are required to take a test developed and validated by the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- The Cosmetology Department at COS requires students to take an exam certified by the state.

The Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) has been developed and validated by the psychometricians at Assessment Technologies Institute, Inc. The validation of the test was confirmed by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's office (CCCCO) and confirmed for use as an identifier for nursing school success. The test is a multiple-choice assessment of basic academic knowledge in reading, mathematics, science, and English and language usage. The objectives assessed on the TEAS exam are those which nurse educators deemed most appropriate and relevant for measuring entry level skills and abilities of nursing program applicants.

Nurse Assistant - Once nurse assistant students successfully complete the program and meet all other requirements, they can apply to take the state exam to become Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) in California. This test is based on theory and skills; the applicant must meet minimum competency in both areas in order to receive state certification. The exam is under the jurisdiction of California Department of Public Health (DPH), Licensing and Certification which includes, but is not limited to, development, approval, validation, and scoring of all tests. The Department of Public Health has the authority to contract out testing services. Test results are reported quarterly to nurse assistant programs. A trend of low pass rates on the exams may result in further scrutiny by the DPH.

Physical Therapy Assistant - The first graduating class of physical therapy assistant students will receive their certificates in May 2012. Upon successful completion of a Commission Accreditation Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) program, the AS degree graduates can apply to take the National PTA exam. Candidates for testing must pass this national exam in order to become licensed in California. This test is the purview of CAPTE and the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), which includes, but is not limited to, test development, validation, distribution, research, and reporting. A trend of low pass rates on the national exam will result in intense scrutiny of any program by CAPTE.

The Certified Nursing Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician and Fire Science programs all use exams developed and validated by California.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. The exams for these programs are governed and validated by the state, thus departments feel comfortable with and confident in their use. While the above list in the description section is a representative sample of the sorts of exams used on campus, others that fit this category are similarly validated by the agencies that create and monitor the tests.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.2.h.

The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.

Description

Regarding the District's ongoing effort to integrate course outcomes (CO) into the curriculum design and program assessment process, much has been done in the last several years. Since the District's last review, it has made considerable progress in the development of COs for all classes. By spring 2012, fully 77 percent of active classes had COs on record, and many of those courses have already entered into an assessment cycle for at least one of those SLOs. The District's current goal is for each course currently being offered to have completed one full assessment cycle for one CO by spring 2011. Considerable progress has been made in this area.

However, the District's ongoing efforts to use COs as the standard for student achievement have been hampered somewhat by problems relating to articulation. As the District has worked toward increasing the role COs play in course outlines and descriptions, four-year transfer institutions have shown resistance regarding the disparity between outcome-based outlines at COS and their own objective-based outlines.

As a result, the COS Curriculum Committee voted in September 2011 to remove Course Outcomes from the official Course Outline of Record, and to continue developing them as separate components of each course. While this change makes things substantially simpler from an articulation perspective, it will allow the District's ability to use course outcomes as the primary assessment mechanism for awarding student credit. Although COs have been removed from course outlines, they have been given greater emphasis in the curriculum system, including a separate module allowing constant development, assessment, and revision of COs alongside, but separate from, the curriculum review process. This separation allows outcomes assessment to proceed at a much faster pace than was previously possible. This accreditation cycle has seen the reformation of the campus Outcomes and Assessment Committee (OAC), which represents a concerted effort on the part of the District to refresh its commitment to outcomes-based assessment at the course, program, and institution level.

OAC is preparing a number of initiatives to increase campus support for and involvement with outcomes assessment as a mindset, rather than just a procedure.

Units of credit are awarded based on the number of lecture, laboratory, or activity hours per semester the student accomplishes. The Carnegie unit has been the minimum standard for determining academic credit for all courses, and this determination is consistent with accepted norms in higher education.

Vigorous dialogue occurred within the District, particularly in the Campus Curriculum Committee, to define exactly what constitutes a lecture, laboratory, or activity course. The impetus for this discussion was the recognition that current courses blend student learning methods, and that the distinction between lecture, laboratory, and activity courses has blurred. These definitions have not been applied consistently throughout the District. The prevailing bias is that if a course occurs in a classroom it must be a lecture course, and if it occurs in a laboratory it must be a laboratory course. For example, many computer classes are considered to involve only lecture hours, even though students spend class time working at computers, practicing, and applying lecture concepts. These discrepancies are compounded by the issue of compensation. Laboratory and activity hours are compensated at a lower rate, and faculty who teach these courses must teach more hours to achieve a full teaching load. In some cases, course hours have been shifted to activity hours to allow adjunct instructors, who can teach no more than 67 percent of a full-time load, to teach more hours and more classes.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. COS awards credit consistent with College policies and is working to make certain that COs are the foundation for defining success.

Although the removal of COs from the course outline may indicate a step backward with regard to the use of outcomes as a metric of achievement, the establishment of the OAC, the separation of the outcomes assessment process from the curriculum review process, and the resultant flexibility of the outcomes review process will allow the District to continue developing COs and assessing student preparedness from that perspective. While this means that COs are currently separated from the official process of awarding credit, it allows the District to better ensure that outcomes represent what students ought to be learning, and to ensure that students are learning what the outcomes require.

Not surprisingly, full-time faculty agree that the curriculum process ensures there is consistency in units awarded. For those deeply involved in the creation of curriculum, the processes maybe more clear than they are for those less involved, who seem less certain that the process works well. Nevertheless, work remains to be done on creating a more consistent way to consider unit values for courses.

26.1.1) The curriculum process ensures that there is consistency in units awarded. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	24.0% (6)	30.5% (25)	28.6% (14)	10.8% (7)
Agree	28.0% (7)	45.1% (37)	36.7% (18)	43.1% (28)
Disagree	8.0% (2)	6.1% (5)	8.2% (4)	0.0% (0)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	2.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.1% (2)
Don't Know	40.0% (10)	15.9% (13)	26.5% (13)	43.1% (28)
Total Counts	25	82	49	65

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.2.i.

The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.

Description

As noted above, the District is working on program and GE outcomes, their assessment, and subsequent evaluation of the awarding of degrees. The GE outcomes will be created in spring 2012, with a plan for assessment to begin during the following year. Program outcomes are in stages of creation and assessment, with the implementation of new processes this year. Many programs have begun assessment cycles as part of their ongoing work in Program Review.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The groundwork has been laid, and while the process is not yet complete, the results will enable the District to meet this standard. The first GE assessment cycle should occur during 2013-14.

Plans for Improvement

1. A GE outcomes assessment cycle will be created and implemented.
2. Program outcomes will be created and assessed to ensure that student achievement is emphasized in the awarding of degrees and certificates.

STANDARD II.A.3.

The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.

General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:

STANDARD II.A.3.a.

An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

STANDARD II.A.3.b.

A capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

STANDARD II.A.3.c.

A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.

Description

For nearly a decade, the District's GE plan languished as a result of contentiousness of previous committees and an inability to find a common path. After that long "time-out," a new GE committee was reconstituted in fall 2009 with the charge of revamping the District's general education plan. For the past two years, the committee has painstakingly worked to fashion a new general education plan and then to populate it with appropriate courses, creating processes to guide the inclusion of new courses in subsequent years, with learning outcomes for each of the GE areas. The group will also decide on the ways those outcomes will be assessed, creating a plan for that assessment by spring 2012. Thus, while GE learning outcomes as a whole are not complete, there are learning outcomes for the courses within the GE.

Additionally, the GE Committee was careful to define each of the GE plan areas and clarify its meaning for the campus. The committee addressed areas A, B, C above by including courses designed to help students with an understanding of the major areas of learning, the capacity for lifelong learning (particularly regarding in the use of technology), and a recognition of the value of ethical and effective citizenship.

The District's philosophy of general education for the Associate Degree, appearing in the 2011-13 College of the Sequoias General Catalog, is as follows:

To provide courses that help students value cultural similarities and differences, attain a sense of self-worth and personal emotional stability, develop critical thinking, maintain physical health and fitness, gain aesthetic awareness, understand the environment and its ecology, and increase the student's abilities to cope with everyday living as an adult in a rapidly changing world (2011-13 General Catalog, page 10).

(These policies are further clarified in the Catalog (pages 56, 62-63) [\[II.A.16\]](#) as codified by BP [\[II.A.17\]](#)/AP 4025[\[II.A.18\]](#))

Proposals for considering a given course as part of the GE pattern are initiated by the department faculty proposing the course, based on the course curriculum. These proposals are then filtered through the division's Curriculum Committee and the Campus Curriculum Committee—each of which are composed of faculty from increasingly broad regions of the campus, who assess the proposal based on the GE pattern.

This GE pattern is currently under review by the GE Committee, a subcommittee of the campus Curriculum Committee. The GE Committee, in coordination with the Outcomes and Assessment Committee, is currently drafting institutional GE-Level Outcomes, which will serve as a more concrete and assessable expression of the District's GE pattern philosophy.

Furthermore, the OAC is working to incorporate a procedure for mapping course outcomes to program outcomes, and program outcomes to institutional outcomes into the curriculum development system (and, soon, GE-level Outcomes). Thus, on each course revision, the course is systematically assessed for its appropriateness to its GE category and to the goals of the institution.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Although general education at COS is evolving as this self-study is being written, the GE plan will be approved by fall 2012. This plan will include the structure of the new GE, the appropriate courses populating each of the areas, and the new outcomes with a plan for the outcomes assessment.

The current practices of the District as described above meet the requirement. Moreover, as outcomes and assessment are further integrated into the curriculum processes, the alignment between course outcomes, the District's philosophy, and the GE pattern will continue to improve, along with clarity of articulation.

Plans for Improvement

The General Education Committee will have a fully functioning course review cycle that is transparent and effective in maintaining an interdisciplinary core of study.

STANDARD II.A.4.

All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

Description

As the current catalog indicates, the District offers a range of program opportunities, each of which includes a focused area of study. Currently, COS offers:

- 60 Not-for-transfer degrees
- 24 Transfer degrees, including three Transfer Model Curricula degrees
- 42 Certificates of Achievement (Chancellor's Office approved, 17+ units)
- 45 Skill Certificates (6-12 units)
- 3 Certificates of Completion (non-credit certificates)

The revision of the program pages for the last catalog led to the creation of a template for each of the types of programs that includes standardized language for the descriptions of the program, as well as the types of courses listed for each program. Currently, those program types include GE courses (for transfer and not-for transfer degrees), required core courses, and restricted electives for most programs. Occasionally, programs will require additional types of course blocks or will allow variations on required courses to give students more choice. Those exceptions are noted when they occur. Programs are input to CurricUNET, which prompts program authors for necessary information to create the proper program page. This process has removed previous difficulties with program variations and the inability to track changes between catalog cycles.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard, as evidenced in the current catalog and through the current process for program creation and approval.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.5.

Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.

Description

Advisory committees provide information concerning employer needs and employment standards for Career/Technical Education (CTE) programs. The meetings between CTE departments and advisory committees result in curriculum and programmatic changes that are reflected in the current catalog. Those vocational divisions with certificates mandated by law or governed by a regulatory agency assist students to meet the required competencies and also ensure they are meeting local and community goals. Faculty in vocational areas work with both area employers and instructors from transfer institutions to ensure that their curriculum is current and meets the needs of employers.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. The vocational programs have active advisory committees that provide invaluable information about work requirements, desirable characteristics of employees, and the knowledge and skills necessary to do the job. The vocational divisions have been particularly aggressive in the past five years to maintain currency in certificate, occupation, and transfer curriculum. Additionally, program changes in CurricUNET now allow departments to demonstrate and record their interactions with advisory committees and indicate how the program meets local employment and training needs. Two years ago, the programs were reformatted for the catalog to reflect the need to include program outcomes and employment opportunities as part of the program's description. Currently, all programs listed in the catalog and in CurricUNET follow this new formatting.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.6.

The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning outcomes consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline.

Description

The current COS catalog was developed to help students successfully navigate their educational experience by providing explicit and accurate information about courses, programs, transfer paths, and other policies and procedures. In preparation for the catalog publication, program templates were developed and approved by the governance structure to help standardize transfer, not-for-transfer, and Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) degrees, as well as certificates. These templates have been subsequently programmed into CurricUNET, so when programs are modified or created, the information will remain standard and easy for students to find. Creating these templates helped to bring programs into a more structured alignment, complementing work that had similarly been accomplished at the course level. Currently, program titles denote the particular end point of the program (achievement certificate, for-transfer degree, etc.). A brief definition of the program informs students about the major learning concepts for the program, expected achievements at completion, potential employment or further educational opportunities the program affords them. Courses required for program completion are listed on every program page, and degree programs also include information about how each course meets various degree or transfer requirements. Currently, this information is pulled from individual course outlines in CurricUNET to ensure uniformity. While the District is not quite at the point that program information can be transferred directly from CurricUNET to the catalog, this goal should be achieved by the end of spring 2013.

The catalog addresses all transfer policies, and these policies are also covered in counseling courses. Students also receive this information in their meetings with counselors, so the information is conveyed in several ways.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard, with one exception. Thus far, there is no mechanism for including learning outcomes on course syllabi, nor in the program pages of the catalog. This issue will have to be discussed as the District creates a systematic way for including outcomes information in courses. Currently, some faculty include outcomes at the behest of their deans or division chairs, but compliance is spotty at best. Additionally, the faculty association has raised questions about compliance as a workload issue, so discussions will need to involve working out the ways this part of the standard can be met. Adding the information to the programs will be somewhat easier, as the program outcomes are already included in CurricUNET; thus, including the outcomes information in course outlines may be simply a matter of re-programming the output page.

Plans for Improvement

The District will create a systematic way to include learning outcomes and program pages in the catalog.

STANDARD II.A.6.a.

The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.

Description

Board Policy 4050 addresses the District's general procedures regarding articulation (the corresponding Administrative Procedure 4050 lays out how these procedures will be accomplished):

The Superintendent/President shall establish procedures that assure appropriate articulation of the District's educational programs with proximate high schools and baccalaureate institutions.

The procedures also may support articulation with institutions, including other community colleges and those that are not geographically proximate but that are appropriate and advantageous for partnership with the District.

Although COS has a procedure for the transfer of coursework into the District, COS does not have written policies. Courses are currently evaluated by the transcript evaluator to ensure compatibility with the institution's courses. The institution does not have written policies for the evaluation of learning outcomes of courses from institutions that students previously attended.

The College Catalog provides information for students who wish to transfer to a California State University or University of California institution. In addition, the Transfer Center offers services to help students prepare for transfer to a four-year institution, including regularly scheduled visits by representatives from four-year colleges and universities, workshops, assistance with completing applications, and a reference library. Students can also determine transferability of courses by the course numbering system, which clearly delineates transferable, degree-applicable, and non-transferable courses.

The institution's articulation officer develops, maintains, and disseminates general education/breadth, major preparation, course-to-course, and system-wide articulation agreements with the CSU, UC, and California independent colleges and universities. The institution currently maintains lower division articulation agreements with all CSUs, UCs, and numerous independent universities. Transfer information, including general education patterns and comprehensive transfer advising sheets, is available for students through the Web Based Statewide Articulation Repository (ASSIST Program).

Evaluation

The institution meets this standard. Although transfer and articulation agreements have been developed with those institutions to which students most frequently transfer, the institution has no formal written policies or information available publicly for students wishing to transfer into COS. Additionally, outcomes are not articulated between COS and any institutions from which students might have come or to where they may transfer. A process for collecting and scrutinizing outcomes outside of COS does not exist and may not be feasible.

Plans for Improvement

The Office of Academic Services, in concert with the articulation officer, will develop a feasible policy for students wishing to transfer to COS; this policy will be placed in the COS General Catalog and on the website.

STANDARD II.A.6.b.

When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

Description

Significant program changes are currently overseen by the Curriculum Committee, with input from area deans and division chairs, as well as faculty who teach within the program. With the recent ability to input and track programs in CurricUNET, the campus will better be able to ensure that students are unwittingly ignored as changes are made. The approval process for all program changes includes the program's author, division chair, curriculum representative, dean, articulation officer, curriculum and outcomes coordinator, curriculum chair, academic resources coordinator, Curriculum Committee, vice president of academic services, Academic Senate, Board of Trustees, and course librarian. The approval process occurs through CurricUNET and allows each entity in the approval queue ample time to

review the program changes and react to any unforeseen consequences. The process allows for dialogue and return for revision of any program in play. Recently, the District decided to return to one-year catalog production (largely online) to help students better navigate the changes in programs and their courses.

Additionally, the work of program change and approval is detailed in Administrative Procedures (AP 4020, 4021, 4022) [III.A.19]. These procedures note the processes that are in place for programmatic changes. During the current budget crisis, as courses and programs have come under extra scrutiny and threat of elimination, the issue of program discontinuance has been discussed. In 2010, the Academic Senate re-wrote and approved a revision to the program discontinuance AP 4021 to further ensure that programs would not be eliminated without due process and time for implementing those changes.

Evaluation

The District clearly meets this standard. For the most part, the District community has taken great care during budget duress to limit negative effects for students and their continued educational progress. The processes in place and the interest in following and maintaining those processes have helped programs and students enrolled in them to weather difficult times. Additionally, as the Curriculum Committee worked through a list of inactive or duplicative courses in the past three years, it created more clarity in curriculum processes, helping programs to remain current in their content and goals.

Planning

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.6.c.

The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

Description

Previously, the COS General Catalog was published annually. Beginning in 2005, it was published biennially, with annual supplemental editions. Beginning in fall 2010, the catalog became available to students mostly online with limited copies on reserve in the LRC, and available for purchase in the bookstore. Extensive review of the catalog and its contents occurs at many different levels. The responsibility for the production of the catalog resides in the Academic Services Office and with the Catalog Committee. This committee is comprised of the vice president of academic services, the dean of math and science, the articulation and assessment coordinator, counselors, public information officer, graphic designer, and academic resources coordinator.

Course outlines are maintained by the division in which the courses reside. As part of each division's Program Review process, courses are reviewed, updated, revised, and/or deleted

every five years. Curricular modifications are implemented only after the appropriate approvals by the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, and Board of Trustees. The articulation officer checks the prerequisite language for accuracy because Banner has produced errors in this area. The District is in the process of including Program Level Outcomes (PLOs) as well as Service Area Outcomes (SAO) within CurricUNET.

Division chairs, academic deans, the vice president of academic services, and the vice president of student services receive the catalog pages appropriate to their areas. They are given adequate time to review these pages for accuracy and completeness. A new process allowing counselors to review each major sheet prior to publication has also been initiated. This change will ensure that formatting of each major sheet is accurate and student friendly.

Division faculty, area deans, the articulation officer, and the academic resources coordinator are charged with keeping the certificate and major sheets up to date. These sheets are then forwarded to the Academic Services Office for inclusion in the General Catalog after being approved by the Board and state Chancellor's Office.

After all modifications to the General Catalog are made, a draft is sent to the appropriate areas for approval and/or further revisions. The General Catalog is then reviewed by the vice president of academic services and the Catalog Committee. A camera ready copy of the catalog is forwarded to a printer, with prints made for a select few on campus. An electronic version of the printed catalog (PDF) is forwarded to the District webmaster who puts it on the COS website. The availability of printed catalogs is limited; however, students may access the catalog online at the District website, on reserve in the library, or by purchase upon request.

The DRC also makes alternative formats available in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA requirements. When the catalog is returned from the printer, it is then forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval. IPEC reviews the planning policies and procedures and ensures their integrity regarding the District's Mission. Integrity is ensured by the Academic Services area for programs and publications, and the Student Services area for services provided to students.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. A majority of those polled in the accreditation survey believe the catalog is a helpful source for identifying information, policies, and requirements of the District.

10.1.1) The general catalog helps students and staff locate information, policies, and requirements. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	32.0% (8)	32.5% (27)	44.9% (22)	25.8% (17)
Agree	56.0% (14)	53.0% (44)	44.9% (22)	59.1% (39)
Disagree	4.0% (1)	9.6% (8)	8.2% (4)	4.5% (3)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	1.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.5% (1)
Don't Know	8.0% (2)	3.6% (3)	2.0% (1)	9.1% (6)
Total Counts	25	83	49	66

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.7.

In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board-adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or worldviews. These policies make clear the institution's commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.

Description

The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty.

This matter is addressed in item 12 of Board Policy 5500, Standards of Conduct – “Cheating, plagiarism (including plagiarism in a student publication), or engaging in other academic dishonesty.” [\[II.A.20\]](#) It is included in the College Catalog to make students aware of the policy and the consequences. The consequences are also in the catalog.

Additionally, many instructors refer to this policy in their syllabi and during the introductions to their courses.

It is useful that the policy is in the catalog to make all students aware of the consequences of their behavior.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.7.a.

Faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.

Description

While COS values academic freedom, the campus community clearly understands that such freedom entails deep responsibility. Embedded in Board Policy 4030 [II.A.21] is the following:

“...b. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of appointment.

c. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public might judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others....”

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Planning

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.7.b.

The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and the consequences for dishonesty.

Description

Board Policy 5500 establishes rules for student conduct and the consequences for misconduct [II.A.20]. Academic honesty is addressed in A.13 in the document: “Cheating, plagiarism (including plagiarism in a student publication), or engaging in other academic dishonesty. *Plagiarism means presenting other people’s words or ideas as one’s own. It may include, but is not limited to, submitting material taken from the web or elsewhere as original work; failing to provide complete citations and references for all work that draws on the ideas, words, or work of others; or failing to identify the contributors to work done in collaboration.*” The consequences for misconduct (also included in the BP) include:

1. Reprimand - Written warning that continued misconduct will result in more serious disciplinary action.
2. Temporary exclusion - Removal from class or College activity for the duration of its scheduled period.

3. Short-term suspension - Exclusion from classes, activities, and/or student privileges for a specified number of days, up to maximum of ten days.
4. Long-term suspension – Exclusion from classes, activities, and/or student privileges for the remainder of the school term or for one or more terms.
5. Expulsion - Termination of student status at this District.

The procedures for the consequences are further laid out in Board Policy 5502 [II.A.22]. This information is also condensed and included in the COS General Catalog in the section entitled “Student Rights and Responsibilities.”

Evaluation

COS meets this standard by providing consistent and detailed information for students and others in the District community about the expectations for academic honesty.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.7.c.

Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators, or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and/or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.

Description

The current COS College Catalog addresses this issue in the section entitled, “Code of Student Conduct, Prohibition of Harassment Policy and Rights and Responsibilities.” The Students Bill of Rights in the catalog states that all students are responsible for following the COS Board Policies and individual rules and regulations (Board Policies PB 3430, Prohibition and Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedures [II.A.23] and 5500 [II.A.20], Standards of Conduct). These policies state the behavior the District expects from its staff and students.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard in giving clear notice of appropriate codes of conduct in its Board Policies/Administrative Procedures and in the COS General Catalog.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.A.8

Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with standards and applicable Commission policies.

Description

College of the Sequoias does not offer curricula in foreign locations.

Evaluation

Not applicable. (N/A)

Plans for Improvement

N/A

STANDARD II.A. Evidence List

II.A.1. CalWorks

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/CalWORKS/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A. 2 CARE Program

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/CARE/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.3 DRC

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/DRC/Pages/DRC%20Home.aspx>

II.A.4 Early Alert Referral System

<http://www.cos.edu/Academics/AcademicSupport/earlyalert/Pages/default.aspx>II.A.5. ELI <http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/ELI/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.6 EOPS

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/EOPS/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.7 First Year Experience

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/FYE/Pages/FYE-Mission-Statement.aspx>II.A.8 MESA <http://www.cos.edu/Academics/MathEngineering/MESA/Pages/default.aspx>II.A.9 Orientation <http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/Orientation/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.10 Puente Project

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/Puente/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.11. TRiO/Student Support Services

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/TRiO-SSS/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.12 PASEO

<http://www.cos.edu/Academics/MathEngineering/PASEO/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.13 Veteran Services

<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/VeteranServices/Pages/default.aspx>

II.A.14 The Course Currency policy

[http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/committee/AS/currcomm/Shared%20Documents/Local%20Curriculum%20Policies/COSCC%20course%20currency%20plan%20Senate%20\(2\).doc](http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/committee/AS/currcomm/Shared%20Documents/Local%20Curriculum%20Policies/COSCC%20course%20currency%20plan%20Senate%20(2).doc)

II.A.15 Outcomes and Assessment Cycle

<http://intranet.cos.edu/department/committee/AS/currcomm/outcomesandassessment/SitePages/Home.aspx>

II.A.16 2011 – 13 General Catalog

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>

II.A.17 Board Policy 4025

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%204025%20-%20Philosophy%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Assoc%20Degree%20and%20GE.pdf>

II.A.18 Administrative Procedure 4025

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP-%204025%20Philosophy%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Associated%20Degree%20and%20Genral%20Education.pdf>

II.A.19 Administrative Procedures 4020 , 4021 and 4022

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-4-Academic-Services.aspx>

II.A.20 Board Policy 5500

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%205500%20-%20Standards%20of%20Conduct.pdf>

II.A.21 Board Policy 4030

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%204030%20-%20Academic%20Freedom.pdf>

II.A.22 Board Policy 5502

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%205502%20-%20Student%20Discipline%20Procedures.pdf>

II.A.23 Administrative Procedure 3430

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203430%20-%20Prohibition%20of%20Harassment%20and%20Discrimination%20and%20Harassment%20Complaint%20Procedures.pdf>

STANDARD II.B.***Student Support Services***

The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.

STANDARD II.B.1.

The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.

Description

Distance education students have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support their learning. Student services information, such as financial aid, admissions and records, and counseling are available to students online. Students can apply to the District, register, apply for financial aid, contact a counselor, and order transcripts online. The College Catalog is available online. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) also provides students with online access to catalog searching, full-text articles, and e-books, and librarians through the “Ask a Librarian” service. Online tutoring began during the fall 2011 semester. The District has also established a Student Computer Helpdesk available online and staffed during LRC hours. Periodically, online student satisfaction surveys are conducted in order to gather students’ perceptions of their online learning experience. Information collected from the surveys is used to improve services to online students. Faculty have individual pedagogical and technical support from the distance education coordinator. The coordinator periodically meets with counseling staff to provide information and training to support online student success. The District provides an online orientation to distance education at COS. An online survey of distance education learning readiness (Is Online Learning for Me?) helps students assess whether they have the background, knowledge, and technical skills required to undertake and successfully complete a distance education course. Instructors are encouraged to direct students to readiness tools and activities as they begin their classes each semester, and faculty development workshops help faculty learn about student readiness and retention strategies for assisting online students. The coordinator has developed and launched a collection of web pages available to students linked from the COS home page as COS ONLINE [II.B.1]. These pages include the following:

- Link to Blackboard (Bb)
- Instructions for logging in to Bb
- Distance education frequently asked questions (FAQ)
- Faculty contact list
- Distance education program definition and contact information

- A student readiness survey
- A student orientation to distance education and technology at COS
- Links to student services

At the College's Hanford Educational Center, support personnel from the Student Services division include an EOPS counselor, Financial aid outreach program specialist, CalWORKs representative, and tutors. A COS team helps register local high school students in the Hanford area. In spring 2012, the Hanford campus gained a new police officer for campus patrol. Representatives from the DRC also visit Hanford as requested. While most services are represented in some form at Hanford, their presence is not consistent or constant, so students often have to wait to receive necessary assistance. At this time, plans are being developed to ensure the presence of student service programs at the new Tulare College Center (set to open in 2013).

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. The provost at Hanford, in coordination with Student Services, ensures that student support is adequate and comparable on that campus. Having the provost on campus has gone a long way in helping to target and resolve the Hanford campus' student services needs. As the table below confirms, most of the campus agrees or strongly agrees that student support services are made available where classes are offered by the district.

12.1.1) Instructional and student support services are available at all locations where classes are offered. (Level of Agreement)

	Administrator	Full-time Faculty	Adjunct Faculty	Classified Staff
Strongly Agree	12.0% (3)	14.3% (12)	8.2% (4)	9.1% (6)
Agree	48.0% (12)	39.3% (33)	46.9% (23)	48.5% (32)
Disagree	24.0% (6)	21.4% (18)	16.3% (8)	10.6% (7)
Strongly Disagree	4.0% (1)	2.4% (2)	4.1% (2)	3.0% (2)
Don't Know	12.0% (3)	22.6% (19)	24.5% (12)	28.8% (19)
Total Counts	25	84	49	66

Plans for Improvement

1. Develop student services programs for the new Tulare campus in preparation for its opening in spring 2013.
2. Continue working toward center status at Hanford to ensure consistent funding for student services programs and personnel.

STANDARD II.B.2.

The institution provides a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, and current information concerning the following:

STANDARD II.B.2.a.***General Information***

- *Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Web Site Address of the Institution*
- *Educational Mission*
- *Course, Program, and Degree Offerings*
- *Academic Calendar and Program Length*
- *Academic Freedom Statement*
- *Available Student Financial Aid*
- *Available Learning Resources*
- *Names and Degrees of Administrators and Faculty*
- *Names of Governing Board Members*

STANDARD II.B.2.b.***Requirements***

- *Admissions*
- *Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations*
- *Degree, Certificates, Graduation and Transfer*

STANDARD II.B.2.c.***Major Policies Affecting Students***

- *Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty*
- *Nondiscrimination*
- *Acceptance of Transfer Credits*
- *Grievance and Complaint Procedures*
- *Sexual Harassment*
- *Refund of Fees*

STANDARD II.B.2.d.***Locations or publications where other policies may be found***

- *Website*
- *Faculty Handbook*

Description

The General Catalog is the primary source for information on programs, policies, and procedures pertaining to students. The General Catalog is reviewed and updated every two years and is available to students only online on the COS website [\[II.B.1\]](#). The General Catalog is mailed to the District's feeder high schools and is distributed to select staff members at the District such as the articulation coordinator, counselors, and members of the Curriculum Committee.

The General Catalog in an electronic format is updated in the Errata or Supplement as needed or as changes in curriculum occur. An electronic supplement detailing other catalog changes is available on the website in years when the catalog is not published. The General Catalog is also available on the subscriber website College Source. Students needing alternate ways of accessing the catalog may visit the DRC or the DRC website [\[II.B.2\]](#) to request versions in Braille, in large print, or through software (such as screen reading software JAWS) that can verbally transmit the publication.

The General Catalog is organized into nine sections, along with a table of contents and complete index. Those sections are:

- General Information
- Admissions/Matriculation
- Academic Regulations and Policies
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Services
- Academic Divisions
- Transfer Information and Requirements
- AA/AS Degrees – Not for Transfer
- AA/AS Degrees – For Transfer
- Certificates
- Course Descriptions
- Faculty, Staff and Administrators

The General Information section contained in the General Catalog includes the District's official name, address (including each campus location), telephone numbers, and website. Names of administrators and the governing board members are also listed in this section. The District's Mission Statement is included, as well as College objectives, responsibilities, philosophy, and the open access principle. Here the District also sets forth its nondiscrimination policy as it pertains to students and employees of the District. The published academic calendar, which is included in this section, details the District's school years and events of importance to students, faculty, and staff. It provides an easy-to-follow timeline for academic deadlines.

Complete information about the admission and matriculation process is found in the Admissions/Matriculation section of the General Catalog. The catalog lists costs of attending COS, including course fees, health, material, resident and non-resident tuition, parking, and student center fees. Payment and refund policies are explained. In addition, information about the Board of Governors Fee Waiver program is presented.

Both the Admissions/Matriculation and Academic Regulation and Policies sections include information about acceptance of transfer credits from other colleges and universities, credit by examination, independent study, and other nontraditional learning, as well as credit granted to veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

Appeal and Grievance procedures with regard to matriculation at COS are detailed in the Admissions/Matriculation section, while those dealing with sexual harassment are located in

Student Rights and Responsibilities, as is information on a student's right to lodge a complaint.

The Academic Regulation and Policies section provides information to students about grading, course repetition, and dropping and withdrawing from classes, as well as probation and dismissal policies. The procedure to regain good standing status is also explained. Statements acknowledging the importance of academic freedom for both students (the Student Bill of Rights) and faculty (Statement of Professional Ethics) are found in the Academics Regulations and Policies section, with a more extensive policy on academic freedom as it pertains to faculty spelled out in the Faculty Handbook located on the District website. The General Catalog section titled Student Rights and Responsibilities includes College regulations pertaining to privacy rights, access to official student records, sexual harassment, and code of student conduct (including academic honesty).

The Student Services section provides students with information about the many special services and programs offered at COS, including the DRC, EOPS, Puente Project, Associated Student Body (ASB), clubs, media center, veterans' educational benefits, child care, health care, mental health and academic counseling services, student employment, Transfer/Career Center, Tutorial Center, scholarships, and financial aid, as well as information about applying for aid. Details about available learning resources, including the Learning Resource Center, the Tutorial Center, and Instructional Media Services, are also found in this section.

The Academic Divisions section contains a complete listing of the various divisions within the Academic Services area. The divisions include Agriculture, Business, Consumer Family Studies, Fine Arts, Industry and Technology, Language Arts, Mathematics and Engineering, Nursing and Allied Health, Physical Education, Science, Social Sciences, and Student Services (Academic Counseling).

In Transfer Information and Requirements, students will find comprehensive information about transfer requirements to the University of California and California State Universities. In Major (AA/AS degree) and Certificate Requirements, information is available about all COS degrees, certificates, and local general education requirements, including the length of program and courses required. Information is presented in an alphabetical listing in tables by certificate and major, and cross-listed by division. The programs can also be found alphabetically in the extensive index at the back of the General Catalog.

A complete list of all of the degrees and certificates offered is available in the AA/AS Degrees – Not for Transfer, AA/AS Degrees – For Transfer and Certificates Sections. Every degree and certificate is laid out in a one-page format for ease of use and easy printing. The AA/AS degrees not for transfer are the degrees that do not correlate with transfer requirements. On the other hand, the AA/AS degrees for transfer do meet transfer requirements in general education and major preparation requirements. A standard template implemented in 2011 ensures that these program descriptions also include information about program outcomes and employment opportunities. As programs complete a review cycle, the new templates with this information are created.

In the Course Descriptions section, every discipline the District offers is listed alphabetically by department. Each course is listed by course number, unit value, prerequisites and co-requisites, and a description of the course.

Finally, all Faculty, Staff and Administrators are included in the last section, with title and education level attained. Details about programs, policies, and procedures are also located elsewhere on the COS campus and website.

A new revised and interactive online orientation provides new students with comprehensive information about the District, including how to apply for admission, registration, financial aid, and many other services. Information is also disseminated during face-to-face orientation sessions such as the “First Giant Step Orientation,” high school outreach visits, biannual meetings with the directors of high school counseling, individual counseling sessions, financial aid workshops, and College Nights.

A Student Handbook and a Faculty Resource Guide are also available online, as well as policies of the Financial Aid, EOPS (including a Mutual Responsibility Contract), and DRC offices (including a DRC Faculty/Staff Handbook). Each of these offices also has hard copies of their policies available, and the DRC provides policies in alternate formats, upon request. A Student Conduct Standards: Discipline and Grievance Procedure handbook was adopted by the Board of Trustees. This document includes students’ rights and responsibilities, information on causes for disciplinary action, disciplinary procedures, and student and matriculation grievance information. Standard definitions of academic dishonesty and previously unaddressed issues such as protests and demonstrations are also discussed.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The COS General Catalog is vetted by many committees and many sets of eyes. It contains all that a student or community member might need to know about educational pathways, whether for degree or career programs, transfer, or certificate programs of study. The catalog gives students necessary information about the GE program, their rights and responsibilities, courses, and resources available for help.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B.3.

The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.

STANDARD II.B.3.a.

The institution assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method.

Description

Providing equitable access to services for all students in the COS area is a challenge, but one that the District fulfills. The District maintains a commitment to student access, which is particularly important because of the rural area in which it is situated and the relatively limited access to other higher education opportunities. In keeping with this philosophy, COS continues to review and revise the Student Equity Plan as needed to ensure that all students achieve their educational goals. Additionally, a number of other campus programs address access and attainment.

Once students complete an admission application, they have access to a number of entry services, including counseling, placement tests, and orientation. Counseling is also available to continuing and returning students by appointment, online, or on a walk-in basis. A fulltime counselor is scheduled at the Hanford Educational Center four days a week, and a counselor will be scheduled at the Tulare College Center once it is operational. The District also employs online tutors to help students.

Students who are admitted to the District undergo assessment testing, which is available for English and mathematics placement, mathematics and reading competency testing, English as a Second Language testing, and the Ability to Benefit test (financial aid eligibility for non-high school graduates). Students receive their results immediately after testing. Follow-up on assessment results also occurs during individual counseling sessions, when counselors use results for advising and course placement. Students have the option to retake the placement tests.

The financial aid program supports the open access principle and equal opportunity for students by offering a coordinated program of federal and state grants and scholarships, subsidized loans, and work opportunities to students who qualify according to the National Standardized Needs Analysis. The Financial Aid Office helps students with the financial aid process and walks potential students through the entire Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) during classroom presentations and workshops, periodically dropping off materials and brochures.

The DRC helps students overcome limitations and circumvent barriers to their educational and occupational goals. DRC services are individualized to aid each student's independence, productivity, and self-advocacy. Support services (Adaptive PE, High Tech Lab, Learning Skills Lab and test accommodations, etc.) enhance students' access to and success in all classes and activities offered at COS. The DRC also has a counselor whose main priority is

disability related counseling. The DRC offers learning disability testing in order to identify students who would qualify for additional support services. DRC services are available to students at the Hanford Educational Center and will be available at the Tulare College Center.

Part of the EOPS mission statement is to improve the delivery of programs and services to disadvantaged students. EOPS provides a number of support services, including counseling, early alert monitoring, priority registration, assistance for university transfer, and more. EOPS hosts the annual Multi-Cultural Fair as part of its mission to increase the welcoming nature of the District.

The DRC, EOPS, and Financial Aid offices have specific individuals dedicated to outreach. Within the COS service area, these individuals visit high schools, present current information at community functions (college and career nights, focus group events, and so on), make regular contacts with identified school representatives and counselors, and conduct campus tours.

A continuously growing part of campus access now comes through online learning and other forms of distance education. In a district that comprises hundreds of square miles, the possibility of completing courses and programs without long commutes appeals to local communities, particularly as budget crises have developed.

In 2011, COS partnered with the city of Visalia and regional transit agencies including the Kings County Area Rapid Transit System to create a student low-fee transit pass, supported by a small student fee. This pass provides students with unlimited ridership on Tulare and Kings Counties bus service which includes Visalia, Tulare, and Tulare and Kings County Transits.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Students have numerous routes for gaining admission to the District and for finding success. Although the budget constraints have stymied some growth in programs that aid students, the number of students finding their way to campus and taking advantage of programs is high.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B.3.b.

The institution provides an environment that encourages personal and civic responsibility, as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.

Description

COS, aware of its students' needs for an environment that supports both emotional and social growth, provides a wide variety of programs to facilitate the development of personal and civic engagement. These broad goals are written into the Strategic Plan and the institutional

outcomes but are covered more completely through student activities and clubs.

As the center of college community life for students, the Associated Student Body (ASB) and the Student Executive Board are very active and highly involved in many leadership activities through institutional governance and committee representation. Additionally, ASB provides cultural, social, and recreational programs, many of which have social and cultural activities for students and for the community. Some of the activities coordinated by the ASB and its clubs include food and toy drives, voter registration, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) awareness, Red Ribbon Week (drug free promotion), Alcohol Awareness Week, Career and Health Fair, March of Dimes Walk America, Earth Day, 9/11 Event, Cesar Chavez Day, Kids' Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Rock the Vote, and the Multi-Cultural Fair.

A leadership course, Interdisciplinary Studies (IS) 120AD, is offered for members of the Student Executive Board, who are elected by the ASB or are appointed by the Executive Board membership committee. The course emphasizes the development of leadership, critical thinking skills, teamwork, and parliamentary procedure. The Executive Board members also serve as representatives on the College Council's standing committees, including the Institutional Technology Committee, the Institutional Facilities Committee, the Institutional Budget Committee, and the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee. Additionally, there are students on the College Council, Scholarship Committee, Crisis Prevention and Intervention Team, Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, and various advisory committees. A student also serves as the Student Trustee on the District's Board of Trustees. Other programs that provide a variety of opportunities for the personal and intellectual development of students include CalWORKs, DRC, FYE, Puente Project, Student Health Center, Transfer/Career Center, TRiO, and EOPS/CARE.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Students are encouraged in any number of ways to engage in opportunities for development. Every week, campus clubs hold meetings, perform public service, or host events in the center of campus. Students are actively encouraged in classes, through bulletins, and by information on the campus website to engage in the myriad events the campus offers. While community college students often feel disconnected from the District experience enjoyed by their residential college peers, students at COS have few competing opportunities for the sort of activities and involvement the campus offers.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B.3.c.

The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function.

Description

Counseling at the COS provides complete educational guidance services. The purpose of counseling is to help students succeed in their studies through self-evaluation, decision

making, careful planning, and commitment. Counselors meet with students on an individual or small group basis for a range of purposes: interpreting assessment scores; recommending further assessment/testing (Disability Resource Center); determining specific courses for immediate and future registration needs; and developing student education plans (SEP) that conform to the students' short-term and long-range goals. Counselors also provide follow-up services related to students' academic success, including grade progress reports, referrals to on-campus resources such as tutorial services, and revised SEPs. On the Visalia campus, counselors are available during the day (M-F, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) either by appointment or on a walk-in basis. Evening counseling is available by appointment only. The Hanford Educational Center has counseling available four days each week and by appointment.

In addition to addressing institutional factors that might impede students' success (prerequisites and matriculation process), the counselors assess external factors that can affect student success, such as balancing family obligations and academic demands. In doing so, the counselors take a holistic approach to the provision of counseling services. The counselor services provide information and referral services aimed at eliminating external impediments to student success for students who require community interventions.

There are currently 14 full-time counselors and six adjunct counselors in the counseling department. Any new student who enrolls in more than six units with a goal of receiving a certificate, degree, or transfer must receive an individual counseling appointment to generate a SEP. The counseling program utilizes the Program Review process to evaluate its services. To maintain currency regarding curriculum, major requirements, and admission procedures at four-year institutions, the counseling faculty participate in professional development activities such as meeting weekly for training, attending UC and CSU conferences and seminars, and participating in an annual retreat. Additionally, counseling faculty work to maintain positive relationships with K-12 schools and parents by attending college night activities. On campus they network and collaborate with division and campus committees.

Currently there are ten departments where students can receive counseling services at COS. In addition to the general counseling offices on the Visalia campus and at the Hanford Educational Center, counseling services are provided by categorical programs for underrepresented populations such as:

CalWORKs – A half-time counselor provides specialized counseling to students who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). The counselor assigned to this caseload assists students with academic and personal counseling, as well as assisting students in meeting mandatory requirements affiliated with welfare reform. Additionally, the counselor assists students in addressing psychosocial issues associated with being low-income single parents.

Disability Resource Center (DRC) – Currently there is one full-time equivalent (FTE) counselor assigned to this categorically-funded program. The DRC counselors provide specialized counseling services to students with verified disabilities. The specialized services include identification, authorization, and coordination of academic accommodations necessary to address student educational limitations. In addition to these functions, the

counselors provide personal/academic counseling, conduct tours for incoming students, and provide information on disability-related issues by conducting faculty enrichment activities.

Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) provide academic, personal, and vocational counseling services to students. The program has 2.5 FTE counselors dedicated to its students.

The Puente Project provides academic and personal counseling services to students who are assessed at the English 251 level and are interested in courses that emphasize Latino culture, while immersed in an accelerated writing program. The program includes community mentors and prepares students for transfer to universities and has 1.0 FTE counselor.

The First-Year Experience program (FYE) employs one non-tenure track full-time counselor and two adjunct counselors. This program targets first-year students by providing intensive support by way of learning communities, follow-up counseling, peer mentoring, and workshops.

The **MESA** and **PASEO** programs are housed in the math and science departments, but each employs an adjunct counselor to serve students interested in math and science degrees.

The **TRiO** program employs one adjunct counselor to support first-generation students by way of learning communities and assistance with financial aid.

Evaluation

The College meets this standard. Comprehensive counseling services are provided for all students. The counseling services are evaluated according to formal methods such as Program Review, as well as through informal methods such as obtaining feedback directly from students. As the table below notes, the vast majority of respondents agree that the programs support student learning at COS.

11.1.1) The services offered by Student Services programs support student learning.
(Level of Agreement)

	Administrative Services	Academic Services	Student Services	Board Member
Strongly Agree	16.1% (5)	24.5% (34)	35.8% (19)	20.0% (1)
Agree	64.5% (20)	58.3% (81)	54.7% (29)	40.0% (2)
Disagree	6.5% (2)	2.9% (4)	3.8% (2)	0.0% (0)
Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	2.2% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Don't Know	12.9% (4)	12.2% (17)	5.7% (3)	40.0% (2)
Total Counts	31	139	53	5

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B.3.d.

The institution designs and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Description

COS is committed to diversity as stated in its Mission, Philosophy, Vision for the Future and Strategic Plan. The District encourages and provides funding for the implementation of appropriate programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.

As part of its commitment to diversity, the District financially supports and recognizes student organizations that represent and help celebrate the diverse student body through the Student Activities Office. Currently, 45 student organizations are chartered through the ASB with the following centering on racial and ethnic diversity: Black Students Taking Action to Reach Success (B-STARS); California Mini-Corps Program; California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids; Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan (MEChA); Native American Club; Pride Club; Puente Club; and Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE). Student organizations help coordinate campus wide events that include guest speakers, musical/theatrical performances, and political forums, and members may attend regional conferences that foster a greater appreciation for diversity. Annual campus-wide events such as the AIDS Awareness Day, Disability Awareness Day, Multi-Cultural Fair, Black History Month, and Cinco de Mayo provide an opportunity to learn more about the diversity that exists at the District by hosting guest speakers, art exhibits, food, musical, and theatrical performances.

The District encourages non-traditional groups to coordinate events that focus on introducing issues of community members who are disabled (including having physical, learning, psychological, or communication disabilities), gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, veterans, and re-entry students. All College administrators, faculty, staff, and students are invited to all campus wide events and are encouraged to participate in the planning and execution of these events. The District strives to admit a student body that reflects the surrounding community and has done so through increased outreach efforts throughout the District. The enrollment of American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and African-American/Black students at the District has risen in recent years, but remains comparatively small in number. In contrast, the enrollment of Hispanic/Latino students has increased dramatically, but the proportion continues to be slightly lower than the proportion of Hispanic/Latinos in the District, a group that continues to grow more rapidly than any other racial or ethnic group. In comparison, the District's enrollment of White/Caucasian students has decreased during the past few years.

Although the District does not actively recruit abroad, it does enroll a small number of international students who represent the continents of North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. International students provide a new perspective in the classroom and

allow the rest of the student body an opportunity to learn more about the world beyond the Central Valley.

The District has also been awarded various grants to academically support minority students as they seek to gain basic skills and transfer to four-year universities. The Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Title V SEQUOIAS grant was awarded to the District for a five-year period (2010 -15) to improve student success through learning communities (FYE), an enhanced early alert program and orientation, and supplemental instruction. The PASEO Title V HSI grant was awarded to the District (applicant and lead institution) in conjunction with Fresno Pacific University (partner institution) for a five-year period (2011-16) This grant focuses on first-generation, low- income students who are interested a math or science degree. The U.S. Department of Education also awarded the District a three-year grant to focus on improving recruitment, retention, and transfer rates of minority students studying science and engineering.

In fall 2004, the Academic Senate formed the Student Equity Committee, comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, which came together to work on drafting and implementing the Student Equity Plan as mandated by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The Student Equity Plan is a living document that outlines ways in which the District can establish student success indicators; implement policies, activities, and procedures related to student equity; and analyze how college activities and programs can provide equal opportunity for all students. [\[II.B.3\]](#)

The District has taken proactive steps to ensure that all of its employees are given opportunities to explore and appreciate the diversity that exists at COS by hosting guest speakers and events fostering a greater appreciation for multiculturalism. The District also funds an Ethnic Studies curriculum including courses on American Indians, Black-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Americans of European ancestry. Other academic disciplines that incorporate diversity include English (e.g., Chicano Literature and Native American Literature), History (e.g., Mexican-American), Nursing (e.g., Cultural Diversity/Healthcare), and foreign languages. Through the following on-campus programs and offices, the District provides its diverse student body with specialized direct student services that allow them to meet their educational goals: California Mini-Corps, CalWORKs; Counseling Office; Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE); DRC; EOPS; and Financial Aid Office. Each of these programs and offices employs ethnically and racially diverse faculty and staff members, many of whom are proficient in a language other than English to serve the District's diverse student body.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard as evidenced by the District's Mission, the Strategic Plan, and the campus Philosophy and Vision for the Future, all of which have been approved by the Board of Trustees and implemented campus wide. The importance of diversity is expressed and celebrated through the many activities and programs offered by the District on campus and throughout the local community.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B.3.e.

The institution regularly evaluates admissions and placement instruments and practices to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases.

Description

COS uses the California Community Colleges state-wide online admission application, CCCApply, for its admissions procedures. All new, returning, and transfer students must complete the admission application. The process involves the student logging on to the District's website and clicking on "Apply for Admission."

That link takes the student to the online application. Upon completing the application, the student is instructed to print the signature page, sign it, and submit it to the District. Once applications are downloaded by the admissions staff, processing involves editing and placing the applications into Banner. This process takes from one to two days, depending on other demands on the staff processing applications.

After completing the admission application, students receive emails about their application status and potential non-resident status or other situations based on their applications. If a student lists an email address, CCCApply will send the email to that address; if an email address is not listed, CCCApply will issue the student an address and the student can access emails through this address. COS evaluates this application process by receiving input from students and staff, posting questions and comments to the Admissions and Records listserv, and communicating directly with the Chancellor's Office or the representatives of the XAP Corporation, which runs the CCCApply process and has made numerous upgrades based on input from the implementing colleges, including COS. Additionally, after each registration process, staff members from Admissions and Records and Student Services identify issues that require resolution.

The assessment office conducts placement testing and generates the placement recommendations. The primary purpose of the District's assessment program is to provide students and counselors with basic skills assessment data to be used for accurate placement in English, mathematics, and ESL courses. The assessment staff monitor and evaluate assessment instruments and procedures for validity, reliability, and sensitivity to cultural differences; work in conjunction with the English, Mathematics, and ESL departments to improve the efficacy of the program; coordinate the mathematics competency testing program; and coordinate the Federal Ability to Benefit (ATB) testing required of all non-high school graduates to establish Title IV financial aid eligibility.

The District continues to use the ACCUPLACER Computerized Placement Tests (CPT)-reading, sentence structure and mathematics; the COS Algebra Readiness Test; the Math Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) Elementary Algebra Test; MDTP Intermediate Algebra Test; MDTP Precalculus Test; and the Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA) for the ESL population.

Various methods are used to evaluate the placement instruments and practices in order to validate their effectiveness while minimizing biases and to ensure the instruments and procedures are valid, reliable, and appropriate for use as course placement tools. First, a collaborative effort between staff of the assessment office and the matriculation sub-committees for both English and mathematics is employed when critical decisions need to be made and when changes and validation studies are conducted relative to assessment. The assessment coordinator locally manages the COS Algebra Readiness Test (i.e., conducting all research normally required by test publishers and all local validation research). The assessment coordinator also completes all disproportionate impact studies and validation studies for all other placement tests.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Since the last self-study, when the District noted the need for consistent email communications with students, the giant email system has been set up; it is currently the official means of communication within campus groups and between the campus and its students.

All placement tests currently utilized have passed examination for cultural/linguistic bias, insensitivity, and offensiveness as determined by the test publishers or by local management of a test instrument. All placement tests are also currently approved for matriculation by the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The District has historically monitored the effectiveness of the assessment and placement program. The last formal evaluations of the instruments for English were conducted during the 2008-09 academic year. The last formal evaluations of the instruments for ESL were conducted during the 2010-11 academic year, and the last formal evaluations of the instruments for mathematics were conducted during the 2005-06 and 2008-09 academic years. A formal evaluation of all instruments for mathematics is in progress for the 2011-12 academic year. The primary method is the collection and analysis of consequential validity evidence in which both students and faculty are surveyed regarding their "satisfaction with course placement." The results for both the English and mathematics placement procedures exceeded the Chancellor's Office standard; the percentage of both students and faculty who believed course placements were correct ranged between 84 and 96 percent. The results for the ESL placement procedures were inconclusive and did not support the implementation of mandatory placement. Due to the relatively small size of the ESL program, a longitudinal study needs to be conducted so a sufficient number of students can be included in the analysis at each course level.

Plans for Improvement

The District will conduct a longitudinal study of ESL placement procedures.

STANDARD II.B.3.f.

The institution maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provision for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which those files are maintained. The institution publishes and follows established policies for release of student records.

Description

COS has been in existence since 1925 and has records spanning that time in three different formats: hard copy, microfilm, and electronic. Records from 1925 through spring semester 1986 are on microfilm with the exception of the S through Z portion of the alphabet, which is still in hard copy. These records were microfilmed in 2006. In spring 2004, the District implemented Banner, a campus management system. All previous system records were converted to Banner; thus, Banner includes the District's academic history from spring 1986 to the present.

The District has used an underground bunker for storage, including student records. During fall 2004, a water valve leak caused water and mold damage to the backup records stored in that location. After consulting with a firm that specializes in cleaning and copying damaged records, it became clear that the quantity of mold and the expense of cleaning or copying the records would be excessive; consequently, the District decided to destroy the records. All destroyed records were backup records for electronic and microfilm files. The bunker has been cleaned and is available for storage. Currently, all hard copy and microfilmed records are located in the Records office (room 107), with the past year's grade rosters maintained in the Admissions and Records coordinator's office.

The electronic records are maintained on the Banner system server, and the LaserFiche scanned records are on a separate server. Access to records, regardless of the format, is by an established security and confidentiality approval process. All regular employees and all student employees must sign and submit a confidentiality statement (Employee Acknowledgement of Responsibility for Security and Confidentiality of Student Records, and Student Employee Acknowledgement of Responsibility for Security and Confidentiality of Student Records) ensuring personally-identifiable information will not be released inappropriately prior to being approved for access to or release of records.

Various other Student Services offices or programs maintain student records, including Financial Aid, tDRC, and EOPS. Those programs are held to state and federal guidelines and regulations pertaining to establishing, maintaining, and managing student records. To aid in this process, a Security and Confidentiality of Student Records document was developed and distributed to all departments that maintain student records. In addition, a memo regarding confidentiality of records is periodically sent to Student Services staff.

Routinely the District is served with subpoenas or court orders for various types of student records. The Admissions and Records office handles the majority of these requests, following state and federal regulations for notifying students of requests and informing them of their right to file a motion to quash the subpoena, preparing the records for transmission, and transmitting the records within the allowable time line. In addition, the District receives

many requests for records, both from current and former students and from a third party secondary to a signed release of records by the student. Again, each request is managed in a confidential manner, following Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines for release of directory and personally-identifiable information.

Many of the requests are for official, unofficial, or in-house transcripts, general education certification, and evaluation of other college or university transcripts. Official and unofficial transcripts must be requested directly by the student. In-house transcripts are requested by counselors or other staff who require a working hard copy. General education certification is typically requested by students asking for an official transcript. The Admissions and Records office evaluates transcripts from other colleges and universities during a student's initial semester of attendance at COS if transcripts arrive in a timely manner. Transcripts that arrive late in the semester may not be evaluated until the following semester. Students receive copies of their general education certification documents and transcript evaluations once the process is completed.

Confidentiality of student records is ongoing. When the District implemented Banner, security levels for staff were established based on the needs of their positions. In addition, all student employees and regular employees must sign a Security and Confidentiality of Student Records form. This procedure ensures that staff and student employees are provided with information on security and confidentiality of student records and are aware of the consequences of violations. In addition to distributing information on confidentiality, emails are sent prior to finals week each semester reminding instructors not to post students' grades using personally identifiable information such as name, social security number or partial social security number, or student identification number.

Three Board of Trustees policies pertain to student records. Board Policy 7020, Confidential Records, states the District's intent to maintain the confidentiality and security of students' records. Board Policy 5040 identifies the District's process and requirements for release of student records [II.B.4]. Board Policy 5045 delineates how students may challenge the content of their records to correct or remove information, as well as requiring the maintenance of an access log that identifies all persons, agencies, or organizations requesting or receiving information from a student's records and the requester's legitimate interest [II.B.5]. Board Policy 5040 deals directly with the release of student records and states the Release of Student Records policy: No instructor, official, employee, or governing board member shall authorize access to student records to any person except under certain circumstances [II.B.4].

The COS General Catalog and the website contain information about confidentiality of students' records and students' access to their records; the website also lists all board policies.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard as shown in the above description.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B.4.

The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Description

COS evaluates its student support services using three primary methods: evaluation processes and reports, including the District's Program Review process and categorical program reviews by the Chancellor's Office; regularly scheduled program and division meetings; and other data collected and analyzed.

Student Services evaluates their programs and departments using the current Program Review process. The template for Program Review for Student Services is currently undergoing a much-anticipated revision that will better help the division represent its varied programs and services and more accurately reflect challenges and accomplishments.

In addition to Program Review initiated by the District, many programs respond to external evaluations. For example, numerous categorical programs (for example, the DRC) underwent a program evaluation initiated by the Chancellor's Office. This process included a self-study report and a site visit of peers from other community colleges. These reviews have been discontinued until the state budget improves. Matriculation also has a self-study and site review every five years, completes an annual expenditures report that is submitted to the Chancellor's Office and has a Matriculation Plan that is updated periodically as changes occur.

One of the mandatory program categories specified by the California Community College Chancellor's Office is the coordination of services with on-campus and community partners by CalWORKs, including provisions for planning collaboratively with the county welfare department and other agencies and coordination within the District. This coordination offers opportunities for evaluation and improvement of the services offered by this program.

On an ongoing basis, Student Services holds meetings to discuss, review, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding student support services. The Student Services General Council meets once a week; this group consists of the vice president, dean, and associate dean of Student Services. These meetings are devoted to updating these administrators on College-wide issues and activities, discussing issues and resolutions within Student Services, and generally ensuring that students' needs are being met. Once a month, Student Services meets with all Academic and Administrative department heads and program managers, including the vice presidents, deans, directors, and coordinators. Again, the purpose is to update these managers on College and Student Services topics and to discuss service delivery issues and concerns. Beginning this year, monthly meetings are being held with small groups of Student Services staff to gather input on improving services to students, enhancing the work

environment for staff, and generating ideas. In addition, departments and programs hold staff meetings at various intervals and devote a significant portion of these meetings to discussing services to students, service delivery methods, specific issues, and improving service to students. Also, many Student Services programs have advisory committees (for example, the DRC, EOPS, and Student Health Center), which meet regularly to review program services, discuss issues, and consider adding new services or revising existing ones.

Three other groups contribute to the evaluation of student support services: the Creating a User Friendly Environment and Atmosphere in Student Services Committee, the Customer Service Training Committee, and the Directors of High School Counseling meeting.

The first committee was formed at the end of spring semester 2004 to brainstorm ways of improving the atmosphere and environment in Student Services. Some of the ideas presented were practical elements such as adequate signage in Student Services and adequate lighting in the hallway. Other ideas involved making counseling available to students with varying circumstances by increasing day, evening, walk-in, appointment, or information only appointments and creating step-by-step instructions on how to enroll at COS (as in the matriculation process). This committee no longer meets; however, since 2004, other committees have been created in the Student Services area such as the Student Services General Council, which includes all student service area leaders and meets bi-monthly to discuss needs within the respective areas, and the Student Services Faculty Council, which ranks faculty positions within Student Services for hiring. The Customer Service Training Committee assesses customer service training needs, provides customer service training, and is implementing methods to recognize individuals and departments that provide exemplary customer service. The Directors of High School Counseling group invites directors of high school counseling to COS to receive information about the District and to discuss issues and identify resolutions.

Monthly folder meetings with all Student Services department heads and program managers provide an additional opportunity for evaluating and improving student support services. These meetings focus on programmatic elements, concerns, and innovations to address student needs. Other information for assisting in the evaluation and improvement of student support services includes data collected and information received from four-year colleges and universities on the performance of former students and input from the District's external auditors as they evaluate the processes and procedures in Student Services.

Finally, each Student Services program has developed a mission statement, goals, service area outcomes, and outcome assessments. In the initial phase, assessments are being conducted, and results are compared with goals and SLOs to determine how this information can be used to improve services to students.

Throughout Student Services, a planning-implementing-evaluating process is employed. The various committees provide a forum for planning, the individual programs implement planned program elements and components, and various methods are used to ascertain whether the services support student success and the achievement of student learning outcomes. These evaluation techniques include data (demographics, placement test results,

etc.), student satisfaction surveys, retention and persistence rates, grade point averages, grade distribution statistics, course completion rates, probation and dismissal information, discussions of processes and procedures, transfer raters, certificate and degree completion rates, and student learning outcome assessments.

Evaluation

The College of the Sequoias meets this standard, as described above.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.B. Evidence List

II.B.1 COS ONLINE <http://www.cos.edu/>

II.B.2 Disability Resource Center (DRC) website
<http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/DRC/Pages/DRC%20Home.aspx>

II.B.2 Student Equity Plan
<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/committee/collegecouncil/StudentEquity/Student%20Equity%20Plan/Student%20Equity%20Plan%202011.docx>

II.B.3 Board Policy 5040
<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%205040%20-%20Student%20Records%20and%20Directory%20Information.pdf>

II.B.4 Board Policy 5045
<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%205045%20-%20Student%20Records-Challenging%20Content%20and%20Access%20Log.pdf>

STANDARD II.C.***Library and Learning Support Services***

Library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the institution's instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. Such services include library services and collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, and learning technology development and training. The institution provides access and training to students so that library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently. The institution systematically assesses these services using student learning outcomes, faculty input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of the services.

STANDARD II.C.1.

The institution supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.

Description

COS offers library and other learning support services through the Learning Resource Center (LRC) to students at the Visalia and Hanford campuses as well as off-campus and online students. The LRC includes a library, a tutorial center, a learning commons computer lab, computer-equipped classroom for instruction, distance education classroom, writing center, and learning skills lab. The LRC building, Lodgepole, opened in October 2004.

The library is open 54 hours a week. In fall 2009, the LRC began closing at noon on Fridays, rather than at 4 p.m., after the loss of a 21-hour adjunct librarian position. The LRC was open Monday–Saturday until spring 2011, when it started closing on Saturdays because of loss of funding. The 3M Security System Log records the number of people entering the building, and this number averaged 2100 visitors daily in spring 2011. The Hanford Educational Center building opened in fall 2010 with a space shared between the library and the bookstore. It opened with a print book collection purchased with \$5000, several computers for word processing, and access to the Internet and the COS library databases. College library books can be accessed from both the Hanford and Visalia campuses.

The LRC employs three full-time and three adjunct librarians for a total of 142 hours a week, and the full-time director is a librarian. The LRC also employs a full-time administrative assistant, two full-time paraprofessionals at the circulation/periodicals counter, one 60 percent paraprofessional at the computer help desk, and two 50 percent paraprofessionals who cover the circulation desk, tutorial desk, and the second floor of the library. There is no librarian at the Hanford Educational Center; however, librarians are available to Hanford students via the “Ask a Librarian” email on the Hanford Library website. In addition, procedures for inter-library loan requests are in place and faculty may request library instruction by a librarian.

The Tutorial Center is located in the LRC, and services are available to students 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Monday – Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to noon on Fridays for a total of 52 hours per

week. The Tutorial Center coordinator recruits and trains student tutors to work with students who need help with their studies. The tutors must have completed the course(s) they tutor with a “B” or better and be recommended by their instructors. Tutorial Center students are served on a drop-in basis.

The Math Lab tutoring program began in February of 2006 and is housed in a room next to the Tutorial Center. It is open the same number of hours as the Tutorial Center and has a math instructor present the hours it is open, as well as student tutors and an instructional assistant. Desktop and laptop computers are available for student use which house My Math Lab and Math Compass programs. My Math Lab software is also available on 24 computers in Kaweah 202A. Beginning fall 2011, online math tutoring services were offered on a limited basis. During fall 2011, 2,976 students used the Tutorial Center and Math Lab for a total of 17,539 hours; 3,526 students took advantage of these same services during spring 2012 for a total of 18,126 hours.

The Writing Center is housed on the second floor of the LRC and is open 39 hours a week. One English instructor is present whenever the center is open, along with a paraprofessional tutor and several trained student tutors. Any students working on essays or other writing projects may use the Writing Center, regardless of the classes they are taking. The Writing Center is equipped with laptop computers for student use. The Hanford Writing Center currently offers limited services, and students are encouraged to make an appointment with the Hanford writing center consultant as well as visit the Hanford Writing Center during the hours it is open, currently 18 1/2 hours per week.

The Learning Skills Lab offers study skills strategy instruction. Students enrolled in Learning Skills (LS) 308 (Instructional Support) schedule specific hours in the lab for assistance. Six computers are available in the lab, and students also have access to LRC computers. Students who are eligible for DRC services are able to use the lab without enrolling in LS 308 if they choose. The Learning Skills Lab is a part of the DRC, which provides testing accommodations, alternate media, assessment services, and a high tech center. The Hanford Educational Center also provides test accommodation services, and once a month or by appointment, a DRC counselor visits the campus.

In the science building, the MESA program, open 40 hours per week, offers tutoring for upper level math, science, and engineering courses as well as supplemental instruction for all upper level classes. Every other Friday, students from MESA, SETA (a science, engineering and technology student club), and PASEO meet to listen to guest lecturers or to learn about internships, scholarships, and transfer requirements. These programs are not offered at the Hanford campus, but students may come to the Visalia campus to participate.

The First Experience (FYE) lab offers a study area, laptops and textbooks for lab use and checkout, and peer mentors to assist students with general questions. The lab is open 34 hours per week, staffed by a part-time program specialist.

In the Language Center located in the Kern building, instructional specialists and tutors help English 360 basic skills and ESL students with beginning writing skills. Thirty computers are

available when classes are not in session. Grammar software is available on these computers. The lab is open 47 hours per week staffed by one full-time and one part-time instructional specialist.

The TRiO/SSS program serves first-generation, low-income students. The services offered include individual advising and a referral process to services and activities already available on campus. The program also offers education or counseling services designed to improve participants' financial and economic literacy.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard and is working to improve support available to the Hanford campus through additional databases and e-books and access to librarians. The Hanford campus does not have an ongoing budget for library materials, and new materials were not added during the 2011–12 year. Tutorial services are available at Hanford in person and online. Both services will be expanded as needs grow and funding becomes available.

Library, Instructional Media Services, and Tutorial Services are available to students and staff at all locations where classes are offered. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
17.6% (40)	40.5% (92)	18.1% (41)	2.6% (6)	21.1% (48)

In the accreditation survey, over 58 percent of the total surveyed either strongly agreed or agreed that instructional services were available where classes are offered, while 20 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed (above). Several people commented on the lack of services available at Hanford, and some mentioned that lack of funding had crippled the services and library hours. When asked about the importance of the providing these services, over 95 percent of those completing the survey felt these services were important or strongly important as shown below.

Library, Instructional Media Services, and Tutorial Services are available to students and staff at all locations where classes are offered. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
67.7% (151)	27.4% (61)	1.3% (3)	0.4% (1)	3.1% (7)

The services provided by the Library, Instructional Media Services and Tutorial Services support student learning. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
46.9% (107)	42.1% (96)	3.5% (8)	0.9% (2)	6.6% (15)

A large percentage of those surveyed, 89 percent, agreed or strongly agreed that the tutorial, library, and instructional media services support student learning (above). Comments suggested a need for longer library hours, a Spanish speaking librarian, and more staff and funding in general.

Plans for Improvement

1. Develop a budget for books for the Hanford and Tulare centers.
2. Extend the hours of operation for the library when the budgets allows.

STANDARD II.C.1.a.

Relying on appropriate expertise of faculty, including librarians and other learning support services professionals, the institution selects and maintains educational equipment and materials to support student learning and enhance the achievement of the mission of the institution.

Description

The LRC at COS supports the mission of the District and enhances the learning opportunities available to assist students. The LRC book collection currently stands at approximately 72,896 titles, of which 14,743 are e-books. The print periodicals collection has declined from 340 titles in 2006, the year of the last Accreditation, to 214 currently. The video collection was weeded to remove titles that were not closed-captioned or needed to be discarded for other reasons; it now numbers 656 videos, down from 2000 videos at the last Accreditation. The change in number is accounted for by a drop in use of the video format, as well as a change in funding priorities. The Hanford campus has a small print book collection but does not have a stable budget for ongoing collection development. Students from the Visalia and Hanford campuses, as well as online students, have access to e-books and databases. Students at Hanford can request print books from the Visalia campus via computer and phone, with the books delivered to Hanford by an outside messenger vendor. At their weekly meetings, the librarians work together to select titles for acquisition. They consider curricular needs, requests from students, and the age of the collection in making selections. The heaviest weight is given to input from the faculty on titles needed in their subject areas. Librarians work with faculty from specific disciplines to build a collection that meets student needs. The library is part of the review process for any new course or programs. As a new course goes through the curriculum review process, librarians confirm that the author of the course has checked with librarians to ensure that resources will be available in the library. Recently a physical therapy program was added to the school, and the library director and program directors worked closely together to purchase a core collection and identify relevant journal titles available in the databases. Another librarian worked with a new ESL coordinator to purchase books with appropriate reading levels and topics for the curriculum. With input from faculty, librarians also choose databases, which have increased from six to 13 since the last self-study.

There are 109 computers available for student use in the LRC. Another eight computers provide access exclusively to the library catalog system. These computers provide access to the Microsoft suite, Blackboard, Internet, and a small number of software license –programs, including the library databases. All the computers are equipped with ADA-compliant

software including Kurzweil 3000, Zoomtext 9.1, and Jaws 12.0. There are four scanners available on the first floor, and printer/copiers are on both floors. The building has Wi-Fi, and the library furniture includes outlets for students to plug in laptops and smart phones. Through the COS computer refresh program, the computers in the LRC were updated in summer 2010.

There are two classrooms in the LRC. One is a fully-equipped distance education classroom. The other is a library orientation computer classroom with 36 computers, a document camera, and computer projection equipment. Librarians work closely with faculty to provide orientations to library resources, tailoring their presentation to specific courses and frequently to specific assignments. Several one-unit library courses are also taught in this classroom, and instructors may book the classroom for class activities when it is available.

The Computer Services (CS) and Audio/Visual departments maintain the computers in the offices, classrooms, and labs throughout the District, as well as TVs, DVD players, LCD projectors, editing equipment, and audio systems. The CS staff trains faculty and staff in the proper use of AV equipment at both the Visalia and Hanford campuses. Two CS staff members have the primary responsibility of working with faculty and students in the use of cameras and Macintosh computers to create videos and other programs that are used in the classrooms. There is a small Mac lab dedicated to these endeavors.

The Technology Committee oversees any new equipment requests on campus. The committee defines technology as “software, hardware, and infrastructure that either directly or indirectly affect instruction, learning outcomes, and services within the COS campus community.” As spelled out in AP 3261, requests for technological equipment from programs that have passed program review are reviewed by the Technology Committee, and its recommendations and prioritizations are sent to the College Council [II.C.1].

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The materials and equipment in the Visalia and Hanford libraries support student learning and enhance the mission of the District. The librarians have chosen to increase the number of e-books and databases and decrease the money spent on print titles in order to support students taking online courses and courses on both campuses. This decision has been based more on budget restraints than on students and faculty preferences. The librarians are continually educating students and faculty how to use online resources effectively.

Since the last self study, the Curriculum Committee has included the library in a checklist for new classes to ensure that library resources are available to support the curriculum. This system has worked well for collection development aimed at supporting new areas of curriculum.

15.1) Learning resources collections are evaluated to ensure that they enhance the curriculum. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
13.2% (30)	30.3% (69)	4.8% (11)	0.9% (2)	50.9% (116)

The respondents to the accreditation survey were split in their understanding of the meaning of “learning resources collection.” There were nine comments to this survey question, and three indicated they did not understand what was meant by “learning resources collections.” These comments suggest that the question was probably not well-worded and may explain the large number of “don’t know” responses.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.C.1.b.

The institution provides ongoing instruction for users of library and other learning support services so that students are able to develop skills in information competency.

Description

The librarians at COS support student development of information competency skills through formal and information instruction.

The Reference Desk in the LRC is staffed by librarians and provides many opportunities for one-on-one instruction. A typical reference interview with a student would include instruction in basic information competency skills such as defining the information needed to complete the assignment, and how to locate information using the LRC resources. These resources include the online public access catalog (OPAC), periodical collection, online databases, and appropriate websites. There are no hours of in-person reference service for the Hanford campus. Questions are handled by phone and through the Ask a Librarian email provided on the Hanford campus library webpage.

The librarians conduct bibliographic instruction sessions for individual classes in the LRC and at Hanford either in person or through the interactive classroom in the LRC. Most of the instruction is given in the Library Computer classroom with an instructor and a librarian working in partnership. In these sessions, the students are exposed to information competency skills through instruction tailored to their current class and assignments. Many of the presentations include printed handouts as well as custom-made library guides available through the library’s website. Librarians also teach one-unit, CSU-transferable courses covering the components of information competency: Library 101 (College Research Strategies), Library 102 (Internet Information Resources), and Library 103 (Evaluating Information Resources). These three courses are taught as short-term online courses, in a two-weekend for an eight-week format. Beginning in fall 2012, if COS accepts the GE pattern now being formed, students graduating from COS and using the COS GE pattern will be required to take one of the three library courses or the equivalent. Additionally, COUN 110, the freshman seminar course, incorporates an information competency segment taught by a librarian. Finally, the librarians have developed and maintain an extensive website that includes information about the LRC, access to databases, class and subject guides, and other information useful to students doing research.

Evaluation

COS meets this standard. The library lost a 21-hour adjunct librarian position in fall 2009. As a result, there have been times when the reference desk has gone unstaffed during hours of operation. Fortunately, these occasions have been rare and are usually the result of staff shortages due to illness. With the loss of the 21 hours adjunct position, the director began working three hours per week on the reference desk. The director also teaches bibliographic sessions; without this help, the librarians would not have been able to meet all requests from the instructors. The loss of the adjunct librarian position has meant that the library webpages have not been maintained as regularly as before and more innovative tutorials and programs have gone unexplored. However, the number of library courses has increased to seven per semester since the last self study, and as mentioned earlier, all requests for bibliographic sessions are being met.

Plans for Improvement

Replace the 21-hour adjunct librarian to ensure consistent staffing of the reference desk in the library when funding becomes available.

STANDARD II.C.1.c

The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.

Description

At the time of the last self study, the LRC was open 62.5 hours per week. Currently it is open only 54 hours per week. The LRC is no longer open on Saturdays and closes at noon on Fridays. These closures are due to lack of funding and the loss of the adjunct librarian position. There are no hours of in-person reference service for the Hanford campus. Questions are handled by phone and the Ask a Librarian email provided on the Hanford campus library web page.

During the hours the LRC is open, students may access all parts of the library including the Computer Commons, periodicals, books, study rooms, and reference service. ADA-compliant workstations are available in the Computer Commons area and the library classroom. Wheelchair accessible Online Public Access Catalogs are available on each floor of the LRC. The Tutorial Center is open 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 7:30 a.m. to noon on Fridays. Tutorial help is also available at the Hanford Educational Center, and the Tutorial Center started online math tutoring in fall 2011. As mentioned earlier, there are 13 databases and over 14,000 e-books available through the Library web pages. These databases and books are always available through any computer with internet access, but students must use the passwords when not on campus or go through the OPAC and use Banner ID.

Instructors can request that the library place books from its collection, or the instructor's own materials, on reserve for student use. The reserve items are held behind the circulation desk and can be checked out for an hour, overnight, or for two weeks, depending on the desires of the instructor. There is also a place for reserved materials in Hanford. The LRC has a \$3,000

budget to purchase major textbooks and place them on reserve for students who cannot afford to buy their own textbooks. Students can check textbooks out for an hour at a time for use in the LRC building only. No similar service is available in Hanford. The LRC provides copy machines, microfilm readers, and televisions with VCRs and DVD players. The Hanford Educational Center has computers and one printer in the library/bookstore. There is a PHAROS print system available on both campuses that allows students to print documents.

Evaluation

The COS does not meet the standard in this area.

The library resources have undergone a shift in format as well as number. The rising cost of periodicals without a corresponding rise in budget has resulted in cancelling over 200 print magazines/journals in the past six years. The effect of this loss has been offset by increasing the variety and number of articles from newspapers/journals through purchasing additional databases. While having access to articles through the databases is valuable to the students, losing the consistency of print journals is still a loss.

The book collection is going through a similar shift. The e-book collection is growing while the print book collection is dwindling. However, the total number of books available is much smaller due to cuts in the book budget and the rising costs of publishing.

Through the expanded collection of e-books and databases, students with internet access are able to access authoritative resources for research in all curricular areas. Resources are richer in depth and variety in general education fields, but they are quite thin in many of the vocational areas.

Students have access to tutorial services in Visalia and Hanford both in person and limited access online. Online access has been in the testing phase and will be expanded.

Plans for Improvement

1. Expand the e-book and print book collections to add depth, quality and quantity.
2. Develop a budget for books for the Hanford and Tulare centers.
3. Extend the hours of operation for the library when resources become available.

STANDARD II.C.1.d.

The institution provides effective maintenance and security for its library and other learning support services.

Description

Security for the Lodgepole building, which houses the library, tutorial center, math lab, writing lab and the learning skills lab is addressed in several ways. LRC staff members discuss security issues in meetings as needed. A Learning Resource Center Conduct Policy has been written and posted in the building and on the website [II.C.2].

Confidentiality of staff and student personal information is maintained at all times. Personal information stored in LRC computers is not released to anyone without proper authorization.

Computer files are periodically purged to maintain confidentiality. Personal information on paper is kept in locked cabinets and is shredded when no longer needed. COS student Banner IDs are used instead of social security numbers to check out materials, log on to LRC computers, and assign grades.

Books and laptop computers are tagged to set off an alarm at the security gate at the entrance of the LRC and the library at the Hanford Educational Center. The 3M security system helps to prevent theft. Computers in the LRC that are accessed by students have vision-monitoring software allowing staff to see what the student is viewing.

The staff entrance and emergency exits are alarmed on both floors of the building. A key is needed to leave the building through the emergency exits without sounding the alarm. The entire building is alarmed for unauthorized entry.

Library resources are maintained through collection development. In the spring of each year, the librarians meet and discuss the current databases available and decide if any changes need to occur. As mentioned earlier, books (both print and electronic) are added throughout the year through librarians work with faculty, staff, students and the curriculum review process. Deselecting materials has not been occurring in an efficient and timely manner. This is largely due to the reduced number of librarians available.

Evaluation

The District meets the standard in this area.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.C.1.e.

When the institution relies on or collaborates with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible, and utilized. The performance of these services is evaluated on a regular basis. The institution takes responsibility for and assures the reliability of all services provided either directly or through contractual arrangement.

Description

COS provides space on its campus for California State University Fresno (CSUF) to have an off-campus program. The library had an agreement with CSUF that included provisions for CSUF students to receive the same library service and access to materials COS students receive, including use of computers, reference services, and borrowing privileges. In return, the contract provided that CSUF paid for the hours that a COS librarian worked on Saturdays to keep the library open. CSUF also provided interlibrary loan service for books and magazines from its library to COS students on a priority basis, and librarians were given access to CSUF's electronic databases. The COS students were not able to access the databases themselves; however, the librarians could access them to answer reference

questions. The librarians could print out database articles for students or request an inter-library loan for articles not available full-text in the database. CSUF withdrew funding for keeping the library open on Saturdays in spring 2011. In fall 2011, CSUF withdrew access to database access. CSUF will still fill inter-library loan requests, but not on a priority basis. COS has not changed its services for CSUF students.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

The campus will work with CSUF to resume access to its databases.

STANDARD II.C.2.

The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Description

COS uses the program review process to evaluate programs and services and to provide evidence of contribution to course and program outcomes. A complete report is due every six years, with an update provided every other year to the Program Review Committee. The LRC and Tutorial Services went through Program Review in 2011. Program Review includes surveys of students and faculty that give direct feedback, which is used for planning improvement. Program Review includes the library's and Tutorial Center's plans for improvement, responsibility, measureable outcomes, and assessing how the plans connect to the District's Strategic Plan and mission. Passing Program Review is necessary to obtain funding for resources beyond the basic budget and any additions to staffing. The library Program Review includes services at Hanford.

All three library courses have course outcomes and go through the assessment cycle every year. The outcomes and assessments are kept in CurricUNET. The assessments are used to improve the quality of the courses.

The Math Lab and MESA are part of the Math division's Program Review, and the Writing Center is reviewed during the Language Arts Program Review. The Learning Skills lab is part of the DRC Program Review.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD II.C. Evidence List

II.C.1. Administrative Procedure 3261

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203261-%20Requests%20for%20Personnel%20Budget%20Augmentations%20Facilities%20and%20or%20Equipment.pdf>

II.C.2 Learning Resource Center Conduct Policy

<http://www.cos.edu/Library/Services/StudentFAQ/Pages/LRC---Conduct-Policy.aspx>



Standard III

Resources

Standard III: Resources

Standard III.A

Human Resources

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, and evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

STANDARD III.A.1.

The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.

STANDARD III.A.1.a.

Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.

Description

The policy for hiring faculty is found in Board Policy 7120 [III.A.1] The current faculty hiring procedures were adopted by the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees in November 2000 [III.A.2]. The procedures outline the entire process for hiring of both full-time and adjunct faculty. (Note: In December 2011, the Academic Senate formally revised the faculty hiring procedures. The revised faculty hiring procedures are scheduled to be ratified by the Board of Trustees during the spring 2012 semester and will take effect during the 2012-13 academic year).

Faculty Hiring Committees are made up of the area administrator, the division chair or designee, up to five faculty members, and an Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee representative. The Committee screens the applications and determines who to interview. The Hiring Committee develops the interview questions and criteria for answers, along with teaching demonstration topic(s) and any other requirements (tests, syllabi, etc.) for applicants to be interviewed.

Faculty job descriptions are jointly developed by area faculty and Human Resources. All job

descriptions include a description of the position; the minimum qualifications required for the position; desirable qualifications for the position; information on courses to be taught if hired; academic responsibilities associated with being a District faculty member; academic and work experience needed for the position; and the requirement that the faculty member, if hired, must have knowledge of and commitment to working with students of diverse backgrounds. Finally, the job description also includes the screening procedure and application procedure.

As provided for in COSTA Master Agreement §1.4, new faculty classifications can be established only after mutual agreement is reached between the District and the association [III.A.3]. Faculty degrees must be from accredited institutions. Applicants claiming equivalency must follow Board Policy 7211 [III.A.4] and go through equivalency procedures prior to interviewing. The policy for hiring classified employees is found in Board Policy 7120. [III.A.1]

Pursuant to the classified collective bargaining agreement, representatives from both CSEA and the Human Resources office collaborate to develop classified job descriptions [III.A.5]. Job descriptions include description of the position, minimum qualifications, duties, conditions of employment, working conditions, screening procedure, and the application procedure. Classified job descriptions must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

As provided for in CSEA Master Agreement Article I, new classified positions can be established only after mutual agreement is reached between the District and the classified bargaining unit. Along with the area administrator, classified employees participate in the hiring process of classified positions. [III.A.5]

The policy for hiring management and confidential employees is found in the Board Policy 7120 [III.A.1]. The Personnel Policies for Management Council contains information on the recruitment and selection of management and confidential employees. [III.A.6]

When a management or confidential employee position opens up, the supervisor responsible for the position works jointly with the Human Resources office to develop a job description. Job descriptions include basic function, representative duties, required knowledge and abilities, education and experience, working conditions, screening procedure, and the application procedures. Management and confidential employee job descriptions must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Selection of management positions includes input from at least one faculty representative (appointed by the faculty association) and an equal number of faculty representatives who are appointed by the Academic Senate president. Additionally, the District may invite additional faculty, a CSEA member, an adjunct faculty member, and/or a student and community member to serve as needed.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Some areas, however, can be improved.

The classified employees' collective bargaining agreement does not address the process for hiring classified employees. Additionally, while the process for hiring a permanent administrator is well established, the process for hiring an interim administrator is unclear as evidenced this past year when the full-time faculty bargaining unit filed a grievance against the District for failing to comply with the hiring process for an interim superintendent/president.

As can be seen below, while an overwhelming majority of respondents felt the goal of hiring personnel based on established criteria was important, more than 20 percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the District was successful in meeting this goal.

42.1) Personnel are hired based on established criteria related to the District's goals and objectives. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
18.2% (41)	35.6% (80)	12.4% (28)	10.2% (23)	23.6% (53)

42.2) Personnel are hired based on established criteria related to the District's goals and objectives. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
74.9% (161)	21.4% (46)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.7% (8)

Plans for Improvement

Human Resources will work with the appropriate groups and develop comprehensive hiring procedures for classified staff and interim administrators.

STANDARD III.A.1.b.

The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluation of all personnel including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.

Description

The Board of Trustees conducts an evaluation of the superintendent/president, to be completed no later than June of each year. Board Policy 2435 outlines the evaluation procedure for the superintendent/president. [\[III.A.7\]](#)

Full-time faculty are evaluated regularly, consistent with the California Education Code and Title V of the California Code of Regulations

The evaluation procedures for full-time faculty were developed jointly by the Academic Senate, the full-time faculty bargaining association, and administration. The evaluation procedures are included in the COSTA Master Agreement. [\[III.A.8\]](#)

The evaluation process for faculty identifies that the purposes of evaluation are (1) to recognize, memorialize, and acknowledge good performance by the faculty of the COS; (2) to support faculty with expertise, resources, and a supervision experience that will enhance the existing performance of all professional staff, and to aid faculty members who are performing satisfactorily to achieve their own professional growth goals; (3) to identify a faculty member's unsatisfactory performance; (4) to assist faculty members in obtaining the necessary skills and knowledge to make improvements in their areas of deficiency; and (5) to document performance of faculty as per the provisions of California Education Codes §87660–87664.

Part-Time faculty are evaluated regularly, consistent with the California Education Code and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. The evaluation procedures for part-time faculty were developed by the part-time faculty bargaining association and administration. The evaluation procedures are included in the College of the Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association (COSAFA) Master Agreement [III.A.9]. The evaluation process for part-time faculty identifies the purposes of evaluation as being to improve the quality of instruction, enhance academic growth, promote professionalism, and assess performance of unit members.

Classified personnel are evaluated pursuant to the classified bargaining association master agreement [III.A.5]. Probationary classified employees are evaluated during their second and fifth month of employment. After serving a probationary term, classified employees are evaluated annually through their first six years of employment. Thereafter, classified employees are evaluated every two years. The evaluation process for classified employees identifies the purpose of evaluation as (1) to identify and commend effective performance; (2) to counsel and assist employees to improve performance; and (3) to appropriately document the basis for commendation and/or concerns of job performance.

The Personnel Policies for Management Council lay out the evaluation process for management and confidential employees [III.A.6]. Managers and confidential employees are formally evaluated at the end of their initial year of employment and every two years thereafter. The evaluation process for a management employee identifies the purpose of an evaluation as to provide managers with feedback on work quality, overall work performance, work behavior, and strengths and weaknesses, along with providing an opportunity for management employees to gain insights into how their supervisors perceive their work performance, the supervisors' concerns, what the supervisor views as important for being successful at the District, and how to improve and enhance performance. Additionally, the purpose of an evaluation is to provide the manager's supervisor the opportunity to provide feedback; critique the manager's work performance; recognize the manager's achievements and accomplishments; recognize contributions managers have made to the District; recognize measurable progress or improvements made in the manager's performance; identify the manager's work strengths and weaknesses; and provide managers with guidance and suggestions for improvement.

Evaluation documents are all accessible and can be completed using online forms. [III.A.10]

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

The purpose of evaluations and the evaluation process are well established within the appropriate collective bargaining agreements or employee handbooks. There is an Evaluation Board Policy [III.A.11] and Administrative Procedure [III.A.12] for full-time faculty. However, there is not an Evaluation Board Policy or Administrative Procedure for adjunct faculty, classified employees, administrators, or confidential employees.

As can be seen below, nearly all of the survey respondents (92 percent) felt that there was importance in establishing a connection between evaluations and the improvement of job performance. However, only 52 percent felt there was an actual connection between evaluations and improvement. A review of individual comments indicates a concern that the evaluation process does not hold employees accountable for unsatisfactory performance. Moreover, many of the comments expressed concern about poor teachers and the fact that little is being done either to terminate them or to help them improve their performance.

43.1) There is a connection between evaluations and improvement of job performance. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
11.1% (25)	41.6% (94)	22.6% (51)	11.9% (27)	12.8% (29)

43.2) There is a connection between evaluations and improvement of job performance. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
60.9% (134)	32.7% (72)	3.2% (7)	1.4% (3)	1.8% (4)

44.1) Evaluations include information on the performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and are used to encourage improvement. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
15.1% (34)	52.0% (117)	16.4% (37)	4.9% (11)	11.6% (26)

44.2) Evaluations include information on the performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and are used to encourage improvement. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
54.3% (119)	38.8% (85)	3.2% (7)	0.9% (2)	2.7% (6)

Plans for Improvement

Human Resources will work with the appropriate groups and develop Board Policies and Administrative Procedures for the evaluation of adjunct faculty, classified employees, administrators, and confidential employees.

STANDARD III.A.1.c.

Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.

Description

The evaluation of faculty includes an evaluation of teaching methods, materials, and effectiveness. Faculty are evaluated based on their ability to "assist students in attaining their educational goals" (COSTA Master Agreement) [III.A.8]. Faculty are to develop specific goals and objectives for meeting the official course outlines, and their success as instructors should be judged according to how they meet these specific goals and objectives.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. However, as mentioned above, it should be noted that many comments expressed concern about poor teachers and the fact that little is being done to either terminate them or help them improve their performance.

Plans for Improvement

The evaluation process for full-time faculty is a negotiable item. It is the District's desire to improve the process in the future.

STANDARD III.A.1.d.

The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.

Description

The District has a written code of ethics within BP 3050, which states, in part, that College of the Sequoias (COS) is comprised of professionals who are dedicated to promoting a climate that enhances the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual within the District community [III.A.13]. Although members of the community work in various settings and positions, all are committed to protecting human rights and pursuing academic excellence. While the faculty expects freedom of inquiry and communication, employees accept the responsibility these freedoms require: competency; objectivity in the application of skills; concern for the best interest of students, colleagues, and the District community; and avoidance of conflicts of interest and the appearance of impropriety. Additionally, BP 3050 provides an ethics definition; a rationale for the BP; and general responsibilities to the District, to the profession, to colleagues, and to students.

Additionally, within the Personnel Policies for Management Council, there is a Statement of Ethics [III.A.6]. This statement discusses the definition of ethics, the importance of ethics, and the District's expectations for ethical behavior. Finally, a Statement of Professional

Ethics is published in the General Catalog [III.A.14]. There is also a written policy on Academic Freedom.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.2.

The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with fulltime responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.

Description

The table below show the numbers of personnel in each category between fall 2006 and fall 2011.

Academic Year	Full-Time Faculty	Part-Time Faculty	Classified	Administrators
Personnel Change 2006 – 2011				
Fall 2006	174	315	209	40
Fall 2011	163	264	196	36
% Change	(-) 6%	(-) 16%	(-) 6%	(-) 1%
Source: National Center for Educational Statistics – (PEDS)				

The District's full-time faculty, part-time faculty, administrators and classified staff have all decreased within the past five years. The decrease is attributed to budget cuts. It is anticipated that the District will hire two new full-time faculty beginning fall 2012.

The decrease in classified positions over the last several years has been the most severe loss of personnel. The impact of these reductions is dependent on the departments affected. The majority of these losses were due to either layoffs or not replacing retiring personnel during the time of fiscal constraints.

All personnel hired must meet the minimum qualifications for their respective positions. This includes educational background and work experience.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Despite decreasing faculty, staff, and through reorganizations and prioritizing course offerings, the District maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty, staff, and administrators necessary to support the mission and purposes.

Plans for Improvement

Increase staff campus wide as funding becomes available.

STANDARD III.A.3.

The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.

Description

Board Policies related to Human Resources have been developed and approved periodically. Review of Board Policies in general begins in the area associated with the policy, in this case Human Resources. Policies are taken to President's Cabinet and the College Council for review and input. Some policies related to Human Resources must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate constituent groups (Academic Senate, COSTA, CSEA, COSAFA, and Management Council). After approval by the above groups, policies then go to the Board of Trustees for final approval and adoption. All policies related to personnel are available on the College website. [III.A.15]

Procedures related to Human Resources are developed in a similar manner. Procedures are available on the College website. [III.A.15]

Each constituent group has a process by which they can protest if they feel a policy or procedure has not been equitably applied in a particular instance. For those groups represented by bargaining units (COSTA, COSAFA, CSEA), there are formal grievance procedures. Administrators and confidential employees have a procedure outlined in the Personnel Policies for Management Council. [III.A.6]

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Those policies that exist are updated as required and available for information and review.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.3.a.

The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

Description

Board Policy 3420 is a policy on Equal Employment Opportunity [III.A.16]. It was revised in April 2007. The District has an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan in compliance with

Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations [III.A.17]. It was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2009.

All job announcements contain the Equal Employment Opportunity statement “College of the Sequoias Community College District is an equal employment opportunity employer. Prospective employees will receive consideration without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, mental or physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, military service, or any other basis protected by law.”

Human Resources’ Mission Statement includes a section stating its goal of "ensuring compliance with equal opportunity and applicable legal mandates ..."

The Faculty Hiring Procedure includes sections on equal employment and how these requirements are to be ensured during the hiring of faculty. Hiring committees are provided with training in equal employment policies. Training is provided by a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee and takes place prior to the screening of job applications. The training consists of an overview of key equal employment laws and regulations.

Job announcements are placed in a number of publications with the intent of reaching a diverse population. Publications the District has used in recent job recruitments include *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, *Women in Higher Education*, *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, *Tribal College Journal*, *Blacks in Higher Education*, *Asians in Higher Education*, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community (LGBT) in Higher Education*, *Insight into Diversity*, and *Hispanics in Higher Education*.

The District has an Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee (EEOAC). The committee consists of administrators, faculty, staff, and a student representative. The EEOAC’s purpose is to monitor all recruitments to ensure compliance with all equal employment laws.

All applicants who are interviewed are asked to fill out an optional exit survey in order to provide feedback on their perceptions of the District’s hiring procedures. A staff member from the Human Resources office reviews these exit surveys; if comments are made, the comments are shared with the dean of human resources and changes are made as necessary.

In addition to policies, contracts for individual units outline procedures to ensure fair treatment of their respective members. These include evaluation procedures, grievance procedures, and reclassification procedures.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The policies and procedures in place ensure fairness. Moreover, as demonstrated below, almost 70 percent of the respondents agree that the District has implemented policies and procedures that promote diversity within its faculty and administration.

The District implements policies and procedures that will promote diversity in its
50.1) faculty and administration. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
19.3% (44)	50.4% (115)	7.0% (16)	3.1% (7)	20.2% (46)

50.2) The District implements policies and procedures that will promote diversity in its
faculty and administration. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
49.1% (108)	34.5% (76)	9.1% (20)	2.3% (5)	5.0% (11)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.3.b.

The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.

Description

Personnel records are maintained in the Human Resources office. They are kept in locked cabinets in a separate room in the office. This room is also used for interviews and meetings. Utilizing the Banner software, all employees have access to some of their personnel files. This information includes time sheets, benefits, tax information, addresses and phone numbers, and emergency contact information. Additionally, pursuant to State law and Board Policy 7145, employees have the right to inspect their personnel records maintained in the Human Resources Office. [\[III.A.18\]](#)

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.4.

The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and a concern for issues of equity and diversity.

Description

The District's commitments to diversity and equal employment laws are outlined within Board Policy 3420 [\[III.A.16\]](#) and Board Policy 7120 [\[III.A.11\]](#).

Every job announcement includes the following statement: "College of the Sequoias Community College District is an equal employment employer. Prospective employees will receive consideration without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin,

sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, mental or physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, military service, or any other basis protected by law. College of the Sequoias Community College District provides reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the job application and hiring process, please contact a representative from Human Resources.”

The job announcement also includes a statement in the job description emphasizing the District’s commitment to diversity, and the minimum qualifications description for faculty recruitments states that applicants must demonstrate sensitivity to, and understanding of, the diverse academic, social, economic, cultural, disability, and ethnic backgrounds of community college students.

Additionally, it is the practice of the Human Resources office and the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee to train every hiring committee on its commitment to equity and diversity and relevant Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws before all job applicant interviews.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.4.a.

The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.

Description

The District understands the importance of promoting diversity on campus and supporting its diverse personnel. The Human Resource office encourages all hiring committees to include diverse members and provides equal employment opportunity training. COS is also committed to supporting its diverse personnel once they are hired. Employees have many opportunities to participate in activities within the District’s diverse campus community. These include but are not limited to Multi-Cultural Fairs, Cinco de Mayo celebrations, and Club Rush (which includes diverse clubs). Additionally, an active Student Equity Committee promotes diversity on campus. An example of a Student Equity Committee sponsored event is “SafeZone Training,” which promotes the understanding and appreciation of all individuals regardless of sexual orientation.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

The Accreditation Survey identified that the vast majority of personnel believe that it is important that the District have these programs, and nearly the same majority agree that the District achieves this goal.

49.1) Through programs, practices, and services, an understanding of and concern for diversity is promoted. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
30.3% (69)	51.3% (117)	5.3% (12)	3.5% (8)	9.6% (22)

49.2) Through programs, practices, and services, an understanding of and concern for diversity is promoted. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
54.5% (120)	34.5% (76)	6.4% (14)	1.8% (4)	2.7% (6)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.4.b.

The institution regularly assesses its records in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.

Description

The diversity of District personnel is tracked and reported to various campus groups. The makeup of District personnel is compared to the surrounding communities. While the diversity of District personnel does not exactly match the demographics of the District students, the District is committed to improving in this area.

The below chart reflects the demographics of the District during the fall 2011 semester.

Demographics of College of Sequoias 2010 – 2011													
	Non-Reside nt Alien	His- panic	Asian	Black/ African American	Alaskan/ Native American	Pac. Islander	White	Two or More Races	Un- known		Female	Male	Un- know n
Community	-	55%	3%	3%	1%	1%	36%	-	1%		50%	50%	
COS		49%	4%	3%	1%		35%	3%	5%		54%	46%	
FT Faculty		16%	2%	4%	0%	1%	63%		14%		53%	47%	
PT Faculty		15%	1%	2%	1%	1%	70%		10%		51%	49%	
Classified (Part-time and Full- time)		28%	3%	1%	2%		55%		11%		67%	33%	
Administrat ors		20%					70%		10%		48%	52%	

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The institution remains committed to the promotion of diversity in its personnel

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.4.c.

The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.

Description

Safeguards ensure that all employees and students at COS are treated fairly. Within the AP 3430, BP 3430, COSTA, CSEA, and COSAFA Master Agreements, employees are given certain rights to guarantee their fair treatment. Bargaining unit employees are provided with representation throughout their careers at COS. [III.A.19 and III.A.20]

Administration is provided with guarantees of equitable treatment as contained in the Personnel Policies for Management Council. [III.A.6]

Students are provided with fair and equal treatment as outlined in the Student Handbook, which is maintained by Student Services. [III.A.22]

As required by law, every two years, management employees are provided two hours of training on "Preventing of Sexual Harassment." The most recent training took place in November of 2011.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The policies and procedures are in place to safeguard all employees and students.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.5.

The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.

STANDARD III.A.5.a.

The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.

Description

The faculty FLEX requirement of five (four-hour) days was reinstated in the fall of 2009 and is outlined within the COSTA Master Agreement [III.A.8]. There are two mandatory FLEX days, one at the beginning of each semester when faculty are required to attend a campus-wide meeting (whose content is determined by the administration with input from faculty) and a division meeting. The calendar is coordinated by the faculty enrichment coordinator, a

member of the Academic Senate Executive Committee. In addition to the eight mandatory FLEX hours, faculty must complete an additional 12 hours through any one or a combination of approaches. Faculty may attend any number of workshops offered on campus every year as evidenced by the Faculty Enrichment Committee (FEC) calendar published monthly. Additionally, with prior approval, faculty may facilitate workshops, participate in outside conferences, or complete individual projects. FEC has approved the processes related to establishing the FEC calendar and preapproval processes. FEC meets monthly to monitor FLEX processes. FEC conducts an annual faculty needs survey to determine the list of topics for FEC workshops throughout the year. The annual needs survey administered in the spring of 2012 contains an overall evaluation of the FLEX program.

Faculty continue to have access to funds for attending professional meetings. These funds are mandated by the COSTA Master Agreement and are administered by division chairs and Instructional Council [III.A.8]. The procedures and guidelines for approval are developed and enforced by the Instructional Council. Each faculty member is allowed two conferences and a minimum of \$200/year. The number of faculty that avail themselves of this opportunity varies from year to year. On average, approximately 45 faculty attend conferences annually.

Sabbatical leaves, outlined within Administrative Procedure 7341 [III.A.23] and the COSTA Master Agreement [III.A.8] have been suspended during the current fiscal crisis. The last sabbatical leaves were taken during 2008. In the past, faculty were eligible for sabbatical leaves after seven years of service and again once every seven years thereafter. Sabbatical leave requests were submitted to the FEC, which recommended proposals to the superintendent/president for approval. After completing sabbatical leaves, faculty were required to make presentations to the Board of Trustees.

Managers and confidential employees are provided with training at regular Management Council meetings. Recent trainings have included Preventing Sexual Harassment, Hiring the EEO way, SafeZone training, and National Incident Management System/ Standardized Emergency Management System (NIMS/SIMS) training. The District also pays for staff and faculty who take COS classes.

Classified employees are provided with training opportunities through the Professional Association of Classified Employees (PACE). Recent trainings have included workshops on the following topics: benefits, Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), self-defense for women, managing changes, wills, and advanced health directives.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Almost 70 percent of respondents agreed that there are opportunities for professional development for all employees at the District. Many comments acknowledged that opportunities (including reinstating sabbaticals) should improve when the budget situation gets better.

45.1) The institution provides appropriate professional development opportunities. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
18.6% (42)	48.7% (110)	22.1% (50)	3.1% (7)	7.5% (17)

45.2) The institution provides appropriate professional development opportunities. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
48.9% (108)	43.9% (97)	3.6% (8)	0.9% (2)	2.7% (6)

Plans for Improvement

When the budget situation improves, sabbaticals should become available again for full-time faculty.

STANDARD III.A.5.b.

With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

Description

Workshops are evaluated by the attendees. The results are reviewed by the Faculty Enrichment Committee, PACE, and members of the Executive Council; these groups are responsible for overseeing and developing the schedule of workshops and events. The committees strive to have representatives from every division. Changes are made as necessary.

Evaluation

Almost 70 percent of respondents felt the District provided appropriate professional development opportunities as noted above. There were concerns expressed that with budget cuts, training opportunities have decreased (especially for non-grant-funded programs). The workshops presented by FEC received good reviews from respondents.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A.6.

Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Description

Planning for human resources occurs in all areas during the process of Program Review. Program Review policies and procedures are outlined within Board Policy [III.A.24] and Administrative Procedure 3260 [III.A.25]. Areas evaluate their needs and justify requests

based on their findings. Requests for additional personnel are submitted to the appropriate committees for review and recommendation.

Pursuant to Administrative Procedure 3261, faculty positions are taken to Instructional Council for review [III.A.26]. Based on established and published criteria found within AP 3262 [III.A.27] and AP 3263 [III.A.28], Instructional Council ranks the faculty positions requested from divisions. Instructional Council's recommendations are forwarded to the superintendent/president who then presents his/her own rankings to College Council for feedback. The rankings from the superintendent/president may vary from those presented from Instructional Council. The College Council can either agree with the superintendent/president recommendations or advise otherwise. If changes are made within the rankings by the superintendent/president, a justification will be forwarded to Instructional Council. The number of positions finally approved is based on requirements for full-time/part-time faculty ratios as set by the state and by available funding.

Most classified positions and administrative positions identified in Program Review documents are presented to the College Council for review and recommendations. These recommendations are forwarded to the President's Cabinet for final approval. The number of the positions hired is determined by available funding. The process is described in AP 3261, 3262, and 3263 [III.A.26, III.A. 27, and III.A.28].

Unplanned changes in Human Resources occur due to resignations, grants, extended illnesses, etc. In these instances, the appropriate administrator for the area affected consults with the personnel from the affected program or service. Based on that consultation and the overall needs of the District, a recommendation regarding replacement of personnel is made to the President's Cabinet for their consideration.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The use of Program Review as a source for all personnel requests ensures that decisions are made in light of program needs and in the context of needs in other programs and services.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.A. Evidence List

III.A.1 Board Policy 7120

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%207120%20-%20Recruitment%20and%20Hiring.pdf>

III.A.2 Faculty Hiring Procedures

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/Faculty-Hiring-Procedures%2011-28-2000%20Revised%2002-27-09.pdf>

III.A.3 COSTA Master Agreement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/C%20O%20S%20T%20A.pdf>

III.A.4 Board Policy 7211

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%207211%20-%20Equivalency%20-%20Rev%20Jun%2008.pdf>

III.A.5. California School Employees Association (CSEA) Master Agreement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/C%20S%20E%20A.pdf>

III.A.6 Management Council Personnel Policies

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/Management%20Council.pdf>

III.A.7 Board Policy 2435

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202435%20-%20Evaluation%20of%20Superintendent-President.pdf>

III.A.8 College of the Sequoias Teacher Association (COSTA) Master Agreement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/C%20O%20S%20T%20A.pdf>

III.A.9 College of the Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association (COSAFA) Master Agreement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/C%20O%20S%20A%20F%20A.pdf>

III.A.10 Online Forms <http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Pages/Forms.aspx>

III.A.11 Board Policy 7210

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%207210%20-%20Academic%20Employees.pdf>

III.A.12 Administrative Policy 7215

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%207215-%20Academic%20Employees-%20Probationary%20Contract%20Faculty.pdf>

III.A.13 Board Policy 3050

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203050%20-%20Institutional%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>

III.A.14 General Catalog <http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>III.A.15 Board Policies <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/default.aspx>

III.A.16 Board Policy 3420

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203420%20-%20Equal%20Employment%20Opportunity.pdf>

III.A.17 Equal Employment Opportunity Plan

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/COS%20Equal%20Employment%20Opportunity%20Plan.pdf>

III.A.18 Board Policy 7145

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%207145-%20Personnel%20Files.pdf>

III.A.19 Administrative Policy 3430

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203430%20-%20Prohibition%20of%20Harassment%20and%20Discrimination%20and%20Harassment%20Complaint%20Procedures.pdf>

III.A.20 Board Policy 3430

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203430%20-%20Prohibition%20of%20Harrasment.pdf>

III.A.21 College of the Sequoias Master Agreements

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Pages/Master-Agreements.aspx>

III.A.22 Student Handbook <http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog.pdf>

III.A.23 Administrative Procedure 7341

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%207145-%20Personnel%20Files.pdf>

III.A.24 Board Policy 3260

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203260%20-%20Program%20Review.pdf>

III.A.25 Administrative Procedure 3260

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203261-%20Requests%20for%20Personnel%20Budget%20Augmentations%20Facilities%20and%20or%20Equipment.pdf>

III.A.26 Administrative Procedure 3261

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203261-%20Requests%20for%20Personnel%20Budget%20Augmentations%20Facilities%20and%20or%20Equipment.pdf>

III.A.27 Administrative Procedure 3262

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203262%20-%20Submitting%20and%20Ranking%20Tenure%20Track%20Instructional%20Faculty%20Vacancies.pdf>

III.A.28 Administrative Procedure 3263

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203263%20-%20Submitting%20and%20Ranking%20Tenure%20Track%20Student%20Services%20Faculty%20Positions,%20Both%20Instructional%20and%20Non%20Instructional.pdf>

STANDARD III.B
Physical Resources

Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

STANDARD III.B.1.

The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.

Description

The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support the quality of its programs and services, regardless of location. The size of the facilities is a major aspect of the physical resources of the District. COS currently has 631,534 gross square feet of buildings located in Visalia, Hanford, and Tulare. This represents an increase from 510,270 gross square feet in 2006. In Visalia, these increases include a new Science Center (John Muir), a new Allied Health Building (Hospital Rock), and a new Gymnasium (Porter Field House). In 2010, the new Hanford Educational Center started offering courses from five permanent buildings totaling 55,881 gross square feet. The District also offers classes at facilities that are under the management of other agencies. These include area high schools, churches, and hospitals [III.B.1].

Additionally, since 2006 the District has added roughly 1,200 parking stalls in Visalia and Hanford to accommodate the growth related to the added facilities.

The district police chief is the district safety officer and chair of the Facilities and Safety Committee. Unsafe conditions are reported to either area. Depending on the nature of the condition, the maintenance and operations department may be immediately dispatched, or the matter may be referred to the Facilities and Safety Committee for evaluation and recommendations.

The Facilities office reviews all Program Reviews produced on campus to identify maintenance or safety issues. If the identified problems are not major projects, they are assigned to appropriate personnel for completion. Major projects that require additional funding are handled by the above base budget request mechanism. This process is described in AP 3261.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard as it relates to sufficiency of physical resources. The size of the facilities is adequate to allow the functioning of all programs and services. One method to measure sufficiency is to use the space utilization formulas developed by the Chancellor's Office. The capacity/load ratio is the primary mechanism employed to determine whether a District's space is adequate or whether the District is eligible to request funds for buildings. Ratios over 100 percent are deemed underutilized and those under 100 percent could qualify

the District for additional square footage. Since 2006, COS has added 121,264 (23.8 percent) gross square feet to its inventory in response to past capacity/load ratios that indicated a need for additional square footage. This increase was achieved by using both state and local resources. However, with recent budget and enrollment reductions, capacity/load ratios have increased beyond 100 percent in lecture, office, and library space categories. 2010-11 capacity/load ratios are:

Space Type	Lecture	Lab	Office	Library	AV/TV
Cap/Load Ratio	132%	91%	119%	114%	47%

According to the table above, the District is currently underutilizing its lecture space by 32 percent, its office space by 19 percent, and its library space by 14 percent. However, laboratory space is under utilized by 9 percent and the audio video/television (AV/TV) space is utilized by 53 percent. The AV/TV category may no longer be a good indicator of space utilization, since category criteria have not been updated since the 1970's, prior to the technology boom. As budgets and student enrollments recover, the space utilization rates in lecture, office, and library space should rebalance themselves. However, the 91 percent laboratory capacity/load ratio suggests a need for additional laboratory space.

Since the facilities planning process uses future enrollment projections, the need for additional laboratory space was identified early, and a Final Project Proposal (FPP) to create a Basic Skills Center was created and submitted to the Chancellor's Office. That FPP was approved and is awaiting funding.

The Accreditation survey assessed the perception of the campus constituencies as to the sufficiency of the facilities to support their programs and services. Over 67 percent of those surveyed strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that facilities are sufficient, while more than 99 percent of respondents felt the topic was of great or moderate importance.

35.1) Facilities are sufficient for supporting our programs and services. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
14.4% (33)	53.3% (122)	21.8% (50)	7.0% (16)	3.5% (8)

35.2) Facilities are sufficient for supporting our programs and services. (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
61.4% (135)	37.7% (83)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.9% (2)

The Facilities and Safety Committee continues to review all safety complaints made by District stakeholders, and it oversees a safety budget to authorize safety repairs when needed. In 2010-11, the committee authorized \$21,794 in expenditures to mitigate safety issues or

remove hazardous materials [III.B.2]. These expenditures were in direct response to issues raised by District stakeholders.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.B.1.a.

The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.

Description

Programs and services within the District evaluate their physical resources during the program review cycle. The Program Review process identifies facility issues including sufficiency of space and maintenance requirements. Requests for maintenance and upgrades or remodels are submitted through the funding mechanism of the College Council, which determines the funding recommendations for these projects. The same process is used in evaluating equipment within each program and service. Whether these projects and requests are completed also depends on available funding. Even when projects or requests are highly recommended, they cannot be accomplished without sufficient funding. Equipment requests are divided into two categories, instructional equipment and non-instructional equipment. Instructional equipment funds received from the state are used to fund the prioritized list of equipment requests. While there has not been a set amount allocated to fund these requests, COS has augmented these funds using general fund budgets nearly every year.

Program Reviews provide the basis for the District's Strategic Plan, including the physical resources that are needed. Capital outlay projects, such as new buildings, are identified based on the Strategic Plan. However, the California Community College Capital Outlay system guidelines must validate the need for more facilities based on their formulas. The formulas for modernizing facilities take into account the age of the buildings and the changes in programs and instructional methods. In addition to Capacity/Load ratios, the State formulas currently include the ability of the District to supplement funding of new facilities with local bond monies.

After three failed attempts, COS passed three individual School Facilities Improvement District (SFID) bonds in 2006 and 2008. These bonds provided funding specifically for the areas identified within the SFID area. The Hanford Measure C bond passed in November 2006 and used the \$22,000,000 to construct 55,881 gross square feet of new facilities in Hanford [III.B.3].

Proper master planning of this site allowed the District to swiftly move from planning to construction, and the entire site was designed, bid, constructed, and equipped in time for fall 2010 classes. The District also partnered with the Hanford Joint Union High School District and invested \$400,000 of Measure C funds to upgrade the Sierra Pacific High School science labs to District-level science labs. COS has an agreement with the Hanford Joint Union High School District to use these facilities when they are not in use by the high school.

In November 2008, a \$28,000,000 bond for the Visalia campus (Measure I) was supported by the local voters and has been used to augment deficient state equipment budgets for the new gym and allied health projects as well as to provide funding for many smaller safety, scheduled maintenance, and technology improvement projects [\[III.B.4\]](#).

Medium-sized improvement projects included the addition of two surfaced parking lots, the renovation of the existing track and field, and the renovation of the two-story Kern building. COS was also the beneficiary of \$5,780,000 from the Chancellor's Office; the District used these funds to renovate the North Wing of the Sequoia building in 2011-12.

Tulare voters also passed an SFID bond, Measure J, in November 2008. Measure J supplied \$60,000,000 to assist in the development of the Tulare College Center [\[III.B.5\]](#). This money was also augmented by \$48,345,000 of State Capital Outlay money from the Chancellor's Office. Phases 1 and 3 will construct more than 160,000 gross square feet of academic and animal facilities; once the center is completed, the District will be able to relocate its small Visalia farm to Tulare [\[III.B.6\]](#).

The development of the future COS Basic Skills Center illustrates the process of identifying a need and working through the system to solve it. The need for additional physical resources for the basic skills areas was outlined in the Strategic Plan. After an Initial Project Proposal (IPP) was submitted to the Chancellor's Office and the state formulas concurred with the need, the District created a Final Project Proposal (FPP) for constructing a new building for basic skills courses and tutorial services. Faculty from the various basic skills programs involved were consulted throughout the planning process to ensure that the spaces planned fit the needs of their programs, while facilities staff and consultants ensured that the FPP fit the parameters of the Chancellor's Office rules. A 100 percent state-funded proposal was submitted and approved in 2010 and is awaiting funding from a statewide bond. This project is part of the larger Five Year Construction plan that is driven by the District's Strategic Plan and is submitted each year to the Chancellor's Office [\[III.B.7\]](#).

Evaluation

The District meets this standard as it relates to planning and building physical resources. The District has been successful in recent years in receiving state funding for additional buildings. The process of planning ensures the integration of the facilities with the Strategic Plan and the full participation of those who will be housed in those facilities. In past years, the District has struggled with the increasing costs of building and maintenance at a time when campus and state fiscal resources have been reduced. However, with the successful passage of Measure I, several million dollars have been spent on facility upgrades and scheduled maintenance projects [\[III.B.4\]](#). The District meets the standard as it relates to maintaining, upgrading, or replacing its physical resources; processes exist by which program and service personnel can request these improvements. As part of Program Review, departments can make above-base requests for instructional and non-instructional equipment as well as minor facility upgrades. The ability to accomplish program and service goals is affected by the above-base funding

available for each endeavor. However, the District has ensured, even through the recent lean times, the above-base funding category receives at least \$20,000 per year to fund the highest priority requests, though this has been suspended in 2011-12 due to fiscal constraints.

In the Accreditation survey, more than 73 percent of those surveyed strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that facilities are designed and maintained to be usable, while more than 97 percent of respondents felt the topic was of great or moderate importance.

34.1) Facilities are designed and maintained in such a way so that they can be utilized effectively in support of programs and services. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
15.4% (35)	58.3% (133)	14.5% (33)	7.0% (16)	4.8% (11)

34.2) Facilities are designed and maintained in such a way so that they can be utilized effectively in support of programs and services.

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
60.1% (131)	37.2% (81)	0.9% (2)	0.0% (0)	1.8% (4)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.B.1.b.

The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.

Description

As stated previously, Program Review offers programs and services the opportunity to identify facility issues with regard to access, safety, security, and a healthful environment at any site within the District boundaries. The Facilities and Safety Committee, a standing committee of the District's College Council, is responsible for examining and making recommendations on District-wide facility issues, including those covered in this standard. The Facilities and Safety Committee has representatives from all constituent groups and meets on a regular basis. The committee also receives a modest safety budget to authorize mitigation of any issues that it deems to be safety hazards. [\[III.B.8\]](#)

The DRC oversees the District's compliance with the ADA. All sites, facilities, and parking lots comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act codes that were in effect when they were constructed. For new and renovated buildings, the California Division of the State Architect (DSA) must approve access, fire/life safety, and structural compliance before the construction phase. The Facilities and Safety Committee reviews any ADA issues brought to their attention and will often fund mitigation efforts. For example, each year the Maintenance and Operations department identifies uneven concrete areas; once the committee concurs, the areas are ground down. Additionally, although door openers are not

required by ADA code, the District has installed automatic door openers on most of its buildings to further assist those in need, demonstrating that the intent of the District is to do what is right, not just what is required.

Safety is maintained at the Visalia campus, the Hanford campus, and the Visalia Farm by the District's Police Department. Employees of any District campus are instructed to contact District police or call 911 in the case of any emergency. District police then determine whether an additional response from outside agencies is warranted. Nearly every District building is now equipped with burglar alarms so that security breaches can be very quickly identified. These alarm systems are centrally monitored from the District police office and by an offsite monitoring agency when no police officers are on duty. The fire alarm system now sends email and text alarms to the appropriate District personnel when an alarm is activated. If there is an actual fire, the fire department will be notified by the responding employee.

The District's Emergency Response Plan was approved by the College Council in 2006. This plan is the road map for all emergency responses. An update of the plan is currently in progress. [\[III.B.9\]](#)

Periodically, the chemical hygiene officer surveys and identifies hazardous materials needing proper disposal and identifies the appropriate agencies to remove these materials. Funding comes from the Facilities and Safety Committee budget.

In order to address maintenance issues in a more timely manner, the facilities office has instituted a computerized, web-based work order system. Any member of the campus community can report any maintenance problems that affect their working and learning environment. Since the inception of this system, request processing time has decreased, work orders are being assigned more efficiently, and electronic tracking of work requests has become possible. Work orders are no longer lost in the mail, and the person requesting work receives an e-mail confirming the generation of the work order and another when the work is complete.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Existing processes and personnel ensure continued adherence to this standard. One key success component is that the Facilities and Safety Committee is allocated a budget to ensure that safety issues are mitigated. This has given the committee a sense of ownership and achievement because they collectively control the budget and the decisions on what the budget is used for. This has removed any in-fighting between departments on the definition of a "safety issue."

The District ensures that each and every new major construction or renovation project be submitted through the Division of the State Architect (DSA) and be reviewed for structural, fire/life safety, and access compliance. Even structures that some may interpret as being exempt, such as farm animal facilities and athletic dugouts, are submitted through DSA for safety review and approval.

More than 84 percent of those responding to the Accreditation survey strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that facilities are accessible to all, while more than 98 percent of felt the topic was of great or moderate importance.

- 36.1) Facilities are accessible to all, including students and others with disabilities.
(Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
32.2% (73)	52.4% (119)	5.3% (12)	1.8% (4)	8.4% (19)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.B.2.

To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

Description

The College Council, along with its standing committees, is responsible for providing the global perspective in planning for the Institution. Proposals for additional buildings, for re-modeling and upgrading existing buildings, and for the purchase of new and replacement equipment are all identified through the Program Review process or the President's Cabinet. Each program and service is responsible for evaluating its physical resources during Program Review. During this process, the programs are provided with appropriate data for evaluating their needs. For example, divisions are provided with Weekly Student Contact Hours (WSCH)/Load information for the last several years, and student service areas receive data on the number of students they have served. This data assists them in planning future needs. The Strategic Plan, which is derived from the Program Reviews, drives the Five Year Construction Plan, which is updated every year. [\[III.B.7\]](#)

The dean of facilities and facilities planning has conducted several meetings with the Facilities and Safety Committee, Management Council, and College Council, describing facilities plans including potential funding sources. During these meetings, committee members can give input and ask questions.

During the 2006 Accreditation process, the District's self-study noted that this standard was not met because the District had not yet begun to evaluate classroom utilization. Since that date, the Room Utilization Committee has been established to evaluate the efficiency of classroom utilization compared to Title 5 space standards. Over the course of three years, the committee has reviewed the capacity/load ratio (the Title 5 measure of space utilization) of each lecture classroom at the Visalia site. In areas where there were an inappropriate number of stations, adjustments were made.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Program Review mechanism provides a way for each area to evaluate its physical resources, including both facilities and equipment. The College Council and its institutional standing committees are charged with making recommendations to the President's Cabinet regarding physical resources. The President's Cabinet has placed a high value on this planning process, as shown by the continuation of funding for these processes even during dire budgetary times.

The superintendent/president chaired the Room Utilization Committee, and funding was made available to modify and enhance the equipment features within the classrooms for those rooms that were found to be deficient. During this process, "smart" equipment was installed in each lecture room. This not only enhanced the instructional methodologies of the faculty, but it allowed many items that took up floor space, such as overhead projectors, to be removed and replaced with student desks.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.B.2.a.

Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.

Description

The District ensures that long-range capital plans support the programs and services offered by the institution by using Program Review as the basis for planning, by offering additional opportunities for input by campus personnel, and by gathering input from the community. Program reviews provide the basis for the Strategic Plan which, in turn, drives the Facilities Five Year Construction Plan. Community input is gathered at meetings with local city councils and service organizations. Development plans for facilities in Tulare and Hanford are also identified in the Strategic Plan.

In 2010, members of the Foundation for California Community Colleges completed a formalized Facilities Condition Assessment, including a detailed assessment of all existing buildings within the District. Each facility was assigned a "Facilities Condition Index" (FCI) score [III.B.10]. Expressed as a percentage, an FCI is the cost of a facility's needed repairs divided by the cost to replace the facility. If a building has a high FCI, it means the building is in poor condition. These FCI scores are used as part of the decision regarding whether to renovate a facility or replace it. [III.B.11]

Total cost of ownership includes the cost of maintenance, the cost of personnel (certificated and classified) to utilize and maintain the space, and the cost of utilities to run it. For each new state-funded facility, an "Analysis of Costs" evaluation is created which identifies the budgetary needs to operate the facility. The additional FTES generated by the new spaces typically provides the funding for operating and maintaining the facility.

Facilities planning has included integrating new building plans into existing infrastructure in

order to reduce the overall cost of utilities. One example is that new buildings are connected to the campus central cooling plant, which was oversized to accommodate future growth. The central plant is nearly 30 percent more efficient than a smaller, localized cooling chiller would be if added directly onto the building. In addition, in the last three years an energy management system (EMS) has been installed in every building throughout the District. This state of the art system allows for individualized climate control in occupied rooms and can be accessed from any computer connected to the internet. The system is 20 percent more efficient than the previous energy management system. These savings are being put back into the maintenance energy conservation budget, allowing more energy conservation projects to be carried out [III.B.12]. Along with saving several hundred thousand dollars in energy costs over the past 10 years, the District has also achieved the main goal of the 2007 Chancellor's Office Board of Governors energy and sustainability policy. [III.B.13]

This goal is to reduce electrical energy usage by 15 percent compared with the base year; COS reduced its electrical energy usage by 21 percent in 2010-11 compared with the base year of 2001. The District's commitment to meeting energy and sustainability standards is further evidenced in that the COS dean of facilities was the co-author of the Board of Governors energy and sustainability policy. [III.B.14]

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The District has a planning process that ensures adequate input from the campus constituencies and the surrounding communities. The total cost of ownership is evaluated and taken into account during the planning process.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.B.2.b.

Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Description

The District's physical resource planning for major capital outlay is integrated with institutional planning practices and procedures. The District works diligently to ensure that the Five Year Construction Plan is aligned with the Chancellor's Office enrollment projections, the Strategic Plan, and the institution's Program Review process. As the primary facilities planning document, the Five Year Construction Plan identifies the scope, schedule, and budget of new construction and modernization projects. As new facilities are planned, designed, and constructed, the District's shared governance process ensures that departmental representatives are included as part of the design team.

Physical resource planning for minor capital projects is integrated into institutional planning by relying on departmental Program Reviews and by utilizing the established governance structures to recommend funding. The College Council and two of its standing committees,

the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee and the Facilities and Safety Committee, are the governance structures most involved with facilities planning.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Processes exist to integrate physical resource planning and institutional planning. The Program Review process ensures that all District programs have an equal opportunity to evaluate their physical resources and make necessary requests. The individual programs are in the best position to analyze their own resources and determine whether they are sufficient. The cycle of biennial Program Review updates and the six-year cycle of full Program Review reports is a systematic approach to planning, assessing, and improving facilities use. The limitations to this process are related to an ongoing lack of sufficient funding sources. In addition, the process relies on the thoroughness of each program or service in evaluating its own physical resources.

The District also meets this standard with regard to the effective utilization of instructional support spaces. This is best shown by the success of the District in the state capital outlay program. The Chancellor's Office uses a very stringent criterion for calculating the capacity/load ratios of the institution, which is the state's measure of effective space utilization. This ratio, along with a strong educational argument, forms the basis for state funding of Final Project Proposals (FPP's) [III.B.15]. COS has received approximately \$103,828,000 in state capital outlay funding in the past eight years by showing its effective utilization of existing space. In addition, almost all of this funding was given without the requirement of any local contributions. In fiscal year 2009-10, COS received more capital outlay funding than any other District in the state [III.B.16]. Additionally, the District has nearly \$48,746,000 of approved capital projects that are awaiting the success of a statewide bond for funding.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.B. Evidence List

III.B.1 Instructional Delivery Locations

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Instructional%20Locations.pdf>

III.B.2 Safety Budget

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Safety%20Budget.pdf>

III.B.3 Measure C Bond

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Hanford%20Campus%20Map%208-2010.pdf>

III.B.4 Measure I Bond

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Measure%20I%2012-31-11.pdf>

III.B.5 Measure J Bond

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Tulare%20Campus%20draft%206-13-11.pdf>

III.B.6 Measure J Report

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Measure%20J%20Report%2012-31-11.pdf>

III.B.7 Five Year Construction plan

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Sequoias%20CCD-Five%20Year%20Plan%207-26-11.pdf>

III.B.8 Facilities and Safety Committee Meeting minutes

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/2011%20Facilities%20Safety%20Committee%20MINUTES.pdf>

III.B.9 Emergency Response Handbook

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Facilities%20-%20Final%20Emergency%20Response%20Handbook.pdf>

III.B.10 Facilities Condition Index

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/FCI%20Executive%20Summary%2011-15-11.pdf>

III.B.11 Survey Detail Report

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/COS%20FCI%20Detail%20Report.pdf>

III.B.12 Southern California Edison Billing Records

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Electricity%20Bills%202-24-12.pdf>

III.B.13 Energy and Sustainability Policy

http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/BOG_Energy_and_Sustainability_Policy.pdf

III.B.14 Energy Usage Calculator

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Electricity%20Calculator.pdf>

III.B.15 College of the Sequoias State Capital Outlay funding history

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/Cap%20Outlay%20Project%20History.pdf>

III.B.16 Proposed Uses of State General Obligation Bonds

http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Standard%203/2009-10%20Cap_Outlay_Spending%20Plan.pdf

STANDARD III.C.***Technology Resources***

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

STANDARD III.C.1.

The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.

Description

The technology needs of Academic Services, Administrative Services, Student Services, and Interdisciplinary Services are identified during their Program Reviews. During that process, the members of each area determine what technology they require to meet their needs. These needs include computer software and hardware and multi-media equipment, as well as the campus infrastructure to support them. Identification of technology needs for learning and teaching occurs in the Program Reviews of the academic divisions. Identification of technology needs related to operational systems of the District occurs in Computer Services Program Review. Communication and research systems include commercial email systems, web pages focusing on internal or external audiences, and a locally created reporting system for research.

The dean of technology services is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of all information technology for the District. This position is responsible for overseeing the information technology used in Student Services, Administrative Services, Academic Services, and Interdisciplinary Services. Through the Program Review participatory process, needs are established and then prioritized, and equipment is purchased and implemented as outlined in Administrative Procedure 3261 (AP 3261) [\[III.C.1\]](#).

The Institutional Technology Committee, which is a standing committee of the College Council, is charged with making recommendations to the College Council on technology issues. This committee has developed hardware standards for both academic and non-academic technology equipment. These standards are revised annually to ensure there is continual, sustainable quality improvement in the technology available in the District.

College-wide communications are supported with an email system as well as with SharePoint document repositories. The District is currently in the process of implementing a complete document management system utilizing the SharePoint repositories to share committee agendas and minutes, department and division procedures, and general announcements. The communications system is augmented with notification systems for classrooms and texts/emails for selected individuals during emergencies.

The District has implemented the Banner Enterprise Resource Program (Banner) for support of student registration and academic history, student accounting, financial aid processing, the

course catalog, and scheduling, as well as all fiscal and human resource functions. A locally designed system, the College Extended Information System (CEIS), provides users with up-to-date information for researching data collected in the Banner system.

The commitment of the District to meet the technology needs of its departments can be seen in the process followed when implementing a new software product. The District explored online course management systems for several years, piloting various software solutions. Faculty were encouraged to use several products and give feedback as to their experience. Ultimately, it was the faculty who chose the Blackboard online course management system that would best support the needs for the distance education classroom. Computer Services, charged with the support of technology in the District, oversaw the project to ensure that it met District information security standards and was compatible with the District software (Banner).

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Each academic division and administrative department identifies technology that will best serve its needs. These needs are evaluated during the Program Review process for alignment with the District's mission and goals. The Institutional Technology Committee works with the dean of technology services to ensure that the technology needed is placed into service and supported with updates and maintenance. A consistent review of technology systems in the participatory governance model results in a continual, sustainable quality improvement for District technology resources.

Computer Standards 2011/12 Academic Year

Standard PC

- Hard drive - 320GB

- Memory - 4GB

- Processor - Core I5 (standard) Core I7 (Power user)

- Video - 512mb VRAM

- Monitor - 20" widescreen

- Preferred vendor - ACER

Standard Laptop

- Hard drive - 320 GB

- Memory - 4GB

- Processor - Core I3

- Video - onboard

- Monitor size - 15"

- Preferred vendor - ACER

Standard Apple

- Desktop iMac 20" 4GB RAM

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IIIC.1.a.

Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

Description

The Technology Services Department is responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of the District's information services. These services range from desktop software at one end of the spectrum to the integration of the Banner Enterprise Resource Planning (BERP) system at the other. The department also maintains the District's web presence. Other essential services that Technology Services provides to the District include integrated phone systems, inter- and intra-site network connectivity, and Internet connectivity. The Internet connection is provided through the Corporation for Educational Network Initiatives in California (CENIC). These services are essential in connecting staff to their peers as well as to the students they serve.

The technology staff is augmented when necessary with outside professional consultants. When updates and patches are required to the BERP, the application manager and the data base administrator consult with the vendor system experts to ensure that the upgrades and patches are applied correctly. The same is true for the current task of implementing a SharePoint document repository, where outside consultants have been contacted for specific deliverables to augment the knowledge in the department.

Just recently, Copy and Mail Services and Media Services have been consolidated into the Technology Services Department. Previously, these departments were overseen and managed by the Public Information office and the learning resources director. The consolidation of all of these services has streamlined the support and coordination between computing, media, and printing services.

The Technology Committee plays an important role in monitoring the District need for technology services and keeping the appropriate support mechanisms in place. The Technology Plan [III.C.2] continues to drive the overall vision and goals of the Technology Department, which include:

- Providing predictable support for all technology systems.
- Providing systematic technology development and implementation plans for District priorities.
- Providing consistent accessibility to technology resources.
- Maintaining the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronically stored information.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Utilizing a centralized support structure to maintain all technology supports the commitment to enhancing the operation and effectiveness of these services.

The coordination between the Strategic Plan and the Technology Plan drives the priorities and tasks of the technology support functions on a daily basis. Currently, this support is staffed with specialists in the following areas:

Specialty	Number of staff
Microcomputer Hardware	5
Application Systems Programming	3
Data Base Systems	1
Systems Administration	1.5
Telephone/Network Systems	1
Web Site Maintenance	1
Media Systems	2
Printing and Duplication	1

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.C.1.b.

The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

Description

Each functional department is responsible for providing training to faculty and staff in the Banner and SharePoint software systems. Faculty and staff are invited to attend other training sessions relevant to the use of Banner and SharePoint in their jobs. These sessions are sponsored by the District's Faculty Enrichment Committee (FEC) and the Professional Association of Classified Employees (PACE). [\[III.C.3\]](#)

Training in other software systems is not universally available; however, there are occasional FLEX workshops open to faculty and staff in basic uses of Office applications. The distance education coordinator is responsible for training faculty and staff to use Blackboard and offers regular workshops and individual consultations twelve months of the year. Faculty and staff can take courses at the District, and the tuition and related fees are waived. This training means that staff are able to update their skills in job related software such as Outlook and Excel.

Students are trained in information technology in many different ways. Students can take software classes through several divisions, including Agriculture, Business, Industry and Technology, and Mathematics and Engineering. The Learning Resources Center (LRC) also offers courses on information technology. The District has instituted Banner system training as part of the orientation curriculum all students receive when enrolling for the first time [\[III.C.4\]](#). The Student Helpdesk in the LRC supports student use of email, Blackboard, and basic Office applications. During the orientation process, students are trained in the use of the District's Student Information System (Banner) to register, add and drop courses, check on financial aid information, and review academic history. In addition, students get training

from their instructors in course-specific software. This training occurs in a wide variety of courses and divisions.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Training on the District's information system is ongoing and is incorporated into orientation of new employees. The District has standardized use of the Microsoft Office Suite of products for daily use in office automation. Through the site license of these products, online instruction is available to all District employees. In addition to this training, coordination with faculty and classified staff development has resulted in regularly scheduled training for other software instituted in the District.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.C.1.c.

The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.

Description

Technology resource planning occurs at different levels. Computer Services is responsible for planning as it relates to the District server farm as well as the institutional software package, Banner. The departments and programs use the Program Review process to plan their technology needs. Requests for technology resources are presented to the College Council, which is responsible for making recommendations to the President's Cabinet on funding priorities. The Institutional Technology Committee advises the College Council on issues related to technology resources.

The acquisition of technology resources for new, upgraded, or replacement technology is dependent upon available financial resources. Instructional equipment funds from the state are used to purchase computers and software for use in classrooms and laboratories and faculty offices. The purchase of technology resources for non-instructional uses is dependent upon the allocation of financial resources from the general fund of the District. In years when instructional equipment funds from the state were ample and the general fund healthy, technology resource purchases were adequate. However, these funds have been limited or nonexistent in the last several years, especially for non-instructional purchases.

The District began a computer refresh cycle in the summer of 2007, with the aim of replacing all computer systems every four years. Measure I, the local general obligation bond, was used to kick-start the process with a plan to slowly increase the General Fund budget for computer replacement [III.C.5]. The District was able to maintain this refresh rate until 2010, when due to devastating budget cuts from the state, this plan was altered to a six-year cycle.

When computers are purchased, the computers they replace are sometimes re-allocated to other areas that are in need of additional resources or whose resources are older and out of date compared to the "hand-me-down" computers. Some computers removed from service are stored against future need or are scavenged for usable parts by Computer Services.

The maintenance of existing technology resources is the responsibility of Computer Services. Maintenance can be requested by notifying the computer “Helpdesk” by phone or by email. The request generates a work order, which is assigned to a technician. Email confirmation of the work order is sent to the requesting party. When the maintenance has been completed, or the problem solved, another email is sent. Although there is a central contact for computer and technology issues, most issues are not solved immediately, but instead are assigned to a knowledgeable technician for repair. If the problem is beyond the expertise of the technician, the request is sent to the networking or programming staff

The District evaluates each Banner release and schedules appropriate time for testing and installation consistent with system usage, manpower availability, and the degree of need for the new features. This evaluation includes an assessment of how the new feature can be used to meet the needs of the various departments. The Banner Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from Academic Services, Administrative Services, and Student Services, discusses Banner features that can help make more effective use of the system. When other requests for new or modified software systems are received, the District follows similar evaluation, assessment, and prioritization procedures.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. There is systematic planning for technology procurement and a centralized mechanism for performing scheduled and non-scheduled maintenance. Respondents in the Accreditation survey agreed that technology resources are systematically maintained and upgraded, and that this maintenance is important. Over 74 percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that “Technology resources are maintained, upgraded and replaced systematically.” In that same survey, 98 percent believed that the importance of this maintenance was either great or moderate.

Technology resources are maintained, upgraded, and replaced systematically.

46.1 (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
21.1% (48)	53.3% (121)	16.3% (37)	4.8% (11)	4.4% (10)

Technology resources are maintained, upgraded, and replaced systematically.

46.2) (Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
66.5% (147)	31.7% (70)	0.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.4% (3)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.C.1.d.

The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.

Description

The distribution of technology is primarily determined by the Program Review process, because programs and services must request funding for the initial purchase of these resources. The requests include a justification for how the technology will be used and why it is needed. Such factors as the age (or existence) of current technology, the critical nature of the technology to the course goals (or service operation), and the number of students who will be served are considered in making recommendations. Administrative Procedure 3261 provides direction for technology requests during the Program Review process [III.C.1]. Each area vice president (Academic Services, Student Services and Administrative Services) ranks technology requests from their individual area. These three lists are forwarded to the Technology Committee for review. A single prioritized list of all technology requests is forwarded to the superintendent/president, who reviews and presents the prioritized list to the College Council. As mentioned previously, instructional equipment funds from the state vary from year to year. The availability of funds for non-instructional equipment is spotty at best. Categorical funds and grant monies have also been used to purchase technology resources for both instructional and non-instructional uses. When additional technology resources become available because of the purchase of new technology, these resources are distributed as appropriate by Computer Services.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Program Review process indicates what technology is needed in each of the programs and services. Procurement and maintenance of technology is based on these needs and the budgetary constraints imposed by the state. The Accreditation survey indicates that the technology is sufficiently supporting programs and services.

- 47.1) Technology resources are sufficient for supporting programs and services.
(Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
16.9% (38)	55.1% (124)	16.4% (37)	5.3% (12)	6.2% (14)

- 47.2) Technology resources are sufficient for supporting programs and services.
(Level of Importance)

Great Importance	Moderate Importance	Little Importance	No Importance	Don't Know
66.4% (144)	31.8% (69)	1.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.5% (1)

Academic areas have specialized computer labs that support particular instructional needs. General access student computer labs are also available for instruction and practice. Currently the District supports the following computer labs:

Academic Discipline	Number of Computer Labs	Computers available
Industry & Technology	10	171
Nursing & Allied Health	1	50
Math & Science	8	212
Business	6	166
Language Arts	4	123
Agriculture	6	47
Learning Resources & Tutorial	8	202
Hanford Educational Center	8	184
Fine Arts	4	44
Student Services	9	139

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.C.2.

Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Description

As mentioned previously (III.C.1.c), technology resource planning occurs at different levels. All technology requests that arise out of planning during the Program Review process are sent to College Council, which also receives information from the Institutional Technology Committee to help make its recommendations to the President's Cabinet. In this way, technology resource planning is integrated into institutional planning.

The Strategic Plan and its associated tactical plans are an integral part of the planning for technology resources. The Technology plan, reviewed and authored by the Technology Committee, is used as the vehicle to describe the tasks associated with the tactical plans involving the use of technology.

The assessment of the effective use of technology is a responsibility of programs and services during program review. Program review has as its focus the improvement of all programs and services, including any technology resources used. The Institutional Technology Committee, through its surveys, has also assessed some aspects of effective utilization.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Technology planning is a fundamental element of the overall planning process of the District. The academic, student, administrative, and interdisciplinary areas utilize the participatory process to determine needs, prioritize those needs, and finally to purchase and implement those technologies.

The Strategic Plan is used as the foundation for the Technology Plan. During the strategic planning process, areas that would be best addressed by the Technology Committee were identified and assigned to that committee or the dean of technology. These assignments were referred to as tactical plans and became the direction used in revising the Technology Plan as well as the work done in creating new Board Policies. Currently the policy for Web presence has been developed by the Technology Committee and has been endorsed by the College Council. Administrative Procedures for web development and maintenance are the current subject of the Technology Committee work.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

Standard III.C. Evidence List

III.C.1 Administrative Procedure 3261

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203261%20-%20Requests%20for%20Personnel,%20Budget%20Augmentations,%20Facilities%20and%20or%20Equipment.pdf>

III.C.2 The Technology Plan

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/committee/collegecouncil/tc/COS%20Technology%20Plan%20Working%20Documents/Technology%20Plan.doc>

III.C.3 Professional Association of Classified Employees (PACE)

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/PACE/Pages/default.aspx>

III.C.4 Orientation <http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/Orientation/Pages/default.aspx>III.C.5 Measure I Bond <http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Pages/Measure-I-Bond.aspx>

STANDARD III.D.***Financial Resources***

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability.

The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

STANDARD III.D.1.

The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.

Description

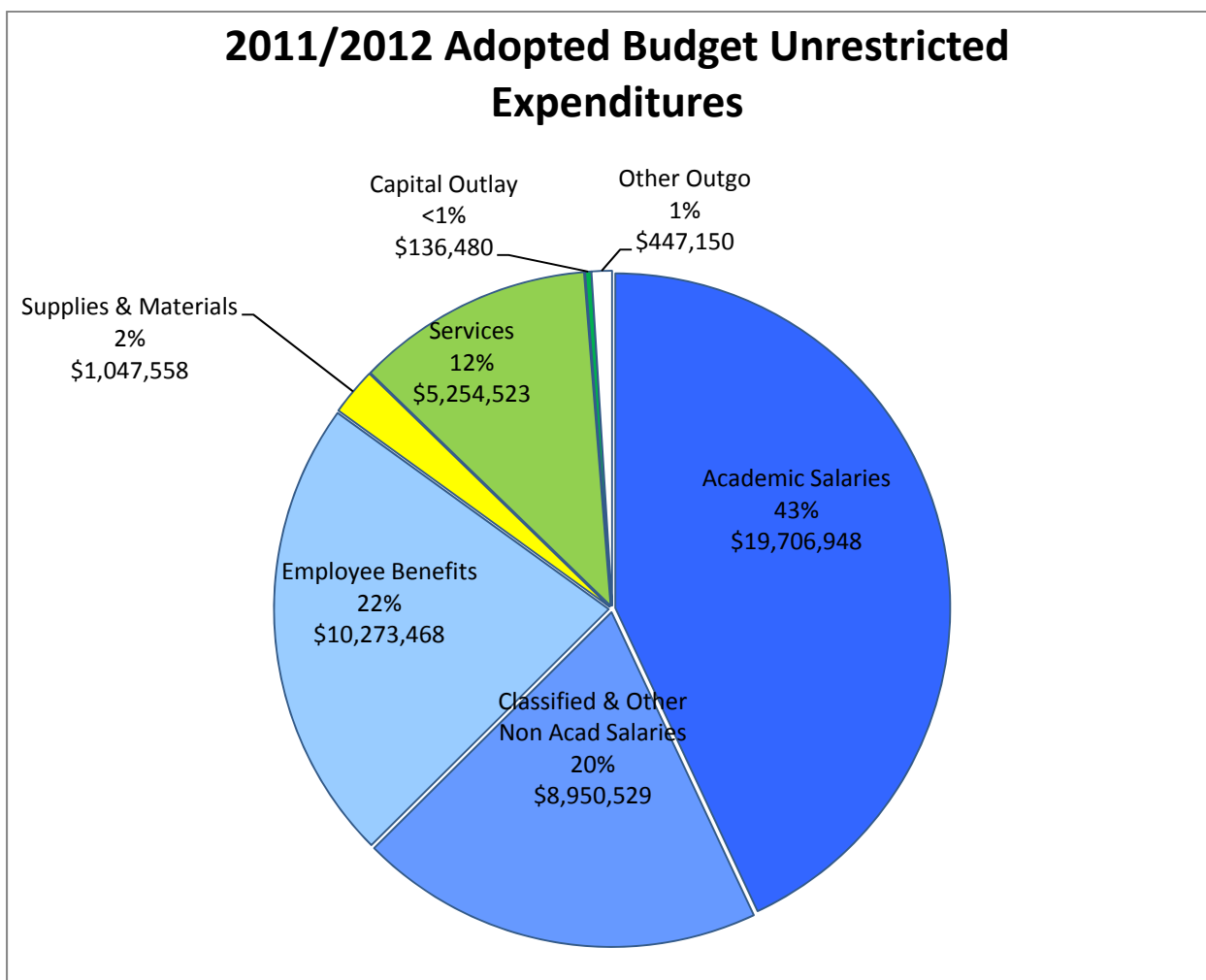
Financial planning occurs at several different levels of the District. Individual departments, programs, and divisions use the Program Review process as the focus of their financial planning.

During Program Review, these programs evaluate their needs in all areas, including financial needs. Funds for supplies, equipment, and personnel are requested and justified at this time. Program Review at these levels is based on the mission and goals of the District and the goals of the individual programs [III.D.1]. However, the funds available for these requests are determined by the vice president of administrative services and the President's Cabinet.

The shared governance structures of the College Council are also involved in financial planning. This group, with representatives from all campus constituencies, makes recommendations to the superintendent/president about funding allocations for above-base budget monies. The group has no involvement with the development of any other area of the budget.

Financial planning has two aspects, income and expenditures. The District's 2012 general fund unrestricted budget expenditures were \$45,816,656, consisting of 85 percent for personnel costs (salaries and benefits), 14 percent for supplies and services, and 1.2 percent for other areas, including discretionary spending.

The Preliminary Budget is developed by the vice president of administrative services and the President's Cabinet in May and is presented to the Board of Trustees in June. During this time, the Standing Budget Committee is kept informed on the status of the budget. This budget projects income and expenditures for the next fiscal year, including a projection of Full-time Equivalent Students (FTES) generated by the District along with other potential impacts on the budget, such as workload reductions, salary and benefits changes, and new hiring. The final budget goes to the Board in September for approval. The final budget and pertinent material used to develop the budget are published in the Budget Book [III.D.2].



The vice president of administrative services' office has been conducting budget reviews with the Standing Budget Committee three to four times per year.

The President's Cabinet reviews the recommendations from the vice president of administrative services and makes his/her own recommendations to the superintendent/president.

Financial planning also occurs at the level of the Board of Trustees, which receives budget reports at every meeting. The Board discusses financial issues at its monthly meetings, as well as the annual retreat.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The use of Program Review and shared governance structures for making budget and financial recommendations helps focus the budgeting process on the mission and goals of the District. However, the Accreditation survey identifies some concerns about funding allocations. Although most respondents rank this issue as being very important, many are not convinced or do not know that allocations are prioritized appropriately.

40.1) Funding allocations that focus on student learning are given appropriate priority.
(Level of Agreement)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Strongly Agree/Agree	41.4	66.7	36.4
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	30.8	20.8	21.2
Do Not Know	27.8	12.5	42.4

40.2) Funding allocations that focus on student learning are given appropriate priority.
(Level of Importance)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Great/Moderate Importance	96.0	100.0	84.7
Little/No Importance			1.5
Do Not Know	4.0		13.8

This concern could arise for several reasons. The District has experienced several years of reduced budgets due to the state fiscal crisis. The District is also in its second year of contract negotiations, with difficult decisions still needing to be negotiated with both the faculty association and the classified association.

In addition, budget procedures and limitations are frequently difficult to understand, which may lead to a general dissatisfaction with the budget and the budget process. The vice president of administrative services and the chief accounting officer have worked extensively with the Board and constituent groups to develop budget accountability reports that are more easily understood. [\[III.D.3\]](#)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.1.a.

Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.

Description

Program Review is a main source for institutional planning. It not only provides plans for individual programs, but it also significantly contributes to the Strategic Plan. The requests for funds for equipment, facilities, technology, and personnel that arise out of Program Review reports are therefore justified based on the plans developed in the individual programs.

These requests are then reviewed by Instructional Council and Student Services General Council. Depending on the type of request, the requests will be ranked either by the superintendent/president and area vice presidents or by other designated committees as illustrated in Administrative Procedure (AP) 3261, which delineates each level of approval throughout the process [III.D.4]. At each of these levels, the requests are discussed in light of institutional plans. The College Council also adds input and recommendations based on its institutional standing committees. Recommendations for expenditures are only for above-base budget items and personnel.

Institutional goals and objectives that do not fall within the scope of individual programs or divisions, but are over-arching goals or objectives, are identified at the Cabinet level where all constituency groups on campus are represented. Large initiatives such as the Basic Skills Initiative have campus-wide steering committees representing the various stakeholders.

In fiscal year 2007-08, the District created the Essential Learning Initiative (ELI) with the state basic skills funding. ELI is a subcommittee of College Council and Academic Senate and reports to those groups [III.D.5]. Basic skills is spread across several departments, but each basic skills department has standing committee members on ELI and the ELI budget committee. The District does not request funding through individual departments because ELI's funding through the state supports these basic skills projects. Success rates for basic skills are addressed in the individual departments' Program Reviews. In addition, ELI utilizes Program Review data for the District's annual action plan and budget report to the Chancellor's Office. This report is presented and approved by College Council and Senate. ELI was actively involved with developing the Strategic Plan, and the goals of these two entities are closely aligned.

The allocation of funds into different budget categories is accomplished by the vice president of administrative services and the President's Cabinet. The dean has instituted a Fiscal Oversight Group (FOG) which consists of the chief accounting officer and the coordinators of accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll, as well as other accounting staff. This group reviews the budget allocations in light of projected income and expenditures.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. While divisions and programs have the opportunity to discuss requests and recommendations in light of institutional plans, those whose requests are

not funded may express dissatisfaction about the fairness of the process. Some institutional goals cannot be funded because of the lack of money. Each year, \$20,000 is allocated for each of the above-base categories, though this funding has been suspended for 2011-12 due to fiscal constraints.

The Accreditation survey has identified a concern that funding does not always support institutional plans, with significant numbers of respondents indicating that funds are not appropriately prioritized or they don't know how funding is prioritized to support programs and services.

39.1) Funds are prioritized to help the District support its programs and services. (Level of Agreement)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Strongly Agree/Agree	41.7	76.0	41.6
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	34.8	24.0	27.7
Do Not Know	23.5		30.8

39.2) Funds are prioritized to help the District support its programs and services. (Level of Importance)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Great/Moderate Importance	95.3	100.0	92.3
Little/No Importance	0	0	0
Do Not Know	4.7	0	7.7

The majority of the budget consists of items that are structural and cannot be altered (or allocated differently); i.e., salaries, benefits, utilities, etc. This may make it difficult to show how institutional planning and financial planning are integrated. That being said, it is true that some planning efforts have not led to meaningful allocations of funding. The technology four year replacement plan is one example of this problem. When committees invest a great deal of effort in developing plans that are accepted but not implemented, or that are discontinued due to budget constraints, such endeavors are difficult to justify.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.1.b.

Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.

Description

The main source of unrestricted income is the number of FTES that the District generates every year. To a large extent, the District controls this factor. Other fluctuations in unrestricted resources can also come in the form of Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) and

workload adjustments. The state budget process controls these factors. The number of FTES produced by the District is a direct function of the scheduling of courses and the enrollment in those courses. Each year, Academic Services works with Administrative Services to develop a projection of FTES. The budget is based on meeting that FTES projection. If scheduling and enrollment are not sufficient to meet this goal, income to the District will be less than planned. Another key factor in the development of the budget is the projection of the cost of generating the FTES. The main factor is the number of FTES that are generated by adjunct instructors and overloads (in excess of 15 Lecture Hour Equivalent (LHE)) taught by full-time instructors. The salary expenditures are substantially less for these FTES.

As mentioned above [III.D.1], the vast majority of the expenditures are for personnel costs. The District can accurately plan for the salary portion of these expenditures because salaries are a function of negotiated contracts. The costs for benefits can be more difficult to predict, but the levels are also covered by the contracts. Costs for supplies and services are additional planned budget items; however, utilities costs have increased substantially in the last few years.

The College Council and its standing committees receive briefings from the vice president of administrative services several times a year on the budget process and the level of agreement between projected income and expenditures. This information allows them to make informed recommendations to the superintendent/president. Discussions of FTES projections and accomplishments also take place in Instructional Council, since the division chairs and academic deans under the parameters of the COSTA Master Agreement develop the class schedule [III.D.6].

The District has developed additional financial resources through partnerships with local agencies and through grants, both federal and state. Examples of federal awards are Title V Hispanic Serving Institute, PASEO, Achieving the Dream, and Upward Bound Math/Science.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The appropriate planning does occur and the information is disseminated to those whose responsibility it is to meet the projections or recommend expenditures.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.1.c.

When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

Description

The main long term financial liabilities are for retiree health benefits and for Certificates of Participation (COPs, loans). Based on an actuarial study in 2000, the Board decided to

contribute funds to a retiree health benefits account over a fifteen year period in order to make this fund self-sustaining. Funds held locally are available to the District for internal borrowing. In 2006-07, the District began making contributions to the California Community College League Retiree Joint Powers Agency (JPA) to fund the liability. Every two years, Total Compensation Systems Incorporated prepares actuarial studies for the District to determine the unfunded liability for retiree health benefits. As of September 2011, the District has made contributions to the JPA in the amount of \$3,733,169. The JPA is an irrevocable trust that receives earnings to meet future health care expenses. Currently, the District makes several COP payments annually. These include a Parking Lot COP, Hanford COP, and Student Center COP. Partial payment of the Student Center COP is being made by the Student Center Trust and Health Services. These COPs have allowed the District to make needed facility upgrades that were not eligible for state funds. Other long-term contracts include those for insurance and copy machines. All of these expenses are detailed and accounted for during the development of the annual budget.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. All long-term liabilities are included in the budget and taken into account during both short-term and long-term budget planning.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.1.d.

The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development, with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.

Description

A great deal of the budget process is dictated by the state, both in timing and process. The vice president of administrative services and the chief accounting officer attend the annual State Chancellor's Budget Workshop in order to receive pertinent budget information directly from the state. In conjunction with the state's guidelines, the District also has guidelines on budget preparation addressed in AP 6200 [III.D.7] and Board Policy (BP) 6200 [III.D.8].

To address the issue of constituents having appropriate opportunities to participate, the District contracted with an outside consultant in 2008-09 to assist the District with providing budget accountability reports. The consultant gave four recommendations: (a) general recommendations are intended to strengthen the overall integrity of the financial data and operational decision making, enhancing the fiscal stability of the District; (b) the goal of those recommendations is to generate more active participation by staff in managing the District's resources for the best results; (c) information needs to be direct, simply stated, and clear in its meaning; and (d) multiple sets of eyes should attend to the budget, leading to better understanding by the broader community and confidence that the budget is being created collegially and to the highest standards.

The consultant provided examples of 12 documents that were necessary to meet the recommendations and meet the desired outcome for the District's constituents. During the development stages of the recommended documents, fiscal staff met with several committee groups, the Board of Trustees budget committee, and the superintendent/president for input. The entire process took approximately two months to complete, and the District now has a working budget report that consists of 14 new items. These new budget accountability reports were shared and discussed with the President's Cabinet, College Council, the standing Budget Committee, the Board of Trustees Budget Committee, and the Board of Trustees annual retreat; the documents were also shared with the superintendent/president, who sent them via email to "Everyone at COS." The budget accountability reports are also presented at every Board of Trustees monthly meeting and the standing Budget Committee meeting. Beginning in 2009-10, the Budget Accountability reports were incorporated into the final budget book.

The budget process, as it relates to above-base budget funding allocations, includes all constituencies through Program Review. The process of developing the Preliminary Budget in May provides opportunities for discussion and input before the Final Budget is adopted by the Board in September. In addition, informational updates are also provided on the status of the budget (income and expenditures) several times a year. These groups, along with the other Standing Budget Committees, are also the groups charged with institutional planning. This ensures that those who make recommendations on planning and expenditures are also those who have received current and detailed budget information.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The budget processes are defined by the state and adhered to by the District. All constituent groups have the opportunity for input into the budget development process, and these are the same groups responsible for institutional planning.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.

To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.

Description

The District utilizes Banner software as its financial management system. Those individuals who have budget responsibilities, generally referred to as budget managers, are given access to the appropriate levels of this software. To ensure proper use of funds, spending from an account requires approval by at least one supervisor. Once the budget has been developed, the appropriate funds' balances are placed in Banner. All expenditures are processed by the Banner software. The budget managers can view their budgets as often as they wish to monitor expenditures. They can also print out budget reports for

dissemination to their areas. Budget reports are presented to the Board of Trustees at all regular Board meetings.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The use of Banner allows all budget managers to have real-time access to their accounts. This, in turn, allows them to plan for future expenditures. In addition, multiple levels of approval ensure the appropriate use of funds.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2. a.

Financial documents, including the budget and independent auditor reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

Description

The final budget adopted in September clearly states the expected income and expenditures for the year, including the assumptions that were used to develop the budget. This constitutes the budget book, which is distributed to key groups and made available to anyone who wishes to view it [III.D.9].

The District undergoes an annual external audit. The audit reviews all funds and processes in order to determine compliance with established accounting and reporting standards. The audit begins after the end of the fiscal year, at the end of June and is generally presented to the Board before the end of the calendar year.

Findings by the auditors fall into two categories, minor findings and major findings. Minor findings would include such things as a missing signature on a financial document. These findings are usually reported to the vice president of administrative services via the management letter; the vice president and the fiscal personnel then review the processes and make any necessary changes.

These minor findings are presented to the Board of Trustees and standing Budget Committee. Major findings include processes that do not conform to established accounting and reporting procedures. These findings are included in the audit report that is presented to the Board. The vice president of administrative services develops a remediation plan to address any major finding. This also is presented to the Board.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Accurate and comprehensive budget information is made available to campus constituents and the public in the budget book [III.D.2]. External audits are conducted annually, and the findings are reported to the Board. Audit findings are addressed in a timely manner. Over the past 6 years, there have been no major audit findings and only a few minor ones.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.b.

Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

Description

The budget book and the budget accountability reports are distributed to several groups including the College Council and the standing Budget Committee. In addition, anyone who requests a copy can receive one. The budget book is also presented to the Board during a regular board meeting, and the budget accountability reports are presented to the Board at every board meeting. The budget book [III.D.2], quarterly budget accountability reports [III.D.2], annual 311 [III.D.9], quarterly 311 [III.D.10], and the annual audit [III.D.11] are posted on the District website. Budget managers can access their accounts through the Banner software at any time in order to ascertain the status of their budgets. They can print reports and distribute those reports to the appropriate personnel within their areas. Budget managers are expected to distribute budget information to their personnel at least four times a year.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Budget Book is comprehensive and is distributed to representatives from all constituencies. The budget accountability reports are extensive, timely, and presented to representatives from all constituencies.

However, the Accreditation survey did identify that 37.4 percent of faculty, 31.8 percent of classified staff, and 28 percent of administrators were dissatisfied with the availability of budget information or did not know that it is available. Since this information is disseminated and available, the source of the dissatisfaction is unclear. It is possible that budget related communications from representatives on the College Council and the budget standing committees do not effectively reach constituents. Also, the District is currently in a protracted contract negotiations with the faculty and classified associations. Any or all of these factors could have contributed to the perception by some that financial information is not provided throughout the campus.

38.1) Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution (Level of Agreement)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Strongly Agree/Agree	38.2	68.0	34.9
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	37.4	28.0	31.8
Do Not Know	24.4	4.0	33.3

38.2) Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution. (Level of Importance)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Great/Moderate Importance	92.8	92.0	89.2
Little/No Importance	1.6	4.0	
Do Not Know	5.6	4.0	10.8

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.c.

The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

Description

Board Policy 6200 stipulates that the District have a reserve of six percent [III.D.8]. During the state fiscal crisis, the Board temporarily reduced the required reserve to five percent, with the understanding that once the state economy rebounds, the reserve will increase back to at least six percent. The current budget projection for 2011-12 has a 5.5 percent reserve at the end of this fiscal year. The budget reserve allows the District to meet unforeseen financial obligations.

The District maintains adequate cash flow to meets its financial obligations. However, this process is complicated by the state deferring more than \$8 million. During the last fiscal year, the District maintained cash flow by borrowing funds from the Municipal Lease from Valley Business Bank and from the Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN). These transfers were carried out two separate times to cover cash flow shortages caused by the state's deferrals. All loans were paid back during the following fiscal year. These loans to maintain cash flow are itemized in the budget book [III.D.2].

The District has contracted with the Tulare County School District Authority for property and liability insurance. The District also participated in the Tulare County Schools Insurance Group to purchase workers' compensation.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. There are processes and practices in place to limit liability and to ensure adequate cash flow. The state's financial crisis and the deferral of over \$8 million caused the District to twice act to mitigate cash flow difficulties. The District is maintaining a reserve above the "fiscally distressed" designation of three percent set by the Chancellor's Office.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.d.

The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

Description

Oversight of finances is the responsibility of the vice president of administrative services. The dean meets regularly with the Fiscal Oversight-Group (FOG) to review financial practices. Administrators are responsible for monitoring the budgets in their areas. For example, the associate dean of student services is responsible for overseeing the financial aid program. The COS Foundation Board and the director of the COS Foundation are responsible for oversight of the foundation finances. The dean of fiscal services is also responsible for overseeing institutional investments and assets.

The external audit reviews the practices and processes used by the District in management of financial aid and grants. It also reviews the management of the assets of the COS Foundation. The most recent audit did not find problems with any of these areas.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The findings of the external audit support this assertion. The Accreditation survey indicates overall agreement that the institution practices effective oversight of finances, though about one quarter of faculty and classified employees disagree and another quarter to third do not feel knowledgeable enough to express an opinion. Fiscal services continues to make all the relevant information available for the constituencies to become informed if they so choose.

37.1) The institution practices effective oversight of finances. (Level of Agreement)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Strongly Agree/Agree	40.6	80.0	45.5
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	24.8	20.0	28.7
Do Not Know	34.6	0.0	25.8

37.2) The institution practices effective oversight of finances. (Level of Importance)

	Faculty (FT&PT)	Administrators	Classified
Great/Moderate Importance	94.5	100.0	92.3
Little/No Importance	0	0	0
Do Not Know	5.5	0	7.7

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.e.

All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fundraising efforts, and grants, are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

Description

Specific expenditures for categorical funds, including grants, are overseen by the managers of those areas. There is no central manager to oversee all of these areas. General expenditures within these areas are reviewed by the dean of fiscal services or by the vice president in the relevant area. The external audit report does look at the District's compliance with established government requirements for state and federal programs, including grants and financial aid.

The COS Foundation raises funds, and a Foundation Governing Board oversees the foundation's activities and practices [III.D.12]. The foundation budget processes and accounts are reviewed during the external audit.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The external audit report found the District in compliance with all applicable rules and laws.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.f.

Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institutions.

Description

The District has a number of contracts with external entities. All contracts of this kind are overseen by the vice president of administrative services. These contracts range from leases, to service contracts (copier machines), to contracts with individuals (attorneys), to construction contracts. The vice president of administrative services utilizes the expertise of the Tulare County Counsel, as well as other attorneys, when reviewing potential College contracts to ensure they contain the appropriate provisions.

Board Policy 6100 delegates to the superintendent/president or his/her designee the authority to enter into external contracts [III.D.13]. In addition, this policy outlines guidelines and limitations for outside contracts. Board Policy 6340 outlines the approval process for external contracts [III.D.14].

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Board Policies are in place to govern the awarding of outside contracts. The review of contracts ensures that they contain the appropriate provisions specific to that contract.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.2.g.

The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.

Description

Financial processes are evaluated on a regular basis by several different entities. The standing Budget Committee reviews the budget development process. The FOG reviews budget management processes. The external audit evaluates the entire budget for compliance with various legal standards of budget management and reporting. And in fiscal year 2008-09, the District contracted with an outside consultant to recommend budget accountability reports. All of these evaluations lead to changes and improvements in the budget processes. Specific changes recommended by the outside consultant include 14 new budget accountability reports which include out-year budget planning and income and expenditure projections.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D.3.

The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Description

As stated previously, the vast majority of the budget expenditures are for personnel costs. Evaluation of effective utilization of these funds can be done when a position becomes vacant. By evaluating whether the position should be filled, or whether it should be left vacant, the District has the opportunity to make more effective use of its funds. This process is described in AP 3262 and 3263 [III.D.15, III.D.16]. Recommendations for new positions go through the Program Review process and are recommended by the College Council. Requests for replacement personnel may also go through this process.

Allocation of funds for above-base budget items identified during Program Review, such as equipment, are generally not evaluated for effectiveness once the decision has been made to spend the funds. It is difficult to measure and document effective utilization of funds on these items.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Program Review process and the review and recommendation processes of College Council and its Standing Budget Committees allow for the evaluation of effective utilization of financial resources. However, there is currently no method by which, over the long term, effectiveness is being evaluated. Notwithstanding the difficulty in defining what constitutes effective use of financial resources, evaluation is problematic at best because of the complexities of the budget processes as mandated by the state and federal governments and the structural nature of most budget expenditures.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD III.D Evidence List

III.D.1 College of the Sequoias Mission Statement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/MissionStatement/Pages/default.aspx>

III.D.2 Adopted Budget

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/Adopted-Budget.aspx>

III.D.3 Quarterly Budget Accountability Reports

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/Qtrly-Budget-Accountability-Reports.aspx>

III.D.4. Administrative Procedure 3261

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203261%20-%20Requests%20for%20Personnel,%20Budget%20Augmentations,%20Facilities%20and%20or%20Equipment.pdf>

III.D.5 Academic Senate <http://www.cos.edu/About/AcademicSenate/Pages/default.aspx>

III.D.6 COSTA master agreement

<http://www.cos.edu/About/HumanResources/Documents/C%20O%20S%20T%20A.pdf>

III.D.7 Administrative Procedure 6200

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%206200-%20Budget%20Preparation.pdf>

III.D.8 Board Policy 6200

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%206200%20-%20Budget%20Preparation.pdf>

III.D.9 311 Annual Financial and Budget Report

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/311-Financial-And-Budget-Report.aspx>

III.D.10 311 Quarterly Financial and Budget Report

<http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/311-Qtrly-Financial-and-Budget-Report.aspx>

III.D.11 Audit <http://www.cos.edu/About/FacultyStaffSupport/Fiscal/Pages/Audit.aspx>

III.D.12 College of the Sequoias Foundation

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Foundation/Pages/default.aspx>

III.D.13 Board Policy 6100

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%206100%20-%20Delegation%20of%20Authority.pdf>

III.D.14 Board Policy 6340

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%206340%20-%20Contracts.pdf>

III.D.15 Administrative Policy 3262

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203262%20-%20Selecting%20and%20Ranking%20Faculty.pdf>

III.D.16 Administrative Policy 3263

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203263%20-%20Submitting%20and%20ranking%20tenure%20track%20students%20services%20instructional%20and%20non%20instructional%20faculty%20vacancies.pdf>



Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.

STANDARD IV.A.

Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

STANDARD IV.A.1.

Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.

Description

Participatory governance at COS is demonstrated by active participation of campus constituents at all levels of the institution. Committee rosters show that administration, full-time and adjunct faculty, classified staff, and students are represented on campus committees.

The Board of Trustees, administration, faculty and staff of COS pursue a practice of open governance and participation that facilitates empowerment and involvement from students, faculty, classified staff, and administrators. There are many different venues for submitting ideas for improved practices, programs, and services; these venues include Academic Senate, College Council, Professional Association of Classified Employees (PACE), various campus wide committees, and the Associated Student Body (ASB). Support programs, such as Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) and Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA), have advisory committees that include administration, faculty, staff, and community members. The "committees" chart shows the organization of campus committees.

COS encourages an environment that supports institutional excellence in many ways. It begins with the superintendent/president, who updates the institution regularly. The past superintendent/president published "Weekly Reports," and the current interim superintendent/president publishes the "Giant News" monthly. These reports highlight faculty projects and commendations, along with informing the campus about other issues. Communication continues with regular updates for faculty and classified staff from

Academic Senate, College Council, and various committees. There are also structured campus-wide presentations—for example, the all-staff convocation at the beginning of each semester—as well as more casual gatherings such as the PACE/FEC end-of-the-year outdoor dinner.

The primary role of the PACE is to facilitate every classified employee's professional and personal growth. PACE also supports a campus-wide perspective that encourages classified involvement in improving practices, programs, and services that affect the institution. Although, attendance at PACE professional development activities has declined over the last few years.

Evaluation

Through an active participatory governance structure and other routes, the District meets this standard. In view of the decreasing participation in PACE professional development activities, the vice president of academic services has been working with the Management Council to increase participation of classified staff in these activities.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.A.2.

The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.

Description

Participatory governance is the way that the District encourages and facilitates faculty, staff, administration, and student participation in the decision-making process. Board of Trustees minutes reflect the adoption of the original participatory governance model, "Principles of Collegial Governance," on April 17, 1989. This model was reviewed in College Council in August 2010 [IV.A.1]. This adoption allowed for the development and continuance of the College Council and its institutional standing committees. The most recently revised participatory governance model was approved by College Council in September of 2008 [IV.A.2]. It describes the way campus wide constituency groups are represented and work together for the best interests of students and the institution. The College Council serves as a forum for discussing college-wide issues and providing recommendations to the superintendent/president regarding institutional planning and budget development. As the College Council Participatory Governance Model states, "The District superintendent/president will normally accept the recommendation of the College Council. If the College superintendent/president does not accept the recommendation from the College Council, the College superintendent/president will communicate the reasons. In all cases, a written record will reflect those reasons." The voting membership of the College Council includes administration, full-time and adjunct faculty, classified staff, and students. College Council committees also have membership from all constituency groups. Membership is shown in the committee rosters [IV.A.3].

Board Policy 2510: Participation in Local Decision-Making describes how the Academic Senate, superintendent/president, and Board of Trustees are to work collegially on “academic and professional matters.” This policy clearly states that the Board of Trustees and Academic Senate are to consult collegially [IV.A.4]. Administrative Procedure 2510 describes how this process is to occur [IV.A.5]. Minutes from Board of Trustees show that the Academic Senate president addresses the Board at Board meetings on Senate issues, demonstrating collegial interchange [IV.A.6].

Administration, faculty, staff, and students participate in decision-making at all levels. A student serves on the Board of Trustees (Board Policy 2105: Election of Student Member) [IV.A.7]. Election procedures are clearly laid out in Administrative Procedure 2105 [IV.A.8] and the ASB Constitution [IV.A.9], which describes the rights and responsibilities of the student member. Administration, faculty, staff, and student representatives also participate on most campus-wide committees, as shown in the committee membership rosters [IV.A.10].

Evaluation

Through the District’s written “Principles of Collegial Governance” participatory governance model as well as Board Policy 2510, the District meets this standard. In order to maintain sustainable continuous quality improvement, the District needs to continue efforts to encourage participation by all campus groups as well as continually maintaining a process of review and refinement.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.A.2.a.

Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.

Description

Academic Senate serves as the primary governance structure for faculty members on campus. As described above, Board Policy 2510 establishes collegial relationship between Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees demonstrated in the Board of Trustees minutes by the regular presentation by the Academic Senate president.

A voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget is provided to each group defined as a “program” by the District through the program review process. This process is the District’s way of determining budget changes for supply, facilities, faculty, non-instructional, or instructional needs. Every member of a program has the opportunity to participate in the Program Review process; thus everyone at the District has input on budget requests or changes. Details of how these processes work are shown in Administrative Procedure 3261, Administrative Procedure 3262, and Administrative Procedure 3263 [IV.A.22].

Management Council provides administrators and managers a forum for participation in COS participatory governance. The Management Council, composed of managers, directors, administrators, and confidential staff, meets monthly and is led by the superintendent/president. The council discusses matters pertaining to the management and function of the District.

Creation and implementation of the Strategic Plan is another route for faculty, staff, administration, and students to have a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget. The Strategic Plan—the District’s road map—was developed with significant input from faculty, staff, administration, students, and the community.

The Associated Student Body (ASB) provides a mechanism for student participation in institutional decisions. Student leaders and students interested in leadership and governance can enroll in IS 202AD: Students in Government & Leadership, a two-unit class, in which students review and discuss college issues. Also on Tuesdays, the ASB has an open meeting in the District Board Room. Public comments are taken during this meeting. Students also have a voice through membership on various campus wide committees and through the Strategic Plan; about 200 students participated in the development of this plan. A section of the course IS 202AD: Students in Government & Leadership is offered at the Hanford Educational Center, which began offering it in fall 2011.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Program Review process along with Academic Senate, College Council, Management Council, and ASB show that faculty, administration, staff, and students have a substantial and clearly defined role in institutional governance. The District must stay vigilant in maintaining continuous Program Review and other processes that encourage inclusion of all constituents in campus-wide decisions.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended.

STANDARD IV.A.2.b.

The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.

Description

Academic Senate meets twice a month, and its standing committees have separate meeting schedules. Discussion in Academic Senate is frequently focused on student learning programs and services. Standing reports are given by Curriculum Committee, Essential Learning Initiative, Honors Committee, Program Review Committee, Outcomes and Assessment Committee, Distance Education, and Student Equity Committee, and frequently these reports generate robust discussion. A specific example was the discussion about Achieving the Dream (ATD) results and plans for improving student success on March 24, 2010. The Curriculum Committee and the Outcomes and Assessment Committee (formerly called the Student Learning Outcomes committee) have the same chair, and the committees

work closely together. The chair of these committees is on the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate and is scheduled in the Academic Senate agenda to give a standing report.

The Curriculum Committee, a standing committee of the Academic Senate, meets monthly. Over the last few years, the campus implemented a software program, CurricUNET, to manage the structures necessary for the adoption of course outlines. CurricUNET allows any two Curriculum Committee members to request course outline discussion during the monthly meeting. This has allowed the Curriculum Committee meetings to shift from close examination of the specific wording or grammar in each course outline to robust discussion of the intent of course outlines and the role that campus curriculum has in the institution. Curriculum Committee membership includes administrators, classified staff, and full-time and adjunct faculty.

The Outcomes and Assessment Committee is a standing committee of the Curriculum Committee. In addition to working to provide a structure for faculty to record assessment design, results, feedback, and plans, the committee encourages the development of a campus culture of inquiry about how and what students learn. This culture of inquiry encourages faculty to examine what they teach students, what students learn, and how to improve these factors.

Evaluation

The College meets this standard, as shown through feedback from the Accreditation survey along with a strong Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, and Outcomes and Assessments Committee. Most survey respondents agreed that administrators and faculty make recommendations about student learning programs. Almost 79 percent of respondents answered “strongly agree” or “agree,” while only 5.5 percent answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”

- 59.1) Academic administrators and faculty, along with appropriate faculty structures such as academic senate, make recommendations about student learning programs and services. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
29.4% (64)	49.5% (108)	3.7% (8)	1.8% (4)	15.6% (34)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.A.3.

Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.

Description

The College Council, Academic Senate, Instructional Council, and ASB provide forums for discussion and communication through participatory governance. Students, staff, faculty, and administrators have the opportunity to participate in College governance and express their opinions throughout the District. By collaborating as members of these groups, they work towards institutional improvement. Administrative Procedure 2510 outlines how the Academic Senate and superintendent/president jointly present to the Board of Trustees [IV.A.5].

The College Council and its institutional standing committees meet twice monthly [IV.A.9]. The College Council standing committees which are Budget, Essential Learning Initiative (ELI), Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC), Technology, Student Equity, and Facilities/Safety, provide reports at College Council meetings. In addition, College Council also receives regular reports about Title V HSI grants and from President's Cabinet. The vice president of academic services gives a standing report on Accreditation at College Council.

The Academic Senate meets twice a month. Agendas are posted on the "Public Notification" display case in the breezeway of the administration (Sequoia) building at least 72 hours before a senate meeting, in full compliance with the Brown Act. Agendas are also posted on the campus website and emailed to all Academic Senate members and guests. Summaries of the meetings are emailed to all Academic Senate members and guests and the full Board of Trustees as well as being posted on the campus website. The Academic Senate president gives a monthly report at Board of Trustees meetings and participates in the yearly Board of Trustees retreat.

Instructional Council is chaired by the vice president of academic services. Voting members include division chairs and academic deans. In addition to the voting members, several academic directors and senate leaders attend regularly. Instructional Council meets twice a month with minutes being distributed to the members and any guests.

Members of ASB meet every Tuesday in an open meeting that all students are welcome to attend. During this meeting, public comments are taken. Agendas for the meeting are posted at least 72 hours in advance in the ASB bulletin board case (outside the Giant Forest building) and in the Student Center. Summaries of meetings are posted in the same place. ASB also tries to have agendas and summaries posted on the ASB part of the campus website; however, they have had difficulty finding a reliable student with the necessary computer skills to do these postings.

Administrators, full-time and adjunct faculty, staff, and students have COS email accounts. Email serves as the official way of disseminating information about campus-wide issues.

The development of the COS Strategic Plan demonstrates the way administration, faculty, staff, and students have worked together for the good of the District. In fall 2009, the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC), was charged with developing a five-year Strategic Plan for the District. In December 2009, 40 COS employees met to define

six areas of focus that would form the foundation for the Strategic Plan. In January 2010, the District's spring convocation was held in the gymnasium to facilitate input from faculty and staff. This format included formal and informal discussions as participants moved around the gymnasium to stations for each of the six focus areas. Over the next five months, the plan was augmented, changed, and enhanced based on input from college groups, units, and programs, as well as from community and student forums held during February through early April. The Strategic Plan [IV.A.12] was presented to the Board of Trustees at the November 8, 2010 Board of Trustees meeting [IV.A.13] as an information item and further discussed at the Board of Trustees' January Study Session. The result is the District's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, "In the Spirit of Student Success."

The Program Review process drives above-base budget resource allocation including personnel, facilities, technology, and instructional and non-instructional equipment. This resource allocation process is described in Administrative Policies 3261: Requests for Personnel, Budget Augmentations, Facilities and/or Equipment, 3262: Submitting and Ranking Tenure Track Instructional Faculty Vacancies, and 3263: Submitting and Ranking Tenure Track Student Services Faculty Positions, Both Instructional and Non-Instructional [IV.A.22].

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Most respondents to the Accreditation survey, which included administration, faculty, and confidential and classified staff, indicated that all groups worked together to benefit the District, with 73.6 percent answering "strongly agree" or "agree."

58.1) Administration, faculty, and classified staff work in a collaborative effort on behalf of institutional excellence. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
21.4% (48)	52.2% (117)	14.7% (33)	6.3% (14)	5.4% (12)

College Council, Academic Senate, Instructional Council, The Board of Trustees, and ASB work together for the good of the institution.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.A.4.

The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self-study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.

Description

The District advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. COS is committed to the Accreditation process. As required by the

Accrediting Commission, the District has submitted three interim reports since 2006—a progress report in 2007, a follow-up report in 2008, and the mid-term report in 2009. The District community was informed by the superintendent/president about the results of the fall 2006 Accreditation report and visit and the processes leading to the Commission reaffirming accreditation in January 2008 (Weekly Reports 9-21-06, 10-23-06, 2-8-07, 9-20-07, 2-6-08). A copy of the 2006 Report is available on the campus Internet system as well in the campus library where it is listed in the publically accessible catalog [IV.A.14]. All public documents related to Accreditation are available on the campus website.

The District responds to recommendations from state agencies, the Chancellor's Office, federal grant programs, and other accrediting associations. In the last three years, the District has filed four successful substantive changes with ACCJC, for the Professional Helicopter Pilot [IV.A.15] and Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) programs [IV.A.16], Hanford Educational Center [IV.A.17], and Distance Education [IV.A.18].

As a requirement for maintaining eligibility for financial aid funding (Title IV reporting requirements), the District participates in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the National Center for Education Statistics. In accordance with the IPEDS timetable, the District completes a series of interrelated surveys that allow for the collection of data in such areas as enrollment, program completions, faculty, staff, and finances. In addition, a Student Right To Know (SRTK) statement is published in the General Catalog [IV.A.19].

As required by the ACCJC, the “Student’s Right to Lodge a Complaint Outside the District” is available on the District website in the 2011-2013 Catalog Supplement [IV.A.20]. The processes involved in student grievances are explained in Administrative Procedure 5503: Student Rights and Grievances.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. As shown below, most respondents to the Accreditation survey indicated that the District showed honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies, with only 6.3 percent disagreeing. That 28.4 percent of respondents answered “Don’t Know” may indicate that administration, staff, and faculty are not familiar with how the District interacts with external agencies.

60.1) The District advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
27.5% (61)	37.8% (84)	1.8% (4)	4.5% (10)	28.4% (63)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.A.5.

The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

Description

Program Review provides a process for review of all programs at the District. The term “program” is widely interpreted and includes academic programs, student services, administrative services, and interdisciplinary programs. Program Review provides a structured approach for continual assessment, review, and improvement. The results of Program Review are widely communicated to the Board of Trustees and across the campus community. All Program Reviews are available on the intranet through the President’s Office and available to all campus groups [\[IV.A.21\]](#). In addition to regular review of programs through the Program Review process, the IPEC, through the Strategic Plan, provides another avenue for self-evaluation of campus structures and processes. The Strategic Plan is evaluated and updated annually and available on the campus website [\[IV.A.12\]](#).

Evaluation

The District meets this standard through the District’s ongoing Program Review process, as well as regular revisions of the Strategic Plan.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.A Evidence List

IV.A.1 College Council Agenda – August 24, 2010

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Shared%20Documents/Standard%20IA%20-%20Mission%20-%20Sources%20of%20Evidence/College%20Council%20Agenda%208-24-10.doc>

IV.A.2 College Council Participatory Governance Model

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Shared%20Documents/Standard%20IA%20-%20Mission%20-%20Sources%20of%20Evidence/College%20Council%20Participatory%20Governance%20Model%209-9-08.doc>

IV.A.3 College of the Sequoias Academic Senate Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

<http://www.cos.edu/About/AcademicSenate/layouts/sitemanager.aspx?Source=%2FAbout%2FACademicSenate%2FPages%2FACademic%2DSenate%2DCommittees%2Easpx&Filter=1&FilterOnly=1>

IV.A.4 Board Policy 2510

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202510%20-%20Participation%20in%20Local%20Decision%20Making.pdf>

IV.A.5 Administrative Procedure 2510

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%202510%20-%20Participation%20in%20Local%20Decision%20Making.pdf>

IV.A.6 Board of Trustees meeting minutes

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/AgendaPacketMinutes/Pages/2012.aspx>

IV.A.7 Board Policy 2105

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202105%20Election%20of%20Student%20Member.pdf>

IV.A.8 Administrative Procedure 2105

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%202105%20-%20Election%20of%20Student%20Member.pdf>

IV.A.9 College of the Sequoias Associated Students Constitution

http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Shared%20Documents/Standard%20IVB-Board%20and%20Administrative%20Organization-Sources%20of%20Evidence/ASB_Constitution.pdf

IV.A.10 Committee Membership Rosters

<http://www.cos.edu/About/AcademicSenate/Pages/Academic-Senate-Committees.aspx>

IV.A.11 College Council

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/committee/collegecouncil/Pages/default.aspx>

IV.A.12 The Strategic Plan

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Documents/COS%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf>

IV.A.13 Board of Trustees meeting minutes from November 8, 2010

http://old.cos.edu/ImageUpload_Links/Nov%202010%20Board%20Minutes.pdf

IV.A.14 Accreditation Self Study – September 2006

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/Accreditation%20Self%20Study%20Sept.%202006.pdf>

IV.A.15 Substantive Change Proposal – Professional Helicopter Pilot

[http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/COS_Aviation_Proposal_Complete1%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/COS_Aviation_Proposal_Complete1%20(2).pdf)

IV.A.16 Substantive Change Proposal – Physical Therapist Assistant

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/Substantial%20Change%20Proposal%20OPTA-Final10-07-11.pdf>

IV.A.17 Substantial Change Proposal – Hanford Educational Center

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/Hanford%20Center%20Sub%20Change-final%2007-11.pdf>

IV.A.18 Substantive Change Proposal – Distance Education

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Accreditation/Documents/DE%20Sub%20Change%20final-07-11.pdf>

IV.A.19 College of the Sequoias General Catalogs

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Pages/Catalog.aspx>

IV.A.20 2011 – 2013 Catalog Supplement

<http://www.cos.edu/Admissions/ClassSearch/Documents/2011-13%20COS%20Catalog%20Supplement.pdf>

IV.A.21 Program Review

<http://intranet.cos.edu/departments/presidentsoffice/research/ProgramReview/Pages/default.aspx>

IV.A.22 Administrative Procedure 3261, 3262, and 3263

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/Ch-3-General-Institution.aspx>

STANDARD IV.B.***Board and Administrative Organization***

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

STANDARD IV.B.1.

The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.

Description

The Board of Trustees is the policy making body of the District. It is entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing all College programs and assets and is responsible for ongoing fiscal stability. The vice president of academic services is responsible for student learning programs, while the vice president of administrative services has responsibility for fiscal matters (Administrative Policy 6100) [IV.B.1]. This authority has been delegated with the oversight of the superintendent/president. The Board of Trustees adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting of the superintendent/president (Board Policy 2431) [IV.B.2] and follows Board Policy 2435 [IV.B.3] for evaluating the superintendent/president.

Board Policy 2410 requires that all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures be reviewed on as an ongoing process so that Board Policies are reviewed at least every five years [IV.B.4]. The Board of Trustees, along with the superintendent/president, undertook a comprehensive review and revision of all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures during 2007 through February 2008. This process is described in the 9-20-07 Weekly Report; all revised Board Policies were given first and second readings at Board of Trustees meetings, along with a vote. Administrative Policy 2410, which was updated in spring 2012, describes how Administrative Policies are reviewed.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees has clear policies, which are reviewed regularly, to assure the quality, integrity and effectiveness of student learning programs and services as well as the financial stability of the institution.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.a.

The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.

Description

The Board of Trustees is an essential link with the community. Each member of the Board of Trustees has been elected by voters of a specific geographic ward and represents this geographic ward. The boundaries of these geographic wards were thoroughly discussed in the summer and fall of 2011 at Board of Trustees meetings and approved at the October 10, 2011 Board of Trustees Meeting [IV.B.5] Board of Trustees members are advocates for the constituents of their own districts as well as for the District. In addition, each year the Associated Student Body selects a Student Trustee. The Board of Trustees arrives at its decisions by collegial dialogue and parliamentary procedure. Once the Board of Trustees makes a decision, it acts as a whole; during Board meetings, the Board usually votes unanimously after its discussions.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees reflects the public interest because they are elected by the public they represent. The Accreditation survey of faculty, staff, and administration showed that a plurality felt that the Board of Trustees worked for the best interests of the public, with 43.5 percent of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing. However 29.6 percent of respondents selected “Don’t Know,” which may indicate that many people are unfamiliar with how the Board of Trustees operates or which sections of the public it represents.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
51.1) The Board of Trustees represents the best interests of the public.	10.9% (25)	32.6% (75)	14.8% (34)	12.2% (28)	29.6% (68)

It would be helpful if the administration, staff, and faculty were provided with information on good practices for a board and on the constituencies it represents.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.b.

The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.

Description

The current College mission statement was adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2007. The Board of Trustees establishes mission consistent policies to ensure quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs. The Board of Trustees does this through a variety of mechanisms including the standing reports it receives at Board of Trustees Meetings and through participatory governance practices throughout the District. For example, when it was clear that summer school would be cancelled for summer 2011, Auto technology students appealed to the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Trustees directed that administration find a solution for these students [IV.B.6]. A solution was found that allowed these students to complete their required coursework.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Accreditation survey indicated that in general, respondents agreed that the Mission Statement guides the Board in developing new programs, But 38.7 percent responded “Don’t Know.”

52.1 The Mission Statement guides the Board in development of new programs and services. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10.2% (23)	32.4% (73)	10.7% (24)	8.0% (18)	38.7% (87)

The high number of “Don’t Know” responses suggests that administration, staff, and faculty are not familiar with how the mission statement guides the Board.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.c.

The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

Description

The Board of Trustees reviews and approves educational programs and curriculum that have undergone the required approval processes, which includes input from the departments, divisions, the Curriculum Committee, and the Academic Senate. Regular reports and presentations at Board of Trustees meetings by Academic Senate, division chairs, and other faculty keep the Board informed on education matters. For example, the vice president of academic services presents new, modified, or deleted curriculum at Board meetings.

For general legal matters, the Board of Trustees works with their Joint Powers Authority (JPA), Keenan and Associates. The JPA may assign an attorney to assist the District if needed. When necessary, the Board of Trustees contracts with other attorneys. Tulare County Council is also used if needed.

The Board of Trustees closely monitors the financial resources of the District. At each meeting, the Board receives detailed reports on the District’s current financial state, progress

toward attainment of specified financial goals, and projections concerning the District's ongoing financial viability. The Board of Trustees is responsible for final payment of all bills. A preliminary budget is adopted in May after it has been developed by Administrative Services in consultation with the President's Cabinet. The preliminary budget is presented to the Institutional Budget Committee of the College Council for information and input if necessary. The final budget is adopted by the Board of Trustees in September following passage of the state's final budget. The Board of Trustees formed a budget sub-committee and worked with an outside consultant to better understand the budget issues and processes. On the recommendation of the consultant, fourteen documents titled "Budget Accountability Reports" are incorporated into the working budget report.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Through a variety of clear processes, the Board of Trustees is responsible for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.d.

The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.

Description

The five members of the COS Board of Trustees are elected by ward to four-year terms [IV.B.7]. The primary duties are to establish District policies, adopt the District's annual budget, approve expenditures, authorize employment, approve curriculum, and make contract decisions. Board of Trustees policies clearly delineate the Board's structure (BP 2010 [IV.B.8], BP 2210 [IV.B.9]), and duties and responsibilities (BP 2200) [IV.B.10]. Board of Trustees Policies along with Administrative Procedures specify operating procedures. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are available on the District webpage [IV.B.11].

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The District publishes specific policies about the Board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures on its website.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.e.

The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.

Description

The Board of Trustees acts in a manner consistent with its policies. The Board evaluates its policies and practices at its annual study session. During this session, the Board discusses

the results of its self-evaluation. The Board of Trustees undertook a comprehensive review of all Board Policies in 2007 through February 2008. This review involved many administrative members and included a re-organization and re-numbering of Board Policies. Board Policy 2410 requires that all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures be reviewed on a five-year cycle. The District subscribes to the Community College League of California's Policy and Procedure Service. This service assists in the development and maintenance of policies and procedures legally required and/or recommended by statute.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees' actions are consistent with its policies, which are reviewed regularly and revised as needed.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.f.

The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

Description

Board Policy 2740, Board Education, describes the Board of Trustees' commitment to ongoing development of the Board as well as to a trustee education program [IV.B.12]. The Board of Trustees has an annual study session, in January or February, during which reports from major areas and services of the District may be presented. This meeting provides a time for public comment and is in full compliance with the Brown Act. The session generally extends across two days, and the format allows for a wider array of presentations and broader discussions than a typical Board of Trustees meeting. Administrators, faculty, classified staff, and the public are invited to present and to participate in discussion sessions.

Board Policy 2010 describes the qualifications of a Board of Trustees member [IV.B.8]. Board of Trustees elections are staggered every two years with either two or three positions up for election. Trustees are elected for four-year terms.

Board Policy 2740 includes a commitment to a trustee education program that includes new trustee orientation. The District is a member of the Community College League of California (CCLC), which hosts a variety of board trustee workshops. Members are encouraged to attend any educational conferences they feel appropriate to their continuing education as a board member.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees encourages board development and has a new member orientation. The terms for board membership are staggered.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.g.

The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.

Description

Board Policy 2745, Board Self Evaluation, describes the process the Board of Trustees will use for self-evaluation [IV.B.13]. After selection of the method of self-evaluation during the Board of Trustees meeting (for example, the method was selected at the October 2011 meeting) [IV.B.5], all Board members are asked to complete evaluations and submit them to the Board president. A summary of the evaluation is discussed at a Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for that purpose. Often the evaluation summary is discussed at the annual study session [IV.B.14].

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees has a self-evaluation process that is clear, published, and carried out.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.h.

The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.

Description

The Board of Trustees maintains high standards of ethical conduct for its members. Board Policy 2715, Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, contains the Conflict of Interest code mandated by the state. Violations of this code are handled through legal jurisdiction of the state of California [IV.B.15].

Board Policy 2710, Conflict of Interest, Administrative Procedure 2710, Conflict of Interest clearly, describes what economic interests must be disclosed as well as when and how these interests are to be disclosed [IV.B.16 and IV.B.17]. It also describes prohibited gifts, loans, or other income sources. Board of Trustees members are very conscientious about conflict of interest when voting on action items and will recuse themselves if they feel there might be a conflict of interest. For example, at the March 2011 Board of Trustees meeting, Trustee Zumwalt removed himself from the room due to a potential conflict of interest on item #18 of the Consent Calendar. Trustees Zumwalt and Nunes removed themselves from the room for #19 of the Consent Calendar. [IV.B.18]

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees has a code of ethics which it follows.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.i.

The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.

Description

The Board of Trustees has been involved with accreditation through attendance at selected Accreditation team meetings and participating in the Accreditation survey. The Board of Trustees is updated monthly by the vice president of academic services about Accreditation progress during the Board and Executive Reports portion of the Board meeting.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The Board of Trustees is regularly informed about and involved in the Accreditation process.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.1.j.

The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively.

In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.

Description

The Board of Trustees has the responsibility for selecting the superintendent/president as described in Board Policy 2431 [IV.B.19]. Selection is fair, open, and complies with all regulations. In June 2011, Dr. Scroggins submitted his resignation as superintendent/president, and Brent Calvin was appointed as interim superintendent/president. In fall 2011, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with various campus organizations, decided at the October 26, 2011 Special Board Meeting [IV.B.20], that a consultant from outside the District would be helpful in guiding the selection of a new superintendent/president. The new superintendent/president, Stan A. Carrizosa was selected and started July 1, 2012.

The annual review of the superintendent/president is described in Board Policy 2435 [IV.B.21]. Board of Trustees minutes show that the superintendent/president was evaluated in June 2009 [IV.B.22]. Although the superintendent/president's contract was discussed in closed session in January 2010, which likely included a discussion of his performance, it

appears that there was no formal evaluation in 2010. The superintendent/president resigned to accept a position in another district in June 2011, and an interim superintendent/president was appointed.

The Board of Trustees gives the superintendent/president the executive responsibility for administering the policies it adopts and executing all Board decisions requiring administrative action according to Board Policy 2430. This BP and Administrative Procedure 2430 allow the superintendent/president to delegate powers and duties delegated by the Board of Trustees, but they specifically state that the superintendent/president is responsible to the Board for the execution of these powers and duties.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. In response to an Accreditation survey question on whether the Board delegates responsibility without interference, nearly half the respondents answered “Don’t Know.”

53.1) The Board delegates responsibility and authority to the Superintendent/President without Board interference. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10.5% (24)	21.5% (49)	11.0% (25)	8.8% (20)	48.2% (110)

Most respondents to the survey answered positively to the question, “The Board holds the Superintendent/President accountable for the operation of the District,” with 56 percent either agreeing or strongly agreeing. However, 35.9 percent answered “Don’t Know.” Given the lack of knowledge of how the Board holds the superintendent/president accountable, the District should work to improve this aspect of the Board’s function.

54.1 The Board holds the Superintendent/President accountable for the operation of the District. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
20.6% (46)	35.4% (79)	5.4% (12)	2.7% (6)	35.9% (80)

Plans for Improvement

The Board of Trustees will conduct a formal evaluation of the superintendent/president annually and will be sure that the process is noted in the minutes.

STANDARD IV.B.2.

The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.

STANDARD IV.A.2.a.

The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.

Description

The authority of the superintendent/president to revise the organizational structure as needed is described in Board Policy 3100 [IV.B.23] and Administrative Procedure 3100 [IV.B. 24]. The College of the Sequoias Community College District Organizational Structure chart describes the District structure. The superintendent/president delegates authority and responsibility for Academic Services to the vice president of academic services, who delegates to area deans and directors as described in the Academic Services Organizational Chart. The Board of Trustees approved the reorganization of Student Services at their June 13, 2011 meeting [IV.B. 25]. The Student Services Organizational Chart (shown on page 29 of Background Information for June 13, 2011 Board of Trustees meeting) [IV.B.26] shows the additional tasks to be overseen by the dean of student services, vice president of academic services, and the vice president of student services while the dean of counseling and matriculation position remains open due to budget constraints. Until an interim vice president of administrative services was hired in February 2012, Fiscal Services was restructured to utilize a dean of fiscal services rather than a vice president of administrative services. With the resignation of the director of research and planning, that office now reports to the vice president of academic services. Given the current budget situation, the District is making do with this organization. A new superintendent/president was selected in 2012 and started July 1, 2012.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. In the Accreditation survey, 70 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the superintendent/president provides effective leadership.

55.1 The Superintendent/President provides effective leadership. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
29.5% (67)	40.5% (92)	7.9% (18)	4.0% (9)	18.1% (41)

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.2.b.

The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following:

- *establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities;*
- *ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions;*
- *ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; and establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts.*

Description

The superintendent/president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities. COS 2010-2015 Strategic Plan [IV.B.27], “In the Spirit of Student Success,” provides six focus areas to guide program planning at the District.

1. Student Access
2. Students’ Success in Completing Their Education
3. Students’ Mastery of Basic Skills
4. Efficient and Effective College Practices
5. Students as Citizens of a Global Community
6. Economic Growth of Tulare and Kings Counties

Each of these six focus areas has specific goals with associated measurable outcomes. These goals form a road map for improvement of the teaching and learning environment at the District.

The superintendent/president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions. The superintendent/president has set the tone over the past six years for a culture of evidence. Achieving the Dream (ATD), Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) are all data driven. Data from these and other sources is compiled and distributed by the office of Research and Planning.

Through the collegial activity that led to the Strategic Plan, tactical plans were developed and assigned, leading to department and program plans, which are incorporated into Program Review. Program Review recommendations are sent to College Council, which uses them to make recommendations to the President’s Cabinet for its final decisions on resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The superintendent/president establishes a collegial environment which encourages planning through the Strategic Plan and decision making based on evidence.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B.2.c.

The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.

Description

The superintendent/president is responsible for overseeing the implementation of statutes, regulations, administrative procedures and Board of Trustees policies for the District. The superintendent/president also ensures that the actions of the District are consistent with its stated mission. These policies, statutes, and regulations provide context for discussions and decisions in President's Cabinet, Management Council, and College Council.

Board Policy 2430 holds the superintendent/president responsible for assuring the implementation of statutes, regulations, and Board of Trustees policies [IV.B.28]. The superintendent/president ensures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies. Based on data from ATD and CCSSE, the superintendent/president has encouraged the development of student success strategic priorities. These priorities are reflected in the Strategic Plan. The six student success strategic priorities are to

1. require a college success course for selected populations;
2. develop and implement mandatory orientation;
3. implement new student success practices such as eliminating late registration; enhanced use of Student Educational Plans (SEPs), and degree audits;
4. create an efficient progression through basic skills sequences;
5. refocus and expand counseling and advising systems; and,
6. enhance the teaching and learning culture.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The mission statement and Strategic Plan guide discussions and decisions. Board Policy 2430 holds the superintendent/president responsible for implementation of statutes and regulations.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended.

STANDARD IV.B.2.d.

The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.

Description

The superintendent/president works with the vice president of administrative services and fiscal staff to develop the budget and set the budget controls. Based on recommendations made during the 2000 and 2006 Accreditation processes, substantial progress has been made by College Council in streamlining the above base budget process and using data generated through Program Reviews. All of this was accomplished through participatory governance. Programs that do not receive a passing grade on Program Review are not eligible for above-base funding that year.

Each spring, the vice president of administrative services in consultation with the President's Cabinet prepares a tentative budget book for the subsequent year, which is reviewed by the College Council and the Standing Budget Committee. The superintendent/president receives budget recommendations from the College Council, which are then discussed in the President's Cabinet. The vice president of administrative services then produces a comprehensive budget book that is available to all College constituents online. Budget accountability reports are presented monthly at the Board of Trustees meeting and Standing Budget Committee meetings; these reports are available on the District's website.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. The superintendent/president is able to focus effectively on controlling budget and expenditures by making use of Program Review and the participatory governance structures that make recommendations to the President's Cabinet on budget and financial matters.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended.

STANDARD IV.B.2.e.

The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.

Description

The superintendent/president and his designees represent the District on various local boards and commissions. The Board of Trustees and the superintendent/president have had regular meetings with the City Councils from Visalia, Hanford, and Tulare, at which time issues of importance to these three communities are discussed. The Board of Trustees and the superintendent/president also have regular meetings with school boards, such as Hanford Joint Union High School District, Tulare Joint Union High School District and Visalia Unified School District [IV.B.29]. Near the beginning of all Board of Trustees meetings, there is a time for public comments.

The Superintendent/President speaks to about 15 service clubs throughout the District (primarily Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis) in addition to numerous business and trade organizations. He represents the District at Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meetings for Kings County, Tulare County, and the City of Visalia and is a regular participant at Visalia and Tulare Chamber of Commerce meetings. The superintendent/president also attends the Tulare County Office of Education monthly superintendents' meeting with K-12 superintendents from Tulare County. The superintendent/president has spoken to area school boards about the lack of math/English preparation.

The superintendent/president provides leadership to the COS Foundation as a member of the executive committee and routinely attends their monthly meetings to report on campus issues.

Evaluation

The District meets this standard. Respondents to the Accreditation survey indicated that the superintendent/resident communicated effectively with communities, with 67.1 percent answering "strongly agree" or "agree"

57.1) The Superintendent/President communicates effectively with the communities served by the District. (Level of Agreement)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
28.0% (63)	39.1% (88)	6.2% (14)	3.6% (8)	23.1% (52)

The Superintendent/President communicates effectively through many channels.

Plans for Improvement

No plans for improvement are recommended at this time.

STANDARD IV.B. Evidence List

IV.B.1 Administrative Policy 6100

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%206100-%20Delegation%20of%20Authority.pdf>

IV.B.2 Board Policy 2431

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202431%20-%20Superintendent-President%20Selection.pdf>

IV.B.3 Board Policy 2435

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202435%20-%20Evaluation%20of%20Superintendent-President.pdf>

IV.B.4. Board Policy 2410

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202410%20-%20Policy%20and%20Admin%20Procedures.pdf>

IV.B.5 Board of Trustees Meeting minutes – October 10, 2011

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Minutes/2011/Minutes%20Board%2010-10-11.pdf>

IV.B.6 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – December 13, 2010

http://old.cos.edu/ImageUpload_Links/Board%20Minutes%2012-13-10.pdf

IV.B.7 College of the Sequoias Board of Trustees

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Pages/default.aspx>

IV.B.8 Board Policy 2010

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202010%20-%20Board%20Membership.pdf>

IV.B.9 Board Policy 2210

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202210%20-%20Officers.pdf>

IV.B. 10 Board Policy 2200

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202200%20-%20Board%20Duties%20and%20Responsibilities.pdf>

IV.B.11 Board Policies and Administrative Procedures

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Pages/default.aspx>

IV.B.12 Board Policy 2740

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202740%20-%20Board%20Education.pdf>

IV.B.13 Board Policy 2745

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202745%20-%20Board%20Self-Evaluation.pdf>

IV.B.14 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – January 27 – 28, 2012

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Minutes/2012%20Minutes/Minutes%20Board%20Retreat%2001-27-28%202012%20-%20Signed.pdf>

IV.B.15 Board Policy 2715

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202715%20-%20Code%20of%20Ethics-Standards%20of%20Practice.pdf>

IV.B.16 Board Policy 2710

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202710%20-%20Conflict%20of%20Interest.pdf>

IV.B.17 Administrative Procedure 2710

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%202710-%20Conflict%20of%20Interest.pdf>

IV.B.18 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – March 14, 2011

http://old.cos.edu/ImageUpload_Links/Minutes%20Board%2003-14-11%20signed.pdf

IV.B.19 Board Policy 2431

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202431%20-%20Superintendent-President%20Selection.pdf>

IV.B.20 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – October 26, 2011

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Minutes/2011/Minutes%20Board%2010-26-11%20Signed.pdf>

IV.B.21 Board Policy 2435

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202435%20-%20Evaluation%20of%20Superintendent-President.pdf>

IV.B.22 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – June 8, 2009

http://old.cos.edu/ImageUpload_Links/09%20June%208%20Board%20Minutes%20-%20Final.pdf

IV.B.23 Board Policy 3100

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%203100%20-%20Organizational%20Structure.pdf>

IV.B.24 Administrative Procedure 3100

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/AP%203100%20-%20Organizational%20Structure.pdf>

IV.B.25 Board of Trustees meeting minutes – June 13, 2011

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Minutes/2011/Minutes%20Board%2006-13-11%20signed.pdf>

IV.B.26 Board of Trustees meeting agenda – June 13, 2011

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/Documents/Board%20Packets/2011%20Board%20Packet/Board%20Packet%2006-13-11%20Joint%20Hanford%20Mtg.pdf>

IV.B.27 The Strategic Plan

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Documents/COS%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf>

IV.B.28 Board Policy 2430

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/BoardPolicies/Documents/BP%202430%20-Delegation%20of%20Authority%20to%20Superintendent.pdf>

IV.B.29 Board of Trustees meeting minutes

<http://www.cos.edu/About/Board/AgendaPacketMinutes/Pages/2011.aspx>

