

EVALUATION REPORT

LOS ANGELES TRADE-TECHNICAL COLLEGE

400 W. Washington Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90015

A confidential report prepared for the
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited Los Angeles Trade-
Technical College from March 23-26, 2009

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SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Institution: Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Date of Visit: March 23-26, 2009

Team Chair: Peter Garcia
President, Los Medanos College

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College (LATTC) was established in 1925 in response to the needs of industry to provide post-secondary vocational training. The college sits on 25 acres near the central business district of downtown Los Angeles. Today, it is one of nine accredited and comprehensive community colleges of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD). LATTC received reaffirmation of its accreditation by ACCJC in 2003, following a comprehensive visit by an accreditation team and subsequent action by the Accrediting Commission. The college was directed to prepare and submit a focused midterm report to the Commission in 2006 addressing in particular five of eleven recommendations made by the 2003 visiting team.

A nine-member accreditation team, augmented with a team assistant, visited Los Angeles Trade-Technical College (LATTC) from March 23-26, 2009. The team, appointed by ACCJC, conducted a comprehensive accreditation evaluation of LATTC. During the three-day visit, the team met either individually or in groups with numerous college faculty, staff, students, administrators, and governing board members. In addition, team members held three well-attended sessions open to all members of the college community. The team reviewed hundreds of documents; toured a wide variety of instructional and student support facilities; visited classes and student services offices; examined on-line instruction, and observed the operation of instructional and student support programs throughout the institution; attended a number of campus meetings; met with the district chancellor, vice chancellors and other district administrators, and representatives of the Board of Trustees; in order to acquire a thorough understanding of LATTC's instructional programs, support services for students, organizational culture and climate, and student population.

The college's greatest strengths are its spirit of community and pride in the LATTC history and brand. The team was impressed by the enthusiasm and genuine excitement of students, faculty, staff, and administrators to be a part of the institution and to contribute to its success. College personnel were friendly, engaging, helpful, and cooperative in the many interactions team members experienced. Many students reported that they were satisfied with their college experience and felt that the institution was committed to their academic success and the accomplishment of their academic goals. Others noted the significant life and community changes effected by LATTC. Students shared the following: "LATTC has been serious about my education", "I am addicted to school. I come here even when I do not have class" and "Trade-Tech cares about people."

The purposes of the evaluation were to review evidence in support of assertions of the college, as detailed in the *Self-Study Report*, that the institution meets or exceeds the four standards of accreditation for a comprehensive community college, to determine how well the college had addressed the recommendations of the previous visiting team, to provide recommendations regarding quality assurance and institutional improvement so as to assist the college in strengthening its programs and services, and to enable the team to make a founded recommendation to the Accrediting Commission regarding the accredited status of LATTC.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair attended an all-day chair training session on December 11, 2008 and the chair and team members attended an all-day team training session on February 11, 2009 conducted by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (WASC, ACCJC). Team members reviewed the Commission's *Guide for Evaluating Institutions*, the *Accreditation Reference Handbook*, the *Team Evaluator Manual*, and the *Distance Learning Manual*, as well as the college's *Self-Study Report* and related evidentiary documents provided by LATTC. In addition, team members carefully reviewed the team report prepared by the 2003 accreditation team and the focused midterm report from 2006. The team chair and assistant conducted a pre-visit meeting with the college president Dr. Roland Chapdelaine, Accreditation Liaison Officer Dr. Lawrence Bradford and Self Study Co-chairs Linda Delzeit and Dr. Bradley Vaden on February 2, 2009 to outline the expectations of the visiting team and to assure that all appropriate arrangements and accommodations would be in order.

The team members were divided into four sub-groups according to the four accreditation standards. For coordinating purposes, one team member was designated Lead Member for each accreditation standard with the exception of standard two with two team members as co-leads. Two weeks prior to the visit, each team member prepared detailed reports of their review of the entire *Self-Study Report* and the particular accreditation standard to which they had been assigned. Team members also identified individuals with whom they desired to meet while on campus, and this information was conveyed to the college. On March 22, 2009, the Chair and the five standard leads met with members of the district administration and Board of Trustees. On March 23, 2009, the Team chair and standard leads met with District Office staff while two team members and the team assistant went to LATTC to review the evidence available during the ensuing team visit.

The *Self-Study Report* contained an Abstract referencing each of the accreditation standards and the college's responses to them; an Introduction outlining the organization of the *Self-Study Report*, the involvement of college constituencies in its development, and college and district organizational charts; Background and Demographics including a brief history and descriptive background of the institution and its curriculum, student, and community demographics; Responses to Previous Recommendations made by the evaluation team in 2003; and a detailed descriptive summary, self-evaluation, and planning agenda for each of the four accreditation standards.

While the self study report contained most of the elements required by the Commission, the organization and unavailability of cited evidence created some challenges for the visiting team in understanding the activities upon which the college was reporting and in determining the college's level of compliance with the standards. More specifically, the supporting documentation was not readily accessible in the team room or via the website and often difficult or impossible to obtain on campus. Some of the content assertions of the study were discovered to be inaccurate. During the visit, members of the college community made competing claims about the same phenomenon and the team was unable to confidently discern the truth. This did not serve the college well. The team found that the college did not appear uniformly well prepared for the site visitation. The team noted that a closer review of the format and content recommended by the ACCJC in the online Self Study Manual (August 2008) would benefit the college – specifically pages 11 through 16. Nevertheless, the team was able to complete its tasks, and noted the following commendations and recommendations to meet Commission standards.

Commendations

District Commendations

- The district has dedicated considerable resources to planning and applying sustainability practices throughout the district. (Std.IV.B.3.b)
- The district has focused attention on enhancing the skills and abilities of its employees by developing formal staff development programs and activities, e.g. Faculty Teaching and Learning Academy, Administrative Leadership Program, and Project MATCH. (Std.IV.B.3.b)
- Since 2001, the district has initiated three successful capital facilities bond measures totaling \$5.7B, enhancing the learning environment for students throughout the district service area. (Std.IV.B.3)

College Commendations

- The team commends the college for the high level of commitment, pride, and passion that the faculty, staff and administration have for their students, their success, and the community of LA Trade Tech. (Theme: Institutional Commitment)
- The team commends the college for REDI - Regional Economic Development Institute – specifically for being adept, market-focused, flexible and responsive. (Std. I.B.2)
- The team commends the college for a variety of innovative student and quality responsive programs, including the Freshman Experience, Faculty Inquiry Network, Umoja, and various “greening” initiatives. (Std. II.A, II.B, II.B.3.b, II.A.2.d)

- The team commends the college for the integration of Matriculation and Basic Skills. (Std. II.B.3)
- The team commends the college for the authentic integration of Gain/CalWORKS with instruction. (Std. II.B.3)
- The team commends the college for maintaining a highly effective special support services and academic advisement operation within its EOPS program. (Std. IIB.3)
- The team commends the college for the student success support centers: writing center, honors project, learning skills, tutoring, reading and math labs, and the supportive environment for students provided by the library staff. (Std. II.C)
- The team commends the college for securing \$20M in grant funding for the college and its programs. (Std. II.D.2.e)
- The team commends the college for its aggressive capital improvement campaign reflecting a program that will virtually re-make the entire campus and a vibrant land acquisition program that will add significantly to the campus footprint as well as for leveraging additional resources into its capital improvement program. (Std. III.B)
- The team commends the college for having taken steps to minimize the cost of facility operations through their commitment to green and sustainable building practices that should serve to buffer increasing utility costs and through the provision of better equipment for Maintenance and Operations staff (Std. III.B.1.a).
- The team commends the college for the well executed custodial and grounds services that result in a well-kept albeit aging physical plant. (Std. III.B.1.a)
- The team commends the college for incorporating the necessary fiber optic backbone installed between buildings and other technology infrastructure to support its vision for technology support services. (Std. III.C.1)
- The team commends the college for its focus on refreshing and upgrading technology. (Std. III.C.1.a)
- The team commends the college and the district for developing its OPEB pre-funding plan, which recently received special recognition from the Public Employee Post-Employment Benefits Commission established by Governor Schwarzenegger. (Std. III.D.1.c)

- The team commends the college for the high level of activity and integration of the Associated Student Organization in the core functions of the college. (Std. IV.A.3)

Recommendations

District Recommendations

District Recommendation 1

In order to improve, the post-retirement health liability should be carefully monitored for the potential fiscal ramifications that could arise over the next few years. (Std. III.D.1.c, IV.B.3.e)

District Recommendation 2

In order to improve, both the district and the college need to evaluate the consistent adherence in practice to the recently developed delineation of operational responsibilities and functions. (Std. IV.B.3.a)

District Recommendation 3

To meet standards, develop and implement methods for the evaluation of role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes for the college and the district. Widely communicate the results of the evaluation and use those results as the basis for improvement. (Std. IV.B.3.g)

College Recommendations

College Recommendation 1 – Theme: Institutional Integrity

In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the campus leadership (cross-constituent) create venues, forums, and a sense of permission to the practice of dialogue (not to be confused with debate, gossip, innuendo and argument) to strengthen and sustain the high quality programs, relationships and sense of pride that LATTC's students and community deserve. (Std. I.B.1, IV.A.1, 3)

College Recommendation 2 – Theme: Evaluation, Planning & Improvement

As cited in previous accreditation recommendations (1997 and 2003), the team recommends that in order to meet the standards, the college develop and fully implement an integrated planning process that clearly links program review, all aspects of human, physical, technology and fiscal planning, and resource allocation in a cohesive and inclusive manner. Development of the model should be based on prevailing best practices that include a clearly established and calendared cycle, use of current and relevant internal and external environmental data, analysis of data to inform planning, a committee review process, linkage to resource allocation, and evaluation of the implemented plan. (Std. I.B; I.B.1; I.B.2; I.B.3; I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.a, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.2, II.B.3.c, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C, II.C.2, III.D, III.D.3.)

College Recommendation 3 – Theme: Student Learning Outcomes

In order to meet the standards by 2012, the team recommends that the college establish a formal review and evaluation process at the department level that will allow faculty and/or staff to dialogue about SLOs and continuous improvement. The process should be documented for tracking and program improvement purposes. Student learning outcomes must be clearly, accurately, and consistently stated in print and electronic documents. The training of faculty and staff for a clearer understanding and relationship between program review and student learning outcomes is essential. (Std. IIA.2.e, IIA.2.f, IIA.6.c)

College Recommendation 4 – Leadership Stability

In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the college, working collaboratively with the district office, take steps to stem the turnover of senior management. The college requires a stable, experienced administrative team to meet many of its recommendations. Administrative turnover, especially within the ranks of senior management, is concerning. (Std.III.A.2, ER 5)

College Recommendation 5 – Communication

In order to exceed the standards the team recommends the college work to improve communication between the district and the college's constituent groups. District committees which have a direct relationship with campus committees, such as Student Success, should develop a seamless process of communication and reporting. (Std.IV.A.3)

College Recommendation 6 – Participatory Governance

To meet standards, the team recommends the college evaluate its participatory governance process(es) to ensure that all constituent groups actively participate in the college's planning and decision making. (Std. I.A.3, II.B.1, I.B.4, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.A.5)

**Response to Recommendations of the Previous Team
(based on the 1996 Standards) –
March 18-20, 2003**

Under the former standards, the college was given 11 general recommendations by the team that visited in March 2003 — seven specific to LATTC and four related to the district. In the 2009 team’s review of the college’s response to the previous team’s recommendations, it found that the college made efforts to address the previous recommendations in many instances; however, resolution is not complete for all of the recommendations

Former Standard I:

Recommendation 1.1 – *As recommended by the 1997 visiting team, the team recommends that the president ensure that a written overall strategic planning process be developed, widely distributed on campus and consistently implemented. The process should dovetail with the budget planning, future educational master plans, facilities plans, technology plans, program reviews and other college decisions. The published process for planning needs explicit communication and coordination, clear charges for the collegial consultation committees, and expected timelines to meet both long-range objectives and annual implementation processes. Furthermore, the college should implement the assessment of institutional outcome measures as benchmarks for progress in achieving college-wide goals. The strategic plans resulting from this process should clearly reference the college and district mission statements.*

Findings and evidence

When the Accreditation Team visited Los Angeles Trade Technical College in March 2003, their report observed that “while the educational master plans and the program discontinuance policy referred to in the report are yet to be completed, the college appears to be making progress towards instituting planning initiatives with the notable exception of an overall strategic plan...”. The College addressed this with a completed strategic plan in 2006 which resulted in the review and revision of the College’s mission statement as well as a newly defined set of priorities. The four priorities are Student Success, Growth, Community and Business Development, and Organizational Development. The strategic plan and its priorities dovetail with the strategic plan of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD).

However, the writing of the educational master plan is still in progress. The program discontinuance policy, now called the Program Viability process, had some forward momentum, but this has reportedly stalled. The process and timeline described in the self study has not occurred.

The college revised its Strategic Plan, which was approved by the Board in October of 2008. The college demonstrated a planning process, timelines, participation in retreats, and survey results.

Program reviews have not been placed into plans, nor were they connected to college goals. There is some concern as to whether the new program review process will be

ongoing and systematic as the self-study indicates that the college has experienced false starts and follow-through issues related to achieving this college goal in the past.

The college hired a consulting firm to develop a web site for Program Review. The consultant was unable to complete the project. While the college has set up a web-based process for program review and SLO development, the process is not complete. The college reports false starts, lack of follow-through, and lack of consistent leadership on the effort. The assessment component of the process has not been fully developed. There is no evidence of broad-based participation in the process, the total number of Program Reviews completed, or documentation of the process and procedures. It is unclear how faculty and staff are trained to use the system or how they are making data-driven decisions. While the self-study notes that the “Program Review has also become a major vehicle for planning and budgeting on a department/unit level,” there is no evidence of this process, no flowcharts, no evidence of integrative planning. While the website provides a venue to track results and information, there was no evidence of how this is used for assessment or accountability. The relationship between the faculty, Department Chair or unit manager and Dean in the process is vague. It is unclear where these plans go once they are submitted online. Accountability is also vague.

Conclusions

The team finds that the college has not fully met this recommendation, and it is addressed in the new College Recommendation 2.

Former Standard IV: Educational Programs

Recommendation 4.1 – *While the college identifies learning outcomes for its courses, the team recommends that it identify and uniformly make public in its catalog and/or other college publications expected student learning outcomes for its degree and certificate programs.*

Findings and evidence

Student Learning Outcomes at LATTC are not consistently noted in the catalog and the web site. LATTC currently publishes student learning outcomes for the majority of its programs and some of the certificates. These outcomes are printed in the college catalog under the description of a program’s overview and/or information about a certificate. They are also on the web with program review information. This web site is potentially a highly useful tool for all students and faculty. However, it needs to be more consistent in its information on student learning outcomes and program review information. It must be monitored for quality control and consistency, which it currently lacks.

Some outcomes appear to be difficult to assess. For example, some SLOs are introduced with, “students will be proficient in, or students will understand, or students will be adept at...”. Some outcomes do not employ Bloom’s taxonomy, a claim made in the self study, to codify anticipated student learning outcomes and therefore will be difficult to assess. When those programs begin an assessment phase, they will benefit from a more consistent use of specific actions that are measurable. More definition of proficiencies,

understanding, and “being adept at” will help instructional faculty assess their students’ success in fulfilling the intended outcomes. LATTC’s stated timeline for completion of this activity was the end of 2006.

There are College documents that suggest that the student learning outcome process is farther along in its progress than it appears to be to the accreditation team. The self study states that “all courses have one SLO created and three to four measurable objectives. Assessment of courses taught in the fall semester is now underway.” While this has been accomplished to a partial degree, on the LATTC web page under “Latest Course Updates” of 10 courses listed, four do not have SLOs and five do not appear to have goals/program reviews. Under “Newest Courses” none have SLOs listed. However, under “Latest Course SLOs” all have SLOs listed.

The 2003 accreditation report concluded, “While the college has established expected learning outcomes for students in their course outlines of record, it is apparent that the College does not uniformly publish expected learning outcomes for its programs. This does not meet the expectations of the standard and should be addressed by the College.” As evidenced above, this inconsistency appears to continue. The college’s student learning outcomes are not uniform in their publications or on web sites. Furthermore, while the catalog for 2008-09 notes SLOs for most courses but not for all degree and certificate programs, most of the General Education departments do not have program level outcomes or student level outcomes.

Conclusions

The team finds that the college has not fully met this recommendation, and it is addressed in the new College Recommendation 3.

Former Standard VII: Faculty and Staff

Recommendation 7.1 – The team recommends that the district and college provide for the evaluation of all full-time and part-time faculty, classified staff and administrators regularly, systematically, and in a timely way. Furthermore, the college should make a commitment to implementing the evaluation process for all employees to ensure that evaluations encourage improvement.

Findings and Evidence

The visiting team found that the college has made some progress on implementing a systematic evaluation process for all employees. Most of the improvements have occurred in the last year.

While the college established an online system for monitoring employee evaluations – Early Alert System (EASY) – in place in July of 2008, the team found that since the last accreditation visit slow progress has been made toward this recommendation. The portion for managers is in development, and the current phase of the EASY will not generate reports for: faculty, unclassified, or elected officials (board members,

commissioners). The district reports to have nine months worth of evaluations so far and has set up a monitoring system to track completion of reports and outstanding reports.

Annual evaluations for classified personnel, as required by the Staff Guild contract, are not occurring consistently. The new contract calls for classified staff to be reviewed annually on their birth month.

Adherence to policy, consistency and timeliness of faculty evaluations vary by area. The LACCD & AFT Agreement 2008-10011 notes the process in Article 19. The evaluation of administrators (Deans, Associate Deans, and Assistant Deans) appears to be occurring annually and the process and documentation has improved since 2002. A new Teamsters Local 911 contract was approved in 2008. The contract requires annual evaluations to occur on the birth month with linked salary step advancements.

Administrators and managers currently receive an alert when evaluations are due for classified staff (through EASY) and for administrators. It appears that proper systems are being put in place. Continued communication with the District to design the system and enforce timely usage is required. Additionally, evaluation of the process should occur.

Conclusions

The team finds that the college has partially met this recommendation.

Recommendation 7.2 – *The team recommends that the college follow the “selection procedures” for the appointments of “consulting instructors” and “instructors special assignment (ISA)”.*

Findings and Evidence

The team heard conflicting messages from credible stakeholders in the college about how consistently the procedures were being followed. The college adopted HR Guide R-121 on June 6, 2006. While the policy is in place, the team suggests that the college ensure proper implementation of the procedures, adherence to the interview committee procedure, proper documentation of the selection process, and that the criteria for the selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or area to be performed, as noted in Standard III.A.1.a.

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has been met.

Standard IX: Financial Resources

Recommendation 9.1 – *The team recommends that the college and district develop a strategic financial plan for responding to financial emergencies or unforeseen occurrences.*

Findings and Evidence

The previous recommendation required the college develop a strategic financial plan in order to be able to respond to financial emergencies. Evidence indicates the college and district have engaged in fiscal planning in the face of recent national and international economic volatility. In light of the high cost of service delivery associated with many of the LATTC programs and on-going budget uncertainty, continued budget forecasting and planning is critical.

Evidence gathered during the visit notes that the college maintains a reserve for financial emergencies which is targeted at 1% (\$831,000 as of March 2008) and that the college may call upon the district's contingency reserve in case of a major financial emergency. A report to the Fiscal Policy and Review Committee (FPRC) dated October 8, 2008, notes that a deficit of over \$2 million emerged in FY 2008. The report goes on to note an array of expense reductions designed to bring the budget back into balance; it also notes, however, that the college will seek debt forgiveness from the district. Similar to the stipend afforded small colleges in the district, LATTC was awarded a \$500,000 augmentation in an acknowledgement of the challenges present in supporting and maintaining its array of high cost programs. This award will be re-examined in two years. This action in concert with the expense reductions and growth targets noted above may allow LATTC to create structural balance and result in a level of financial resources that provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. A broader question begins to emerge which is if a deliberate choice has been made to offer an array of high cost CTE programs, does the funding allocation model reflect the level of resources necessary to allow LATTC to sustain itself. (Std.III.D.1.b)

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has been met.

Standard X: Leadership and Governance

Recommendation 10.1 – *The team recommends that the Board of Trustees ensure systematic development, implementation, and revision of its policies and procedures.*

Findings and Evidence

The district has made progress by developing Board Rule 2418.12 on February 27, 2007. The regulation specifies the process for review of Board Rules, Administrative Regulations and procedural guides. A schedule has been developed to ensure systematic development implementation and review.

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has been met.

Recommendation 10.2 – *The team recommends that the Board develop and publish in Board policies and by processes for assessing its own performance.*

Findings and Evidence

The Board of Trustees adopted a formal policy for orientation, procedure for orientation of student trustees, a statement of ethical conduct and sanctions for ethics violations. The board also has a process for self-evaluation and adopted Board Rule 2301.10 for establishing annual goals.

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has been met.

Recommendation 10.3 – *The team recommends that the Board and the chancellor ensure the hiring of a permanent president and a management staff reflective of the purpose, size, and complexity of the college; the hiring of managers who are qualified by training and experience to perform their duties; and that policies are in place and followed in the hiring of every management position.*

Findings and Evidence

The Board and Chancellor hired a permanent president with extensive experience relevant to the mission. In addition, the President has been able to hire administrators for many critical vacant positions. However, many of the new administrators have been with the college less than one year resulting in significant transition, and the turnover rate among senior administrators remains high.

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has been met. See current College Recommendation 4.

Recommendation 10.4 – *While the college has an inclusive and effective institutional governance process (PAC), the team recommends that a written policy on college support for faculty participation in governance be developed.*

Findings and Evidence

There is no reference or evidence that a written policy for faculty participation in governance has been developed (since prior recommendations). The only update was that in December 2007, the Academic Senate President invited State Academic Senators for a meeting between the administration and members of the Academic Senate and AFT (February 27, 2008).

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has not been met, and it is addressed in the new College Recommendations 1 and 6

Recommendation 10.5 – *The team recommends that the chancellor ensure that strategic plans are developed at the district and the college levels and that the college plans are linked to the district as stated in Goal #1 of the “Los Angeles Community College District Vision and Goals, February 2000.”*

Findings and Evidence

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College underwent a strategic planning process July 19-20, 2007. The process was to develop a strategic plan for LATTC addressing the goals of the College within the context of the District's plan. The document created was titled Strategic Plan For Los Angeles Trade-Technical College 2008-15.

An area of concern is that the recommendation was made first in 1997, again in March 2003, and in the Mid-term report dated April 25-26, 2006, yet the current plan was not developed until 2007. The current document is for the period 2008-2015 with much of the implementation beginning 2009 and thereafter. The plan has vague timelines and little specificity of assignment of responsibility and required resources.

Conclusions

The team finds that this recommendation has been met. See current College Recommendation 2.

Recommendation 10.6 – The team recommends that the district and college leadership delineate operational responsibilities and functions of the college and the district and establish a method and timeframe for regular evaluation of this delineation.

Findings and Evidence

Operational responsibilities and functions of the District and College are delineated in the Draft "Los Angeles Community College District/College Functional Map (October 2008). The recommendation 10.6 was made as a result of the March 2003 site visit. The District provided documentation indicating that the past eighteen (18) months were used to conduct workshops and increase dialogue resulting in greater clarity of college and district roles and responsibilities. Twenty (20) process maps were developed to delineate the reporting responsibilities between the colleges and the District Office and are available on the intranet. The document is marked as "draft" but depicts the steps for various District functions.

The functional map provides a framework for clarifying roles and responsibilities of the district office and where they interact with the colleges. In addition, the process maps depict steps within the district for selected processes.

Conclusions

Due to the recent development of the process maps, there was no evidence identified for the method and timeframe for regular evaluation of this delineation; therefore, the District is encouraged to continue their development, implementation, evaluation, and improvement. The team finds that this recommendation has not been fully met. See District Recommendations 2 and 3.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. AUTHORITY

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC receives Board of Governors' approval of its programs and services from the California Community College system and is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges. The college is authorized by the State of California to operate as an educational institution and to award undergraduate degrees.

2. MISSION

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC has a clearly defined educational mission which has been adopted by its college council as part of the May 2008 Strategic Plan, but not yet approved by the Governing Board. The mission is appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education and to the constituency the college seeks to serve. The older board approved version of the mission statement is included in the college catalog and the newer, unapproved version, is posted on the college website.

3. GOVERNING BOARD

The visiting team has confirmed that the governing board for LATTC is the Board of Trustees for the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD). It is responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of LATTC and for ensuring that the financial resources of the college are used to provide a sound educational program. Its seven-person membership is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill all board responsibilities. The governing board is an independent, policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in board activities and decisions. None of the board members have employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The board adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that relevant interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing board members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the college.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC has a chief executive officer appointed by the governing board who serves full-time in this capacity. The chief executive officer, in combination with the district chancellor, possesses the requisite authority to effectively administer board policies. Neither the chief executive officer nor the district chancellor serves as a member of the governing board. The team concluded during its visit that the high turnover rate of presidents during this last accreditation cycle contributed to a number of the college's challenges in meeting the standards.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC generally has sufficient staff, with appropriate credentials, preparation and experience, to provide the administrative services necessary to support its size, mission and purpose, but the team concluded during its visit that the high turnover rate of presidents and administrators during this last accreditation cycle contributed to the college's challenges in meeting the standards.

6. OPERATIONAL STATUS

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC is fully operational with students actively pursuing its degree, certificate and transfer programs.

7. DEGREES

The visiting team has confirmed that a substantial portion of LATTC's credit educational offerings are programs that lead to associate degrees or occupational certificates, and a significant proportion of its students are enrolled in them. LATTC's non-credit offerings consist of courses and programs to meet basic educational goals of adult learners, improving English skills, preparing for citizenship, learning new job skills, preparing for higher education, and becoming a productive, active participant in American society.

8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC's principal degree programs are congruent with its mission, are based on recognized higher education fields of study, are of sufficient content and length, are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the degrees offered, and culminate in identified student outcomes. Many of the college's degree programs are two academic years in length.

9. ACADEMIC CREDIT

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC awards academic credits based on Title V, Section 55002.5 of the California Administrative Code. Appropriate information about the awarding of academic credit is available in college publications. .

10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC defines and publishes the expected student learning and achievement outcomes for the associate degree, and it defines and publishes student learning outcomes for its student services. While not yet completed, the college is engaged in the process of establishing student learning outcomes at the program and course levels. It is also developing its program of regular and systematic assessment designed to demonstrate that students who

complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes.

11. GENERAL EDUCATION

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry, includes demonstrated competence in writing and computational skills and an introduction to major areas of knowledge.

12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC faculty and students operate under a Governing Board policy on academic freedom in which they are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic/educational community in general. LATTC maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist.

13. FACULTY

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC has a substantial core of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The core is sufficient in size and experience to support all of the institution's educational programs. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities exists which includes development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning.

14. STUDENT SERVICES

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC provides for all of its students appropriate student services that support student learning and development within the context of its institutional mission.

15. ADMISSIONS

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs.

16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC provides, through ownership or contractual agreement, specific long-term access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs in whatever format and wherever they are offered.

17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The visiting team has confirmed that LATTC documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability.

18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC annually undergoes and makes available to the public an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or an audit by an appropriate public agency, and that the Governing Board reviews audit findings, exceptions and letters to management and any recommendations made by the audit firm.

19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC has initiated on-going institutional planning and evaluation to ascertain how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning outcomes. It is encouraged to further develop those structures and processes and to document them. LATTC provides some evidence of planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. The institution does some assessment of progress toward achieving its stated goals. It should increase the degree to which it makes decisions regarding improvement through an on-going and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation with appropriate resource allocation, and subsequent re-evaluation.

20. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC publishes a catalog for its constituencies with precise, accurate, complete, and current information that includes all of the requisite elements.

21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The visiting team confirmed that LATTC provides assurance that it adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the Commission, describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.

STANDARD I INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

Standard I A – Mission

General Observations

The spirit of the mission can be found in the positive attitude of the College's faculty, staff, students, and administrators; however, the mission of Los Angeles Trade-Technical College (LATTC) is not posted throughout the campus as other ACCJC member institutions do. A new mission statement was created last year at a College Council retreat and is being prepared to go before the Board of Trustees for approval.

The institution demonstrates its historical and passionate commitment to its mission, its students, and their success; however, there is no evidence that the institution achieves the "sustainable, continuous quality improvement" stage of the ACCJC's rubrics regarding planning and program review. Rather, the College appears to have just moved from the "awareness" to the "development" levels on the rubric.

Findings and Evidence

The mission statement of Los Angeles Trade-Technical College meets the needs of the College's service area as outlined in the demographics section of the self study and through the offerings of courses that are primarily geared toward Career and Technical Education, basic skills, English as a Second Language, and general education courses, certificates, and degrees. The College also offers numerous support programs such as EOP&S (Equal Opportunity Programs and Services), GAIN/CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids), Bridge to College, and CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam) to College just to name a few programs. The College meets all of the components of Standard I.A but a more formal process regarding mission review does not exist at LATTC.

There is an opportunity for the College to move toward exceeding the standard by assessing the results of the College's Strategic Planning activities, ARCC (Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges), and College Effectiveness indicators in an effort to document support of the mission statement. (Std. I.A.1)

The mission statement in the catalog is Board approved. A more recent version of the mission statement was created last year and is projected to be Board approved in April. This recent mission statement has already been publicly disseminated via the College's website. (Std. I.A.2)

The Co-chairs of College Council indicated that the mission statement is reviewed on a yearly basis. LATTC should consider creating a regular schedule to assess the mission statement that also includes which consultative committees will be involved in the review process. This portion of the standard can be improved if the College produces, publishes, and widely disseminates a collegially written procedure regarding mission statement

revision, including a specified maximum timeframe during which the College must formally re-examine its mission statement. (Std. I.A.3)

Program reviews and institutional master plans (Educational, Technology, and Facilities) are in line with the intent of the College mission statement, but the mission statement is not directly referenced in any of those documents. The College should insist upon a direct linkage to the mission statement whenever program reviews or plans are being generated. (Std. I.A.4)

Conclusions

The College meets Standard I.A.

Standard I

B – Improving Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations

While the College meets Standard I.A, it does not meet Standard I.B. There is no formal linkage between the existing program review and planning processes of the College. There is also no indication of the use of the results of program reviews in the College's various master plans (Educational, Technology, and Facilities), and in the allocation of resources. An exception to this finding is the planning processes that are conducted through the REDI (Regional Economic Development Institute) programs. REDI programs follow a program review format that are placed into plans, funded, implemented, and evaluated. While the Institution has begun a planning process and assigned responsibility for implementing it, the process is not well defined or well communicated to all campus constituent groups.

Findings and Evidence

While program review, student learning outcomes, and planning efforts appear to have begun in earnest last fall, campus-wide implementation of these efforts when measured against the ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness suggest that the College is at the beginning stages of the Development level for Program Review, Planning, and Student Learning Outcomes. (Std. I.B)

The College has not completed full cycles of all program reviews for all academic, academic support, and non academic areas according to established timelines. The College began implementing program review processes for academic, academic support, and non academic areas at the beginning of the 2008-09 academic year. This program review process is completely online, and there is no evidence that any areas have completed their initial program review cycles (i.e. information collection; stating recommendations for improvement; linkage to plans; implementation and resource allocation; and re-evaluation).

Efforts have been made within the past year to jump start the dialogue through the merging of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee with the Budget Development Committee to form the Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC). Recommendations

from PBC flow up through College Council for discussion and review and on to the President's Cabinet for a decision. The PBC is less than one year old. There is evidence that some recent activities reported in PBC and College Council show the use of data to drive the creation of goals, but without the creation of plans.

Resource allocation is mentioned but without any specific information to guide constituents. College personnel have indicated that it is too soon to assess the effectiveness of program review efforts. College personnel also indicate that planning and program reviews are distinct, unaligned processes at the College. College personnel could not produce documentation, such as a flow chart or graphic, to indicate the flow of information into, through, and out of the College's program review process and into other planning and shared governance structures at the College. Staff also seem to lack an understanding of how continuous improvement processes work and how the processes positively impact student learning and institutional processes. (Std. I.B.1)

The College has followed the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) lead by using the goals as outlined by the System Office's Strategic Plan. Locally generated goals were not identified. References to the strategic plan goals were not found in College planning documents or program reviews. Program goals were found in program reviews but the goals did not appear to be linked to institutional efforts and many were not written in measurable terms. Discussion of institutional attainment of plan goals or past evaluations of program review goals was not found in PBC or College Council minutes. (Std. I.B.2)

There is no evidence that formal, open, and collegial dialogue occurs to ensure that all program review recommendations support the mission and goals of the institution before the recommendations are allocated resources and are added to the formal planning processes of the institution.

Assessment of progress made toward institutional goals to improve the College was not provided. The College has recently begun a new process of program review based upon qualitative data that is linked to resource allocation. But the process does not appear to be clearly defined and proof of the cyclical process flow was not presented. Implementation and re-evaluation were not evident as this is the first cycle for the program review process. Additionally, the Self Study indicates that "the College's strategic plan is brand new and faces the difficulty of seeing its implementation and review during its first year." (p. 58) (Std. I.B.3)

There is evidence of a preliminary investigative dialogue at the institution about what data or process should be used for program review. In fact, it was reported that a former, completely paper-based, academic program review process has been replaced by a completely online system. No examples of completed, past, paper-based academic program reviews were found, and it is assumed that these were completed several years ago as the College has been working on an online program review process for the past three years. The College recognizes that the online program review process needs to incorporate institutional research in the process. In fact, efforts have been made to link

the College's student information system data to the online program review process. Despite these linkages and the initial programs that have begun the online program review process, the College has not yet assessed its plans or program reviews as both processes are too new, having been created during the 2008-09 academic year. There are plans to link the online program review process to the district's electronic staffing and budget systems once they have been created. Input on the Technology Plan appears to have been somewhat broad-based as it has received input from the Technology Committee and College Council. The College is still in the process of taking ownership of its planning processes and is currently re-working the consultant-written plans in order for the College constituent groups to buy into and truly own them. Ideas contained in online program reviews have begun to receive input from committees – Budget Subcommittee, PBC, and College Council. Resources are reportedly attached to PBC and College Council endorsed plans, but evidence of actually funded program reviews was not provided. Improvements to institutional effectiveness could not be assessed. (Std. I.B.4)

Conflicting information was gathered regarding broad constituent-based participation in planning and program review processes. Requests for evidence to support the broad-based participation claim were not adequately fulfilled by the College. Assessment of the effectiveness of student learning outcomes, program reviews, master plans, and strategic planning goals were not provided and do not appear to have been conducted. When asked to describe the College planning process, employees could only describe the initial steps in the continuous improvement cycle. Re-evaluation of plans and the planning process were non-existent. (Std. I.B.5)

The college lacks a formal process by which all committees (particularly the College Council) maintain, officially record, publicly display, disseminate, and track approved actions and their related assessment results in order to facilitate improved awareness and understanding of the College's planning and shared governance procedures and processes.

No documentation or timelines (current or future) for reviewing or modifying the process were provided. (Std. I.B.6)

No evidence exists that a formal procedure for evaluating and revising the institution's planning processes has been created, published, and widely disseminated. The only assessment mechanism found was the program review process. This process does not appear to be systematic. (Std. I.B.7)

Conclusions

The Institution has identified quantitative and qualitative data to use for its program review and planning processes, but there is little evidence that areas are actually making data-informed decisions. In fact, the Self Study reports that “even before the College has entered into the analysis stage of its assessments, improvements to courses and programs are being initiated” (p. 59). It is unknown how the College knows which improvements should be made if decisions are not data-driven. Therefore, the team does not find that

there is recognition of the need for quantitative and qualitative data analyses to support planning.

The College does not meet the requirements of standard I.B, specifically I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, I.B.7.

Recommendations

College Recommendation 1 – Theme: Institutional Integrity

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the campus leadership (cross-constituent) create venues, forums, and a sense of permission to the practice of dialogue (not to be confused with debate, gossip, innuendo and argument) to strengthen and sustain the high quality programs, relationships and sense of pride that LATTC's students and community deserve. (Std. I.B.1, IV.A.1, 3)

College Recommendation 2 – Theme: Evaluation, Planning & Improvement

As cited in previous accreditation recommendations (1997 and 2003), the team recommends that in order to meet the standards, the college develop and fully implement an integrated planning process that clearly links program review, all aspects of planning, and resource allocation in a cohesive and inclusive manner. Development of the model should be based on prevailing best practices that include a clearly established and calendared cycle, use of current and relevant internal and external environmental data, analysis of data to inform planning, a committee review process, linkage to resource allocation, and evaluation of the implemented plan. (Std. I.B; I.B.1; I.B.2; I.B.3; I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.a, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.2, II.B.3.c, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C, II.C.2, III.D, III.D.3.)

College Recommendation 6 – Participatory Governance

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends the college evaluate its participatory governance process(es) to ensure that all constituent groups actively participate in the college's planning and decision making. (Std. I.A.3, I.B.4, II.B.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.A.5)

STANDARD II

STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Standard II

A – Instructional Programs

General Observations

There is little doubt that Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC) adheres to its mission statement and “offers learner centered associate degree and certificate programs to students who reflect the global diversity of the Los Angeles region.” Also congruent with this mission statement is visible evidence that the College is adapting to “the changing educational needs of the Los Angeles community” and to the growing diversity among students. “

What is palpable at this College is a heartfelt passion of faculty and staff for students, a passion for the College’s mission, and an enviable pride in the size and scope of the Career Technical Education programs. All of this, coupled with the revitalization in facilities that can only be called remarkable, provides a picture of a college with the potential to serve a significant role in the revitalization of the Los Angeles community and its workforce.

These silos of excellence and this moment of change are jeopardized by the inconsistencies in stated processes, lack of coordination and communication, and the failure to follow through on initiatives that initially appeared to have momentum - issues noted by previous teams. These may have been exacerbated by to the significant turnover of administrative staff over a prolonged period of time. The president of the college has been in his position for only two years. Three of the four vice presidents appear to have assumed their duties in the last three months. The dean of research and planning has only been at the College since December 2008 with the position vacant during an accreditation year. A dean of academic affairs position is vacant. The official Accreditation Liaison Officer has only been at LATTC for a few months. LATTC is an institution in transition.

Research provided by the College reveals that the service area population is grossly underprepared for college in the basic skills areas of math and English. In addition, nearly one-third of the service area population lives at or below the federal poverty level – which is 15.9% more than the residents of the other LACCD colleges. This makes Los Angeles Trade Tech a postsecondary educational institution with significant challenges.

There was little evidence that the culture or the processes of LATTC supported data driven assessment and improvement.

Findings and Evidence

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College offers 49 degrees, 53 certificates, and a full array of noncredit programs. Over 60% of the College's programs are considered Career Technical Education (CTE) programs. The transformation that is occurring on buildings throughout the campus will raise many CTE facilities to state of the art environments for learning and teaching. The Basic Skills plan and the newly appointed Basic Skills coordinator, who was hired January 2009, have increased efforts pairing CTE classes and the basic skills. Courses in English which have been tailored for particular programs, is an example. There appears to be a dynamic environment in the development of curriculum in the CTE areas. The leadership in "Green" courses and Solar related courses, the new Process Technology and Administration of Justice programs, as well as the Electrical Lineperson course are examples of new courses and programs recently developed at the College. Ongoing CTE program review needs attention. (Std. II.A.1.a.b)

The College's curriculum committee appears to function well with appropriate processes in place. Leadership of the committee is well served by the college's articulation officer who has helped to lead the movement to revitalize course outlines, especially those which have languished over time and threatened to lose transferability. Course outlines will eventually more uniformly include student learning outcomes. Because the LACCD is developing electronic software for the management of course outlines throughout the district, the curriculum committee is waiting for the inception of the system before mandating that faculty bring curriculum through the committee with SLOs. The development and implementation of the assessment cycle based on SLOs has not progressed significantly. (Std. II.A.1.c)

While the team witnessed great enthusiasm, innovation, and pockets or silos of excellence at LATTC, it did not find evidence of ongoing systematic evaluation, program review, or assessment for improvement on a consistent basis. After a long hiatus, a Dean of Planning and Research was hired in December and left soon after. However, web based program review software provides data to faculty that enables them to examine retention rates, course prerequisites, grades and/or assessment scores of their students, and enrollment data. While not all instructional or student services programs have undertaken program review, those that have are able to use current data which is particularly accessible because of its graphic display. Faculty who have used the system report a high level of satisfaction and ability to easily perform classroom based research and refine their learning environments.

While the self study asserted that the College was in the assessment phase of student learning outcomes, in fact progress still needs to be made to get all programs into a review cycle. The need to establish and publish student learning outcomes for each general education course has not been completed. The goal of fall development and spring assessment is a good one – but implementation of SLO development is not complete. (Std. II.A.2.a-i)

To address the significant percentage of underprepared students at LATTC, grants and categorical programs are numerous and active. The piloting of a First Year Experience program, along with projects like the Students for Higher Education program with the L.A. County Probation Office, the Youth Opportunity Program, and the County office of Education are examples of partnerships forged by the College. (Std. II.A.2.d)

As the college states in its self study, the team found evidence that it met Standard II.A.3.a, b, c, with a comprehensive General Education program. The self study indicated that an assessment of the learning outcomes for general education courses was currently being implemented; however, it does not appear that all courses which fulfill general education have student learning outcomes. The 2008-09 catalog does not show student learning outcomes for general education courses, but the College's philosophy of general education is stated in the catalog. While the catalog's GE patterns listed in the graduation plans "A" and "B" need to be reviewed for accuracy, the Curriculum Committee ensures that all degree programs follow one of the two plans. (Std. II.A.3, 4)

The college approves vocational and occupational majors and certificates based on input from advisory committees and labor market research. The Los Angeles/Orange County Workforce Development Leaders (LOWDL) reviews the programs and gives its approval to the Chancellor's office. In conjunction with program review, these processes contribute to the standards demanded by employers and external licensing agencies. Several programs at the college are subject to review and licensure by external agencies such as Nursing by the BRN and NLN, CNC/Machine Shop by NIMS and MSSC, Child Development by DECTC, Culinary Arts by the American Culinary Federation Educational Institute (ACFEI) and Cosmetology by the State Board of Barbering and Cosmetology. Students in these programs are prepared to pass the licensing exams conducted by these agencies. (Std. II.A. 5)

Information about educational programs offered at the college is widely offered in a number of different publications: in both the print and web-based versions of the college catalog, in department prepared brochures and program planning sheets, and on the college Website under the Admissions and Records link from the Student page. However, clear and consistent student learning outcome information varies by location and may create some confusion. For example, the Program Viability process is a significant one which is stated in the College's catalog and has been used by the campus. However, under inquiry, many key faculty and administrators said that the questions of Program Viability were not being asked. The Academic Affairs website has a sample syllabus and comprehensive course syllabus checklist to assist instructors in developing their syllabi. When instructors are evaluated, the evaluator(s) uses a similar checklist in evaluating syllabi. This helps promote consistency and quality of the syllabus. (Std. II.A.6)

Articulation agreements between LATTC and public and private colleges and universities are developed by the college's articulation officer, a member of the California Intersegmental Articulation Council (CIAC). Transfer-of-credit policies are clearly described in detail in the college catalog and schedule. Students may view the official

articulation for California's colleges and universities through the link on the college website to ASSIST (Articulation System Stimulation Intersegmental Student Transfer). (Std. II.A.6.a)

When programs change, current students are counseled by department chairs and counselors about which new courses to take to substitute for courses that were part of their original educational plan but may no longer be offered under the new guidelines. When programs are eliminated, the institution makes an effort to contact and accommodate current students through program change or transfer. (Std. II.A.6.b)

The Office of Academic Affairs oversees the publishing of the college catalog and schedule of classes. The catalog is revised and updated every year. If there are errors in the printed version or as changes are made to the schedule, updates are emailed to all users at the college and posted on the website and in the Admissions Office. (Std. II.A.6.c)

Standards of conduct for students are readily accessible in the college catalog, schedule of classes, and student handbook. Employee standards of performance are accessible through employee union contracts and district personnel guides. The district's Personnel Commission also has a policy governing derogatory communications, which outlines policies and procedures for dealing with unsolicited written communications accusing district employees of inadequate or improper performance of duties, an unlawful act, or an act of moral turpitude. Specific information regarding faculty conduct is contained in the faculty handbook. Standard II.A.7 is one with oversight from the LACCD Board of Trustees. Faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. A faculty code of ethics is printed in the catalog. (Std. II.A.7.c)

Standard II.A.8 does not apply to LATTC.

Conclusions

The College needs to make its General Education patterns accurate with current courses and delete those that are no longer offered. The plans for the RN program to address its pass rates needs completion. The Program Viability process must be revitalized.

The team concluded that there is no ongoing, thorough review of student learning outcomes since they are not found consistently in either the catalog or on the college's Program Review and SLO website. Assessment of SLOs is taking place in some programs, but the assertion in the self study that "all courses have one SLO created and three to four measurable objectives" is not in evidence. It appears to occur with good success in selected departments. It is also reported that constructive dialogue is occurring within departments as the result of the process, but documentation of these conversations needs to take place. There has been some positive, forward momentum in the use of the web based program review/SLO system, but this is not uniform across the college. External requirements for categorical programs appear to help these programs maintain regular review processes. Still, the two year requirement for program review of CTE programs needs attention.

B. Student Support Services

General Observations

In preparation for interviews and examination of evidence, the team reviewed the LATTC Self-Study, the State Chancellor's Site Visit report for all categorical programs (2007), the college catalog, district Educational Master Plan, district mapping document, roster of district level committees, applicable minutes for district meetings, web-based Program Review/SLO site, unit planning process for Counseling Department, CalWORKs services, as well as integrated planning with other student services units, Matriculation status, and the college step-by-step process for developing the campus Strategic Plan. In addition, the team met with the Dean of Matriculation and Recruitment, Dean of Admissions, Vice President of Student Services, lead personnel assigned to facilitate the web-based Program Review/SLO process, the Department Chair assigned to Basic Skills/ESL housed within Matriculation, the Coordinator of EOPS and the Coordinator of Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) to review services and integration with other units, lead Academic Senate personnel, and the Counseling Department Chair.

Findings and Evidence

The team reviewed evidence in the college catalog that verified the presence of General Information, Official Name, Address, Telephone Number(s), and Web Site Address of the Institution, the Educational Mission, Course, Program, and Degree Offerings, Academic Calendar and Program Length, Academic Freedom Statement, Available Student Financial Aid and Learning Resources, Names and Degrees of Administrators and Faculty, Names of Governing Board Members, Requirements, Admissions, Student Fees and Other Financial Obligations, Degree, Certificates (Graduation and Transfer), and Major Policies Affecting Students (Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty, Nondiscrimination, Acceptance of Transfer Credits, Grievance and Complaint Procedures, Sexual Harassment, Refund of Fees).

The team found that there is some use of evidence (data) to identify student learning needs at the unit and department level, including Matriculation, EOPs, CalWORKs, and Counseling. Categorical programs, by virtue of State Chancellor office monitoring requirements, were all exemplary in their evaluation, planning, and data tracking areas. However, there was no evidence found to support the contention that the institution is using internal and/or external environmental data to conduct institutional planning in an integrated, cohesive, and inclusive manner at a comprehensive institutional level. LATTC's catalog meets Standard II.B.2.a-d. (Std. II.B, II.B.1, II.B.3.c)

The team found that the college maintains and promotes equitable access to a diverse student population. A review of student enrollment statistics and population based information revealed that LATTC serves the largest limited English-speaking student population of the nine campuses of the district, as well as the largest CalWORKs student population. The Office of Matriculation and Recruitment maintains diverse staff of various backgrounds and language proficiency to accommodate a wide array of students. The integration of Basic Skills and ESL with the college's Learning Center and

Matriculation Office demonstrates an innovative and dynamic approach to strengthen the entry-services feature of the college. (Std. II.B.3.a, d)

The team found that a review of the evidence pertinent to programs such as CalWORKs, EOPS, the Freshman Experience, the integration of Matriculation with Basic Skills/ESL demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting this section of the Standard. (Std. II.B.3.b-c)

The team found evidence that revealed that the college is using Compass/Accuplacer validated instruments to effectively assess and place students in the appropriate level of math and/or English instruction. It also securely maintains student records. This finding demonstrates the institution's alignment with standard, acceptable practices within the California community college environment. (Std. II.B.3.e-f)

The team found that a review of the documented evidence and the results of interviews with various personnel revealed that there are several unit-level "pockets of excellence" where evaluation is used to provide informative support to delivery of effective services to students. This finding was clearly evident in the case of all of the college's Categorical programs (e.g. EOPS). However, there was no evidence that demonstrates the existence of a college-wide comprehensive evaluation and review process that verifies statements within the self-study and/or adheres to the expectations of the respective Standard.

The team found that the college demonstrated it is committed to developing SLO's, as evidenced on the college Program Review/SLO website. However, in the case of general fund programs, there was little evidence to show that evaluation is routinely conducted to support the continuous improvement needs of programs. Categorically funded programs appeared to be more comprehensive in their development and use of evaluation to facilitate continuous improvement. (Std. II.B.4)

Conclusions

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College is undergoing a significant transformation, and the college is responding to the needs of the students, recognizing that a large percentage of entering students do not have the basic skills to succeed. The instructional programs that will be revitalized because of its physical make over are either undergoing or have completed program review. The partnerships that have been forged with industry partners, K-12 districts, county and city agencies, the significant dollars brought in by grants, and the high enrollment in categorical programs are hallmarks of Los Angeles Trade-Tech's instructional and student service programs. While the self study implied that all courses and programs have developed student learning outcomes, there is evidence that this has not been totally completed. The efforts in these directions are mainly positive, but need to be completed and monitored. This is a theme that runs throughout the organization. The team did not find evidence that student learning outcomes have been consistently developed in LATTC's student services.

The self study also indicated that ‘information garnered through the program review process is funneled into the educational facilities, technology, and strategic master plans of the college.’ This process is not apparent at this time – but the potential to do this certainly exists. While the self study implied that all courses and programs have developed student learning outcomes, there is evidence that this has not been completed for all areas of the college. An examination of the college’s student services website, where the program profiles and related Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are posted, revealed that development of SLOs for this area of the college has not been achieved. When program reviews and student learning outcomes are truly developed throughout the college, LATTC will be ready for a more systematic procedure in which results are routinely used as part of its planning process.

There is recognition by the Los Angeles Community College District that a College with 70% of its programs in Career and Technical Education has significantly greater resource demands than other colleges. LATTC needs to redouble its efforts to complete a thorough program review process, fully establish its student learning outcomes, and restart and maintain a process regarding program viability. The college’s efforts in student services are strong, but based on a review of documents, interviews of lead staff, and an examination of the college’s website where program review and SLOs are posted, it was evident that not all programs are being routinely evaluated in a comprehensive manner. As stated, categorical programs are evaluated on a routine basis. In effect, section “B.4” of Standard II.B has not been met.

C. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations

The general quality of the college’s library and learning support services is very good. The report on the whole accurately describes the college’s strengths and weaknesses in this area.

Findings and Evidence

The college supports the library and other learning support services. The Library has revised and expanded its online capabilities to meet the needs of students. Currently, the construction projects have decentralized the services and limited the expansion of workshops and course offerings. Library Science 101, Library Research Methods, is taught 100% online. The tutoring services and the open computer lab are separate from the library. The library has a process in place for faculty to review holdings for currency. Faculty are asked to submit titles for new acquisitions. The college identifies that its print collections are limited at this time.

The Learning Support Services (LSS) includes many services and resources across the campus. In addition to the library, there are the Honors Project, Learning Skills Center, Tutoring, Writing Center, Math and Reading labs, open access computer lab and various

CTE labs such as fashion, automotive and CIS. The expansion of these services has been facilitated by monies from the Basic Skills Initiative and Proposition A/AA.

Information Competency is addressed in several ways. Librarians offer workshops in research and databases. There are study guides which assist students in their research. The library and the associated support services have extensive open hours for student access. The focus seems to be on Basic Skills: Learning Skills (many courses) and Writing Center. LSS also supports the Open Access Computer Lab, the Assessment Center, EOPS tutoring, DSPTS tutoring and learning skills partnerships with English and Math. (Std. II.C.1.a-c)

The library staff works to maintain security. Books are tagged and the doors are alarmed. While the college recently evaluated its library and learning support services through a student/staff satisfaction survey, it fails to meet the standard for a more systematic and rigorous evaluation and commitment to improvement focused on student learning outcomes. (Std. II.C.1.3, II.C.2)

Conclusions

The commitment of faculty and staff to LATTC students is felt throughout the campus. There are many examples of ways that staff extends assistance to students. The College appears to be a place where students feel comfortable and welcome. Learning is taking place, evidenced by full reading and writing labs, and students throughout the campus throughout the day and evening. But the college has not adequately addressed its previous recommendations for the standard related to improving instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

The college is responding to the needs of the students, recognizing that a large percentage of entering students do not have the basic skills to succeed. The college is to be commended for its innovative approach to full integration of orientation, testing, and placement services with the Basic Skills/ESL program. Given the high rate of LATTC students entering the college with a demonstrated need for remedial education and/or English as a Second language training, the college's effort to provide early instructional intervention that is directly linked to Matriculation services constitutes an exemplary example of a commitment to student success.

The college is to also be commended for its creation and implementation of the *Freshman Experience* initiative which is designed to increase the retention and persistence of students. This unique program provides new students with special support services that include extra counseling, peer-advising, tutoring, leadership training, and other services that serve to help bond students with the institution and to excel within their programs of study.

The college has much to be proud of. It has implemented programs, such as the Writing Center, Honors Project, Learning Skills, Tutoring, Reading and Math Labs, to help remediate students in reading, writing, and math. The Library provides a supportive

environment for students, especially with the acquisition of the Blanche Gottlieb Culinary Research Collection (2,200 volumes).

The college is to be commended for its development and continuing support of an exemplary GAIN/CalWORKs program. This program employs highly effective student success strategies that include strong collaborative efforts with partner agencies, and a commitment to integrated planning with instructional units of the college to develop customized career and technical training programs that serve the gainful employment needs of students.

LATTC deserves high praise and commendations for its high ranking among California community colleges – twenty-one LATTC programs rank first in their fields for degrees and certificates awarded, 44 programs rank in the top five, and 53 programs rank in the top ten in their discipline area in degrees and certificates earned by community college students in California.

The results of the student survey are very positive in regards to the library, tutoring, and support services such as the open computer lab. The college does not provide evidence of consistent commitment to and implementation of planning and evaluative practices and commitment. Its high administrative turnover rates may be partially to blame for this.

Recommendations

See College Recommendation 2 – Theme: Evaluation, Planning & Improvement

College Recommendation 3 – Theme: Student Learning Outcomes

In order to meet the standards by 2012, the team recommends that the college establish a formal review and evaluation process at the department level that will allow faculty and/or staff to dialogue about SLOs and continuous improvement. The process should be documented for tracking and program improvement purposes. Student learning outcomes must be clearly, accurately, and consistently stated in print and electronic documents. The training of faculty and staff for a clearer understanding and relationship between program review and student learning outcomes is essential. (Std. IIA.2.e, IIA.2.f, IIA.6.c)

See College Recommendation 6 – Participatory Governance

STANDARD III RESOURCES

A. Human Resources

General Observations

The college has attempted to improve its overall resources. Integrated planning for continuous improvement and maintenance of standards is not yet evident, but the college is making strides in some areas.

Findings and Evidence

The College Compliance Officer and Personnel Officer support and promote the hiring of persons with the appropriate training, education and work experience. The Faculty and Staff Resources webpage includes resources that all personnel can access. Faculty Hiring follows the state minimum qualifications for Faculty and Administrators.

Selection of faculty candidates is through an agreed upon selection criteria based on minimum qualifications, industry standards, and any applicable LACCD Board of Trustee rules. The web-based flow charts and procedural outlines are sound tools to help clarify the process. An Educational Policy Advisory Committee has been established to advise and assist in areas including Academic Standards, Curricula Planning, Degree Requirements, and Equivalencies among other activities. (Std. III.A.1.a)

The college adopted HR Guide R-121, a procedure for hiring Consulting Instructors and Instructors Special Assignment, on June 6, 2006. The team heard conflicting messages from credible stakeholders in the college about how consistently the procedures were being followed. While the policy is in place, the team suggests that the college ensure proper implementation of the procedures, adherence to the interview committee procedure, proper documentation of the selection process, and that the criteria for the selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or area to be performed, as noted in Standard III A.1.a.

Collective Bargaining agreements and personnel rules outline the procedures for evaluation. Evaluations of faculty are based largely on a basis of peer review. Classified employees are required to have at least one performance review annually. Similarly, administrators are evaluated annually based on their hire date. Vice presidents have a basic evaluation in concert with a comprehensive evaluation that occurs every third year. Although the process is dependent on the objectivity of those conducting the review process, a 2007 survey of both faculty and staff indicated that 83% of respondents agreed established procedures were followed in their evaluations. (Std. III.A.1.a-c)

Process maps and flow charts have been designed to better define and outline processes for recruitment of all classes of employees. A previous recommendation (7.1) indicates regular evaluations need to be completed. The college must continue its vigilance in assuring timely evaluations of all employees. A comprehensive evaluation handbook has been developed for faculty. The Teamsters contract, representing deans, now reflects an

official evaluation process. Furthermore, the Human Resources Division and Personnel Commission have created a website that includes tools and procedures for employee evaluation. Communicating the rules and regulations that govern recruitment and hiring was noted as a concern. In a random check of personnel files, some were found to be without completed evaluations.

The LACCD Faculty Evaluation Taskforce has outlined recommendations for incorporating Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in faculty evaluations. It affirms several guiding principles including faculty professionalism and commitment to student learning, the connection between evaluation and professional development, fairness and collegial dialogue. Standard III.A.1.c calls for faculty and others responsible for student progress to have effectiveness in achieving those outcomes as a component of their evaluation. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) were a subject of contract negotiations with the AFT in 2008 and a requirement that faculty participate in the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle was incorporated. (Std. III.A.1.c)

The team found that a sister college in the district adopted the American Association of University Professors Statement on Professional Ethics on February 8, 2006. A review of the adopted board policy in Chapter I, Article II, Code of Ethics, Section 1204.10-1204.14 provides evidence of a statement added to the policy to reflect that all employees of the district must abide by the code as required by the standard. (Std. III.A.1.d)

Administrative turnover, especially within the ranks of senior management is a concern. The President has been in his position for only two years, and recent history indicates that as many as six persons, including those in an interim or acting capacity, have held that office in the past 12 years. Three of the four vice presidents appear to have assumed their duties in the last few months. The Dean of Research and Planning has only been with the college since December 2008, and the position was vacant during an accreditation year. A dean within Academic Affairs is currently vacant. (Std.III.A.2)

Policies and Procedures are available on-line to all employees; this includes a resource page for new employees. A district Human Resources Council working with both the Human Resources staff and Personnel Commission reviews policies and practices and proposals for new positions. HR has established personnel guides that address access to and confidentiality of personnel records. (Std. III.A.3.a,b)

Hiring data is analyzed by the district office to ensure compliance with state and federal laws. Policies and procedures reflected in Personnel Commission, district and collective bargaining documents assure employee rights, legal compliance and a safe work environment. The college must be vigilant about ensuring the College Compliance Officer is engaged in the hiring process. (Std. III.A.4.a,b,c)

The college offers a broad array of professional development activities including Mandatory Flexible Calendar Program, professional Development Compensatory Time and Conference and Tuition Reimbursement, College-wide Staff Development Activities, and the Los Angeles Community College District Success.net. Although numerous

avenues are available for professional development, the self study acknowledges more should be done to build an awareness and understanding of these offerings and how they can assist faculty and staff with their personal professional growth plans. The college has evaluated such programs as they affect faculty and staff but needs to increase its efforts as they impact students or other organizational outcomes. (Std. III.A.5.a,b)

The college has a Planning and Budget Committee (PBC) that theoretically determines staffing levels. The number of faculty hires is based on input from the Faculty Hiring Prioritization Committee (FHPC) and from program review recommendations (p. 159). The PBC began during the 2008-09 academic year, but there is no evidence that its recommendations are driven by program review processes of the college. Growth in physical plant and expansion or contraction of departments throughout the campus has necessitated a strategic approach to staffing. Financial resources have constrained the ability to follow through on this planning. (Std. III.A.6)

Conclusions

While the college generally meets this standard, in order to continue meeting or exceeding the standard, the problem of administrative turnover and stability should be addressed. The team and members of the college community noted that training in the accreditation process, the new online program review, online administrative data sources, such as SAP and Business Warehouse applications would enhance the college's attempts to meet the standards related to improving institutional effectiveness. (Std. III.A.2)

B. Physical Resources

General Observations

LATTC is truly an urban campus; a comprehensive institution housed on only 23 acres south of downtown Los Angeles. A five-year facilities development plan based on funding from the first of three bond measures was created in 2002 and is being updated for a 2009 re-release. This latest iteration of the Facilities Master Plan will help to ensure that physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. LATTC was allocated \$148 million from this first bond measure and planned for 160,000 square feet of additional space. In 2003, a follow-on bond measure resulted in an additional \$92 million in capital resources. Last year, Proposition J provided \$350 million to help complete these plans. Through careful planning, LATTC projects it will be able to leverage an additional \$78 million in state capital outlay proceeds and more than \$11 million in local assistance (Scheduled Maintenance and Hazardous Substance Removal) funds.

Findings and Evidence

Planned improvements include new construction, modernization and land acquisition. LATTC has embarked on an ambitious but mission critical land acquisition effort that, through all three bond measures, will result in an increase in campus land mass of approximately seven acres or more than 25% of its original footprint. This effort has been complicated through the need to assemble land from multiple owners, tense

negotiations, street vacations and the potential for eminent domain actions. The acquisition will allow the college not only to add additional facilities but also critically needed additional surface and structured parking. (Std. III.B)

LATTC is in the process of a complete campus makeover in order to ensure the provision of safe and sufficient physical resources. Increased construction costs and changing enrollment demands have caused the facilities plans to be revisited, and thus have delayed the completion of the updated facilities master plan until later in 2009.

A 2008 survey seemingly speaks to the challenges of identifying sufficient operation resources. Only 50% to 60% of respondents answered affirmatively to inquiries concerning adequate Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), restroom cleanliness and an adequate investment in physical plant maintenance. Many of the LATTC facilities, dating from the 1920's, were not originally planned or designed to include air conditioning. At the conclusion of the bond program, all major facilities, with the exception of the Automotive Technology Center will have air conditioning. Most of the campus restrooms are decades old as well. Through facility modernization and new construction, restrooms are being modernized to comply with access regulations as well as being constructed with more easily maintainable materials/surfaces. (Std. III.B.1.a,b)

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. A review of capacity/load ratios indicates that through the 2015/16 FY, lecture, office and AV/TV space will be more than sufficient and that laboratory and library space may be less than growth projections will require. An underlying issue is the imbalance between sources of capital development funding and operating resources. LACCD, with three successive local bond measures, is the best example of developing local sources of capital funding.

The challenge facing LACCD, and one that plagues many districts with large bond programs, is that as robust as the sources of capital funding may be, the operating resources have not kept pace and present a dilemma as the district attempts to develop a sustainable plan for maintenance and operations while at the same time bringing more building square footage and technology infrastructure into inventory. Under the SB 361 funding model, and largely since Prop 13, the revenue side of the budget model is largely controlled at the state level. However, LATTC has taken steps to minimize the cost of facility operations through their commitment to green and sustainable building practices that should serve to buffer increasing utility costs and through the provision of better equipment for Maintenance and Operations staff. (Std. III.B.1.a)

LATTC has taken definitive steps to help ensure that a safe and healthful working and learning environment exists for all students, staff and faculty. Such a working environment is required under a number of local state and federal guidelines. The district contracts with the county sheriff for security services and a staff of 17 provide services to LATTC. Further bolstering security, and among the bond funded projects, was the

installation of an emergency phone and video surveillance system. The phones were placed in a fashion to allow ready access by those in need.

The college has instituted preventive plans to facilitate a safe working environment. These plans include an Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) and a hazardous communication program (HCP). The college also has an Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) to advance safety awareness and facilitate emergency planning. (Std. III.B.1.b)

As a part of its regular evaluation of the adequacy of facilities and equipment and to assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the current Facilities Master Plan (2002) is being updated with a release scheduled for 2009. The Self Study recognizes the potential change in project priority and this update will serve to ensure the Educational plan is driving the Facilities Plan. (Std. III.B.2.a)

Program Review has been instituted for the Physical Plant Department and its component units including Safety, Maintenance, Operations, Recycling and Receiving. Discussions with employees in the Physical Plant, including the director, indicated that a brief paper-based program review was completed in late 2008 in preparation for the self study visit. As noted in the Technology Resource Section, additional staff training may be required to facilitate utilization of LATTC's new online program review application (started in fall 2008).

The college has established a Work Environment Committee (WEC) as a part of its standing governance structure and includes representatives from all constituency groups. This committee is involved in dialogue surrounding a safe work environment and engaged in space planning and utilization. Building User Groups (BUGs) have been established for each major bond project and are structured as subcommittees to the WEC. (Std. III.B.2.b)

Conclusions

The college meets this standard but should endeavor to continue its vigilance in developing means and methods to adequately maintain and operate the new facilities that will be developed through its capital improvement program. The team suggests that the college consider more fully integrating facilities planning with technology planning to ensure that new technology equipment is fully supported. (Std. IIIB)

C. Technology Resources

General Observations

The College is revising a 2004 consultant-written Technology Plan in order to create a College-owned document with wide support. This review only began in Spring 2009, but this has not hampered the college's efforts to meet the technology needs of the institution. This effort moves the College toward effectively implementing a wide range of technology infrastructure to support its growing student population.

Findings and Evidence

The college based Technology Committee, consisting of a broad range of constituencies, and district based Instructional and Student Services Technology Committee (ISST) are working on standards for the incorporation of technology infrastructure. (Std. III.C)

The institution has taken steps to ensure it is meeting the needs of its internal and external constituencies. Recent infrastructure installations (fiber optic backbone) were designed to ensure future technology installations will not be hobbled by outdated technology infrastructure. Identified staffing needs in Management Information Services and Instructional Media Services however number at least six plus four student workers. This benchmark was established using the Telecommunications & Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP) metric for Information Technology (IT) staffing support. The staffing needs identified previously suggest that the delivery of training and/or maintenance services may be impaired. (Std. III.C.1.a)

Along with the robust installation of new technology is an emerging need for training for faculty, staff and students to ensure productivity and effectiveness in the utilization of technology. The self study indicates training resources have not kept pace with new installations including course management software and Google Apps. The student demographic served by the institution underscores this need for training.

A new position to facilitate training of both students and instructors has been established; the Director of Technology Mediated Learning and Teaching. Further, a staff development officer has received an increase in release time to 60%. Title V grant funds have provided resources for technology training. With the significant development of technology infrastructure, there is a clear need to integrate facilities planning with technology planning to ensure the necessary support exists as new technology equipment is procured. (Std. III.C.1.b)

The college has utilized several sources of funds for developing and installing technology equipment and infrastructure. The same question facing Operations and Maintenance of facilities is raised here in relation to the college's ability to support and maintain this new wave of technology equipment and infrastructure. (Std. III.C.1.c)

Technology planning has been introduced in the program review process. The academic areas that have begun program review cycles have identified technology needs as a result of their reviews. The identified needs are correlated to course goals and referenced to student learning outcomes. Faculty has been engaged in the process in order to identify technology needs for classes taught. This has moved the institution toward a model of systematically assessing the effective use of technology resources and using the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement. Plans are in place to coordinate an online advising program and program monitoring function with the District. Despite these efforts, though, program review recommendations and plans are not tied to the Technology Plan, and discussions with numerous individuals at the college revealed that there have been no discussions to create this linkage. This is contrary to the information

regarding integrated planning discussed in the self study where the program reviews are feeding college plans. (Std. III.C.1.d, III.C.2)

Although there are approximately 40 student computer labs located in specific discipline areas throughout the campus, the lack of computing facilities in the library (27 computers with read-only software and only one shared printer), suggest that Library and Learning Resource services could be more robust. There is another open lab with about 130 computers available for student use; however, there are complaints regarding this lab as its computers do not have discipline-specific software (such as AutoCAD, etc.) that students need to complete their assignments. This software is available in the smaller labs in the individual areas, but students have issues gaining access to these labs outside of scheduled class meeting times. (Std. III.C.1.d)

Conclusions

The college meets most of this standard. While the college is to be commended for the technological installations accomplished, future technology planning should take a “total cost” approach that would include sufficient training. Concerning training in the use of technology, the team found a lack of adequate training in use of the online program review process; a lack of understanding of the use of the online SLO assessment process; and a lack of use of electronic data sources to support decision making and assess student learning.

The college needs to develop and implement more comprehensive technology training programs to provide faculty and staff with continued professional development and training to include online program reviews and use of electronic data sources to support decision making and assess student learning to exceed the standard.

The college is to be commended for incorporating the necessary fiber optic backbone installed between buildings to support its vision for technology support services. It should expand its technology planning to include a comprehensive model of planning, development, installation and maintenance of technology equipment and infrastructure. The team did not find evidence that the college meets Standard II.C.2. See College Recommendation 2. (Std. III.C.2)

D. Financial Resources

General Observations

One of the core indicators of the adequacy of fiscal resources centers on FTES projections. As noted on the Enrollment management website, FTES figures show an upward trend from actuals in 2006-07 to 2007-08 through 2008-09 P-2 development. LATTC has nearly two-thirds of its program dedicated to Career Technical Education (CTE) and nearly one-third are defined as high cost programs. These high cost programs require additional resources that involve additional building square footage, special support or storage areas, additional support staff, unique equipment and maintenance

requirements and additional instructional supplies. All these factors tend to exert upward pressure on the cost of delivering educational services. (Std. III.D.1.a)

Findings and Evidence

The 2007 strategic planning-related SWOT analysis speaks to the challenges of maintaining these high cost programs/courses, and the college's new mission statement that was approved by the College Council in October 2008, pending approval by the Board of Trustees, also addresses the college's desire to maintain these programs. (Std. III.D.1)

The previous recommendation (9.1) suggests the college develop a strategic financial plan in order to be able to respond to financial emergencies. Evidence indicates the college and district have engaged in fiscal planning in the face of recent national and international economic volatility. In light of the high cost of service delivery associated with many of the LATTC programs and on-going budget uncertainty, continued budget forecasting and planning is critical.

Evidence gathered during the visit note that the college maintains a reserve for financial emergencies which is targeted at 1% (\$831,000 as of March 2008) and that the college may call upon the district's contingency reserve in case of a major financial emergency, in effect increasing its actual financial reserves. A report to the Fiscal Policy and Review Committee (FPRC) dated October 8, 2008, notes that a deficit of over \$2 million emerged in FY 2008. The report goes on to note an array of expense reductions designed to bring the budget back into balance; however, it also notes that the college will seek debt forgiveness from the district. Similar to the stipend afforded small colleges in the district, LATTC was awarded a \$500,000 augmentation in an acknowledgement of the challenges present in supporting and maintaining its array of high cost programs. This award will be re-examined in two years. This action, in concert with the expense reductions and growth targets noted above, may allow LATTC to create structural balance and result in a level of financial resources that provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. A broader question begins to emerge which is if a deliberate choice has been made to offer an array of high cost CTE programs, does the funding allocation model reflect the level of resources necessary to allow LATTC to be self sustaining. (Std. III.D.1.a,b,c)

The self study indicated that 2008-09 was the first year that program reviews have been used to drive budget processes and associated planning linkages. However, evidence uncovered during the visit show that no areas have yet completed a full cycle of program review using the college's new online program review process. In addition, discussions with current and past members of the Research and Planning area of the college confirmed that there presently is no linkage among college planning efforts, the online program review process, and the college's budget process. The Vice President of Administration indicated that integration of these areas is a future plan of the college and that no conceptual framework for integrating these processes yet exists. This is contrary to the information reported in the self study document. The person in charge of program reviews further indicated that the first cycle of program review is expected to be completed in 2010-2011. (Std. III.D.1.a,d)

A concern was noted in the self study of the need to develop an enrollment management tool addressing the necessary "...enrollment level the college will need to maximize its return." No evidence was found suggesting that the development of a tool has begun. Of further interest is the LACCD Enrollment Management toolbox which is noted as being on the college intranet. Upon being granted access to the toolbox (which took the team two days to obtain), it was determined that this toolbox is not a tool that allows for college-level enrollment management nor are there processes that exist for linking program reviews, planning, and budgeting.

In two key areas the college has considered long range financial priorities when making short-range financial plans. The college has identified an unfunded retiree health care liability of \$623 million. An actuarial report dated April 2008 (valuation date of July 2007) has been prepared which identifies an Annual Required Contribution (ARC) of \$41 million over a period of 30 years. An April 2008 Board Report addresses the establishment of an irrevocable trust with the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) to pre-fund retiree health benefit cost.

Employee groups have agreed to contribute 1.92% of total full-time salary expenditures from the prior year to the irrevocable trust. The audit report covering the period ending June 30, 2008, however, notes that the contribution made for the year leaves a net OPEB obligation of approximately \$3.1 million. Although the district's pre-funding plan, which recently received special recognition from the Public Employee Post-Employment Benefits Commission established by Governor Schwarzenegger, is noteworthy, the district must reconcile the remaining net OPEB obligation. Further, in this volatile economic climate, the district should continue to monitor the actual rate of return in contrast to the assumed rate.

Another challenge facing both the college and district, and one that plagues many districts with large bond programs, is that as robust as the sources of capital funding may be, the operating resources have not kept pace and present a dilemma as the district attempts to develop a sustainable plan for maintenance and operations while at the same time bringing more building square footage into inventory. The district and college are to be commended for having taken significant strides in the implementation of energy saving measures including photo-voltaic arrays, demand management improvements, efficient renewable central plants and other such actions. (Std. III.D.1.c)

The college follows a Board-adopted budget allocation mechanism that serves as a vehicle to allocate funds to colleges, but a 2007 survey suggests that only one-third of respondents recognize clear connections between planning and budgeting.

The Vice President of Administration prepares budget documents for each unit. Any new initiatives of the institution percolate up from the five standing, shared governance committees to the College Council, that makes recommendations of approval to the President. Contrary to information reported in the Self Study, program review does not at this time play a role in this process.

The self study indicates a need to provide more training of chairs and directors on SAP and Business Warehouse applications/programs as there is confusion among these individuals regarding the budget management processes. For example, if all budget managers utilized these tools to track their budget information in real-time, then the deficits seen by the college during the past two fiscal years may have been eliminated (or at least minimized). Budget deficits should not/could not occur if budget managers reviewed their budget information in real-time. (Std. III.D.1.c)

Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, generally reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. The college has responded to concerns raised by the external auditor. Three years of external audits as well as an excerpted summary of LATTC related audit issues/recommendations were made available upon arrival at the college. There were several instances of recurring findings in areas centering on policies and procedures for equipment management, allowable costs for CTE programs and student health and material fees. Management responses indicate progress, if not implementation, has been made in these areas. The Performance Audit addressing the Prop 39 bond programs (Moss-Adams) dated February 2009 for the period ending June 2008 reflects 136 issues being identified and 132 closed items with 4 solutions being implemented and no further open issues. The Performance Audit for the prior period reflects 118 issues being identified and 103 closed items with 15 solutions being implemented and no further open issues. (Std. III.D.2.a)

The district has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain fiscal stability and can reasonably confront volatility in the economy. The California Community College's Analysis of Selected Data from the Annual Financial and Budget Report (CCFS-311), Quarterly Financial Status Report (CCFS-311Q), and Fiscal Data Abstract For the period FY 2004-05 to 2008-09 shows the LACCD Fund Balance moving from \$38.3 million in Fiscal year 2004-05, or approximately 8.9% to total expenditures to \$60 million in fiscal year 2007-08, or approximately 11% of total expenditures. The district fund balance is well above the threshold necessary to maintain a 5% reserve for the periods noted. This same report demonstrates an increase in FTES from 96,985 to 107,914 or approximately 11%. (Std. III.D.2.b,c)

Development of other fund sources is referenced as a prior recommendation, and the college is to be commended for having secured various grants at a value of \$20 million. An agreement between the college and Foundation was found to have expired in 2004. Discussions with the Vice President of Administration indicate a new contract is currently being prepared. The Self Study notes that the Vice President of Administration or President must approve all contracts. It also speaks to review and assistance from Regional Procurement Specialists to ensure conformance with district contract standards. (Std. III.D.2.d, e, f)

LATTC regularly evaluates its financial management processes. On a monthly basis the college prepares a forecast and budget report that covers such fundamentals as enrollment

and staffing. These reports are submitted to the district office and a quarterly meeting is held to review prior performance and set future goals/targets. (Std. III.D.2.g)

At the present time, there is no linkage between this process and the program review process of the college.

The College Council and PBC regularly review their approach and methods for setting priorities, allocating funds and establishing college initiatives” (p. 186 – not numbered page). While this was reportedly done via the College Council’s annual retreat, evidence was only found to suggest that this occurred one time – during the summer of 2008. The PBC was not created until fall 2008, and no evidence was found that the PBC has ever reviewed its priority setting approaches or methods. (Std. III.D.3)

The institution has limits on the accrual of unused vacation time. The limit is 400 hours and enforcement is achieved as once an employee reaches that limit they will cease accruing further hours. Compensatory time is allowed to accrue but any accrued amounts are paid out annually. Board reports indicate most recent total compensation obligations reflected in collective bargaining agreements is limited to the 0.68% COLA for the Faculty Guild. Discussions with the Vice President of Administration indicate other units received the same level of compensation.

Conclusions

A common theme revolving around integrated planning arises in the context of compliance with Standard III. In the spirit of the evaluations and recommendations in Standard I, the college is strongly encouraged to engage in broad-based, collegially developed, effective and integrated educational, financial, physical, technological and human resource planning supported by institutional research. This integrated planning must ensure that recommendations stemming from the program review process are thoroughly vetted through the college’s governance processes. This lack of integrated planning is critical to the college meeting Standard III consistently, especially Standards III.A.6, III.B, III.B.2.a, b, III.C, III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.1.a,d.

Recommendations

See College Recommendation 2 – Theme: Evaluation, Planning & Improvement

College Recommendation 4 – Leadership Stability

The team recommends that the college, working collaboratively with the district office, take steps to stem the turnover of senior management. The college requires a stable, experienced administrative team to meet many of its recommendations. Administrative turnover, especially within the ranks of senior management is concerning. (Std.III.A.2, ER 5).

District Recommendation 1

In order to improve, the post-retirement health liability should be carefully monitored for the potential fiscal ramifications that could arise over the next few years. (Std. III.D.1.c, IV.B.3.e)

STANDARD IV LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Observations

Frequent administrative changes at the college accompanied by corresponding stoppages and restarts of key processes have led to mistrust, governance instability, and deteriorating collegiality on this proud campus.

Findings and Evidence

College Council is the primary governance body. In 2007, the college reorganized the campus structure into the College Council, which consolidated existing campus committees into five subordinate committees: Planning and Budget; Marketing, Outreach, Recruitment, and Communication; Student Success; Facilities and Work Environment; and Technology. Each committee has its charge with the agendas and minutes posted on the web site. College Council has a new workflow (Procedures and Flow), which was a major revamping in August 2008. (Std. IV)

The self-study reports that the college “maintains an environment of inclusive participatory governance”. The report also states that the college “structures bring all of our constituent groups together to participate in planning, decision-making, and conflict resolution”. There is evidence of agendas and minutes of the College Council and its subcommittees. The process has not been in effect long enough to ascertain its viability. There was no indication of an evaluation of the previous process, though the new college Council is expected to serve as the major governance and planning entity. (Std. IV.A)

There is no reference or evidence that a written policy for faculty participation in governance has been developed (since prior recommendations). The only update was that in December 2007, the Academic Senate President invited the State Academic Senate President and others for a meeting between the administration and members of the Academic Senate and AFT (February 27, 2008).

The college’s self-study states the College Council is the primary shared governance body with representatives from the college’s major constituents groups. However, the process outlined above, and concerns expressed by employees, indicates a lack of agreement on the processes for informed dialogue and decision making. Both the academic senate and the administration referenced a Shared Governance Agreement approved by the LACCD in 2000. This agreement has not been reviewed or updated since its approval. The Chair of the Classified Guild and the Academic Senate President have direct access to the college president. (Std. IV.A.1-2.a)

The self-study report demonstrates there is a strong college process in place for curriculum development. The following committees are actively involved in the development and approval process: Curriculum Committee, Educational Policies Committee, Vocational Education Committee, and the Distance and Distributed Learning Committee. The committees have published policies and guidelines. The Curriculum,

and the Distance and Distributed Learning Committees adhere to shared governance principles. (Std. IV.A.2.a-b).

The team found that while some constructive professional dialogue continues on campus, there is considerable disagreement and dissension on processes and decision making. Simple statements of fact are contested on many issues. This breakdown of respect and collegiality as shared by many on the campus and observed by the team has led to the college's struggle to meet this standard. Clearly, the college has not evaluated its governance and decision making processes, and this has led to its inconsistent responses to the standards and to the recommendations of previous visiting teams. (Std. IV.A.3-5)

The College Council was formulated to replace the President's Advisory Council (PAC). There was no evidence of an evaluation of the PAC to identify deficiencies in its processes. The self-study states that there is no formal process for evaluation; and with the advent of program review, the governance structures and decision-making process will commence in spring 2009. The college has held annual retreats for shared governance members to engage in dialogue about achievements and to set new goals; the last retreat was just prior to the start of fall 2008. (Std.IV.A.5)

Conclusions

Even though the team found pockets of collaboration, many on campus shared considerable disagreement about the college's performance on this standard. The college did not provide sufficient and consistent evidence to support that it meets Standard IV.A.1, 2.a,3, and 5.

B. Board and Administrative Organization

Through numerous interviews with college and District employees, in direct dialogue with Board members, by attending a Board meeting, and during an extensive document review of board agendas, minutes, and policies, the team found that the college accurately described how it met this standard. (Std. IV.B.1.a-j)

The governing board meetings rotate at the various colleges throughout the year. There is a Chancellor's Cabinet where the college president meets with his peers and the Chancellor. There are a number of district committees with representatives of the colleges. Examples of these committees are the District Planning Committee; Student Success Steering Committee and the Advisory Council on Student Learning Outcomes. The self-study does state that participation by the constituent groups on these committees is limited. Some committees have websites. In addition, there is no formal reporting process to the college's constituent groups which impedes any discussion and feedback in a timely fashion.

The district has made progress by developing Board Rule 2418.12 on February 27, 2007. The regulation specifies the process for review of Board Rules, Administrative Regulations and procedural guides. A schedule has been developed to ensure systematic development, implementation, and review.

The Board of Trustees adopted a formal policy for orientation; procedures for orientation of student trustees, adopted a statement of ethical conduct and sanctions for ethics violations. The board also has a process for self-evaluation and adopted Board Rule 2301.10 for establishing annual goals. (Std. IV.B.1.f)

The Board and Chancellor hired a permanent president with extensive experience relevant to the mission. In addition, the President has been able to hire administrators for many critical vacant positions. However, many of the new administrators have been with the college less than one year resulting in significant transition. (Std. IV.B.1.j)

The college president supported and authorized Los Angeles Trade-Tech College's strategic planning process on July 19-20, 2007. The process was to develop a strategic plan for LATTC addressing the goals of the College within the context of the District's plan. A document was created titled Strategic Plan for Los Angeles Trade-Technical College 2008-15. (Std. IV.B.2)

The current president, one of four permanent or interim incumbents during this accreditation cycle, has led the college in the development of a number of new programs, plans and processes. The management organization structure has also been changed under the president's direction. There has not yet been an opportunity to evaluate the changes through the use of data.

The college has made progress on recommendations made in 1997 and again in 2003. In 2006 the college underwent a process for review and revision of the college's mission statement and created a set of strategic priorities. The four strategic priorities that were defined were Student Success, Growth, Community & Business Development, and Organizational Development. The college will need to maintain these efforts and follow up with evaluation to meet this standard. (Std. IV.B.2.a-b)

The college president and the college, through various new initiatives and the support of the chancellor and board, attempt to align their practices with the LATTC mission. (Std. IV.B.2.c)

The president's ongoing discussions with the district about the high costs of CTE and a subsequent budget adjustment (\$500,000 additional funding to the base) appear to be improving the college's financial standing. (Std. IV.B.2.d)

Under the auspices of the President's Office, instructional advisory boards, political stakeholders, members of the community, and even presidential candidate Barack Obama, have been hosted at LATTC. (Std. IV.B.2.e)

Operational responsibilities and functions of the District and College are delineated in the Draft "Los Angeles Community College District/College Functional Map (October 2008). The District provided documentation indicating that the past eighteen (18) months were used to conduct workshops and increase dialogue resulting in greater clarity of college and district roles and responsibilities. Twenty (20) process maps were developed

to delineate the reporting responsibilities between the colleges and the District Office and are available on the intranet. The document is marked as “draft” but depicts the steps for various District functions. The functional map provides a framework for clarifying roles and responsibilities of the district office and where they interact with the colleges. In addition, the process maps depict steps within the district for selected processes. (Std. IV.B.3.a)

The District provides a wide array of services to the college that assist in its mission-related activities, most notably the passage of major local bonds for capital improvement. (Std. IV.B.3.b)

As noted in Standard III, the district distributes resources and controls them effectively for the good of the college. (Std. IV.B.3.c-d)

The team concluded that the college was served by the district and the chancellor in accord with the standard, and no evidence to the contrary was found. (Std. IV.B.3.e-f)

There has been no formal evaluation of the district/system’s role in delineation, governance, and decision-making structures and processes. (Std. IV.B.3.g)

Conclusions

The college and district have made strides in their mutual support and alignment around the college’s mission. The internal collegial dialogue in the college needs attention as a prerequisite to integrating planning, governance, decision making and program review and assessment of student learning outcomes. Frequent administrative changes have made sustaining dialogue, planning, evaluation, and assessment at the level of the standards difficult. The college has substantially met this standard with the exception of IV.B.2.a and IV.B.3.g.

Recommendations

See District Recommendation 1

District Recommendation 2

In order to improve, both the district and the college need to evaluate the consistent adherence in practice to the recently developed delineation of operational responsibilities and functions. (IV.B.3.a)

District Recommendation 3

To meet the standards, develop and implement methods for the evaluation of role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes for the college and the district. Widely communicate the results of the evaluation and use those results as the basis for improvement. (IV.B.3.g)

See College Recommendation 1 – Theme: Institutional Integrity

See College Recommendation 2 – Theme: Evaluation, Planning & Improvement

See College Recommendation 4 – Leadership Stability

College Recommendation 5 – Communication

The team recommends the college work to improve communication between the district and the college's constituent groups. District committees which have a direct relationship with campus committees, such as Student Success, should develop a seamless process of communication and reporting. (Std.IV.A.3)

See College Recommendation 6 – Participatory Governance