SUMMARY OF EVALUATION REPORT

INSTITUTION: College of the Redwoods

DATES OF VISIT: October 18-20, 2005

TEAM CHAIR: Susan C. Carroll, Ph.D.
                        Superintendent/President, Feather River College

The College of the Redwoods was visited by a nine member accreditation team from October 18 to October 20, 2005 to determine if the Redwoods Community College District is meeting the approved standards of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, to identify and commend its strengths, and to provide recommendations intended to assist the district to most effectively serve its students.

In preparation for the visit, team members attended a training session on September 16, 2005. They also carefully studied the institutional self study, web site, and supporting materials. On October 17th, the team met to discuss the information gathered to date, including the content of the written assignments that they had submitted. During the course of the visit, one team member conducted interviews at the instructional site at Hoopa; another queried staff and students at the Mendocino Center in Ft. Bragg. Two other members of the team visited the Del Norte Center. Approximately 60 meetings were held with faculty, classified staff, administrators and governing board members.

The team was treated with great courtesy during the visit, and all employees (as well as students) expressed enthusiasm about the overall working and learning environment at the College of the Redwoods.

Recommendations of the 2005 Accreditation Team

1. The team recommends that the college develop and implement a means of systematic, collaborative, and evidence-driven Program Review for all instruction, student services, and institutional support areas. In order to assure maximum effectiveness, such reviews should be conducted on a regular cycle that links the findings to the annual planning process for all programs and services. (Standard IB.3,IB.4, IB.5, IB.6,IB.7; Standard IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.3, IIB.4, IIC.2; and Standard IIIA.6, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2g, IIID.3)

2. The team recommends that the college address the currency of its official course outlines. (Standard IIA.1a. IIA.2, IIA.2e, IIA.6)

3. The team additionally recommends that the district engage in institution-wide dialogue on the meaning, purpose, and institutional value of student learning outcomes that includes charting a sustainable course of action to implement

outcomes, assess student achievement, and use assessment results to drive improvement in instructional and student learning programs and services. (Standard IB.1), IB.4, IB.7; Standard IIA.1c, IIA.2a, IIA.2b, IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.2g, IIA.2h, IIA.2i, IIA.3, IIA.6, IIA.6a, IIA.6a, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1a, IIC.1a, IIC.2; Standard IIIA.1b, IIIA.1c, and Standard IVA.1, IVA.2b, IVB.1b)

4. The team recommends that the college establish a standardized process for the evaluation of part-time faculty. (Standard IIIA.1b)

5. The team recommends that the district improve its planning processes to include the development of a long-range educational plan; the development of a facilities master plan; and the development an information technology plan. It is further recommended that the district develop a long-range financial planning process to provide early notice of structural imbalances between revenue and expenditures; to identify resources needed to adequately support changes in technology systems, facilities, and enhancement to student support systems; and to regulate the pace of changes consistent with available funds (Standard IA.1, IA.4; IB.3, IB.4, IB.5, IB.6, IB.7; and IIIB.2b, IIIC.1, IIIC.1c, IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.1b, IIID.1c, III.2)

6. The team recommends that the college develop a financial plan that will accomplish the following goals:

   - Respond to declining revenue resulting from the loss of full-time equivalent students

   - To establish a prudent and sufficient unrestricted general fund balance reserve

   - To address changes in annual expenditures to assure that such expenditures are equal to or less than available resources (Standard III D.2c)

7. The team recommends that the college improve its capacity for collaborative and data-driven decision-making. Such decision-making should incorporate broad-based participation, use of qualitative and quantitative data, and establish appropriate measures of effectiveness (Standard IB.3, IB.4, IB.5, IB.6, IB.7; Standard IIA.1, IIA.2, IIA.2f, IIB.3, IIB.4, IIC.2; Standard IIIA.6, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2g, IIID.3; and Standard IVA.1, IVA.2, IVA.3).

ACCREDITATION EVALUATION REPORT FOR

COLLEGE OF THE REDWOODS
OCTOBER 17-20, 2005

INTRODUCTION

The Redwoods Community College District serves the counties of Humboldt (population 128,000); Mendocino (population 90,000), Del Norte (population 21,000), and the western portion of Trinity County. The main campus, located four miles south of Eureka, has a current enrollment of approximately 4,800 students. The Del Norte Campus, located in Crescent City, has a current enrollment of approximately 700 students; and the enrollment at the Mendocino Campus, located in Fort Bragg, is also about 700 students. The district also serves the western portion of Trinity County. Classes are offered at instructional sites in Hoopa, Arcata, and downtown Eureka . The Hoopa site presently enrolls approximately 135 students. Total projected enrollment for the district in the 2005-2006 academic year is 5,100 full-time equivalent students.

History of the College
The Redwoods Community College District was formed in Humboldt County in 1964, and the main (Eureka) campus was constructed with the proceeds of a general obligation bond measure. The need for the institution was immediately apparent, as reflected in its early enrollment of over 1,800 students. Offerings were extended through education centers in Mendocino County when it was annexed in 1975 and in Del Norte County on its annexation in 1978. The district also operates three instructional sites in Arcata, downtown Eureka, and Hoopa (all communities within Humboldt County) and serves a portion of Trinity County.

Mission of the College
The mission of the Redwoods Community College District is very lengthy, but emphasizes its commitment to maximizing the success of its students in its academic and vocational programs, as well as helping them develop an appreciation for life-long learning. The district also makes a commitment to providing adult education, a vocational, recreational, cultural and professional development offerings, and to participating with area businesses and agencies to enrich the economic vitality of the community.

Curriculum
Cited as primary missions of the Redwoods Community College District are the provision of associate degree and certificate programs; academic and transfer education; and professional and technical education. Toward these goals, students are afforded the opportunity to pursue coursework in 71 different disciplines and fulfill their educational objectives by seeking a

degree or certificate in one of 25 fields of study. Areas of emphasis within these degrees and certificate majors allow students to select from 76 concentrations that more specifically address their educational interests and goals. In particular, the college's vocational programs offer a broad range of choices. While the majority of the instructional programs are offered predominantly at the Eureka campus, the catalog clearly delineates those that are available at more than one site or are unique to Del Norte and Mendocino campuses.

Present student enrollment within the district has been declining for the past several years. The number of degree and/or certificate offerings has subsequently decreased, as has the number of full-time faculty and classified employees. Despite these decreases, however, the district has maintained a comprehensive transfer curriculum and support services at its three main sites, and has been exceedingly responsive to community needs and requests for vocational offerings.

Unique Challenges
According to a recent study commissioned by the district, a decline in school-aged population and changing labor market needs are two of the major challenges that require current and future attention. Although the communities within the COR service area are projected to grow at least 1% per year, the majority of new property owners are (and will continue to be) over age 55, or are absentee owners who tend not to actively contribute to the development of educational opportunities. The poverty level of full-time residents has increased in recent years, at the same time that the costs of college attendance, transportation, and other living expenses in the region have also increased. These factors appear to have influenced the decision processes of potential students to a greater degree than is the case in other parts of the state and are likely to continue to be problematic in the foreseeable future.

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Eligibility Requirements

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1. Authority The College of the Redwoods has the appropriate authorization through the California Secretary of State to operate as a public community college and to offer associate degrees and certificates.

2. Mission Admissions policies are consistent with the mission and the mission statement sufficiently defines commitment to student learning.

3. Governing Board A nine-member Board of Trustees elected from the geographical areas of served by the institution oversees the college. The governing board meets all of the requirements necessary for eligibility.

4. Chief Executive Officer In July 1999, Dr. Kathleen Crabill was appointed by the Board of Trustees to serve in a full-time capacity as the Superintendent of the Redwoods Community College District and as president of the College of the Redwoods.

5. Administrative Capacity   The college has sufficient administrative capacity. Key administrative positions of Chief Instructional Officer, Chief Student Services Officer and Chief Business Officer are filled by permanent personnel.

6. Operational Status   The college is fully operational. It offers vocational programs, associate degree programs, and courses that prepare students for transfer to universities.

7. Degrees   The college offers Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees in 22 different fields of study. An estimated 35 percent of the district's students are enrolled in degree programs.

8. Educational Programs   The programs at the College of the Redwoods are consistent with its mission, offered in recognized academic disciplines, and appear to be conducted with appropriate levels of quality and rigor. Less than half, however, have clearly identified and specifically defined student learning outcomes.

9. Academic Credit The awarding of academic credit follows generally accepted practices of one semester-credit unit for each student lecture hour per week or for three student laboratory or activity hours per week. Required information about academic credit is published in the college catalog and is available on the district website.

10. Student Learning and Achievement: The eligibility requirement for educational outcomes has only partially been met by the College of the Redwoods.

11. General Education   Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degree programs require a minimum of 18 semester credit units in general education courses. Degree credit awarded for completion of general education is consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

12. Academic Freedom   The college meets the eligibility criteria through its adopted board policy on academic freedom.

13. Faculty The Redwoods Community College District employs 109 full-time tenured or pre-tenured faculty and approximately 250 associate (part-time) faculty. Approximately 60% of the college's instruction is provided by full-time faculty. This core is sufficient in size and experience to support the district's educational programs. Faculty are integrally involved in curriculum and assessment of learning both in policy and practice.

14. Student Services   Appropriate student services are provided at all of the sites within the Redwoods Community College District.

15. Admissions   The Board of Trustees has adopted admissions policies and requirements consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs.

16. Information and Learning Resources   The college provides library resources at each of its facilities that offer instruction. Each facility also offers a full array of learning support resources, including assessment, tutoring, and academic support. A collegewide network and telecommunication infrastructure supports both administrative and academic information technology needs. The district's information and learning resources are minimally adequate for supporting its instructional programs

17. Financial Resources   The self-study report comments that the Redwoods Community College District operates on an annual balanced budget. However, deficits were recorded for each of the past two years. The primary source of revenue is state apportionment funding that is documented and is allocated to support the operations of the district. There were no indications of any cash flow problems.

18. Financial Accountability   The district is audited by certified public accountants annually. These reports are available to the public.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation   Planning and evaluation within the college are inconsistent. Although planning for facilities and certain departments or units is documented, districtwide input on programmatic planning is not evident, nor is a systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation.

20. Public Information   The team found that the institution provides a catalog that contains accurate and current information. In a review of the compliance information, the catalog contains all but one element of the required information. The information on an Academic Freedom Statement is not included in the catalog but may be found on the College of the Redwoods web page.

21.   Relationship with the Accreditation Commission   The college has a long-standing relationship with the Commission and adheres to its requests as appropriate.

Commendations for the College of the Redwoods

The accreditation team was very impressed with the commitment of the staff and the good work they were doing. Commendations are specifically offered for the following:

1. The district is commended for systematically setting funds aside to pay the long-term liability for post-employment retirement benefits. As a result of its responsible actions, cash balances equal to 66 percent of the total estimated liability have been accumulated.

2. The district is commended for its professional development offerings, including new faculty orientation, establishment of the Center for Teaching Excellence, leadership workshops for management, and the newly developed Service Excellence Group for staff. These opportunities demonstrate a clear understanding of the vital role that

professional development plays in the promotion of learning and the creation of a climate for continued improvement.

3. The Human Resources Department is commended for its progress related to issues of equity and diversity, for leadership in the development of effective hiring and interest-based bargaining processes, and for continued clarification of policies and procedures that comply with applicable code and regulations.

4. The college is commended for the steps that have been taken to integrate and coordinate its student services and for providing such a broad spectrum of services at all of its campuses and instructional sites.

5. The college is commended for its successful application for Title III grant and General Obligation Bond funding. These funds will help to meet a number of the problems identified by the district in its self study.

6. The college is commended for cultivating a common purpose and collective vision and commitment to student success that is evident at every campus and instructional site. The team felt that the staff, faculty, and administration work very well together and that the overall climate was characterized by a sense of trust and collegiality.

7. The Board of Trustees deserves special recognition for its dedication and ongoing efforts toward making the match between community needs and institutional offerings.

8. And finally, the College of the Redwoods is commended for genuinely recognizing and valuing the fundamental roles of faculty, staff and administration.

Recommendations for the College of the Redwoods

While a great deal has been accomplished at the College of the Redwoods over the past few years, much remains to be done to more effectively address accreditation standards and learning outcomes. The visitation team recommendations give special emphasis to and build upon the most critical planning areas presented in the college's self study. In summary, the team recommendations are as follows:

1. The team recommends that the college develop and implement a means of systematic, collaborative, and evidence-driven Program Review for all instruction, student services, and institutional support areas. In order to assure maximum effectiveness, such reviews should be conducted on a regular cycle that links the findings to the annual planning process for all programs and services. (Standard IB.3,IB.4, IB.5, IB.6,IB.7; Standard IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.3, IIB.4, IIC.2; and Standard IIIA.6, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2g, IIID.3)

2. The team recommends that the college address the currency of its official courses outlines. (Standard IIA.1a. IIA.2, IIA.2e, IIA.6)

3. The team additionally recommends that the district engage in institution-wide dialogue on the meaning, purpose, and institutional value of student learning outcomes that includes charting a sustainable course of action to implement outcomes, assess student achievement, and use assessment results to drive improvement in instructional and student learning programs and services. (Standard IB.1), IB.4, IB.7; Standard IIA.1c, IIA.2a, IIA.2b, IIA.2e, IIA.2f, IIA.2g, IIA.2h, IIA.2i, IIA.3, IIA.6, IIA.6a, IIA.6a, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1a, IIC.1a, IIC.2; Standard IIIA.1b, IIIA.1c, and Standard IVA.1, IVA.2b, IVB.1b)

4. The team recommends that the college establish a standardized process for the evaluation of part-time faculty. (Standard IIIA.1b)

5. The team recommends that the district improve its planning processes to include: the development of a long-range educational plan; the development of a facilities master plan; and the development an information technology plan. It is further recommended that the district: develop a long-range financial planning process to provide early notice of structural imbalances between revenue and expenditures; to identify resources needed to adequately support changes in technology systems, facilities, and enhancement to student support systems; and to regulate the pace of changes consistent with available funds (Standard IB.3, IB.4, IB.5, IB.6, IB.7; and IIIB.2b, IIIC.1,IIIC.1c, IIIC.2, IIID.1a, IIID.1b, IIID.1c, III.2)

6. The team recommends the develop a financial plan that will accomplish the following goals:

   - Respond to declining revenue resulting from the loss of full-time equivalent students

   - To establish a prudent and sufficient unrestricted general fund balance reserve

   - To address changes in annual expenditures to assure that such expenditures are equal to or less than available resources

                                                        (Standard III D.2c)

7. The team recommends that the college improve its capacity for collaborative and data-driven decision-making. Such decision-making should incorporate broad-based participation, use of qualitative and quantitative data, and establish appropriate measures of effectiveness (Standard IB.3, IB.4, IB.5, IB.6, IB.7; Standard IIA.1, IIA.2, IIA.2f, IIB.3, IIB.4, IIC.2; Standard IIIA.6, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2g, IIID.3; and Standard IVA.1, IVA.2, IVA.3).

Responses to the Recommendations of the Previous Comprehensive Accreditation Team Visit

The College of the Redwoods was last evaluated in the fall of 1999. The recommendations resulting from that visit, and the observations of the current team are cited below:

Recommendation 1 *The team recommends that the college develop and implement a comprehensive integrated strategic planning process that clearly defines the connection between planning, research, evaluation, budget, and program development. The team recommends that planning be based on broad involvement from faculty, students, classified staff, and administration from the campuses as well as from the North Coast communities.*

Broad involvement in long-range planning was achieved through the listening sessions in the community conducted in fall 1999 and the update in 2003. These activities satisfy a portion of the response to this recommendation. The community sessions served as a basis for the development of the multi-year strategic plan, with the Administrative Team using the recommendations and initiatives as the basis for the establishment of their annual priorities and the Academic Senate linking them to new faculty appointments and allocation of faculty development funds.

However, the connection between planning, research, evaluation, budget, and program improvement that was specifically requested in the recommendation, does not seem to have been entirely completed. There is little documentation that clearly defines the relationship between annual planning and budgeting, or what research is being used to evaluate planned activities. In conversations with a wide variety of individuals on campus, many had minimal knowledge of the college's annual planning process and how they could be meaningfully involved. In the opinion of the team, the materials provided reflected reasonably broad participation on committees but lacked detail related to specificity. The timelines for planning also appeared to be insufficient for full dialogue and consensus on important issues that face the district.

Recommendation 2 *The team recommends that the college clarify and document those areas where it is critical that the campuses and instructional sites integrate and cooperate departments, student services, library services, curriculum, and operations, and the areas where these sites are empowered to take independent actions. Once these distinctions are clarified, necessary changes in communication, budgeting, and operations should be implemented.*

The College of the Redwoods has taken positive steps to integrate and coordinate overall services at its campus and instructional sites, and has done a particularly good job with the integration and coordination of student services. Each of the sites is serviced by a staff of student services professionals, and a full array of student services is provided at each site. For example, the financial aid staff has assigned Financial Aid Specialists III at all sites to provide complete financial aid advisement. While the formal packaging of financial aid is

centrally produced at the Eureka campus using a batched computer system, the specialists do all of the work in preparation for this production.

Integration and coordination is enhanced through the use of a new Datatel system. Because the computer system has integrated the registration and student support functions, accessing this functionality at a remote site provides services that are similar to that on the Eureka campus. This seamless use of the new student system has facilitated very supportive services to students attending at the various locations. Communication is also enhanced through the use of the CCC-Confer program to hold meetings. The district has embraced a culture of providing quality services at all of their locations. It is the opinion of the team that this recommendation has been met.

Recommendation 3   *The team recommends that the college use collaborative processes to develop and implement a plan for an organizational structure for technology support and services that is clear, coordinated, efficient, and effective, and that addresses the need for sufficient staff training and funding at all campuses and sites.*

There is little evidence to support that this recommendation has received appropriate attention. Although some support positions have been added since the last site visit, and the operations of the district have been made more efficient through the use of electronic communications, there is no formal plan in place for technology acquisition or replacement. It is the opinion of the team that this recommendation has not been met.

Recommendation 4   *The team recommends that the college use research, information from the community, current students, and analysis of outcomes to assess and modify as needed the choice of course and program offerings and class scheduling to respond to community needs.*

The "15-year study" conducted by a consultant and the proceedings of "listening sessions" were used to provide evidence addressing this recommendation. It was stated that changes to the schedule, to the course offerings, and to the location were all made as a result of this input. These are commendable activities and, in part, address the recommendation. However, the use of research and analysis of outcomes seems to be missing from the response. It is unclear how research is being used in the planning process, and how research is incorporated into the on-going activities. There was no evidence in the document section of outcomes research for assessment.

The college has received a Title III grant to promote the use of research in decision-making on campus, which will help in achieving this recommendation in the future.

Recommendation 5   *The team recommends that the college collaboratively develop a clear plan for facility modification, facility construction, and/or alternate use of facilities and land resources. This plan should be based on the results of program/service assessment and other strategic plans.*

The recently passed general obligation bond issue reflects a collaborative effort and clear plan for major modifications to facilities and new construction.

Recommendation 6 *The team recommends that the college staff the vacant leadership positions as soon as possible to ensure the institution's capacity to meet its mission and serve its students and community.*

The previous team recommended staffing of seven vacant leadership positions. All of these were filled by the opening of the 2002-2003 academic year.

EVALUATION OF THE COLLEGE OF THE REDWOODS

This report pertains to a request for reaffirmation of accreditation for the Redwoods Community College District, also referred to as the College of the Redwoods. The college followed the 2002 ACCJC accreditation standards for this reaffirmation. The following reports reflect the consensus of the team for each standard.

Standard I
Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

A. Mission

General Comments
The college's mission has been reviewed and revised on a regular basis (five times since it was first adopted in 1977). Although the mission is lengthy, it was developed based on input from a variety of sources, including the community and campus staff, and addresses three primary missions of the college: Associate Degree & Certificate Programs, Academic & Transfer Education, and Professional & Technical Education.

The current Strategic Master Plan outlines the process used to revise the mission. Using the Integrated Planning Committee along with a series of listening sessions, over 400 college staff and community members were involved in the strategic planning process.

For the 2004-07 Strategic Master Plan, the Integrated Planning Committee identified the five areas of focus: Access, Curriculum, Economic Vitality, Inclusiveness & Diversity, and Outreach & Marketing. Goals and activities are included in the Plan and are associated with each of these five areas. Each year, the administrative staff meets to develop the focus for the upcoming year based on these strategic master plan goals and activities.

Reports addressing the "Underprepared Student" and "Barriers to Learning" are planning documents that look at the key issues the campus is facing. Significant changes in campus policies and procedures have been made based on the "Under-prepared" document in both the student services and instructional areas. These changes are in line with the primary philosophy of Student Success that is outlined in the Strategic Master Plan.

Findings and Evidence
The mission statement is approved by the Board of Trustees. The revised mission statement is published in the 2005-06 Catalog. However, the relationship of the mission to the institutional planning and decision-making process is not clearly defined.

With respect to aligning student learning programs and services with the student population and stated purpose of the college's the mission, the process on campus is unclear. The campus appears to use minimal data for program planning and does not yet have a fully functioning Program Review process. (Standard IA.1 and IA.4)

Conclusions

The college periodically revises its mission as part of the three-year strategic planning process. However, it is not entirely clear how institutional planning and decision-making are related to the college's stated mission.

Recommendations

See Recommendations 5 and 7

B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

General Comments

On a few selected topics, the campus community has been engaged, over the past few years, in dialogue on continuous improvement of student learning. The Spring 2003 study on "The Underprepared Student" involved significant conversations among faculty and student services staff members about ways to improve student learning. In September 2003, a series of conversations about barriers to student learning were conducted on campus and lists were created of ways in which barriers can be minimized.

The overall goals for improvement are included in the college's Strategic Master Plan. This plan is revised every three years. The goals and activities included in the plan are not expressed in measurable terms, so it is unclear how any achievement can be measured. For the annual activities identified by the administration, a report is provided each spring at a Board of Trustees meeting.

On-going and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation and reevaluation needs to be strengthened. Qualitative information used each year at the Board of Trustees meetings to report on progress made in Management Activities is a positive beginning.

The college's three-year strategic planning process includes input from a variety of individuals, including both campus staff and the community. However, opportunities for broad-based input by various constituencies are not well documented, and it appears that annual planning activities are developed primarily by the management team.

Although there are a number of committees that conduct meetings on campus, little assessment information or quantitative data was available at the college for review. Most of the evidence verified that the management staff assumes the responsibility for development of annual activities and timelines each year and these are provided for review by the Board of Trustees.

The general program review process for instruction and student services was reported to have been "placed on hold" to allow the Academic Senate to review and revise the process. A few external reviews for vocational programs have been completed (e.g. nursing, dental

assisting), and the Business Services area has conducted reviews (e.g. financial aid, maintenance).

Findings and Evidence

The goals and objectives established in the current Strategic Master Plan are very general and difficult to measure. The RCCD Management activities intended to implement these goals and objectives are more specific, but are not quantitative. (Standards IB.2, IB.3)

A review of the documentation revealed little quantitative data. The college community does not appear to have access to, or use data on which to base key decisions. The annual management activities plan developed by the administrative team each year is a list of things to do that is based generally on the three-year Strategic Plan goals. (Standards IB.3, IB.4, IB.5, IB.6, IB.7)

Conclusions

Although there are plans to strengthen data collection, the college does not yet have adequate systems in place to measure institutional effectiveness based on ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning.

Recommendations

See Recommendations 1, 2, and 3

Standard II
Student Learning Programs and Services

General Comments

A dedicated, student-focused faculty forms the core of a multi-faceted instructional program at College of the Redwoods. It is evident that mutual trust and respect underlie the relationships between faculty and administration and set the foundation for the sound educational programs provided by the college. A common purpose and collective vision for student success permeates the institution. Further, the college genuinely recognizes and values faculty expertise and role that they have in certain fundamental aspects of the institution. Taken as a whole, this value system creates a positive, productive, and effective teaching/learning culture and climate.

Instructionally, there are many notable programs that deserve mention. While not meant to be exhaustive, the following are representative of the commitment the college has to meeting the students' educational needs in innovative and clearly effective ways.

- *First Year Initiative*
  Based upon an impressive and comprehensive study of underprepared students, the institution has collectively moved in the direction of rejecting the notion of a student's right to fail and has shifted that perspective toward the positive, focusing on the pathways that lead to student success. This realignment in viewpoint has manifested itself in a number of significant and bold programmatic and policy

changes including the elimination of late registration, directive and intrusive assessment and advising, competency-based common essays blind scored by English faculty in two of the foundational courses below transfer level English courses, and restricting course access for those students placing below a certain level on the English assessment. These efforts have merit, and the college is commended for taking a courageous stance to support the underprepared with a strong program focused on the ultimate goal of student success and retention.

- *Projects for Learning Enhancement (PLE)*
  For some years, a funding stream has been set aside to support projects that enhance student learning, increase course and degree/certificate completion, facilitate student transfer, enhance workforce development, and foster basic skills improvement. The PLE Committee of the Academic Senate is responsible for overseeing the process of granting project funds. The college is commended for this very effective commitment to student learning and the high quality projects that emanate from this program.

- *Early College Initiative*
  The college has launched two early college endeavors in partnership with local high schools in the district. These programs have the potential for effectively addressing the challenges associated with high potential, underachieving high school students by providing them with a learning environment and experience where they can thrive and inculcating in them the idea that college is a viable option and choice for them.

Findings
The college's course and program offerings are congruent with the broad-based mission of the institution. The provision of associate degree and certificate programs, academic and transfer education, and professional and technical education are cited as primary missions of the Redwoods Community College District. Toward these goals, students are afforded the opportunity to pursue coursework in 71 different disciplines and fulfill their educational objective by seeking a degree or certificate in one of 25 fields of study. Areas of emphasis within these degree and certificate majors allow students to select from 76 concentrations that more specifically address their educational interests and goals. In particular, the college's vocational programs offer a broad scope of choices to students. While the majority of the instructional programs are offered predominately at the Eureka campus, the catalog clearly delineates those that are available at more than one site or are unique to Del Norte and Mendocino campuses.

With the exception of the major research effort put forth to understand the instructional needs of the underprepared student, there is limited evidence to demonstrate that the instructional programs have been developed in response to and are driven by student learning needs across the district. Further, while the college garnered extensive input from the 2002 listening sessions conducted in concert with the development of the strategic plan and the initial study to launch the educational master planning effort, it is not evident that the district is proactively addressing the shifting demographic and economic conditions within the community in a systematic and ongoing manner. For example, the changing demographics in

the area served by the district speak to the growing need to address second language learners, yet there is not evidence that the college has assessed or developed plans to address this emerging community educational need. Further, the college should consider the necessity of adequately distributing appropriate course offerings across the time blocks, including evening hours, to most effectively meet the needs of all students. Offering a stable, rotating collection of key course offerings in the evening time blocks will communicate to potential and current evening students that their interests and educational needs are a priority to the institution. (Standard IIA.1a)

The delivery systems and modes of instruction utilized across the educational programs appear to be suited to the curriculum and are, for the most part, appropriate to student needs. The predominant delivery system is the traditional face-to-face methodology with limited distance learning modalities (e.g., online and cable TV courses) offered each term. While it is clear that technological limitations at the various campuses and sites are posing a barrier to a fully developed distance learning program, there are other institutional issues which may slow the development of more accessible delivery systems (such as concern regarding the impact that distance learning might have on enrollments in the classroom-based courses). The college has a clear commitment to provide instructional access to citizens of its own district and has articulated that it is not interested in serving the needs of students from outside the service area. This value guides the institution to offer the majority of its courses in a traditional delivery format. However, the implementation of a more robust distance learning program has the potential to more effectively reach this goal by enhancing educational access, choice, and opportunity for its own rural and isolated communities. (Standards IIA.2d, IIA.1a)

Modes of instruction are multi-faceted and appear to effectively address the varied learning needs of students. This is evidenced by the recent faculty and student surveys conducted to seek input regarding teaching strategies used and the suitability of these instructional approaches to the students' learning styles. Additionally, information is provided on the course outlines of record that documents the representative learning activities in which students will be engaged. A review of a sample of these outlines attests to the different teaching strategies used by faculty in the delivery of courses. The Center for Teaching Excellence supports faculty in area of professional development and provides opportunities to explore new and innovative teaching strategies. This dedication to faculty training is a laudatory and effective means by which the institution advances in its commitment to providing high quality instruction.

Efforts have been launched to integrate student learning outcomes into the instructional component of the institution. At the course level, the Curriculum Committee has worked diligently to modify the official course outline of record to integrate student learning outcomes into this fundamental document. Faculty are asked to describe each course in terms of the following:
- specific learning outcomes of the course;
- the concepts the students need to master in order to demonstrate attainment of the course outcomes;

- the primary issues or problems, if any, that the students must understand in order to achieve the course outcomes (e.g., issues of gender, diversity, multi-culturalism);
- the skills students must master in order to demonstrate student attainment of the course outcomes;
- representative learning activities that are related directly to the learning outcomes; and
- the assessment tasks that students engage in that will document their achievement of learning outcomes.

The college has supported faculty training in student learning outcomes through the Center for Teaching Excellence workshops, attendance at statewide workshops, and hosting a nationally-recognized expert on campus. It is evident that the recently introduced revised course outline form integrates student learning outcomes into key components of the course structure and content. The critical problem from a course-level perspective is that 56 percent of the college's course outlines are more than six years old. It is not evident that the system (or lack thereof) that allowed the curriculum to become so outdated has now been fixed by the redesign of the form. It is likely that systemic factors have lead to this untenable situation. The faculty and the Curriculum Committee have a unique opportunity to cultivate (hand-in-hand with implementation of the new curriculum form) an expectation that the core of the institution, its curriculum, is current and is maintained in that manner through a cyclical update process. (Standards IIA.1, IIA.2a, d, e, and Standard IB.3)

At the program level, the definition for and articulation of student learning outcomes for degrees and certificates is still in its early stages. As a consequence, the college is unable to assert that the awarding of degrees and certificates is based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes. While an effort to update degrees and certificates and identify learning outcomes for some programs has been undertaken, there is limited evidence to suggest that faculty fully embrace the necessity of this effort.

On an institutional level, the 2005-06 college catalog includes a general education student learning outcomes statement. In it, the college "certifies" that those students who earn an Associate's degree have demonstrated achievement of five specific general educational learning outcomes.

While there is little, if any, institutional reticence about the student learning outcomes initiative, the college is still in the early stages of this comprehensive effort. As referenced throughout this report, delineating student learning outcomes at the course level has begun, and although program level outcomes have not yet been developed, a good deal of work has been done to define degree level learning outcomes (i.e., general education). To meet the spirit, intent, and purpose of student learning outcomes, there needs to be a clear value and commitment placed on the student learning outcomes process to include:
- college wide dialogue;
- development of student learning outcomes;
- assessment of student achievement of such outcomes; and
- use of such assessment to improve programs and services.

(Standards IIA.2a and IIA.2b)

The college uses established curriculum development and oversight processes to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, and deliver courses. This is principally accomplished through the efforts of the Curriculum Committee, a standing committee of the Academic Senate. As a consequence, faculty expertise drives this process in an effective manner. On the other hand, it is unclear what institutional process is used to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, and deliver programs that comprise the college's degrees and certificates. It is important to note that curricular responsibility extends beyond course review and approval. Whatever process is in place to oversee degree and certificate programs needs to be formalized, clarified, and seriously embraced in order to uphold the integrity of these official (and transcripted) degrees and certificates. (Standard IIA.2a)

With the exception of certain vocational programs (see below), the lack of a program review process at the college stymies efforts to gain an effective assessment of the instructional programs. Processes are not well established to systematically assess the quality of the instructional programs and to use the results of such evaluations to seek improvement. Just as with student learning outcomes, the college must develop a sustainable, meaningful, functional, and cyclical program review process. (Standard IIA.2e and 2f)

As briefly mentioned above, some vocational programs are required (or seek) to undergo periodic external review, self study, and certification to ensure that industry and workplace standards and competencies are being met. Departmental efforts to take these vocational programs through such extensive review processes toward the goal of curricular alignment with external expectations and standards is commendable and can serve as a model worthy of adaptation (as appropriate) to other program areas. It is noteworthy that the College of the Redwoods is the only California community college to have achieved accreditation of four programs by the National Association of Industrial Technology.

Relative to planning, the college has recently embarked upon a major initiative to develop a 15-year educational master plan to guide long-range planning efforts for the overall educational program. This effort has begun with an extensive assessment of external factors that have a bearing upon the future direction of the instructional program. This is an effective start to this intensive planning effort. Coupled with a resurrected program review process, this new educational master plan will form the foundation for effective and meaningful planning if such efforts have the genuine commitment of the institution and its constituents.

The college provides four pathways for students to attain an Associate degree: Associate of Arts in University Studies; Associate of Science in a specific program area; Associate of Arts in General Studies; and Associate of Science in General Studies. Each of these degrees requires a component of general education based upon a general education philosophy and student learning outcomes statement published in the college catalog.

With the exception of the English and mathematics requirements (which are at a higher level for the General Students and University Studies degrees), students pursuing any one of the four Associate degrees select from a common set of courses in language and rationality, the

natural and social sciences, and the humanities to satisfy this general education requirement. Further, the general education student learning outcomes affirm that students will experience the more fundamental aspects of learning such as the ability to think, read, and communicate critically and an awareness of the relationship of humanity to its natural, scientific, aesthetic, ethical, cultural, historical, political, and technical environment. This is true for the vocational programs as well, where these same general education requirements are upheld and speak to a strong commitment to interweave vocational and academic coursework to provide a well-rounded, holistic learning experience for all students.

Of the four Associate degrees available to students, only two (University Studies and the Associate of Science in a specific program area) have a clearly focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. It is recommended the college review the nature and scope of the two Associate degrees in General Studies to ensure that these programs are not merely a collection of disjointed courses but rather meet the purpose and intent of a two-year degree. (Standards IIA.3 and IIA.4)

Barriers to student mobility are minimized through a transfer-of-credit process that results in the evaluation of incoming students' transcripts for acceptance in meeting institutional course requirements. Despite the fact that this process is in place, staff members report that the timely analysis of transcripts sometimes causes an internal problem. This should be addressed so that (1) the transfer student's transition into the institution is not delayed; and (2) course prerequisites (if any) can be effectively and consistently enforced. (Standards IIA.6 and IIA.6a)

With regard to students transferring from the college to a four-year institution, the lack of a dedicated articulation officer is of concern. The complexities of articulation within the California public higher education system and the dynamic state of articulation programs within the three public systems coupled with the large percentage of outdated official course outlines of record (56 percent) necessitate a high level of institutional oversight. Accordingly, the college should strengthen its capacity to champion articulation with transfer institutions, to contend with and appeal unfavorable articulation decisions made by four-year institutions, and to be a voice and activist for the college and its students in articulation and transfer matters. (Standard IIA.6a)

The self study did not speak to the issue of program discontinuance or program requirements that are significantly modified nor the impact that such changes have on students in the program. Information could not be gleaned during the team visit to elucidate the college's response to these situations. (Standard IIA. 6b)

The college represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students through various publications and media including the catalog, website, schedule, fliers, and brochures. There does not yet appear to be a systematic process in place with regard to institutional policies and procedures to ensure that such changes are integrated into printed and electronic documents aimed to inform students. (Standard IIA.6c)

The faculty's responsibility to distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in their discipline is recognized and embodied within the 2004-07 Collective Bargaining Agreement Schedule F-1 which describes professional conduct standards. Within the framework of academic freedom, faculty have a responsibility to promote and defend intellectual inquiry and the exchange and analysis of ideas among colleagues and students and to value the diversity of opinion. Additionally, the faculty evaluation process includes an assessment of the faculty member's performance in the area of professional conduct (valuing the diversity of ideas on campus, demonstrating respect to students and colleagues/staff, and following ethical standards of the profession). The foundation for this is embodied within board policy. Efforts should be made to include an academic freedom statement in future catalogs. (Standard IIA.7a)

The college has established expectations regarding student conduct and responsibilities and codifies these in a recently revised board policy and accompanying regulation. Specifically, policy and procedures delineate general standards of conduct (which include acts of dishonesty) and detail the sanctions that would accompany a violation of these standards. These expectations and policies for student conduct are summarized in the college catalog and web site. The college should include the latest policy on student conduct and responsibilities (and sanctions) in its college catalog and ensure that future revisions and updates to this important policy are incorporated into key student documents in a timely manner. (Standard IIA.7b)

Conclusions
In summary, the college's instructional programs are sound, provide an array of educational choices to the students and communities served by the institution, and are guided by faculty, staff, and administrators who have a sincere commitment to student success. Teaching and learning form the heart of the institution and are evident across the campuses and instructional sites.

Recommendations
See Recommendation 2

B. Student Support Services

General Comments
The student services staff is dedicated to providing quality services to all of the students attending College of the Redwoods. The team felt that the staff are very caring individuals and have the students' best interests at heart. There is very positive support for the First Year Initiative, and the college is embracing this new plan. The enhanced matriculation plan has also placed more expectations on assessment activities throughout the district. Placement cut scores have been recalibrated for matriculated students. Underprepared students who score within certain ranges are now required to see a counselor and are subject to a limited range of classes.

The counseling department works well as a team. While there is recognition that this department is understaffed, students receive appropriate services but sometimes must wait a

while to see a counselor. Counseling staff have been very creative in using flex days and hours to maximize their availability to students during peak enrollment periods. They are also constantly trying new ways of delivering services and have moved office staff to accommodate new initiatives.

Communication is good among all of the student services staff located at the various sites and has been enhanced by e-mail, the integrated Datatel management information system, CCC Confer, and telephone conferences. However, information regarding budgeting, planning, program review, and student learning outcomes does not appear to be adequately communicated to all student services staff.

The team noted a marked lack of budget awareness in student services mid-managers and support staff. While senior staff members understand the budget development cycle, others do not know how to interface with this process and advocate for their needs. For a couple of years, there has been no augmentation to the budget, but there have still been opportunities for budget adjustments and new or replacement positions. Student services staff do not all understand how to access these opportunities. The counseling staff voiced frustration that, while there is an identified need for more counseling, the development of staffing priorities is weighted toward instructional and administrative needs.

There was also a sense that there is not enough time to serve students and, at the same time, focus on new initiatives. Because of multiple priorities, student services staff felt they must chose between serving students or completing a variety of reports and compliance documents.

Findings and Evidence
The College of the Redwoods is providing quality student services at each of their sites. An overall climate of trust and collegiality exists that is very productive to meeting student needs. The team found that the college has secure student records that are confidential and backed up on a regular basis. Student records recorded after 1985 are stored in a fireproof vault in Enrollment Services. The college follows existing policies for release of student records.

The team felt that two areas of student services required greater attention: program review and the development of student learning outcomes for each student services function (e.g., financial aid, counseling, etc.)

The team was told that the campus had suspended program reviews for both instruction and student services in spring 2003 because the Academic Senate wanted to revise and reinvigorate the process. The review process is slated to begin anew in spring 2006. Evidence of a new program review board policy reflected a schedule for program reviews through 2009-2010, and a brief outline listing the review format. (Standard IIB.4)

The team found no evidence that members of the student services programs have completed any internal reviews for some time. While both categorical programs have participated in statewide site visits, compliance reviews, program reviews, etc., and some of the vocational

programs have participated in external program-specific evaluations or accreditation, there was no evidence that student services had participated in districtwide program evaluation. (Standard IIB.4)

The student services staff has only recently begun to develop SLOs. The only evidence the team found pointed to a group of staff who recently attended an RP group presentation. Student services staff commented that they are now "thinking" about SLOs and have not scheduled meetings to begin the dialog for the development of objectives. (Standard IIB.4)

The counseling department has made some initial efforts at creating SLOs for their area and has developed a Student Learning Support Services Survey asking students for feedback on the services they would like to have. The team did not see evidence that the survey had been administered or see any survey results. The counselor who spearheaded this effort is on reduced load and could not be reached for comment. (Standard IIB.3c)

Other student services program areas have not made any progress on development of SLOs. In 2001, the student services area began discussions about a new conceptual model for student learning support services focusing on "Reaching Out, Moving In, Moving Through, Moving On." The college intends to develop SLOs for each phase of this process but has yet to do so. (Standard IIB.4)

The team found that some of the hindrances preventing student services employees from moving forward on the development of SLOs have to do with limited resources available to complete the tasks, especially institutional research data. (Standard IIB.4)

Members of several student services programs were not aware of or involved in the budget development or strategic planning process. Team members asked employees to describe the budget and planning development process and their involvement in these. Student services employees were often unable to clearly articulate the process or their role. The team could not find any evidence of a written annual budget development planning cycle or a clear description of a planning process. (Standard IB.1, 2, 3, 7 and Standard IIB)

Conclusions
Student services staff are highly committed to the success of the students who attend the College of the Redwoods. There is generally good communication among the staff, and they work well together on joint initiatives. The residence hall staff also works well with the various departments and programs at the Eureka campus and are held in high regard by other campus employees.

One of the challenges of the student services program is to make everyone on the campus feel equally valued. When budget cuts have been made, the classified staff has absorbed most of the reductions. While morale remains high, continued cuts could erode this mood and, in turn, negatively affect teaching and learning by reducing the support services necessary for maximum effectiveness.

Recommendations
See Recommendations 1, 3, 4, and 6

C. Library and Learning Support Services

General Comments

Since the last comprehensive visit, the library has been relocated into the new Learning Resource Center (LRC). The LRC also houses the Distance Education Lab, High Tech Lab Center, general tutorial services, Writing Lab, and the Academic Support Center. Supporting the library is an LRC manager, a librarian, a head of circulation (vacant), an evening supervisor, a part-time clerk (temporary), and a technical service staff member (vacant). There is one full-time office assistant who assists the entire LRC facility. The library also has access to student workers. The LRC director and library staff report through student services administration.

Also housed in the LRC are one full-time manager of the Academic Support Center and one full-time instructional tutor. These two staff members do not have evening or weekend hours. The Academic Support Center provides a full array of learning support services, including assessment, tutoring, and access to the Internet.

The library is open Monday through Thursday from 7:45 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., and on Friday until 4:30 p.m. It is not open on weekends. In the evenings, a reference librarian is not available. There is a library branch office at the Del Norte and Mendocino sites. Branch libraries are also closed on the weekends. The Del Norte and Mendocino sites also offer student learning support services during the regular workweek. The two branch libraries do not have any support services provided by a professional librarian.

A policy is in place defining how faculty reviews library materials for currency, accuracy, and depth.

Findings and Evidence

Currently, all cataloguing of materials is performed by the LRC manager, who is the only person college wide trained in the cataloguing software. Use of the software is essential to maintaining the library database's accuracy and currency. No training is currently in place, or planned, for preparing someone else to do cataloguing. (Standard IIC.1a)

The library has a discretionary budget of $30,000, of which $1,200 is used for such things as telephone, supplies, and other support materials. The remaining $18,000 is used for purchases of texts, audio/visual materials, CDs and DVDs. This $18,000 is shared among the Eureka, Del Norte, and Mendocino library branches.

The Del Norte and Mendocino branches do not have a dedicated librarian, but use student workers and a part-time classified staff person for support, library research. Library usage classes and reference support are not provided at these sites. (Standard IIC.1c)

Previous accreditation reports have reflected insufficient library staff to support program needs. Repeated requests have been submitted for an additional librarian, but the position has not been funded. Currently, there is very limited time for such necessary library activities as archiving, placing protective covers on paperbacks, and FTPing of files, or downloading electronic books. (Standard IIC.1, 1a)

While a policy is defined for faculty review of library content, there is no mechanism for enforcement of the policy. (Standard IIC.2)

At the Eureka campus, the Academic Support Center (ASC) has one full-time staff member who manages the center. This person is available Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Several specific services directly provided are not available to evening or weekend students. Student workers are available, but are limited in the services they can provide. This manager does not have any administrative support staff. The ASC is not open on weekends. (Standard IIC.1c)

At the Eureka campus, there is one full-time instructional tutor. Student tutors and faculty tutors are available and are coordinated through the instructional tutor. Tutoring is determined by anecdotal need rather than from data indicating need. Tutors tend to be selected based on volunteerism or are students who have advanced knowledge in specific subjects. Data is electronically captured on students who are tutored, but no analysis of the data is performed. (Standard IIC.1b)

The LRC hosts approximately 350 student workstations used for everything from assessment, internet access, tutoring, and research. There is no dedicated technical staff to specifically maintain and troubleshoot technical problems that might occur at the workstations. (Standard IIC.1d)

Conclusions
Library and learning support services appear to be minimally adequate for services currently provided. Requests for an additional librarian have not been successful. The one librarian works primarily to support referencing and instruction and does not perform other essential types of professional activities, such as FTPing of data files, or uploading of electronic textbooks. In particular, the librarian has no training in cataloguing of the college's library database, so the LRC director is performing the professional functions not performed by the librarian, when possible.

If the need for library services increases, it is unlikely that current staff levels will be sufficient. The college should also give consideration to providing greater access to library resources for evening and weekend students. Similar problems of access and services for evening and weekend students arise within the Academic Support Center and tutoring. In spite of these limitations, the staff of the LRC, in all of its support programs, is clearly dedicated to student success.

Recommendations
See Recommendation 1

Standard III
Resources

A. Human Resources

General Comments

The college works diligently to recruit and hire excellent faculty, staff, and administrators. Particular attention is given to faculty hiring and to the role of faculty in the hiring process both in policy and in practice. The role of faculty is recognized in board which states that "...responsibility for selecting well-qualified individuals is shared cooperatively by faculty members and the college administration, participating effectively in all appropriate phases of the hiring process."

The college's exemplary hiring process for faculty includes an initial paper screening and 30 minute telephone interviews of a substantial pool of candidates. Finalists are invited (at the college's expense) to attend a full day of activities targeted at finding the best possible candidate and ensuring that they are knowledgeable about the college. During the day, each candidate is interviewed by faculty members, asked to offer a teaching demonstration, given a collegewide reception, shown the campus, and afforded the opportunity to meet with the academic administrators. Should the first choice of the faculty not be the first choice of the administration, discussion continues until consensus is reached. If an outstanding candidate cannot be located, the position is opened again at a later time.

The Academic Senate manages the equivalency process for course or discipline equivalency status. The qualifications and process are delineated in BP 305. The college also offers a one semester emergency equivalency given by the Vice President of Academic Affairs during times when an equivalency committee cannot meet. The standards are the same.

A review of current job descriptions reflected that they contain information directly related to institutional mission and goals and appear to reflect appropriate duties, responsibilities, and authority for each position.

Findings and Evidence

The result of careful hiring processes is a sufficient number of full-time faculty and administrators. The emphasis put on full-time staffing at the centers is noteworthy, yet it poses a significant financial demand on the Eureka campus and, in particular, on the need for classified staff. For example, the counseling ratio at Eureka is 1199 to 1; at Mendocino 491 to 1; and at Del Norte 247 to 1. Given the increased workload resulting from the initiative to address the underprepared student, this is of concern to the college (see self study pages 86-87). Staff at the Eureka campus report that staff positions are unfilled due to lack of funding. (Standard IIIA.2)

The college has clearly delineated forms for evaluations of full-time faculty, administrators, and staff. Faculty evaluation forms include assessments of professional development and the

faculty member's self evaluation of their understanding of student learning and success. The performance evaluation instruments include standards for professional ethics. The committee is tasked to examine progress on plans to address concerns and recommendations noted at the last evaluation and to provide "feedback on student learning, faculty effectiveness, and professional growth." It was observed by the team that the faculty evaluation process does not reference part-time faculty, only full-time. (Standard IIIA.1b)

An important omission is that management and staff evaluation forms do not contain any reference to student learning or outcomes. Policies and processes for management, full-time faculty, and staff evaluations appropriately require formal, timely, and documented processes. Associate (part-time) faculty evaluations are handled by the divisions, and no regular period of evaluation is established in the contract. (Standard IIIA.1b and 1c)

The college does not presently measure the effectiveness of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes as a component of evaluation. With the exception of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, none of the persons interviewed seemed aware of this portion of the standards. The Planning Agenda mentioned in the college's institutional self study, however, does acknowledge the need to build on the newly adopted general education and course specific student learning outcomes to incorporate measures of effectiveness in their evaluation processes. Attention must be given to this omission during an institution-wide dialogue on the meaning, purpose, and institutional value of student learning outcomes and the means by which improvement can occur in the instructional and student learning programs and services. (Standard IIIA.1c)

Anecdotal evidence gathered through interviews suggests a high expectation that board policies and related regulations and processes will be appropriately followed and that the institution places a high value on professional ethics. Given board polices address various aspects of ethics including: a conflict of interest code; equal opportunity/nondiscrimination; sexual harassment; drugs; ethical conduct; and consensual relationships. A major revision of the college's staff diversity plan currently awaits approval from the state Chancellor's office.

Personnel records are kept in files that are locked during non-business hours. All but one of the file cabinets is reportedly fireproof. The room is alarmed during non-business hours. Medical information is retained separately from personnel records. Every viewing of a personnel record (regardless of who views the file) is recorded in the file. If copies are made, that is noted, as well.

The college's strategic plan for 2004-2007 includes as one of its strategic drivers "Inclusiveness and Diversity." A Multicultural and Diversity Committee has been established with broad goals designed to support diverse personnel. While the college reports compliance with this standard, every interviewee commented that it is an area where improvements can be made. At the same time, they suggested that there is a supportive "spirit" for these efforts. Interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators all point to a high level of regard for the treatment of all individuals within the college community. The adoption of interest-based bargaining is seen as a commitment to integrity.

Data has not been implemented in the institution's evaluation of the diversity of staff. The institution should regularly assess and communicate its record in employment equity and diversity. (Standard IIIA.4, 4a, and 4b)

The college's new faculty orientation program is commendable. Every new faculty is granted 20 percent release time in their first semester and is required to attend a course in teaching excellence every Friday. A senior faculty member teaches the course at the Center for Teaching Excellence. New faculty members are welcomed with a two-day retreat at Del Norte. An April retreat to the Mendocino Coast campus and once a month meetings in the spring round out the first-year experience for the new tenure track faculty. Fifty percent of current faculty have completed the program. Many faculty and administrators credit the program, in part, with inspiring the high level of professionalism and dedication for which the administration praises this faculty.

While the professional development programs are laudatory in themselves, the institution does not engage in systematic evaluations of its professional development programs (based on the available evidence). While managers are asked for input about their needs, and it is clear that faculty are encouraged to offer feedback regarding their professional develop desires, the lack of a systematic and thorough evaluation leaves an important gap in long term, strategic planning for professional development. (Standard IIIA.5, 5a, and 5b)

As with so many programs at the college, the integration of human resource planning with institutional planning is dependent on the individuals involved rather than being part of the documented processes. Program review of the Human Resource Department (slated to begin in fall 2005) should illuminate strengths, weaknesses, and potential means to improve. Given the fundamental impact of human resources on the college as a whole, it is imperative that human resources planning become integrated with institutional planning and that systematic assessment of the effective use of human resources be used as the basis for improvement.

Conclusions
The College of the Redwoods is in compliance with the requirements of Standard IIIA with the following exceptions:

IIIA.1b - as it relates to the evaluation of part-time faculty
IIIA.1c - role of student learning outcomes in evaluations
III.A.5b - systematic evaluation of professional development programs
IIIA.6 - there is no documentary evidence of the process by which human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning

Recommendations
See Recommendations 1, 3, and 4

B. Physical Resources

General Comments

The district provides sufficient facilities to support both instruction and support services, and has identified instructional programs or services space requiring remodeling or in need of additional space at the Del Norte and Mendocino sites. The district has completed the construction of a Learning Resource Center and Childcare center on the Eureka campus since the last comprehensive accreditation site visit. A strong commitment to and effective processes for the identification and repair of safety hazards in a timely manner is present at the College of the Redwoods. The district is committed to providing well-maintained facilities, and the maintenance department does an outstanding job, particular given the size of the staff.

The institution has aggressively sought funding for construction projects and recently passed a $40 million local facilities general obligation bond. It has subsequently embarked on a facilities development program that includes two new buildings, modernization work in the main gymnasium, locker rooms, and pool. In addition, the district is in the working drawing phase for three projects at the Eureka campus, and one project for each of the Del Norte and Mendocino centers.

A new position, Director of Environmental Health and Safety, was developed to help the college address its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and safety issues. Resources are committed to correct access modifications district-wide.

In January 2003, the district responded to Recommendation #5 from the last accreditation visit to develop an Education and Facilities Master Plan (EFMP). The college's response indicated the projected completion of an EFMP for Fall 2003 to include the appointment of a planning team involving faculty, staff, student, community members, and the appointment of professional planning consultants.

During the course of construction for the LRC sand Childcare Center, the college established an interim review and prioritization process for minor facility construction and modification projects. The review involves a semiannual evaluation of facilities requests by the senior administrators of the college.

Findings and Evidence

In 1999, the district established a Safety Committee chaired by the Director of Environmental Health and Safety. The committee met monthly until 2003, at which point it revised its meeting schedule to meet quarterly, at a minimum, to review safety issues. In addition, the custodial, maintenance, and security staff make regular safety inspections. Safety hazards, once identified, are repaired in a timely manner, as verified by review of the safety inspection reports and completed work orders.

The College of the Redwoods has provided sufficient facilities for the past several years; however, the college has identified the Health Occupations Program as having outgrown their existing space and also reported the need to develop additional space for a new Dental

Hygiene program. In addition, the science facilities were built in 1967 and need to be renovated to maximize the delivery of instruction. Also in the working drawing stage are the renovation/modernization of the Health Occupations/Applied Technology Building, the Life Science Building, and the Learning Resource Mezzanine on the Eureka campus.

Additionally, the Del Norte and Mendocino Centers have identified the need to renovate or expand their main buildings, science labs, art labs, classrooms, and student services areas .All of these projects are identified in the district's five-year construction plan, funded in part or in full by the recently passed general obligation bond.

Work orders are submitted in writing to the maintenance department, however, implementing a web-based work order system is being considered to improve communication back to staff requesting services. Maintenance staff does daily checks on facilities such as parking lots and HVAC systems. The staff also performs preventative maintenance on a regular schedule. On conducting visual inspections and reviewing the Maintenance Department Program Review, it was concluded that the maintenance department is doing an outstanding job maintaining the district facilities to an acceptable standard given the size of the custodial, grounds, and maintenance crews.

In 1999, the district established a Safety Committee and a Transition Committee, both chaired by the Director of Environmental Health and Safety. This person's hours have since been reduced and the some of the responsibilities have been assigned to other district staff on the college's Eureka campus.

The institution allocates one-tenth of one percent of the district's overall budget to fund minor renovations and improvement projects that address needed ADA corrections as identified by the Transition Committee. Bond revenue will address the majority of remaining ADA corrections identified district-wide.

In February 2005, a consultant was hired by the district to complete an external educational needs assessment to assist the college in developing its Educational and Facilities Master Plan. In an interview with the Integration Planning Committee (IPC), it was confirmed that the Educational and Facilities Master Plan has not yet been completed. The new projected completion date is June 2006. The IPC is chaired by the Superintendent/President and membership includes senior managers and administrators as appointed by the Superintendent/ President, and representation from the Del Norte campus, the Mendocino Coast campus, and the Eureka campus (which includes the Klamath-Trinity, Arcata, and Eureka Downtown Instructional Sites in its jurisdiction). The Committee operates as an ad hoc planning group that meets as the need arises. There were no formal meeting agendas or minutes for review by the accreditation team. (Standard IIIB.2a and 2b)

Conclusions
The district is commended for the construction of the Learning Resource Center and Childhood Development Center, both completed in 2002, and for the successful passage of its $40 million local facilities general obligation bond.

The maintenance department is doing an outstanding job of maintaining the district facilities to a safe and acceptable standard given the size of the custodial, grounds, and maintenance staff. A sustained commitment to address ADA corrections is present.

The Educational and Facilities Master Plan is not yet complete.

Recommendations
See Recommendations 1 and 5

C. Technology Resources

General Comments

The college has successfully transitioned its information systems infrastructure to the Datatel system. The Datatel system integrates database needs relevant to financial, enrollment, student records, and other traditional forms of institutional data capture. Datatel training was provided, and continues to be provided, for those needing access to, and knowledge of, use of this system.

The technology infrastructure includes not only the network supporting the management information systems, but also numerous instructional labs, including: Distance Education Lab, Writing Center, Academic Support Center, Digital Media Lab, Center for Teaching Excellence, MAC lab, and other departmental/program labs.

An informal Technology Assessment Group convenes regularly and serves as an advisory body to senior management for issues related to instructional technology.

Findings and Evidence
The Eureka campus has a full-time Director of Information Technology. Reporting to the Director are seven technical support staff, two operations/help desk staff, two programmers, and a manager each for the technical support staff and operations/help desk staff. In addition, the Del Norte and the Mendocino sites each have a full- time instructional technician.

There are ongoing and weekly communications between the Director of Information Technology and the technical staff. The remote technical staff participate by telephone and occasionally by attending meetings in person at the Eureka campus. The Information Systems area will begin a self study evaluative review in fall of 2005.

At this time, the college does not have a formal and inclusive committee responsible for identifying and integrating information technology college wide. Instead, information is shared through an informal Technology Assessment Group (TAG) of interested members. The TAG does not create, keep, or publish formal minutes or agendas. Membership in the committee is more by "word of mouth" and not by formal policy definition. (Standard IIIC.1 and C.2)

Conclusions

The Information System department appears to be effective in its support of the college information technology infrastructure. However, the college has no formal, clearly defined overall process for systematic identification and integration of information technology that is explicitly and formally inclusive of all relevant college communities. Instead, an informal Technology Advisory Group (TAG) convenes weekly and provides advisory information to senior management. Senior management then makes information technology planning, budgeting, and implementation decisions, taking into account recommendations made by TAG.

Recommendations

See Recommendations 1 and 5

D. Financial Resources

General comments

The College of the Redwoods has had two consecutive years of budget deficits that reduced the unrestricted general fund balance to a level that is 4 percent of unrestricted expenditures as of June 30, 2005. Full Time Equivalent Students (FTES) enrollment has dropped by 12.9 percent over the past two fiscal years. Additionally, FTES projections for FY 2005/2006 anticipate only a minor increase in FTES during FY 2005/2006. The projected increase will not restore FTES to the base established in FY 2003/2004. Unless there is full restoration of lost FTES, a permanent decline in base revenue of up to $1.85 million (7.9 percent of base revenue of $23.5 million) will occur. This decrease in revenue will create further challenges to sustain current service levels while maintaining a prudent reserve.

On a positive note, substantial progress has been made in setting funds aside for payment of the long-term liability resulting from post employment retirement benefits. Funds set aside to pay for the retired employee liability could be drawn down to pay for future deficits, but unless a comprehensive plan to correct the structural imbalance between expenditures and revenue is implemented, this action would only cause further deterioration of the financial position.

The self study report lacked sufficient information and evidence to determine compliance with the standards. However, findings were verified by college financial personnel, and financial documents were available, including independent public audit records.

Findings and Evidence

The College of the Redwoods ending fund balance has declined substantially since reaching a level of $4,196,329 on June 30, 2003. The balance at June 30, 2005 was $1,116,670. This is a decline of $3,079,659 in two years. The Final Budget for FY 05/06 projects a fund balance of only $855,000, or 3 percent, although the actual fund balance at June 30, 2004 was 4 percent (Standard III.D.2.c) The Final Budget does not reflect a deficit for FY 05/06.

FTES enrollment has been declining, falling from a level of 5,688 during FY 02/03 to 4,956 during FY 04/05. The 12.9 percent decrease resulted in the college receiving stability

revenue in FY 04/05. A loss of up to $1.8 million in revenue will result unless the FTES rises to 5,688 in FY 05/06. The college is projecting 5,100 FTES during FY 05/06. This decline in FTES was confirmed when the issue was raised during interviews by the accrediting team. (Standards IIID, D.1a and D.1b)

The State Chancellor's Office Recalculation reports confirm the decline. The Recalculation Apportionment reports for the three past fiscal years document credit FTES levels and computational revenue as follows:

FY 02/03	5,688	$22.9 million
FY 03/04	5,518	$22.7 million *
FY 04/05	4,956	$23.5 million *

(*Stability revenue of $1,848,557 was received during FY 04/05 and $41,480 in FY 03/04)

Discussions with the Vice President, Chief Business Officer and a review of the Final Budget for FY 05/06 indicate that the college's planning for financial resources is integrated with and supports all institutional planning. The review of evidence (Final Budget) and Budget Calendar reflect that there is consideration of the goals and activities for the upcoming year when the Final Budget is being developed.

The institutional planning process reflects realistic assessments of the financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements. The process also incorporates "Management Activities in Support of the Strategic Plan" as part of the budget development process. Priorities are established by using the information from the management activities. The Management Activities process is used to set funding priorities.

A Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) reviews information presented to it regarding the annual operating budget assumptions, the budget development timeline, and other relevant information used to compile the annual budget.. Documentation was provided to show that there was one meeting of the FAC in the current year (February 2005), but, with the exception of agendas, no other documentation of discussions or actions taken by the committee was available. (Standard IIID.1d)

In general, some personnel are made aware of the budget development process through the publication of the Budget Calendar, but many levels of the organization are unsure of their part in the budgeting process despite the fact that the process has been consistent for a number of years. Documents and information from discussions do not indicate that an assessment process is in place to determine if the allocations achieved the intended results. (Standard IIID.2a, 2b and 2d)

Budget documents detail the sources of revenues. Unrestricted funds are 89 percent, according to state apportionment reports. Projections of state revenue receipts are established by the State Chancellor's Office, which are standard guides for use in projecting cash inflows. The college is also allowed to use Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANS) to

bridge cash flow deficiencies. The Board of Trustees monitors the budget by reviewing monthly expenditures and budget reports.

The college is funding its long-term liability by making annual contributions to the Employee Benefit Trust Fund. The trust fund is not an irrevocable trust and would not meet the requirements for the GASB 45 reporting requirements. The college has made significant progress in funding this obligation which is reported by actuarial studies to be $8.1 million. There is $4.8 million set aside to pay for this obligation. With the exception of addressing the Post Retirement Health Benefit obligation, no evidence of long-range financial planning was provided. (Standard IIID.1c)

The audit reports prepared by external independent auditors are unqualified and did not report any audit findings for the fiscal year ended in 2003/2004. In FY 2002/2003, the audit report identified a finding related to a lack of timely cash reconciliations. That finding was corrected during FY 2003/2004. The reports do not show any indication of financial problems that may result in a questionable financial condition. All financial resources of the college, including those funds raised by the College of the Redwoods Foundation, are audited along with the college's financial records. (Standard IIID.2c)

Insurance is available through a risk pool arrangement with other school districts in northern California. College of the Redwoods is a member of a Joint Powers Authority established for general property and liability insurance, workers' compensation insurance and also uses a JPA to purchase its medical insurance. These JPAs provide adequate protection for routine and extraordinary losses.

Conclusions

The College of the Redwoods substantially complies with Standard III. However, unless action is taken quickly to address stability, there is a risk that the financial solvency of the district could be jeopardized.

The college is experiencing a trend of deficits in its unrestricted general fund and substantial declines in FTES. It has a projected ending fund reserve of 3 percent. The decline in FTES may result in a permanent reduction in permanent state funding beginning in FY 2005/2006 unless enrollment rises dramatically during the year. The financial condition is resulting in vacancies for staff positions and the college's ability to adequately fund educational improvement programs.

The declining fund balance, the decrease in FTES enrollment and the expectation that enrollment will not increase in FY 05/06 indicate that there are not sufficient resources to support its educational programs at current levels while maintaining a prudent and sufficient unrestricted general balance reserve.

Recommendations

See Recommendations 1, 5, 6, and 7

Standard IV
Leadership and Governance

A. Decision-Making and Processes (and)
B. Board and Administrative Organization

General Comments
The college reflects a commitment to innovation and excellence as evidenced by its Center for Teaching Excellence. Commitment to student success is also demonstrated through the Projects for Learning Enhancement program. There appears to be a culture of collegiality throughout the district. Employees generally consider the president to be a trusted colleague, and the interviews conducted consistently reflected a positive working environment despite the team's determination that many employees were not included in dialogue about factors affecting the college.

The district has an active board and a functional administrative organization. The board is concerned with maintaining current policies and uses those policies along with delegated authority to the president to effectively control the operations of the college.

Evidence reflecting board-based participation on committees responsible for policy, planning, and resource allocation was minimal, and some did not have available agendas and minutes. This was also reflected in the self-study, which listed few documents within the descriptive study summaries.

Findings and Evidence
The working environment has clearly improved since the last comprehensive assessment, and there is evidence of increased opportunities for the community to participate through the Listening Sessions offered throughout the district. Although the college has documentation indicating some institutional policy-making processes and procedures, interviews with a variety of employees reflected that not all sectors know where policy can be obtained or what processes are in place. Institutional policies have been recently made available online, but communication about where and how to access the information does not appear to have been consistently disseminated to college staff. (Standard IVA.1; Standard IVA.1,A.2)

Documentation of the Center for Teaching Excellence trainings and funded Projects for Learning Enhancement were evidence of a high level of commitment to student success. The college has done a good job in communicating its commitment to faculty development through available website training opportunities and through the Center for Teaching Excellence. The institution has allocated a significant amount of money to professional development for faculty and to projects that promote student success. Faculty leadership assists instructors in taking initiatives to improve educational programs and professional development. (Standard IVA.1; Standard IVA.2a)

Faculty members demonstrate positive working relationships with administration and have a substantial voice in the areas of responsibility given to them through the statewide Academic

Senate Title V guidelines. The Vice President of Academic Affairs attends the Academic Senate as a non-voting member and continues to promote collaborative informational discussions that include the perspective of administration. The transmission of recommendations from faculty and academic administrators to decision-making bodies is evidenced in the faculty hiring prioritization process and in the curriculum and academic standards and policy committees. The workings of the Academic Senate are integral to teaching and learning at the college. Curriculum proposals and course content documents mark the beginning implementation of student learning outcomes, but not all divisions have updated curriculum. (Standard IVA.5)

Faculty are made aware of institutional information through the Faculty Handbook. The board demonstrates a respect for the recommendations of the Academic Senate and notes this as a positive change from previous years. Faculty representation on the Academic Senate includes sites other than the Eureka campus, though some faculty would like to see improved communication with the main campus and the other sites. The geography of the district presents a challenge to district-wide participation in collaborative leadership, and the college has improved its representation through a co-chair system of Academic Senate Presidents – one from the Eureka campus and one from the Del Norte campus.

Classified staff interviews reflected that not all employees are aware of opportunities for classified staff participation or collegial issues since the Classified Senate is no longer in place. The participation of leaders through the district is commendable; however, it was noted that many were unaware of shared decision-making, especially as it relates to resource allocation. The faculty noted a need to review the recent restructuring within Academic Affairs, but there is no evidence of evaluation or assessment of effectiveness for faculty or administration to determine the parameters of the review. (Standard IVA.3)

Administrators and faculty noted the need to increase student participation in institutional decision-making processes and student government leadership. Student participation is encouraged, but sporadic. Evidence for findings includes Academic Senate documentation, (including the Academic Senate Bylaws); the Faculty Handbook 2004-2005; Academic Senate minutes; review of shared governance committee listings; and interview information from ad hoc committees not noted within a formal committee structure. (Standard IVA.2; Standard IVA.2.a)

The established governance structure on the surface appears to be sufficient. Although the processes facilitate discussion of ideas and lead to communication, some of the communication is treated informally, i.e., without any committee processes or structure that can be easily identified. Interviews with college staff noted the need for more comprehensive communication. Evidence for these findings included interviews, committee missions and/or purpose, and the self-study document. (Standard IVA.1)

The institution does not demonstrate a clear connection between planning, research, evaluation, budget, and program development. This was also noted in the previous accreditation site visit. (Standard IVA. 4)

The college governance and decision-making structure has undergone change in some areas; however, there is little evidence of systematic evaluation processes or effectiveness criteria for improvement. Communication of processes and effectiveness measures is often informal. The information related to college leadership lacked data on multiple constituency reviews and evaluation as it relates to process and decision-making. Evidence used for findings included Academic Senate Bylaws, interviews, and review of the college's Strategic Plan. (IV.A.5)

The Board of Trustees' policy manual reflects that policies are being reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The district policy on Mission (BP 1200) was reviewed and updated on June 1, 2004. BP 1201 describes the board's philosophy about the quality of the programs of the institution. The written policy describing the selection process for the CEO is defined in BP 2431. The current president was hired in 1999. (Standard IVB.1)

BP 2010 identifies the membership of the board to include nine trustees from the different geographic areas of the district. There is also one student trustee. The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality legal matters and financial integrity. No other entity reviews the actions of the governing board. Board terms are staggered. (Standard IV.B1.a)

Board policy numbers 1010 through 2745 identify the membership of the board, representation areas, election cycles and the bylaws and functions of the board. Board actions are consistent with their policies as evidenced by a review of the minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings. Board policies are systematically and regularly reviewed. Board minutes from the September 11, 2005 meeting document that the last discussion of board policy occurred on that date. (Standard IVB.1.b,c,d, and e).

Board Policy 2740 addresses orientation for new trustees. The trustees are very seasoned and have served on the board for many years. The newest member to the board was elected in 2001. Other members have been on the board since the late 1980's and the early to late 1990's. Interviews were held with four board members. (Standard IVB.1f)

Members of the Board of Trustees stated that they have just started an evaluation process for the first time this year. The process was developed by reviewing evaluation processes from other college districts. The members were still becoming accustomed to the process and noted that as they become more familiar with the process it will become easier and more useful. On September 11, 2005 the Board of Trustees approved BP 2745-Board Self Evaluation and discussed the results of its self evaluation. (Standard IVB.1.g)

The board received informational updates about the accreditation process and the progress of the accreditation report. Board minutes from March 1, 2005 identify that the board received an update on the accreditation process and the self study report. Board minutes from September 12, 2004 comment that Vice President Bobbitt reported on the academic standards committees have been formed and the timeline for preparation of the report was noted. The board members commented that they were aware of the accreditation process and, one of the board members was involved in reviewing the final self study report. (Standard IVB.1.f, j)

Board Policy 2431 "Employment of President/Superintendent" outlines the procedure to use in hiring a president. The current president was hired in 1999. The president is evaluated annually by an ad hoc committee of the Board of Trustees. The trustees review and modify a questionnaire that is sent to various constituency groups and community members. Information from the surveys is used to develop the board's evaluation. The president's goals are reviewed along with performance in achieving those goals as well as other matters important to the board. (Standard IVB.2 a, b)

Authority to operate the college is delegated to the president through board policy. A review of board minutes for the past year reflected focus on policy level decisions. This was confirmed in an interview with several board members. The board expressed that a primary concern is the financial condition of the district. Monthly financial reports are on board agendas. The administration commented that the board is provided updates on enrollment regularly.

Interviews with a number of employees indicated that the president is responsible for most of the planning efforts in conjunction with the administrative team. The president works closely with the community to obtain a sense about what it expects of the college. Although there is considerable evidence to indicate community input, there is little evidence to demonstrate that this input is used in a collaborative campuswide strategic planning. (Standard IVB.2d and e).

Institutional research is not yet conducted on a systematic basis. Few linkages exist between institutional research, institutional research or resource allocation processes. It was interesting to note, however, that the president was cognizant of student performance data that other employees did not appear to know. (Standard IB.3)

The president has effectively implemented systems to ensure statutes, regulations, and governing board policies are consistent with the mission of the institution. Budgets are tightly controlled although there is ample evidence to show that the declining financial situation has not been widely addressed by the college. (Standard IVB.3d)

Conclusions

The college has improved its overall working climate since the last comprehensive accreditation. Evidence indicates that staff enjoy a positive working environment, and that there is a demonstrated commitment to teaching. Faculty members are committed to collaborative decision-making, but not all individuals in leadership roles have sufficient opportunities to participate in the decision processes, particularly in the allocation of resources.

Recommendations

See Recommendation 7