

# **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**Columbia College  
11600 Columbia College Drive  
Sonora, CA 95370**

**A Confidential Report Prepared for  
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

**This report represents the findings of the External Evaluation Team  
that visited  
Columbia College  
October 1 - October 5, 2017**

**Keith Curry, Ed.D.  
Chair**

## **COLUMBIA COLLEGE VISITING TEAM MEMBERS**

### **Chair**

Dr. Keith Curry  
President/CEO  
Compton College

### **Assistant**

Ms. Amber Gillis  
Professor of English and Humanities  
Compton College

### **Academic Representatives**

Mr. Loren Bell  
Faculty, Professor, English  
City College of San Francisco

Dr. Elizabeth Keith  
Dean of Instruction  
Hawaii Tokai International College

Ms. Evelyn Lord  
Head Librarian  
Laney College

Dr. Gary Williams  
Faculty, Professor, Psychology  
Crafton Hills College

Dr. Art Sandford  
Dean of Liberal Studies  
Oxnard College

### **Administrative Representatives**

Ms. Mojdeh Mehdizadeh  
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Ms. Inge Bond  
Director of Research, Planning  
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Ms. Donna Berry  
Vice President of Administrative Services  
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Dr. Renée DeLong  
Dean of Counseling Services  
Cerritos College

## SUMMARY OF THE EXTERNAL EVALAUTION REPORT

INSTITUTION: Columbia College

DATES OF VISIT: October 1 – 5, 2017

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Keith Curry, President/CEO, Compton College

An 11-member Accreditation External Evaluation Team visited Columbia College October 1 through October 5, 2017, for the purpose of determining whether the College continues to meet the Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and United States of America Department of Education (USDE) regulations. The team evaluated how well the College is achieving its stated purposes, providing recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement, and submitting recommendations to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) regarding the accredited status of the College.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair attended a team chair-training workshop on August 3, 2017, and conducted a pre-visit to the campus on August 30, 2017. During the visit, the team chair met with the campus leadership and key personnel involved in the self-evaluation preparation process. The entire External Evaluation Team received team training provided by ACCJC on September 6, 2017. The External Evaluation Team received the Comprehensive Institutional Evaluation Report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the site visit; team members found it to be very detailed and comprehensive. Columbia College made every attempt to make the process transparent while encouraging broad participation from the campus community including, faculty, staff, students, and administration.

On October 2, 2017, several members of the External Evaluation Team participated in meetings with Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) personnel; the Evaluation Team began the site visit at Columbia College that same day. Upon arrival, the team met with the Columbia College leadership team and individuals who were involved in the accreditation self-study process. The day ended with a tour of the Columbia College campus.

During the external evaluation visit, team members conducted about 60 individual interviews and meetings, in addition to observations involving College employees, students, board members, and community members. Numerous, less formal interactions with students and employees outside of officially scheduled interviews were conducted and there were many informal observations of classes and other learning venues. Two open forums were scheduled, which provided the Columbia College community and members of the community an opportunity to meet with the External Evaluation Team. The public forums were not well attended; however, they were very positive. The comments during the forums illustrated the pride many of the faculty, staff, students, and members of the community have for Columbia College.

The team reviewed numerous materials supporting the ISER in the team room and electronically, which included documents and evidence that support the Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. Evidence reviewed by the team included, but was

not limited to, documents such as institutional plans, strategic planning documents, program review procedures and reports, student learning outcomes evidence, course syllabi, distance education classes, College policies and procedures, enrollment and student success information, committee minutes and materials, and governance structures.

The External Evaluation Team greatly appreciated the organization and hospitality of Columbia College shown during the visit. The team also appreciated the staff members who assisted with requests for individual meetings and additional evidence throughout the evaluation process.

The External Evaluation Team found the College to be in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. Additionally, the External Evaluation Team found a number of innovative and effective practices and programs, and as such, the team issued a number of commendations to the Columbia College. While the External Evaluation Team found that Columbia College satisfies the vast majority of the standards, some recommendations were issued to increase effectiveness.

# MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2017 EXTERNAL EVALUATION TEAM

## Columbia College Commendations

**College Commendation 1:** The team commends the College's SLO Working Group for developing a culture of evidence at the institution through such efforts as SLO camp, instituting peer colleagues as Data Wizards, and their tireless efforts to support faculty and programs throughout the assessment process and transition to eLumen.

**College Commendation 2:** The team commends the College Library for creating an innovative online reporting tool that tells its story through the extensive use of comparative statistics, multiple data points, assessment and rich analysis leading to improvement of the library program.

**College Commendation 3:** The team commends the College for enhancing online student support services in order to meet student needs regardless of location or delivery method.

**College Commendation 4:** The team commends the College on its Academic Wellness Educators (AWE) Steering Committee, whose members have been dedicated to improving student learning by introducing innovative pedagogical and student support practices across campus. For programs in need of assistance in improving student outcomes, AWE has formed focused inquiry groups that conduct research to find ways to support improved student learning and achievement.

**College Commendation 5:** The team commends the College for establishing regular, inclusive professional development activities, such as the In-Service Day for all employees and the Adjunct In-Service evening program, that generate widespread, engaged participation from the entire college community.

**College Commendation 6:** The team commends the College for leveraging its small-college ethos to create many innovative, collaborative activities such as Finals Cram Night, Midterm Madness, Welcome Week, SLO Camp and Parents Open House that connect and engage the community.

**College Commendation 7:** The team commends the College for its "can do, will do" spirit, local educational impact and solid community engagement, which resulted in a recent endowment gift of more than \$2 million for the Columbia College Promise Scholarship and Mini-Grant Programs.

**College Commendation 8:** The team commends the College for its unwavering determination to maintain a campus culture that is mindful of the needs of its students and the communities the college serves.

## **Columbia College Recommendations**

**College Recommendation 1 (Improvement):** In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College continue its efforts to fully implement its plan to sustain meaningful SLO assessment, incorporate SLO data into program review, and refine and clarify its integrated planning processes to link institutional planning, assessment, and continuous improvement efforts as outlined in Quality Focus Essay Project #1. (I.B.5, I.C.3, II.A.3, II.A.11)

**College Recommendation 2 (Improvement):** In order to improve effectiveness with the Commission Policies, and USDE Regulations regarding Distance Education, the team recommends that faculty, academic deans, the Vice President of Instruction, along with the Distance Education Committee, continuously engage distance education instructors in a careful review of the definitions, standards, policies and regulations pertaining to regular and substantive interaction between instructor and student. (I.B.5, II.A.7, Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education)

**College Recommendation 3 (Improvement):** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that that College institute a comprehensive system of evaluation of the council and committee structure in order to measure adherence to the mission, progress toward the College's strategic goals, and general effectiveness of the new structure. (I.B.7, I.B.9, IV.A.7)

**College Recommendation 4 (Improvement):** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the College update and implement a sustainable college technology plan that ensures its technological infrastructure, quality, and capacity are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services, and that the plan will also align with. (III.C.2)

## **Yosemite Community College District Commendations**

**District Commendation 1:** The team commends the District for their fiscal responsibility in completing facilities bond measure projects that have greatly improved the environment for teaching and learning for students.

## **Yosemite Community College District Recommendations**

**District Recommendation 1 (Compliance):** In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the District address the total cost of ownership for physical and technological resources in support of the Colleges' missions, operations, programs, and services. (III.B.4, III.C.2)

**District Recommendation 2 (Improvement):** In order to improve effectiveness and transparency, the District needs to engage college and district constituencies with timely, deliberative, and collaborative dialogue to coordinate ongoing efforts in the creation, development, and alignment of all college and district plans and planning processes, including: college and district-wide strategic plans, facilities plans, technology plans, resource allocation (including one-time funds), and human resources. As well, it is recommended that the District

strengthen communication regarding district decisions. (III.B.4, III.C.2, III.D.3, IV.D.5, IV.D.6, IV.D.7)

**District Recommendation 3 (Improvement):** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the Trustees act as a collective entity in support of Board decisions. (IV.C.2)

**District Recommendation 4 (Compliance):** In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the Board fully delegate operational authority to the Chancellor and the College Presidents as specified in Board Policies 2430 and 2430.1, and demonstrate through practice, their policy making role while refraining from interfering with the CEO's authority to operate the District/Colleges. (IV.C.7, IV.C.12)

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT**

### **1. Authority**

The team confirmed that Columbia College is authorized to operate as a postsecondary, degree-granting institution based on continuous accreditation by the ACCJC of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The ACCJC is the regional accrediting body recognized by the USDE and granted authority through the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

### **2. Operational Status**

The team confirmed that Columbia College is operational and provided educational services to 4,009 unduplicated students in 2015-2016. The team confirmed that the College served 1,673 full-time equivalent credit students and 87 full-time equivalent non-credit students in the 2015-16 academic year. Approximately 25% of the College's credit students are enrolled full time.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

### **3. Degrees**

The team confirmed the vast majority of Columbia College courses (88 percent) were for degree-applicable credit. Three percent were for non-degree applicable credit, and 9% were non-credit. The College offers a variety of programs and 59 of these lead to associate and transfer degrees.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

### **4. Chief Executive Officer**

The team confirmed that the YCCD Board of Trustees selected Dr. Angela Fairchilds as the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Columbia College effective on February 1, 2014. The team found that the Board of Trustees vests requisite authority in the President to administer board policies. The District informed the ACCJC of the appointment of President Fairchilds, who replaced Interim President Leslie Buckalew.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

### **5. Financial Accountability**

The team confirmed that Columbia College, as part of YCCD, undergoes an annual external financial audit by an independent certified public accountant agency. The annual financial audit is posted on the District's website. The Board of Trustees reviews audit reports annually in public sessions and discusses management responses to any exceptions.



YCCD files audit reports with the Stanislaus County office of education, the State Chancellor's Office, and all other public agencies as required.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

## **CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND RELATED COMMISSION POLICIES**

The evaluation items detailed in this Checklist are those which fall specifically under federal regulations and related Commission policies, beyond what is articulated in the Accreditation Standards; there may be other evaluation items under ACCJC standards which address the same or similar subject matter. Evaluation teams will evaluate the institution’s compliance with standards as well as the specific Checklist elements from federal regulations and related Commission policies noted here.

*General Instructions: The form should contain narrative as well as the “check-off.”*

- a. The team should place a check mark next to each evaluation item when it has been evaluated.*
- b. For each subject category (e.g., “Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment”), the team should also complete the conclusion check-off.*
- c. The narrative will cite to the evidence reviewed and team findings related to each of the evaluation items. If some content is discussed in detail elsewhere in the team report, the page(s) of the team report can be cited instead of repeating that portion of the narrative.*
- d. Any areas of deficiency from the Checklist leading to noncompliance, or areas needing improvement, should be included in the evaluation conclusions section of the team report along with any recommendations.*

This Checklist will become part of the evaluation team report. Institutions may also use this form as a guide for preparing documentation for team review. It is found as an appendix in the team and institutional self-evaluation manuals.

### **Public Notification of an Evaluation Team Visit and Third Party Comment**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third party comment.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions</i> as to third party comment.

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to

	meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

## **Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement**

### **Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution's mission.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level.

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

### **Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

## **Credits, Program Length, and Tuition**

### **Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution, and is reliable and accurate across classroom based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education's conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits</i> .

[Regulation citations: 600.2 (definition of credit hour); 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

**Transfer Policies**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the Commission <i>Policy on Transfer of Credit</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.17(a)(3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a)(ii).]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does

	not meet the Commission’s requirements.
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**Distance Education and Correspondence Education**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has policies and procedures for defining and classifying a course as offered by distance education or correspondence education, in alignment with USDE definitions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is an accurate and consistent application of the policies and procedures for determining if a course is offered by distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student’s grade) or correspondence education (online activities are primarily “paperwork related,” including reading posted materials, posting homework and completing examinations, and interaction with the instructor is initiated by the student as needed).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has appropriate means and consistently applies those means for verifying the identity of a student who participates in a distance education or correspondence education course or program, and for ensuring that student information is protected.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:**

The team audited a sample of distance education courses and found that in a limited number of cases, the policy of regular and effective instructor-student contact was not in evidence.

**Student Complaints**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the college catalog and online.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student complaint files for the previous six years (since the last comprehensive evaluation) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> and the <i>Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(ix); 668.43.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

**Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials**

**Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the Commission <i>Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status</i> .
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status as described above in the section on <u>Student Complaints</u> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(vii); 668.6.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to
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	meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

## **Title IV Compliance**

### **Evaluation Items:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the USDE.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution's student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations</i> and the <i>Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

### **Conclusion Check-Off:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

# **STANDARD I MISSION, ACADEMIC QUALITY, AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND INTEGRITY**

## **Standard I.A - Mission**

### **General Observations**

Columbia College has adopted a mission statement that accurately describes its role as a provider of basic skills, degrees, certificates and transfer pathways for “students of diverse backgrounds.” The College emphasizes its adherence to strong academic standards and rigorous curriculum development and review process. The institution’s commitment to the use of data in guiding decisions to support their mission appears quite strong, and great progress appears to have been made in the past two years to furthering the development of a culture of data-driven analysis leading to continuous quality improvement.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Columbia College’s mission statement, approved by the YCCD Board of Trustees in May 2016, was written collaboratively and thoroughly vetted through the college’s governance bodies. The mission emphasizes the critical role that the institution plays in serving the educational needs of its community. It further delineates its educational focus on mastering “foundational skills,” attaining degrees and certificates, and pursuing career and transfer pathways. The mission statement appears on the college website, in the college catalog, on posters around the campus, and in the recently published Governance and Committees Handbook. (I.A.1, I.A.4)

There is ample evidence that the College does use data to determine how well it is accomplishing its mission. The college utilized data gathered in their Student Equity Report to target services for former foster youth. The college was awarded a Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant in order to provide staffing and support for increasing the institution’s capacity to gather, analyze and utilize data in decision-making. The College has adopted the software platform eLumen, to facilitate the processes of SLO creation, assessment and analysis, and made some truly admirable efforts to educate and train faculty on the purpose of SLOs and on the new platform. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness publishes an (almost) annual Columbia College Institutional Effectiveness Report. Reports were created and published in 2016 and 2017; however, the most recent report to be reviewed by the College Council appears to be from spring 2014. (I.A.2)

The College has ensured that all programs and services are aligned to the institutions mission. The program review process and report template include sections to describe these alignments. The College has updated its Vision, Core Values, Strategic Plan, Distance Education Plan, which are in alignment to the institutions mission. Resource requests are included in the program review form for faculty and staff hiring and instructional equipment at the College. (I.A.3)

### **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard.



## **Standard I.B - Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness**

### **General Observations**

Columbia College is working diligently on all aspects of meeting this standard, although there is still significant work to be done to fulfill their plans and complete their new planning and evaluation cycles. The College has developed practices that will encourage and sustain dialogue about student learning, equity, and institutional effectiveness.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College conducts dialogue about student learning outcomes in both formal and informal settings. Within programs and service areas, dialogue takes place at the end of each term when that term's assessments have been completed. Student outcomes assessment results are incorporated in program review and, via that process, are foundational to resource requests.

Dialogue about student equity takes place in a number of venues, from program review to use of the Institutional Effectiveness Report (produced annually), and data dashboards produced by the Institutional Research office.

The College relies principally on the Academic Senate in areas concerning academic quality such as curriculum, grading policies, hiring processes, and prerequisites. All programs and courses undergo regular review through the Curriculum Committee.

The College's Institutional Research office is the source of the bulk of the data that the College constituents use to evaluate institutional effectiveness, including the aforementioned Institutional Effectiveness Report, the Student Equity Report, and program- and course-level student achievement reports available via the College's data portal.

The newly-formed Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) is charged, beginning in fall 2017, with leading the College dialogue on continuous improvement. This council is tasked with program review oversight, in consultation with the Academic Senate, as well as conducting regular evaluations of councils and committees. The broad-based membership of the IEC will help to ensure that dialogue will take place across constituency groups. (I.B.1)

The College has identified student learning outcomes for all instructional programs and student learning and support services. With few exceptions for programs undergoing redesign, all student learning outcomes have been assessed, and on Flex Day in spring 2017 course, program, and service area outcomes were mapped to the institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs).

Course, program and service area student learning outcomes assessments are entered in eLumen, software that the College purchased in 2015 and began using for recording of assessments in 2016-2017. eLumen output reports enable the College to view performance on program student learning outcomes based on a roll up from the course student learning outcomes assessments, and institutional student learning outcomes based on a roll up from the program student learning outcomes assessment.

Course student learning outcomes are assessed every two to three years, depending on the frequency of course offering; program, service area, and institutional student learning outcomes are assessed every two years as part of the College's integrated cycle of program review and assessment. This cycle establishes a system of alternating years for learning outcomes assessment and program review so that the evaluative processes can inform one another.

In its Quality Focus Essay, the College has identified the improvement of integration of outcomes assessment into planning and the use of assessment for program improvement. (I.B.2)

The College has established Institution-Set Standards in the following areas, aligned with its mission: satisfactory course completion, program completion, transfer to 4-year institutions, and job placement rates.

The College recently reexamined and reset its institution-set standards to reflect a "stretch goals" approach, rather than their previous iteration which focused on a minimal acceptable standard; the new standards are aspirational in nature. These new standards are intended to encourage constituents across the College to think about improvements to policies or procedures that will result in continuous improvements, rather than maintaining the status quo.

The College assesses its performance on the institution set standards on an annual basis and attends to the results as indicators of a possible need to take action to improve student learning. The College intends to retain these standards for a period of three to four years.

The College publishes its performance on its institution-set standards on the About Accreditation page of the college website, as well as in the appendices of the annual Institutional Effectiveness Report. (I.B.3)

The College utilizes assessment results principally in its program review and resource allocation request process. Faculty assess course student learning outcomes at least every two to three years depending on frequency of course offerings, while program and service area outcomes are assessed every two years. The results of the assessments are summarized at the course-, program-, or service-area level, and faculty and staff dialogue about the results to assess ways to support student learning. Conversations about assessment results take place both formally, at Flex Day/SLO Day, and at department meetings, as well as informally as faculty and staff interact throughout the campus and on various committees and councils. Since, Columbia College is a small college, these informal conversations and collaborations about how to improve student learning are commonplace and part of the College culture.

The College has identified the need to improve the ways in which it utilizes result of assessment for program improvement as part of its Quality Focus Essay. (I.B.4)

The College's program review template includes a requirement that the author discuss program alignment with the College mission. In addition, using reports available via the data portal, program review authors are encouraged to analyze their program's student performance data

including completions, successful course completion, and grades, and describe how they intend to address any areas in need of improvement.

The College has established a five-year strategic planning cycle which began in 2016-2017. The plan includes six goals that were informed by data from student, employee, and community surveys and refined via the College's participatory governance structure. As part of the College's "Understand, Plan, Do, Check" improvement cycle, the College will evaluate the goals and the plan implementation itself on an annual basis.

The College's program review cycle requires that programs establish goals and evaluate their progress toward achievement of those goals in each successive cycle. When creating these goals, programs are referred to the college's strategic plan goals, as well as the institutional student learning outcomes, to foster alignment with the College mission.

The College assesses accomplishment of its mission through evaluation of student achievement via program review data, the institution-set standards, and the annual Institutional Effectiveness Report. Program review data includes enrollment and student performance metrics, which align with the College's mission statement. The institution set standards reflect student learning in four representative areas of the College's Mission, and the Institutional Effectiveness Report includes additional measures and data disaggregation that program and service areas can analyze to gauge their performance with regards to the College mission.

The College should review Distance Education courses to ensure regular and substantive interaction is occurring between the student and the instructors. (I.B.5)

The College provides student achievement data via its data portal. These data are analyzed for use in program review, as well as in annual reporting for a number of college initiatives, including student equity and basic skills. The Research Office is currently developing a series of data dashboards, housed behind a firewall, that will enable users to disaggregate student performance data at the course and program level in order to identify any areas of disproportionate impact. Once approved by the Institutional Effectiveness Council, the Research Office plans to demonstrate the use of these dashboards across multiple College Council and committees to foster the College's use of disaggregated data.

When programs identify gaps across student groups in achievement, they set goals for mitigating those gaps and utilize the resource allocation process to request any resources they may need to support their efforts. The dashboards enable programs to look at student performance measures with data disaggregated by demographics and special populations such as veterans and foster youth. This enables programs to analyze their student performance data with an eye to disproportionate impact on any group and enables them to take steps to ameliorate that effect. (I.B.6)

Until recently, the College Council was responsible for the evaluation of councils and committees and this practice was largely nonexistent, as the College notes in its Actionable Improvement Plans. The College plans to develop and centralize cycles of evaluation for college policies and procedures, led by the Institutional Effectiveness Council.

Based on a review of committee structures in 2016-2017, the College underwent a reorganization, resulting in the creation of the Institutional Effectiveness Council and the Student Success Council, both of which report to College Council and report out, on a monthly basis, to the Academic and Classified Senates. The Student Success Council has oversight for the following initiatives: Basic Skills, Adult Education, Student Equity, SSSP, and the Completion Initiative, among others. This is an ambitious charge for a single council, but the members report that there is sufficient overlap in activities and personnel that efficiency is actually increased by bringing these initiatives all under one council umbrella.

As of 2017-2018, the Institutional Effectiveness Council will assume responsibility for the evaluation of college policies and practices and their integration with the strategic goals and the college mission. (I.B.7)

The College publishes the results of its outcomes assessments, as well as its completed program reviews, on the college website. The Institutional Effectiveness Report is published annually and includes the results of assessment of the College's institutional student learning outcomes, as well as data in support of progress toward each of the six strategic goals. The College publishes committee and council minutes, including results of assessment and evaluation activities, to the appropriate committee and council websites.

College administrators regularly publish newsletter updates regarding assessments and activities in their respective areas to the college community. (I.B.8)

The College has adopted George Polya's "Understand, Plan, Do, Check" model for its institutional planning cycle. This model facilitates the College's use of program review, outcomes assessment, and resource allocation to facilitate accomplishment of its mission, institutional effectiveness, and academic quality.

In the "Understand" segment of the cycle, the College analyzes current and trend data in the area of student achievement to identify areas in need of improvement. Through the participatory governance structure, college committees and councils work to identify plans for improvement in the target areas. Those plans are then enacted by the programs and areas across the college, and in the "Check" segment, the activities and associated data are evaluated.

The College has not had a formalized cycle of evaluation of its councils and committees in recent years, although analysis of data related to college programs and initiatives have been analyzed and refinements have been made as a result. Program review is the primary venue for these analyses; and human, technology, and financial resources needed to improve institutional effectiveness are requested based on those results. (I.B.9)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard.

## **Recommendation for Improvement**

**College Recommendation 1 (Improvement):** In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College continue its efforts to fully implement its plan to sustain meaningful SLO assessment, incorporate SLO data into program review, and refine and clarify its integrated planning processes to link institutional planning, assessment, and continuous improvement efforts as outlined in Quality Focus Essay Project #1. (I.B.5, I.C.3, II.A.3, II.A.11)

**College Recommendation 2 (Improvement):** In order to improve effectiveness with the Commission Policies, and USDE Regulations regarding Distance Education, the team recommends that faculty, academic deans, the Vice President of Instruction, along with the Distance Education Committee, continuously engage distance education instructors in a careful review of the definitions, standards, policies and regulations pertaining to regular and substantive interaction between instructor and student. (I.B.5, II.A.7, Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education)

**College Recommendation 3 (Improvement):** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that that College institute a comprehensive system of evaluation of the council and committee structure in order to measure adherence to the mission, progress toward the College's strategic goals, and general effectiveness of the new structure. (I.B.7, I.B.9, IV.A.7)

## **Standard I.C: Institutional Integrity**

### **General Observations**

The College assures the accuracy, clarity and integrity of the information it provides to its constituents via numerous means. There are processes in place to review and track changes to the College Catalog and to ensure the accuracy of the online class schedule. The College website is generally well-maintained and easy to navigate. There are campus governance and advisory groups who review the College Mission and who maintain a rigorous curriculum review and update process. The Institutional Research and Planning staff provide multiple, customizable, and data-rich reports through which performance data can be viewed and presented. The college recently began the implementation of eLumen in order to facilitate input, tracking, analysis and integration of SLO data into planning and resource allocation.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College demonstrates a commitment to maintaining institutional integrity at all levels. The College Council periodically reviews and updates the mission, vision and core values. The Curriculum Committee faculty, support staff, and Office of Instruction demonstrate a real commitment to the integrity of course offerings and to the regular review and update of curriculum. Student achievement data are posted online. Student learning outcomes are posted for courses and programs on syllabi, Faculty Directory Pages. Program Student learning outcomes for student services are accessible on the Student Services Assessment website. It is evident that the College utilizes multiple resources to clearly and accurately communicate information including catalog, website, and documents. (I.C.1)

The College has established and follows a systematic protocol to ensure the accuracy of the College Catalog. The College provides printed and online catalog. The Catalog clearly identifies academic achievement policies and includes required information. (I.C.2)

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning maintains extensive web-based reports and data tools available to the institution's staff and to the public. Student performance data is available via the CCCCO Scorecard and Data Mart. The college has begun to more fully develop, expand and integrate eLumen into the process of documenting student learning on the course, program and institutional level. The College has student learning outcomes for every course, academic program of study, and at the institutional level. (I.C.3)

The team found that the course requirements are clearly define within the Catalog. The College Catalog contains complete descriptions of degrees and certificates offered and program level outcomes. (I.C.4)

Board Policies for YCCD are in place, including the policy on academic freedom. The Board of Trustees regularly reviews and revises its policies and procedures. The Board Policies and Procedures are published online. The team affirmed that key District policies and procedures are consistently communicated and published. (I.C.5, I.C.7)

Columbia College clearly communicates cost of education in the College catalog. The team was able to quickly locate and verify information on the website for both prospective and current students. The College utilized the catalog information when discussing cost of education at outreach events and activities. (I.C.6)

The College Catalog and board policies contain the requisite statements and policies on academic freedom, student code of conduct, academic integrity, faculty code of ethics, and policy on non-discrimination. (I.C.8)

Columbia College faculty are required by Board Policy 3050 and their faculty contract to abide by the Statement on Professional Ethics. Faculty members are required to distinguish between personal conviction and their professionally accepted views as indicated in the Statement on Professional Ethics. (I.C.9)

Columbia College does not seek to instill specific beliefs or world views upon staff, faculty, administrators, or students. The College has in place for nondiscrimination, academic freedom for faculty and students, nondiscrimination in hiring, prohibitions against harassment or workplace violence, report of suspected child abuse, and drug free work environments. The policies are available online. (I.C.10)

Columbia College does not operate in foreign locations. (I.C.11)

The team verified Columbia College has made all accreditation materials and communication available to the community and the general public. The College is in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards for public disclosures as evidenced by the College website. (I.C.12)

The College demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationship with external agencies through its website and the College Catalog. The College has three academic programs accredited by outside agencies: Automotive Technology, Fire Technology, and Hospitality Management. (I.C.13)

Columbia College ensures its commitment to high quality education, student achievement, and student learning. (I.C.14).

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard.

## **STANDARD II**

### **STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **Standard II.A - Instructional Programs**

##### **General Observations**

Columbia College offers a wide variety of transfer as well as career/vocational programs and degrees that serve the greater Sierra foothills community. In addition to facilitating transfer to institutions throughout northern California, the College boasts strong vocational programs that prepare students for careers in public safety, forestry, automotive technology, and culinary arts, among others.

As of 2017, Columbia College offers 124 degree and certificate programs, which include 10 Associate of Arts degrees, 32 Associate of Science degrees, of which 17 are Associate Transfer degrees (AA-T or AS-T) and 3 Post Secondary Pathways in Computer Science, Physical Sciences and Pre-Engineering (all A.S.). Additionally, the College offers 32 Certificates of Achievement and 33 Skills Attainment Certificates in a variety of career preparation programs. All degree programs were found to contain at least one area of inquiry, with the courses in these areas reflective of the appropriate level of mastery and based upon student learning outcomes.

##### **Findings and Evidence**

Examination of evidence indicates that all instructional programs offered by this institution are offered in fields of study that are in alignment with the institution's mission. The mission is supported by Institutional Student Learning Outcomes, divided into four major areas which are appropriate to higher education. The CTE/Associate Degrees for Transfer handbook and College Gainful Employment pages provide information on degrees, certificates, employment and transfer. (II.A.1)

The Columbia College Curriculum Committee ensures that all provisions of the associate degrees for transfer are met, and that programs and courses comply with required criteria as defined in the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook. The Curriculum Committee also reviews new programs and program modifications, including activations, deactivations, and substantial changes to approved programs. The Articulation Officer facilitates the transferability of courses that regardless of the modality, location or means of delivery, exhibit sufficient academic rigor and breadth to comply with the criteria for transfer as stated in the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, C-ID, IGETC, CSU-breadth and other requirements. The College has readily accessible information regarding the transfer of credit policy found on the College website.

Faculty, through the authority vested in them by the YCCD Board policy 7-8049 are charged with ensuring that the content and methods of instruction and effective methods of evaluation meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. The College relies primarily on the expertise of faculty in maintaining curriculum, establishing prerequisites as well as degree and certificate requirements. Courses undergo a mandatory periodic review on



a 5-year cycle to ensure currency of all content, methods of instruction, and student learning outcomes. For Career and Technical Education courses and programs, advisory committees consisting of local industry experts play a key role in ensuring the currency of instructional methods and standards for student achievement of learning outcomes. A 4-year program review cycle ensures that delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services accurately reflect the needs of the student population. (II.A.2)

Advisory committees and industry accreditations are integral components in the Career Technical Education courses and programs. Discussion with the automotive program coordinator revealed compliance with external industry accreditation by the National Automotive Technical Education Foundation (NATEF) effective until 2020. The coordinator works closely with the area high schools and their automotive programs to ensure smooth articulation from area high schools to the College. The coordinator maintains industry certification in the field to incorporate state-of-the-art technology into the College's automotive technician program. Other external industry accreditations include Fire Academy (2018) and Hospitality Management, and American Culinary Federation. (II.A.2)

The college has established Student Learning Outcomes for every course in the curriculum, and require SLOs for each new course introduced through the curriculum process. Course-level SLOs are found in the Course Outline of Record, and are required to be published on all course syllabi. Additionally, all programs leading to degrees and certificates have established Program Learning Outcomes and all PSLOs are published in the College Catalog. Course SLOs are also mapped to the Institutional SLOs that are aligned with the college mission. (II.A.3)

The College has had established processes for regularly assessing student learning outcomes for the past several years for courses, degrees, certificates and support programs. However, around 2015, the college had encountered significant challenges in managing the growing volume of assessment evidence, and increasing demands for aggregating this evidence to inform effectiveness exceeded the capabilities of the homegrown data management system it had in place. The College adopted and installed a software management system, called eLumen, that allows the College to collect and aggregate assessment at the course level to inform outcomes at the program and institutional level, while being able to disaggregate data to assess achievement levels of various student subgroups at the College. To accomplish this, the College embarked on a complete review of all outcomes, and a realignment of assessment activities college-wide.

With the SLO Working Group, a collaboration of faculty, administrators and student services staff leading the effort, the College has established more effective channels for dialogue, and leveraged opportunities for professional development to engage faculty and departments in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning. (II.A.2, II.A.3)

In 2017, the College has adopted an integrated cycle of program level outcomes assessment with course level assessment and program review on a 4- year cycle. The College continues to focus its efforts on strengthening the link between assessment of student learning at the course level and the continuous improvement of programs and services college-wide. This work is ongoing, and the College plan for accomplishing this task is the subject of Area 1 of the Quality Focus Essay in the College's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER). (II.A.3; II.A.11)

The College provides pre-collegiate level curriculum to address the learning needs of students in the areas of English, Mathematics, and English as a Second Language. The pre-collegiate pathways are distinguishable from the college-level pathways in the College catalog through the use of graphics and shading to distinguish between transferable and non-transferable work, and identifying the sequence of prerequisites toward advancement to transferable coursework. These courses are distinguished from the college level curriculum through the following designations: 1-99 transfer level; 100-199 associate degree non-transfer; 600-699 basic, non-transfer, non-associate degree courses. (II.A.4)

The College employs a variety of assessment tools and multiple measures to accurately identify the appropriate levels of Math, English and ESL courses for entering students. The Academic Achievement Center provides face-to-face as well as online tutoring services to enhance learning of basic skills. The college utilizes the standardized CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems) as an entry assessment as well as a summative assessment tool to measure the gains made through their basic skills courses. The institution's Actionable Improvement Plan included an administrative reorganization in summer 2017 in order to facilitate the expansion of ESL courses and services, which include increasing the number of pre-collegiate basic skills classes such as GED and ESL classes to non-traditional students such as adults, the local community, and the growing Hispanic population. (II.A.4)

Examination of evidence and discussions with key college personnel reveal that the institution engages in an on-going process of conversations and peer oversight to ensure the appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor and course sequencing to promote student success. Scorecard data indicate, however, that while course completion rates at the college are high, the overall rates of program completion turn out to be lower than statewide completion rates. Only a small percentage of students complete the full degree in two years and most students take six years to completion. As indicated in the Actionable Improvement Plan, and in Quality Focus Project 2 of the college's Quality Focused Essay, the institution has identified a number of integrated strategies to address institutional challenges in order to increase student program completion rates. Such strategies include forming a Focused Inquiry Group (FIG) to examine barriers to program completion, improving guidance and educational planning resources to promote completion, and exploring cooperative pathways and modes of service delivery that increase access to coursework toward achieving educational goals. (II.A.5)

The College offers multiple modes of delivery to meet the diverse and changing needs of its students. In addition to traditional modes of lecture, laboratory, classroom activities and discussions, the College provides a variety of fieldwork experience, supervised practicum and cooperative work experience opportunities for students. The location of the College in the Sierra Nevada Foothills provides an outstanding setting for additional field excursion opportunities for students who study geology, forestry, natural resources and GIS. The College has worked diligently on using data-driven means to schedule course sequences that facilitate successful completion of programs and degrees. However, low-enrolled courses have led to the need for course cancellations that have hampered these efforts. The College continues to explore numerous modes of course delivery to support student completion. In the 2016-2021 Strategic plan, the college introduced a Two-Year plan designed to facilitate degree completion in two

years, and has promoted this initiative in the college catalog. (II.A.6)

The College offers courses that span a variety of delivery modes that meet the diverse and changing needs of students. In addition to traditional face-to-face delivery methods offered on campus and in satellite locations within the community, the College has incorporated three types of technology mediated instruction. These include online courses, hybrid courses that combine face-to-face and online instruction, and video-conferenced nursing courses that are simulcast in cooperation with Modesto Junior College, its sister institution in YCCD. The Curriculum Committee ensures that all courses that are taught across various delivery modalities are in alignment with the objectives, goals and student learning outcomes that are stated in the Course Outline of Record (COR). (II.A.7)

The Distance Education Coordinator provides group, individual, and workshop training for all instructors on online and hybrid courses in delivery and content. The training ensures effective instructor-student interaction, appropriate instructional plans, and authenticity of assessment. The college recently switched from the Blackboard system to Canvas and as a result, after the first full year of implementation, experienced fewer reported problems from both faculty and students. A Help Desk dedicated to Canvas has been established to support student as well as faculty access to the online learning environment. Approximately 15% of the college courses are either online or hybrid, and three have been selected for inclusion in the Online Education Initiative pilot program, a statewide consortium of colleges designed to allow cross-college online enrollments. (II.A.7)

The College does not utilize department-wide courses or program examinations. (II.A.8)

The College awards course credit based upon student achievement of the stated student outcomes, and the attainment of a passing grade as determined by faculty. The student learning outcomes are stated on the course syllabus, and all SLOs, course objectives and goals are stated on the course outline of record (COR). The means of assessing student achievement of course outcomes are identified both on the COR as well as the course syllabus. Interviews with faculty members indicate that assessment of course-level learning outcomes are embedded in course exams and assignments. (II.A.9)

Student Contact hours are calculated and stated in the CORs and comply with federal guidelines and norms in awarding appropriate units of credit. (II.A.9)

The institution has a clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that provides criteria under which units earned from other regionally-accredited institutions can be accepted for credit. Related policies and guidance exist for AP Examination credit, CLEP credit, and resources for international student transcript evaluation. Additionally, numerous resources are available to students to evaluate the transferability of courses from Columbia College to 4-year transfer institutions. These include ASSIST, and the C-ID system along with the Degree Audit and the services available from the Counseling department. The Articulation officer is the facilitator of course articulation between academic departments at Columbia College and the corresponding programs at CSU and UC campuses to maintain and improve articulation agreements between courses and within majors. (II.A.10)

The College has developed current set of institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) that also serve as General Education SLOs, and were adopted in January, 2016. The institution has accomplished the mapping of Course-level SLOs to Program SLOs and Institutional Level SLOs through formal events on Flex days and by individually engaging faculty in one-on-one meetings. The mapping process has been completed and all SLOs are mapped in eLumen to facilitate the collection of learning evidence at the course level to inform the achievement of general education, program and institutional outcomes.

The minutes from the SLO Working Group indicate that the work to align Institutional SLOs with assessment at the course level took place in the 2016-17 academic year, with eLumen providing the means to aggregate Course SLO assessment evidence and roll-up this evidence to the course and program level. A document that maps the ISLOs to Course-level SLOs was disseminated campus-wide on May 17, 2017.

The College has produced its initial rollup of data to inform program as well as Institutional level student learning outcomes achievement across the institution. According to the Director of Institutional Research, the roll-up was produced by extracting data from eLumen and producing aggregated tables that can be sorted according to program/discipline, enabling faculty to explore and reflect on student achievement of Institutional outcomes. These data have been provided to faculty and program units for consideration in program review processes. At present, the College is continuing its efforts to strengthen the link between SLO assessment, program review and sustainable continuous quality improvement. The plan to accomplish this is outlined in Project Focus Area 1.2 in the college's Quality Focused Essay. (II.A.11)

YCCD has an established board policy (4025) that articulates a philosophy for general education. The College also has published a descriptive statement for General Education as well as several GE pathways (AA/AS, CSU Breadth and IGETC). The College has a curriculum committee composed of faculty experts that approve courses for the catalog, and determine whether a course is appropriate for inclusion in the AA/AS educational pathway. For the CSU Breadth and IGETC GE patterns, courses undergo an additional external review for inclusion in university transfer patterns. Courses that meet GE requirements for one or more of the patterns are identified as such in the College catalog, in addition to information relating to articulation, transferability, C-ID, prerequisites and advisories. (II.A.12)

The College has identified at a minimum 18 units for each degree program, constituting the area of focused inquiry or established interdisciplinary core as reflected in the standards. In all cases, the course sequences are determined by faculty discipline experts, and then approved by the curriculum process. (II.A.13)

The College offers a variety of career-technical programs and certificates that serve key sectors of local service area industry, and maintains strong ties to local employers and external agencies. All CTE programs undergo annual performance review based on the CTE-Perkins IV Core Indicators, and ensure continued alignment with industry-set standards for each respective CTE Program. (II.A.14)

The College has demonstrated its commitment to maintaining the currency of its career technical programs and provided pathways for the further career development of its graduates, as demonstrated by the “Stackable Certifications” model established by the College, which enables Certificate earners to gain employable skills while continuing toward the completion of an Associate degree by completing the G.E. pattern. (II.A.14)

The Hospitality Management program is completing an overhaul of its program structure, in conjunction with the renovation of its facilities, in the case of the Culinary and Pastry Arts program. The college applied for and was granted an extension of its accreditation from the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation Accrediting Commission (ACFEFAC), to permit the program to complete the program changes and move into the remodeled facility. The college has been successful in securing funding resources to improve and update its programs through the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) and the Strong Workforce Program. (II.A.14)

The College identifies the program review process as the mechanism through which programmatic changes, reductions or program elimination instances are considered. The College cites the Hospitality Management Program modification as a current example of this process in action. The response also details the student catalog rights policy as a mechanism that protects current and continuously enrolled students from changing program requirements over time. This circumstance does not necessarily protect students from impact when a program is eliminated. The response in this standard describes a process by which faculty, counselors and deans work together to approve course substitutions to enable impacted students to earn their degrees and certificates. (II.A.15)

The College has an existing Program/Services Reduction process that was last amended and adopted by the college in August 2010. The document details a process and criteria for program reduction or elimination. Members of the Institutional Effectiveness Council have stated that the process is currently under review and in the process of being updated to align with current program review practices. (II.A.15)

In March 2017, the College Council discussed and adopted a definition of “Program” at the college in the effort to provide better clarity of instructional programs, and the process by which such programs, in their various permutations, are regularly evaluated and improved. The four-year Program Review cycle was adopted for the 2016-17 academic year, and is in the second year of the revised cycle. (II.A.16)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements 9, 10, 11, 12. The external evaluation team notes that the recent realignment of Student Learning Outcomes at the course, program and institutional level, combined with the introduction of the integrated 4-year cycle of planning, program review and outcomes assessment necessitates the recommendation that the college commit to sustaining its efforts to achieve continuous quality improvement, through the activities identified in Activity 1 of its Quality Focused Essay.

## **Standard II.B - Library and Learning Support Services**

### **General Observations**

Library and learning support services are conveniently housed together in a pleasant, light-filled building overlooking the campus centerpiece, the San Diego Reservoir. In addition to print, media and online resources, the library offers access to computers and study space. The library also provides information literacy instruction and has developed innovative lending services to support the needs of students. Just upstairs from the library, centralized tutoring and writing support is available at the Academic Achievement Center (AAC). Both the Library and the AAC provide online resources and support services. Both have taken innovative approaches to assessment. The library has created its own online program review tool with comparative statistics for up to six years with multiple data points and rich analysis, all fully accessible to students and faculty. In addition to surveys, the AAC has analyzed success rates of students who use tutoring services.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Centrally located on campus, Tamarack Hall houses the Library, the Academic Achievement Center (AAC), the Instructional Technology Center and Technology & Media Services. Operating with just one librarian and three support staff, the library is open Monday-Friday for a total of 58 hours per week. The library offers print, online and media collections, as well as an assortment of services including computers, Wi-Fi, eight group study rooms, a copy center and circulating electronic tablets and calculators. In addition, library resources are available from Modesto Junior College via a daily transit service and from libraries throughout the world via interlibrary loan. Students are able to access electronic resources off-campus by remote authentication (EZ Proxy) via the library webpage. The library has an online library catalog (WorldCat), an online content management system used primarily as a library instructional tool and an online *Ask a Librarian* reference assistance service. Student access to these resources would be improved by a more prominent direct link to the library from the college website. There are two library courses: Library 1 (1 unit, CSU-transferable, offered online) and Library 101 (1/2 unit offered as part of summer On Ramp orientation program). In addition, the library offers instruction via individual class orientations which can be contextualized to an assignment. Every semester since Fall 2011, the library has teamed up with the Associated Students Columbia College (ASCC) and the AAC to host a Finals Cram Night just before the start of finals week, drawing students and faculty into the library with food and opportunities to win prizes. (II.B.1)

The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) provides tutoring, supplemental instruction (peer-assisted study sessions) and writing support. The Center is open Monday-Friday for a total of 43.5 hours per week. The AAC provides computers, tables, whiteboards and four rooms for group tutoring. Staffing is provided by a Faculty Coordinator, a full-time support staff and 33 tutors who have completed peer tutoring coursework and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. The AAC offers peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, embedded tutoring and online tutoring in a wide range of subjects. The College offers a certification program for tutors through the College Reading and Learning Association. The Math Lab, located in the math department building, has

computers, tables, whiteboards and a test proctoring room, and provides drop-in tutoring. The lab is open Monday-Friday for 42.5 hours per week and staffed by a full-time instructional assistant and tutors, with additional support from math faculty. The High Tech Center, located in the Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) office, provides additional workstations with assistive technologies for DSPS students and assistance from an instructional technician. (II.B.1)

In alignment with Board Policies 6030, 4-8061 and 6045, the library has *Collection Development and Weeding Guidelines* that outline the factors involved in acquisition and withdrawal of library materials. The library solicits and receives requests from faculty via email, the *Ask a Librarian* website form and surveys. With the active input of faculty, the library has developed new collections in DVDs and recreational reading, and updated materials in a range of curricular areas, including the sciences and career education. In addition, faculty request instructional equipment and materials through the program review process. The library has program outcomes which it assesses annually through analysis of usage statistics, instructional sessions and student surveys. As a result of an analysis of usage statistics and survey responses, the library added a science database to its electronic collection. The AAC has also identified learning outcomes which are evaluated in annual student surveys. In an analysis of students who used tutoring service at the AAC, the Institutional Research Office found that students who receive tutoring had higher success rates than students who did not. The college relies on outside vendors for a number of services, including OCLC (online catalog), WT Cox (periodicals), 3M (security gates), IKON (copiers), CCLC (databases), DECT (captioning), NetTutor and Tuolumne County/CCI Logistics (courier service). Contracts are evaluated through usage reports, analysis of current needs and consideration of alternative options. The college ensures that equipment is maintained and secure through maintenance contracts, good circulation practices and support from the Technology and Media Services Department. (II.B.2, II.B.3, II.B.4)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard. The College provides high quality library and learning support services to students regardless of location.

## **Standard II.C - Student Support Services**

### **General Observations**

Columbia College provides comprehensive student support services and regularly evaluates their quality to demonstrate that these support services are effective and consistent with the College mission. The College assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method. Services are provided to students on campus, online, and at three primary outreach sites at Oakdale, Vallecito, and at the Sierra Conservation Center.

Narrative and evidence identify high standards of quality student support services and programs to students that include but are not limited to academic and career counseling, assessment, admissions and records, financial aid, programs for special student populations, co-curricular and athletic programs. There are many opportunities for student leadership and development on campus, including the Associated Students of Columbia College (ASCC), the Speech and Debate Team, and intercollegiate athletics for men's basketball and women's volleyball. Collaboration across student support services is evident in the ISER and on campus as staff, faculty, and managers work in concert to provide students with a consistent structure of support and assistance.

Student support services across campus are engaged in the program review and integrated SLO process. Through the program review process across student support services, student learning outcomes are identified, assessed, and evaluated to continuously improve student support programs and services.

In response to needs identified in program review and the SLO assessment process, Columbia College added many online support services, including online guidance courses, online orientation, online counseling, and e-advising to supplement on-campus services.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Columbia College has established processes to assess learning support outcomes for students in order to provide effective student support services to advance student learning and further the College mission. Each department examines its programs through the Columbia College Student Services Program Review process, and Program Review is part of the Integrated Planning Cycle. For student support services, annual review addresses the quality of services and how each department contributes to the accomplishment of the College's Mission. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) and/or Service Area Outcome (SAO) results are assessed and evaluated on a four-year cycle, in conjunction with Program Review. The College uses the eLumen SLO management system. Needs for improvements and implementation plans within the program reviews are revisited each year. As an example, a survey revealed a request for extended hours and more assistance available online or over the phone. To meet that need, the College hired new staff, extended service hours, and enhanced services online. Some of the online improvements in student support services include: Counseling available through Google Hang Out counseling appointments, phone appointments, or via questions emailed to counselors or posted on



Facebook; TRIO SSS developed an online support environment to provide thorough resources to program participants; all significant print materials are available online for digital download; EOPS/CARE online orientation; staff in special programs send reminders via text message to participating students; undecided students or those who applied but did not enroll at the College receive multiple follow-up calls and emails with offers to assist and provide additional guidance; and the College has implemented Early Alert and Early Intervention services. (II.C.1; II.C.2, ER 15)

Program Review reaches across all student services departments, and student learning outcomes are identified, assessed, and evaluated to continuously improve student support programs and services. Based on campus-wide discussions, in fall 2016 the College Council adopted a four-year integrated cycle designed to coordinate program review, course SLO assessment, and program SLO assessment in a non-overlapping manner. Student Services departments have many state and federal reporting requirements. The Student Equity and Success Advisory Committee (SSEAC) meets monthly to discuss to the development, implementation, and success of many student initiatives on campus. Local research and community advisory partner requests indicated outreach to the community was needed for first-generation, low-income students without GEDs or high school diplomas. The College received a federally funded TRIO Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Grant, awarded in fall 2016, to serve 1,000 community members across the five-county Mother Lode region with college readiness skill development, financial literacy (including FAFSA assistance), GED/Diploma referrals, and college application/enrollment assistance. In order to enhance online services, the College joined the Educational Planning Initiative (EPI) pilot. A main provision of the EPI is the implementation of Hobsons Starfish Degree Planner. (II.C.2)

Columbia College has numerous examples of programs that seek to provide equitable access and success for students, and the College has made a concerted effort recently to increase many online student support services to meet the needs of the communities served. The College offers services on campus, online, and at three outreach sites in Oakdale, Vallecito, and at the Sierra Conservation Center. Students have equitable access to counselors through face-to-face, online or phone appointments. Tutoring for online students is available through NetTutor. Students also have access to Degree Audit, an online program through ConnectColumbia, which allows students to monitor their progress toward academic goals. Online career support can be found through Vault.com, Eureka, and Vocational Biographies. Columbia College currently has 172 dually enrolled high school students, and the College is expanding its offerings to high school students on their own campuses, with counseling and tutoring available. (II.C.3; ER 15)

Students at Columbia College have opportunities to become involved in co-curricular and athletics programs. These include the ASCC, which includes the Student Senate, Executive Council, and Inter-Club Council. Clubs on campus include the Auto Tech Club, Child Development Future Educators Club, Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO Club), Club of Tolerance, Debate Club, Forestry and Natural Resources Club, Gay Straight Alliance, Nutrition Club, Political Science Club, Sisterhood Fellowship, and the Veterans' Club. The Speech and Debate Team provides students an opportunity to participate in forensics and debate. Columbia College offers two intercollegiate sports: Men's Basketball and Women's Volleyball. Each sport is governed by the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA),

the Central Valley Conference (CVC), and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. All Intercollegiate Athletic finances are controlled by the District and evaluated through the annual planning and budget development process. (II.C.4)

The Columbia College Counseling Department has established a mission statement that includes assisting students in identifying and achieving educational, career and personal development. Nine full time and three adjunct counselors serve students in General Counseling, Extended Opportunities Programs & Services (EOPS), Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE), CalWORKs, Student Support Services/TRIO, Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS), Foster Youth, and Veterans Services. Counseling services are available in the main counseling area (Upper Manzanita), the Veterans Resource Center in the Toyon Building, and at off-campus sites including Vallecito, Oakdale, and the Sierra Conservation Center. In addition to in-person orientations, a newly created online orientation allows access anytime. Consistent meetings and professional development allow for up-to-date advising. The Counseling Department maintains a Facebook page to share information and post questions (II.C.5)

Columbia College's general admission policies are consistent with its mission including open access as noted in Board Policy 5010. The College uses the CCC Apply online application for admissions, including an online admissions checklist for matriculation purposes. Through a partnership with Sonora Union High School, Special Admit students are enrolled through a Middle College program. The College offers two closed enrollment programs at both the Sierra Conservation Center for medium security prison inmates and through College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) at several high schools. Clear pathways are defined through specific catalog requirements for transfer, degrees, and certificates. Educational Plans and Major Advising Sheets provide further clarity. (II.C.6; ER 16)

The College utilizes Accuplacer to assess students in math and English, which have been approved by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office with locally-established cut scores. The College regularly reviews the validity of the instruments in order to reduce bias. Columbia College is currently participating in the statewide Common Assessment Initiative (CAI) and will adopt the new instrument when it is able to be fully implemented. Multiple measures are also used to place students into college-level math and English. (II.C.7)

All student record information is imaged and stored using the On-base (Matrix) system. The system is backed up daily at the College and the District Office. Record security is maintained through high-security firewalls and data security protocols. Physical records are kept in file cabinets for a limited time and then digitized and shredded. The areas are protected by locks when the college is closed, and there are alarms and 24/7 campus security. The College uses Maxient, a third-party vendor, to securely maintain student complaints. Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 5040 specify the College's compliance with FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (II.C.8)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard. Columbia College provides a multitude of student support services to meet student needs at the main campus, online, at three primary outreach sites, and

through a new College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) program for high school students on their own campuses. Evidence confirms that, due to program review and assessment, many additional online student support services improvements have been made including questions emailed or posted to Facebook, Google Hang Out counseling, as well as phone appointments. Many special programs exist to enhance the student learning process including EOPS/CARE, DSPS, TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) and Motherlode Educational Opportunity Center (MEOC), CalWORKs, Veterans Counseling, and Foster Youth.

## **STANDARD III RESOURCES**

### **Standard III.A - Human Resources**

#### **General Observations**

The institution has established fair and equitable employment practices in the areas of recruitment, hiring and evaluation. Hiring procedures ensure that positions accurately reflect the needs of the college and that employees are appropriately qualified. Employment-related procedures, timelines and forms are readily accessible via the Human Resources website. The institution has practices in place to support diverse personnel and annually assesses employee equity and diversity through analysis of data in the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan. Board Policy identifies a code of ethics for all classifications of employees. Personnel records are securely maintained. The College makes extra efforts to provide inclusive professional development activities, including an in-service day identified for all employees and an evening in-services identified for part-time faculty.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The College follows recruitment and hiring procedures that are aligned with Board Policy 7120 (Recruitment and Hiring). Human Resources staff oversee the process to ensure consistency. Human Resources posts announcements for open positions on its website and also uses a recruitment vendor for targeted advertising. Postings include job description, qualifications and information about the hiring process. All faculty and administrators must meet the requirements established by the *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges*. An equivalency process, also posted on the website, is available. Faculty job descriptions, which incorporate curriculum and assessment responsibilities, are reviewed by the screening committee prior to recruitment and updated as needed. Classified and management job descriptions are reviewed at least every five years through a Classification Review process. (III.A.1, III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.4)

The process for identifying and prioritizing personnel needs for district-level programs and services is not clear. There appears to be no college involvement in district level decision making and there are no connections to program review. (III.A.1)

Evaluations of faculty, classified staff and managers are completed at regular intervals in accordance with Board Policy 7150 (Evaluation). Human Resources maintains a website with evaluation forms, a staff evaluation guide to assist with tracking evaluations and a faculty evaluation timeline for tenure track and probationary faculty. Detailed evaluation procedures are available in the respective bargaining unit contracts. Evaluation for all employees includes criteria based on performance of assigned duties and participation in college responsibilities. When needed, improvement plans have been integrated into the evaluation process for all employee types. The faculty self-evaluation is not a form per se, but a narrative response to a prompt which references, among other things, professional improvement and the use of learning assessment results. (III.A.5, III.A.6)

The District follows the Full-Time Faculty Obligation Compliance numbers established by the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges. The number of full-time faculty at the College increased from 47 in fall 2012 to 53 in fall 2016. Although full-time positions are usually filled upon retirement or separation, the College follows a prioritization process and has moved positions to other disciplines based on program needs. The number of full-time classified staff has generally remained steady at 45 since 2012. There are an additional 23 full-time district staff who support campus facilities, IT and transportation. The number of administrators has increased from 19 to 21 since 2012. Administrative hiring is based on needs identified in strategic planning and program review. Recent state initiatives have prompted the college to hire administrators to address requirements associated with funding. The institution provides part-time faculty opportunities for integration in the college through a New Employee Orientation, a special Adjunct In-Service offered in the evening each semester before classes start, campus committees work and service on the academic senate. Part-time faculty are supervised by a dean and are evaluated in accordance with established procedures. (III.A.7, III.A.8, III.A.9, III.A.10)

The board has adopted personnel policies to guide fairness and consistency in employment practices, including Recruitment and Hiring (BP 7120), Commitment to Diversity (BP 7100), Nondiscrimination (BP 3410), Equal Employment Opportunity (BP 3420) and Prohibition of Harassment (BP 3430). The policies and corresponding procedures are published on the board website. Human Resources also maintains a hiring process website with guidelines and forms designed to provide fairness and consistency to the process. The board adopted an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan in June 2015 and data from reporting is assessed annually. All members of hiring committees are required to complete EEO training. Advertising for open positions is targeted to attract diverse candidates outside the service area. The Board code of ethics is clearly stated in Board Policy 2715 (Code of Ethics / Standards of Practice). Board Policy 3050 (Institutional Code of Ethics) identifies the individual ethics codes for all classifications of personnel. (III.A.11, III.A.12, III.A.13)

The College offers professional development days at the start of each semester, including an In-Service Day, for all employees, a Flex Day for all faculty and an Adjunct In-Service program offered in the evening. Both full-time and part-time faculty have a flex obligation based on load. Recent flex activities have focused on technology training, student success factors and learning assessment. The College has recently convened a Teaching and Learning Community (TLC) initiative, an off-shoot of the AWE Committee, which will focus on improving professional development opportunities with a focus on teaching and learning. The work of the TLC will include integration of evaluation as a component of such activities. The institution provides for the security and confidentiality of all personnel records. Paper records are secured in fire-proof cabinets in a locked room within an access-controlled building. Access to electronic personnel records is restricted to key personnel based on the approval a high-level administrator. Employees have a right to view their own personnel files, in accordance with procedures outlined in the relevant bargaining unit contract. (III.A.14, III.A.15)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard. The College uses human resources to further its mission and ensure academic quality. The College employs well-qualified administrators, classified staff and

faculty who possess the requisite knowledge, training and experience to perform their duties. Policies, procedures, and practices are in place for evaluation, oversight, orientation and professional ethics. Personnel records are securely maintained. The College has recently convened a group to establish meaningful evaluation processes for professional development activities.

## **Standard III.B - Physical Resources**

### **General Observations**

YCCD has a centralized facility structure supporting the planning, construction, and maintenance of physical resources District-wide. Columbia College is located on 280 acres in the historic Mother Lode of the Sierra Nevada foothills. The beautiful College campus is located among conifers and hardwoods surrounding a 4.5-acre lake. The College also offers instruction at the High Sierra Institute at Baker Station in the Stanislaus National Forest, which has College staff supporting the facility. The College also offers classes at several other locations, but the facilities are not maintained by college staff.

In November, 2004 the voters of YCCD approved a \$326 million general obligation bond, Measure E. This general obligation bond for the District was designated for repairs, upgrade, and new construction for MJC and Columbia college facilities; expansion of education sites in Patterson, Oakdale, Turlock and Calaveras County. The funds allocations were Modesto Junior College \$220.1 million, Columbia College \$52.5 million, and the District Central Services \$53.4 million. The District was able to manage the bond in such a manner that it was able to utilize savings from other projects to build the new District Office.

The projects initially identified by the District-wide Facility Master Plan were approved by the Governing Board of Trustees and the Citizen Oversight Committee. Most of the projects were implemented in phases between 2005 and 2017.

YCCD Central Services Facilities Planning and Operations unit provide support services to the College's major facilities and supplies the College with maintenance, grounds and custodial services. This staff has a "dotted line" reporting to the College President and the Vice President of Administrative Services and supports the college sites to ensure access and healthy environment that are conducive for teaching and learning.

The College follows the guidelines established in the Columbia College Facilities Master Plan, which was updated in 2012. The College provides input on projects to identify in the 5-year Scheduled Maintenance Report to the California Community Colleges Office of State Chancellor on an annual basis. This report identifies needed maintenance, both scheduled and deferred, including determination of cost, yearly schedules and source of funding. College projects identified in this report are submitted to the District by the college Facilities manager and reported out to the College in the Facility/Safety Committee.

The College also evaluates equipment replacements and maintenance requirements are identified through the College's program review process. Needs are compiled and augmented with equipment replacement needs from the Technology Committee.

The projects planning with Measure E ensures access to existing and new facilities; such as maintaining standards for American with Disability Act (ADA). Facilities are constructed and maintained to ensure safe and sufficient physical resources are in place for effective student learning and support services. The YCCD maintains compliance with all building codes as

required by the state, federal and local entities; such as fire, health and safety regulations codes and standards. YCCD also adheres to the Division of State Architects (DSA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and California State Fire Marshal guidelines. YCCD has put in place, plans to proactively address, monitor, and mitigate facilities issues to improve safety, access to physical resources. The College utilizes a work order system through a facility module within Datatel Colleague for use by staff, faculty and administrators to report facilities issues. Work orders are also prioritized based on security and safety and ADA administration. YCCD facilities automation systems such as remote controls of HVAC infrastructure, electronic locks (access control), intrusions systems and fire alarms ensures improved efficiencies and productive learning environments.

Columbia provides instruction at a number of off-campus sites that include high schools, churches, fitness centers, prisons and community halls. They also utilize two-way video and audio for Distance Education instruction in the nursing area from MJC to Columbia College students. The Distance Education Strategic Plan is scheduled for update in fall 2017.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The District and Columbia College partner together to support and ensure the safety of the colleges facilities. The College campus and off-site locations are assessed regularly for compliance with quality and safety, and accessibility standards. In order to maintain security on campus, the Board developed policies which are being implemented by Administrative Procedure on Weapons on Campus (AP 3530), except if an exemption is approved by the Board through a defined process (Board policy 3530). This campus weapon ban is subject to California Penal Code Sections 626.9 and 626.10 including administrative disciplinary action, and/or criminal arrest and prosecution.

The District parking fund, augmented with funding by the College operates a 24/7 security operation at the Columbia campus in order to provide a safe learning environment for students and staff. Equipment is inventoried annually and the security staff follow up on any incident where equipment may be missing. Additionally, the security staff provides security for the facilities at the main campus, but also address any safety concerns at the offsite locations. (III.B.1)

The five-year capital Outlay plan is based on enrollment projections, capacity load ratios that are derived by the Weekly Student Contact Hours (WSCH) relative to classrooms and space utilizations. The College uses several processes and reports to ensure that the needs of programs and services determine new equipment, replacement of equipment, facilities and maintenance. The Facility Planning Department submits a Scheduled Maintenance Report to the state every year for maintenance needs prioritization. Columbia uses Program Review process to identify equipment replacement and maintenance needs. These needs are compiled in a report and sent to a constituency group consisting of representatives from departments, Deans and the Vice President for prioritization and consideration by the College Council. Equipment needs are only funded to the level of State Instructional Equipment dollars available to the College through the District allocation process. This funding is not sufficient to fund all the needs of the College, so the College will use augmentation from other funding sources as they are available. (III. B.2)



Columbia's Facilities Manager assesses the effectiveness of its physical resources and reports the findings to the Facility/Safety Committee monthly. The Manager has regular communication with the Central Office Facilities Director and occasional follow up meetings with the College President and the Vice President of Administrative Services to discuss the status and needs of campus facilities. (III.B.3)

Columbia plans to effectively utilize the classrooms by providing an Annual Space Inventory Report (ASIR) conducted by Facility Planning Operations that provides information on how the college is using its facilities, by type of rooms, type of instruction in the rooms, and room capacity. (III.B.3)

Long-range capital plans are intended to support institutional improvement goals and reflect projects of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and maintenance of deferred facilities and equipment so that they are sufficient and safe for teaching and learning. (III.B.4)

The implementation of total cost of ownership has not been feasible, due to limited resources. This lack of adequate resources has adverse impact on the readiness of equipment necessary to deliver instruction in the classrooms and is a challenge for programs requiring the need for procuring large equipment for teaching and learning. Due to budget constraints, the District has struggled to provide additional staffing for both custodian and facilities maintenance and operations staff, leading to finding efficiencies and periodic delivery of services. As an example, evidence indicates that the list of projects on the Districtwide 2017/18 Scheduled Maintenance Projects totals over \$3.4 million; however, the funding received from the State and allocated to the College by the District for scheduled maintenance was less than \$1 million. Although the impact of Measure E on Columbia College cannot be overstated, not only providing new building but also modernizing others, the total cost of ownership of the facilities needs to be sustainable. Additionally, equipment replacements, maintenance needs, and the resource needs identified in the college Technology Plan far exceed the funding allocated by the state or through the district allocation of general funds. Concerns for sustainability of the total cost of ownership for equipment and technology must be addressed. (III.B.4, III.C.2)

## **Conclusion**

The College and the District should address the total cost of ownership for physical and technological resources in support of the Colleges' missions, operations, programs, and services.

## **District Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1 (Compliance)**

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the District address the total cost of ownership for physical and technological resources in support of the Colleges' missions, operations, programs, and services. (III.B.4, III.C.2)

**District Recommendation 2 (Improvement):** In order to improve effectiveness and transparency, the District needs to engage college and district constituencies with timely, deliberative, and collaborative dialogue to coordinate ongoing efforts in the creation,

development, and alignment of all college and district plans and planning processes, including college and district-wide strategic plans, facilities plans, technology plans, resource allocation (including one-time funds), and human resources. As well, it is recommended that the District strengthen communication regarding district decisions (III.B.4, III.C.2, III.D.3, IV.D.5, IV.D.6, IV.D.7).

## **Standard III.C - Technology Resources**

### **General Observations**

Columbia College has shifted to centralized information technology services for overall communication and efficient management of technology resources. Information Technology Services (ITS), which was reorganized in both 2014 and 2016, serves the technology needs of both Columbia College and the District. ITS is responsible for reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security of all data and technology systems, including distance education courses, for the entire YCCD. While ITS is centralized, the funding for Columbia College equipment and program specific software is the responsibility of the College. The security of the College and District network and data was improved significantly with a new primary data center on the Modesto Junior College west campus and a secondary data center at Columbia College. These sites provide a fully redundant differentiated path to each college location.

The institutional policies and procedures related to the appropriate use of technology for Columbia College are easily accessible through the College's website. The policies and procedures reviewed are appropriate guidelines for the use of technology in the teaching and learning process, as well as management operations.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Technology services are sufficient to support the College needs. The District Technology Advisory Committee (DTAC) is a district wide participatory governance committee that makes recommendations for communications and operational systems relying on industry standards. DTAC connects with the Columbia College Technology Committee through ITS managers and faculty representative(s) serving on both committees. The Technology Committee receives the College technology needs and these needs may be forwarded to DTAC. The College used savings in the general fund, grant funding, Columbia College Foundation, and Instructional Equipment funds to replace aging computers and multi-media equipment and implement additional Distance Education courses over the past few years. Email accounts were recently moved from the locally-hosted Microsoft Exchange to Microsoft Office 365, and the District successfully migrated their database from Oracle to SQL. (III.C.1)

Planning for technology programs and services has been integrated into the College and District planning processes. Program review resource allocation requests help to prioritize technology purchases and are connected to the College's Strategic Plan. After shared interest and dialogue with groups including the Distance Education Committee and Academic Senate, and in conjunction with the Online Education Initiative (OEI), Canvas was voted on and piloted by faculty to replace Blackboard as a learning management system.

In spring 2017, the District hired Ferrilli Consulting to assess District wide technology needs and provide a summary. College projects funded by Measure E included new and replacement equipment made possible through the general obligation bond. Replacement planning for equipment is integrated into the College resource allocation process, yet the large volume of

equipment purchased during a short amount of time will overburden the College's ability to make the replacement.

The College is currently utilizing the 2011-2015 College Technology Plan while waiting to align a new College Technology Plan with the upcoming District Technology Plan. Due to the absence of a permanent district Vice Chancellor of Information Technology, the District Technology Plan has been delayed. Meetings of both the DTAC (District Technology Advisory Committee) and the College's Technology Committee have been infrequent and unproductive over the past few years. While the College has purchased and replaced technology, most of the purchases have been with general fund savings, grant funding, Columbia College Foundation, and Instructional Equipment state funds. The College and District will need to plan and memorialize solutions in future Technology Plans. (III.C.2)

ITS globally works to provide comparable technology and services at each location, including off-campus sites. The data centers provide full secondary redundancy of all systems and data for the College and District. The College and the District prioritized technology replacement by using one-time monies, restricted funds, and end of year savings. The District and College Technology Plans are scheduled to be revised in the near future. (III.C.3)

There is evidence of a variety of technology training for students, staff, and faculty, ranging from group to individual to independent study. Faculty members receive technology training as Flex opportunities, through Lynda.com, and through the College's online faculty training program. Faculty members are required to receive distance education training prior to teaching online, as taught by the College's Distance Education Coordinator. The Distance Education Plan and the Distance Education Handbook note that the College ensures that all online faculty members are taught the fundamentals of effective online techniques.

Help Desk personnel are available to answer student, faculty, and staff questions and ITS will send staff to repair, install, and upgrade software and hardware to office, classroom, and laboratory spaces. Students are able to use 80 computers in the library and the librarian teaches in the library demonstration lab that has 30 computers. Campus employees also have access to training opportunities through Lynda.com as well as through other venues. (III.C.4)

YCCD Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3720 identify the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning process. Board Policy and/or ITS Administrative regulations address classroom technology concerns including copyright infringement, intellectual property, copying, integrity of sources, allowable use of programs, unauthorized software access, and password protection. (III.C.5)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets Standard. The Technology services are sufficient to meet the College's needs. Planning for technology programs and services has been integrated into the College and District planning processes with a shift to centralized information technology services. Both College and District Technology Plans have been delayed while awaiting the imminent arrival of a new Vice Chancellor of Information Technology.

While the College has purchased and replaced technology, most of the purchases have been with general fund savings, grant funding, Columbia College Foundation, and Instructional Equipment state funds. The College and District will need to plan and memorialize solutions in future Technology Plans.

### **Recommendation for Improvement**

**College Recommendation 4 (Improvement):** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the College update and implement a sustainable college technology plan that ensures its technological infrastructure, quality and capacity are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services. (III.C.2)

## **Standard III.D - Financial Resources**

### **General Observations**

Columbia College is one of two colleges in the YCCD, which has centralized financial services charged with the responsibility of maintaining financial stability, integrity and transparency in the allocation of resources district-wide. The District and the Colleges receive state funding generally described as unrestricted revenue or general funds. General fund restricted budget includes all state categorical programs, college co-curricular trust funds, community education programs, grants, and other special programs and the parking lot funds. The District has a prudent approach to fiscal management and has maintained a 10% board directed reserve of \$9.6 million to ensure the financial stability of the entire district. Moreover, in 2004, YCCD voters approved Measure E, for General Obligation Bond and facilities improvement and construction at Modesto Junior College and Columbia College. Columbia College received \$52.5 million of Measure E bond funds to construct new buildings and modernize existing facilities.

The YCCD has developed a resource allocation model that is based off the state SB361 Funding Model. The model provides a base allocation to the district and colleges of prior year funds, adjusted for step and column, benefits, COLA, then utilizes FTES for remaining allocation of funds. The FTES allocation has resulted in an 87% MJC / 13% CC, but the district has incorporated a small college factor to help sustain Columbia College. With the small college factor, the traditional allocation of FTES funds has become 85% MJC / 15% CC. Additionally, the district has augmented allocations with one-time prior year carryover funds to both colleges and the district. No evidence was identified as to how the allocation of these one-time funds was determined. This augmentation has assisted Columbia College in having financial resources sufficient to maintain its fixed operational costs. The college has a general unrestricted budget of \$13.4 million of which 92% comprises salaries and benefits and the remaining 8% for discretionary operational expenses and other outgo. The College must manage its financial resources in an effective and efficient manner to fulfill its mission and meet its goals. To provide an additional sources of revenue, the College created a Development Office which has produced sustainable and mission focused alternate funding sources to help support the college's goals and provide for continuous improvement. In addition, restricted funds supplement the instructional services, student support services and operations. If existing funding is not available to achieve a college priority, alternate funding sources are pursued, such as Apprenticeship, Title III and TRIO grants.

The College has clearly defined guidelines and processes for financial planning and development. The budget process is directly connected to the college's mission and strategic goals as evidenced in Program Review. The College utilizes Program Review processes to distribute resources to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The College engages in financial planning at several levels, specific to the source of the fund, and the process is clearly defined and involvement of the college constituents is evident. The College budget timeline is integrated with the district timeline established annually by the YCCD Board of Trustees. The college's internal budget development process is integrated with the College program review process to determine temporary staffing needs, operation's needs, and strategic resources needed to meet their mission and goals. The College is in the process of

developing a more formal process for determining their permanent staffing needs. All resource requests are ranked and vetted through a college participatory governance process. The College establishes priorities first to meet enrollment targets and operational expenditures. If adequate funding is not available to support its goals and priorities, the College Development office seeks and writes grants to secure additional funding. In recent years, the College's budget has been impacted by shrinking enrollments; therefore, the College works to allocate funds to achieve its goals for student learning and keep any necessary budget cuts as far from the classroom as possible. No funding has been available for special initiatives or projects, except through grants or specialized funding.

The District practices effective oversight and management of all financial resources. It also continuously evaluates and improves its oversight of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contracts, auxiliary operations and their foundation. However, there is no evidence that the District Resource Allocation Model developed in 2014-15 has had continuous evaluation for effectiveness in meeting the college needs. Evidence of a satisfaction survey for District Fiscal Services was administered in 2012, but it did not specifically address the allocation model. Oversight and review of the status of all restricted and unrestricted fund balances also takes place at the campus through office of the Vice President of College and Administrative Services. College budget managers have immediate access to financial reporting tools to display budget to actual results. Internal controls are built into the Colleague system to not allow over expenditure of budgets. The college ensures the timely dissemination of financial information throughout the institution.

The District annually has an independent audit performed to verify the accuracy of its financial statements and fiscal management practices as well as the effectiveness of its internal controls. Internal audits resulted in some deficiencies related to the internal controls within Information systems regarding the program change process not operating effectively. Instances when District personnel did not document the design of multiple testing phases resulted in a program change that could be initiated, tested, and put into production by the same individual. The District put into place corrective action plans, and processes have been implemented to address deficiencies. In response to any college audit findings, the District or college prepares a corrective action plan. Financial audits, with continued unqualified opinions, support the assertion that the institution manages its financial affairs with integrity and continues to remain financially stable.

The College does not issue student loans; however, it does monitor federal revenue streams to ensure compliance with major Federal programs such as Title IV. Student financial aid funds are audited annually through the external audit process.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Financial resources, with the augmentation of one-time funds, are sufficient to support and sustain student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. The College must be diligent and frugal in managing its financial resources in an effective and efficient manner to fulfill its mission and meet its goals. College plans and allocates its resources to support the development, maintenance and enhancement of programs and services. The College plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability and seeks alternative funding as needed. (ER 18)

The College has sufficient revenues to support and sustain educational programs and services to improve effectiveness. Columbia's current annual budget of \$13.4 million supports fixed operating costs of 92%, and funds budget requests prioritized from Program Review. This is evidenced in reviewing the copies of the college and district annual budgets and program reviews. Additionally, Columbia received one time revenues that were received by the District. (III.D.1)

Columbia's annual allocation of state apportionment revenues is distributed through an YCCD allocation that is modeled after the state's SB361 formula as noted in the general observations. A review of the District Annual Budget book confirms this process. The College has clearly defined guidelines and processes for financial planning and development which utilizes the college's mission and goals as its foundation. As demonstrated in Program Review documents, it is evident that resource requests support the mission and goals. Although the Program Review for instructional programs is in a different format than support services program reviews, the requests for resources support the college mission and goals. All resource requests from program reviews are compiled from groups, units and departments to assist in the process of resource allocation. The requests are prioritized through a collaborative participatory process and funded based on a realistic assessment of financial resource availability. The Columbia College Council is the central participatory governance body through which college budget decisions are vetted and recommendations are sought. The College must remain frugal in the allocation of their resources in order to maintain their fiscal stability. The College President and Office of the Vice President of College and Administrative Services also provide reports to various participatory governance committees and the college at large regarding budget and financial planning processes and issues. The prioritized requests provide the college with valuable data used to determine future funding needed to meet mission and strategic goals. Decisions are made on the basis of the College's general fund allocation with one-time augmentation and funding from alternative funding sources, as evidenced in reviewing the College's balanced budget. (III.D.2, III.D.3, III.D.4, III.D.6)

The District's Resources Allocation Model was revised in 2014-15. While the implementation and college adjustment for equalizing their budgets are ongoing, there is no sufficient college participation on the allocation of District Central Services budget. About 94% of the District's budget is allocated to personnel cost while the remaining 6% is discretionary. Moreover, there are no annual reviews for the District office departments, and the last satisfaction survey performed was done in 2012. The District continues to meet and demonstrate fiscal stability through the long-range planning 10% reserve annually, continued funding of Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS), and Other Post-Employee Benefit. However, the allocation of one-time monies to the colleges and lack of a defined process for surplus monies when the books are closed at the end of the fiscal year need to improve by college involvement in the process of planning such allocations. College involvement in the planning of the District's Central Office budget in order to promote transparency and institutional effectiveness is also lacking. (III.D.3)

Oversight and review of the status of all restricted and unrestricted funds takes place at the campus through office of the vice president of college and Administrative Services and by college budget managers. Critical budget information is shared regularly with all college staff as evidenced in College Council minutes. The College ensures the timely dissemination of financial



information throughout the institution. Checks and balances are built into the Colleague system to ensure no single person can initiate a purchase, authorize an expenditure, or spend the funds. Purchases cannot be encumbered unless the account has adequate budgeted funds in the system. The College manages its finances in a responsible manner as evidenced in the absence of external audit findings particular to the College for the past several years. Documents, including budget and financial audits, indicate the district has financial resources sufficient to support student learning programs and services. However, evidence from college budgets and financial documents indicate the college struggles to sufficiently fund student learning programs and services. (III.D.5, III.D.6)

The District has had audit findings in the past several years regarding their information systems' lack of internal controls. The district has put corrective action plans in place to meet these recommendations. In 2014, 2015 and 2016 the district had recommendation in regards to significant deficiencies in information systems. In 2015 and 2016, the district had the same recommendation as the corrective action plan had not been fully implemented. (III.D.7)

The District has an internal audit department that regularly reviews all business and finance systems to ensure compliance with relevant policies, procedures, laws and statutory regulations. Review of the Internal Audit evidence was limited and only reflected a single audit of cash on hand in two cash boxes in July, 2016. In response to any college audit findings, the College prepares a corrective action plan. Financial audits with continued unqualified opinions, in the areas directly impacting the colleges, support the assertion that the institution manages its financial affairs with integrity and continues to remain financially stable. (III.D.8)

The District practices an effective oversight and conservative management of all financial resources. It quarterly evaluates and analyses cash flow to ensure the smooth operation of the College and District. The District has a long history of not needing to issue a Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN) and the last Certificate of Participation (COP) held by YCCD was paid down in 2005. The District maintains a strong reserve balance of 10%, and as a result, it is likely YCCD will not be required to seek debt financing. (III.D.9, III.D.10)

The District prudently manages long-term financial planning as it relates to OPEB, PARS and other liabilities of the district such as faculty load banking and vacation accruals. Evidence includes the YCCD board of trustees approving an agreement with PARS to administer trust fund for YCCD's Pension Rate Stabilization Program and funding \$6.2 million to this trust. Additionally, faculty load banking and vacation accrual limits have been established and processes implemented to limit these liabilities. Additionally, the pay out of the load bank is at the rate of pay at which the hours were deposited. The College recognizes that the fulfillment of its mission and goals are contingent upon short and long range financial solvency. As a result, college leaders work creatively to leverage funding opportunities to maximize results, yet making decisions cautiously to ensure the long-term viability of the college. Consideration of long-term planning for allocation of Perkins funds is evidenced in Columbia's CTE Perkins Core Indicators. (III.D.11, III.D.12)

All financial resources including auxiliary activities, fund raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with goal setting and the intended purposes of the funding

source and undergo an annual external audit. Measure E funds are used to fund facilities projects found in the College's Facilities Master Plan and a Bond Oversight Committee reviews that the expenditures are consistent with the bond language. Additionally, Measure E bond funds are subject to the annual independent audit. The College follows district policy and procedures for establishing, managing, and monitoring funding sources from outside the district as evidenced in Internal Audit Reports prepared by the District's Internal Auditor in 2015. (III.D.14)

The College does not issue student loans; however, it does comply with federal requirements, including Title IV of the Higher Education Act as evidenced in the audit reports having no finding in deficiency for the management of these funds for the past three audits. (III.D.15)

The appropriate College Dean, Vice President, and President reviews each contract to ensure it complies with statutory requirements and institutional policies and are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution and the quality of its programs, services, and operations. Review of a sampling of college contracts provides evidence that this review is consistent. (III.D.16)

## **Conclusions**

The College and the District meets the Standards and the Related Eligibility Requirements. However, the team notes that the District could improve communication of its financial decision making, as noted in District Recommendation 2.

## **STANDARD IV LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Standard IV.A – Decision-Making Roles and Processes**

#### **General Observations**

Columbia College revised its mission statement and strategic goals, and the College Council instituted two primary councils, the Institutional Effectiveness Council and the Student Success Council. In 2016, both the mission statement and strategic goals were adopted by the College Council. The newly created Council and Committee Handbook defines committee roles and the roles of members and assures all constituents participate in the governance process.

The College Council, Institutional Effectiveness Council, Student Success Council, and the participatory committees meet regularly and are focused on the college operations, student learning, student equity, and academic quality. The College constituents are engaged in dialogue, which reflects a culture that encourages input from all parties. This culture is supported and encouraged by the President and the Vice Presidents. Through the College Council and the participatory committees, the college activities are reviewed, discussed, and acted upon. These mechanisms appear to work for Columbia College.

The College biennially conducts two Institutional Effectiveness surveys. The student survey questions their academic planning and campus experience. The one faculty and staff survey questions their understanding of strategic goals and areas of concern identified by accreditation standards. The College Committee Handbook is a result of these surveys as well as the impulse to create a plan to systematically evaluate the participatory decision-making structure at Columbia College.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

Columbia College has strategic goals and core values that guide decision making at the institution. Through the College Council each constituent group plays a critical role in their governance process. In 2016, the College revised through a collaborative process the institution's mission statement and strategic goals. Both the mission statement and the strategic goals were adopted by the College Council. In the fall of 2017, the College introduced the new Council and Committee Handbook, which clarifies roles and responsibilities with the participatory governance structure for faculty, staff, and students. For the previous year, the minutes and agendas from these committees are posted online. The College has implemented and completed a self-evaluation for the College Councils and committees. (IV.A.1).

Columbia College adopted a new governance structure which was led by the College Council but is augmented by two new Councils, the Institutional Effectiveness Council and the Student Success Council. The new participatory governance structure that has been implemented at the College was designed to allow all campus constituent to have a voice in the decision-making process. From board policies to committees and to the College Councils, the College provides evidence that the college community is able to participate in dialogue and the constituent groups are involved in decision-making. The participatory governance structure at the college is

inclusive of all stakeholders and campus constituents. The College is transparent through agendas and minutes; and has developed a process of regular evaluation to improve its governance structure. (IV.A.2).

The YCCD and Columbia College have established a framework of policies, procedures, and participatory governance structures that ensure administrators, faculty, staff, and students have a substantive and defined role in the institutional governance. Each Council and committee members are selected by their constituent groups. The committees and councils provide a vehicle for receiving input on decisions, policies, and procedure development. Agendas, meeting minutes, and documentation of various committee and council activities provide evidence on the wide and broad-based discussions. (IV.A.3).

YCCD primarily upon the Academic Senate and faculty advice and judgment in the areas on curriculum matters, prerequisites, placing courses within disciplines, degree and certificate requirements, grading policies, and others. The collaboration between the academic administrators and the faculty is primarily through the Academic Senate. The primary vehicle for faculty and administrators to provide recommendations about curriculum is through the Curriculum Committee. Evidence of the collaboration is presented in the agenda and minutes from the Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee, which is a committee of the Academic Senate. The Curriculum Committee Chair discusses current topics at the Academic Senate Meetings and shares information through the Academic Senate newsletter. In addition, the College provides evidence that academic administrators and faculty through board policy take responsibility for decisions made regarding student learning programs and services. (IV.A.4).

The minutes from the District Council, College Council, Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and Student Success and Equity Advisory Committee demonstrate a broad participation relating to college mission statement, strategic goals, and budgeting and resource allocations. (IV.A.5).

Columbia College creates opportunity for relevant perspectives through the College Council and participatory committees. The College Council makes recommendations to the President regarding decisions, directions, faculty and staff hiring, and budget. In fall 2017, the College finalized the Council and Committee Handbook. The handbook clearly defines the participatory governance structure, decision-making roles and committee responsibilities. The meeting minutes for the College Council and the participatory committees are posted online. In addition, after the Board of Trustees meeting, the College sends the YCCD *Board Connection* via email to the campus community. The *Board Connection* is a brief summary of the board proceedings. The President and the Vice Presidents make themselves available to the campus constituents. (IV.A.6).

Columbia College biennially conducts two versions of its Institutional Effectiveness Survey, one for student and one for faculty and staff. The College conducted surveys of employees and students to gauge their understanding of the College issues and needs. The results from the Institutional Effectiveness Survey were shared throughout the College campus. As noted in the college ISER report, the College will develop a plan for systematic evaluation of the

participatory decision-making structure, procedures and process to ensure integrity and overall effectiveness. (IV.A.7).

### **Conclusions**

The College meets the Standard.

## **Standard IV.B – Chief Executive Officer**

### **General Observations**

The College President provides effective leadership in all facets of the College. The College President has built an organizational infrastructure staffed by talented members focused on institutional effectiveness.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College President provides oversight and leadership in overall planning and institutional effectiveness. The President chairs the primary governance body of the college, called College Council and identified three major planning initiatives including the development of a two-year strategic planning process which culminated in the current Strategic Plan. The planning effort also resulted in a re-evaluation of the College's committee structures and the codification of a new and more streamlined structure for the College. The planning cycle provides reflection and ability to review and close the loop on goals and integrates cycles of Program Review and SLO Assessment. The President has also engaged in the services of the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI) to assist the College efforts in the improvement and integration of SLO assessments. As evidenced through memo's and emails, the President clearly communicates the important role of the accreditation process to all constituents, has ensured broad participation by members of the College community, and has taken the lead role in responding to Standard IV in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report. (IV.B.1, IV.B.3, and IV.B.4)

As evidenced by the College's organizational chart and in conversation with President's Cabinet, the College is effectively staffed to meet the institution's mission, size, and complexity. While Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors are in place at the College to support the educational and administrative functions of the College, centralized District level services provide augmented support to the College and are focused on administrative functions such as Information Technology, Human Resources, Facilities and Maintenance. The College underwent a recent structural change by adding a third Vice President and reconfiguring dean and division areas. (IV.B.2)

The District subscribes to the Community College League of California (CCLC) policy and procedure services to ensure up-to-date language in District policies and procedures and upkeep on new and changing regulations. The College has an effective process in place to ensure the President and other key personnel are involved in the development of new policies and revisions to existing ones. The College, under the leadership of the President and VP of Administrative Services also ensures compliance with the policies and procedures regarding fiscal management. (IV.B.5)

As evidenced through the College and organization websites and minutes, the College President is actively engaged with many community organizations including Rotary, the College Foundation, and Chambers of Commerce. Regularly, the President also engages in dialogue with the County and District Superintendents, as well as 4-year University partners. (IV.B.6)

## **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard.

## **Standard IV.C – Governing Board**

### **General Observations**

The Board of Trustees of YCCD has three newly elected board members as of November 2016, and a new Chancellor as of July 2017. The seven-member Board of Trustees is in transition as they are building an understanding of the delineation of roles, responsibilities and lines of authority within the District and at the colleges.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The District has established policies regarding the authority and responsibility of the board as it pertains to academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness as well as financial stability. The board receives regular reports regarding finance, enrollment targets and progress, and student learning and success. Board policy is in place and followed regarding the selection and evaluation of the Chancellor as evidenced through the selection of the new Chancellor during the spring of 2017. (IV.C.1, IV.C.3, IV.C.5, IV.C.8)

Board policies are in place that delineate roles and expectations of board members, including a code of conduct that articulates the need for the board to act collectively. Based on conversations with Board members and other College and District stakeholders, it is evident that there is a divided faction among board members. This has resulted in morale problems and resulted in inefficiencies for the College and District. (IV.C.2)

All policies and procedures are publicly available on the District website. The seven-member board and a student trustee that rotates annually between the two Colleges meet monthly to conduct business. Trustees also engage with the local communities by making appearances at various community functions. Trustees engage in board development by way of new member orientation provided through the office of the Chancellor. New and ongoing professional development for Board members is provided via study sessions on a variety of relevant topics at the Board meetings and study sessions, as well as Board participation in conferences such as those offered through the Community College League of California. (IV.C.4, IV.C.6, IV.C.9, IV.C.11)

The Board assesses its performance per board policy. Self-evaluations are conducted annually with the most recent facilitated by Brice Harris, former Chancellor, California Community Colleges. (IV.C.10)

The Board generally delegates responsibility for implementation of board policies and District procedures to the Chancellor and College Presidents as identified in board policy. However, recent actions of the Board allude to the possibility of interference with operational matters. One such action is a revision to the travel policy whereby all out-of-state travel now require prior Board approval, rendering inefficiencies and possible cost escalations as a result. The second possible area of concern with operational matters is the impact of “office hours”, currently being held monthly by one board member. Such invitations target Modesto Junior College faculty and classified staff and are identified as listening sessions. This does not appear to be in alignment



with the Board's policy role and can impede the College and District's ability to effectively manage operations. (IV.C.7, IV.C.12)

As evidenced through board minutes, the board is systematically informed on the College's status and progress with regard to accreditation. The board has also participated in a self-evaluation study session in fall 2016, focused on their roles in accreditation and other matters. (IV.C.13)

### **Conclusion**

The District does not meet this Standard.

### **District Recommendations**

**District Recommendation 3 (Improvement):** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the Trustees act as a collective entity in support of Board decisions. (IV.C.2)

**District Recommendation 4 (Compliance):** In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the Board fully delegate operational authority to the Chancellor and the College Presidents as specified in Board Policies 2430 and 2430.1, and demonstrate through practice, their policy making role while refraining from interfering with the CEO's authority to operate the District/Colleges. (IV.C.7, IV.C.12)

## **Standard IV.D – Multi-College District or Systems**

### **General Observations**

The YCCD is comprised of two Colleges and a District Office, which houses the Chancellor, senior administrators, and District classified professional staff. The District service area covers 170 miles across central California and includes both a rural mountain campus, Columbia College, and an urban campus, Modesto Junior College. The District works collaboratively with the Colleges and through a participatory governance process.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The Chancellor engages in regular meetings with District Council, a participatory governance body, and Chancellor's Cabinet (composed of College Presidents and Vice Chancellors) to communicate expectations, ensure operational effectiveness and alignment between and among the colleges and the District and provide support. Policies are also in place which articulate delegation of authority from the Board to the Chancellor and from the Chancellor to the College Presidents. (IV.D.1, IV.D.4)

A functional map has been developed articulating the individual and shared roles and responsibilities of the Colleges and the District across functional units. Reorganization efforts have taken place in Information Technology to realign and improve services. The District units engage in satisfaction surveys and work order tracking systems to assess and realign services to better meet college needs. (IV.D.2, IV.D.7)

Board policies and procedures are in place which articulate the annual budget planning process. Budget allocations and prioritization, including FTES goal setting, are discussed in Chancellor's Cabinet and District Council. A timeline regarding the budget planning process is provided and adhered to. The budget is reviewed and approved by the Board. The District's budget resource allocation model uses the SB361 model with a minor adjustment made for Columbia College to adjust for its small size. The District maintains a viable reserve and recent audit shows that prior audit findings and deficiencies in IT have been fully addressed. (IV.D.3)

The College's strategic plan comprises six goals that are illustrated as pillars laid upon the framework of the District's goals. College members participate in the development of the broader District strategic plan, and focus college plans on specific local needs and conditions. Other plans such as that for technology and facilities are also in place. However, there is a lack of connection and integration between college and District plans and between various District plans. Some plans, such as that for technology, require review and update. (IV.D.5)

The District uses multiple channels of communication between the colleges and the District to support effective operations and decision making, including Chancellor's Cabinet meetings, and Districtwide Governance Committees (College Council, Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee, and District Technology Advisory Committee). There are also other District meetings convened by various Central Services areas as well as joint meetings of the two colleges' administrative teams to discuss issues that affect student success. Results and decisions

are shared broadly with the college and District community via meeting notes and published on college and District websites. While such committees and meetings are in place, the effectiveness of the dialogue and decision making processes have not been evaluated in a systematic fashion. Through interviews, some stakeholders shared that a number of decisions are made by the District and communicated to the colleges without opportunity for proper discussion and vetting. (IV.D.6, IV.D.7)

## **Conclusion**

While the District meets this Standard, it is advised that more deliberate and regular evaluation of the planning and decision making processes be conducted. Given that the Chancellor is very new to the organization, this may be an opportune time for the CEO to evaluate the planning and decision-making processes to ensure integration and alignment.