

Abstract Based on Themes

To develop the abstract section of College of San Mateo's self study, the steering committee co-chairs devised a process that included representation from each of the standards committees. One person from each of the nine standards committees was designated as a theme point-person. These individuals were assigned to review their respective standards against the six themes. They were provided with a grid for recording elements that addressed each theme and rating the pervasiveness of each theme throughout the standard. In addition, one member of the steering committee was assigned the task of writing the themes section.

The theme point people, the steering committee co-chairs, and the primary author of the abstract, who is also a member of the steering committee, held two meetings; each meeting focused on three themes. The group discussed the standards' findings relative to themes while the steering committee members recorded comments and ratings. Then the author used the information recorded from these meetings, the grids, and drafts of the standards as resource material for the development of the abstract. Finally, the co-chairs and the author met to evaluate the relative strength of each theme; these evaluations can be found at the conclusion of each theme. The abstract was posted on the college's website for review and comment by the entire college community.

Dialogue

College of San Mateo has developed an inclusive environment and offers numerous avenues through which it conducts meaningful, ongoing dialogue about institutional quality and improvement. Dialogue at CSM plays an integral role in supporting the college mission, vision, and values and in addressing its strategic objectives.

The college demonstrates its commitment to institutional dialogue in a number of ways. First and foremost is the process of shared governance that requires broad-based participation and discussion of issues by various constituent groups. While the heart of shared governance at CSM rests with the College Council, a consensus-based body, the process is practiced throughout the college in committees of College Council (Budget and Strategic Planning), institutional committees, advisory committees, and Academic Senate Governing Council, among other bodies. This governing structure ensures that effective and inclusive dialogue occurs with every new policy and initiative as well as with established ongoing processes such as budget development and facilities planning. It should be noted that students, as one of the four constituency groups, are invited to participate in every shared governance committee and over many years have shown very solid commitment in doing so.

The Diversity In Action Group (DIAG) provides leadership and support for college-wide discussion and activities that focus on supporting student success. This group engages faculty, staff, and students in lectures, workshops, and focus groups that work to broaden perspectives that enhance an understanding of and appreciation for diversity. CSM's commitment to dialogue occurring in many of the college's institutional committees can be found in minutes and meeting summaries; these are

made available to the college community on CSM Internal, the college's biweekly electronic newsletter.

Beyond the process of shared governance, there are many other examples of dialogue on campus. One of the most important venues for dialogue is through the annual program review process, which occurs at the departmental level in instruction and the unit level in student services. Program review generates opportunities for faculty and deans to participate in the evaluation of programs, using qualitative and quantitative data; to review program goals, student learning outcomes (SLOs), enrollment, curriculum, and staffing; and to make recommendations for equipment, instructional materials, facilities, and other improvements. Student services faculty and staff engage in dialogue that includes some 20 different programs and services throughout the college. All of these student services units participate in the program review process; there is also broad dialog within the Student Development Committee, Student Services Leads, and Enrollment Management Committee. This process yields significant data that are used for institutional improvement.

Other opportunities for faculty to engage in meaningful dialogue have occurred through the development and expansion of learning communities which involve faculty working together to assess, plan, and teach linked classes. Currently, there are nine active learning communities and approximately 20 faculty participating in this endeavor. Additional efforts that engage faculty in discussions about improving student learning include the Integrative Learning Project, Writing Across the Curriculum, and the development of electronic portfolios.

The college's assessment movement has created significant opportunities for dialogue both on a college-wide basis and with colleagues from our sister colleges and other institutions. In 2005, the College Assessment Committee developed the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle, a process that fosters dialogue and is used as a vehicle for continuous educational improvement. This committee has spearheaded numerous activities to make the campus aware of SLOs and assessment. It has sponsored open forums to initiate campus-wide dialogue about institutional SLOs and workshops with instructional and student service faculty and to discuss program/department/unit and course level SLOs.

As the college continues with capital improvement and construction projects, faculty, staff and students are very much a part of the consultation process. In the case of the newly built science building, science faculty and staff participated in many aspects of the design and planning phases, meeting with architects and construction firms to discuss optimum facility needs to promote student learning. This process continues with each new major facilities project that unfolds. In addition, a significant number of individuals and groups have met with bridging architects to address program and unit needs for future construction.

The college makes every effort to communicate effectively with all constituent groups and to encourage discussion on important campus issues. All-college meetings are held throughout the year on various topics, including facilities planning, budget issues, and emergency preparedness. Notification of all-college meetings, open forums, and

general announcements are communicated through multiple means, including all-college email notices, CSM Internal, the President's Memorandum, and flyers. Online surveys related to accreditation and facilities master planning have garnered significant responses from the college community. The college invites comments about college improvements via CSM Listens, a mechanism for feedback to help evaluate and improve services and facilities. The college-wide input that is required for the production of the College Catalog provides yet another means for broad-based dialogue.

The Office of Articulation and Research provides quantitative data about the college that is used as the basis for effective dialogue. The office is responsible for data that supports the college, college committees, program review, numerous ad hoc requests, mandated state and federal reports and the college as a whole. The office also coordinates all aspects of survey efforts that are needed throughout the year.

There is ongoing dialogue among college and district staff on issues of district governance, including evaluating and communicating role delineation and decision-making processes. Information about policies and issues related to implementation is communicated widely through a variety of administrative and institutional committees. The chancellor, his staff, and the college presidents engage in dialogue as part of their regularly scheduled district cabinet and council meetings. In turn, the college president communicates through College Cabinet, Management Council, and other college committees. The college president also communicates directly with faculty and staff by means of chat sessions, which he holds on a periodic basis in order to have face-to-face conversations with individuals, especially on difficult issues. The president believes this is one of the best ways to foster understanding and meaningful dialogue.

Dialogue is a **significant strength** of CSM based on the evidence gathered through the self-study process.

Student Learning Outcomes

Since 2003, CSM has been on a clearly defined path to link student learning outcomes (SLOs) to the academic, student services, and operational aspects of the college. CSM's commitment to SLOs is evident in many areas of the college, beginning with the college Mission Statement which refers to "...offering comprehensive, quality programs and services and by measuring student learning..." Since the college mission statement drives the planning and decision making of the college, SLOs have become a fundamental element in these processes.

The college's leadership has made the implementation of SLOs and assessment a priority. It has demonstrated its commitment to this initiative in a number of ways, including the formation of a College Assessment Committee, on which the president and vice president for instruction both serve, and has committed resources to support SLOs by creating the position of assessment coordinator and by allocating funding for the numerous activities and professional development to support its campus-wide implementation.

Since its inception in 2004, the College Assessment Committee has provided critical leadership in the area of SLOs. The committee has made significant progress in determining the college's approach to SLOs, engaging several hundred faculty and staff to actively participate in the initiative and in the implementation of the assessment plan. The dean of articulation and research, a member of the committee, has provided relevant data to support the committee's efforts. The college's assessment website has comprehensive documentation about the history and progress of SLOs at CSM. The committee worked with Governing Council of the Academic Senate, the vice president of instruction, and instructional administrators to promote the integration of SLOs in instructional program review; this was achieved in 2006. SLOs have also been incorporated into the program review process for student services programs. In addition, each student services unit submits an annual report that explains how SLOs are aligned with college goals and the student services planning document.

Program review provides an ongoing opportunity for faculty to evaluate how programs and services connect with the college mission and to discuss program-level SLOs and any recommendations resulting from this assessment. Outcomes from program reviews are used in the annual planning processes, the development of strategic objectives, and the allocation of resources and staffing. Staff thoroughly analyze the state of their programs and provide relevant data, assessment of student learning outcomes, implications for future delivery of services, accomplishments, goals, needs, and recommendations for the following year.

Regarding the assessment of SLOs, the College Assessment Committee has determined that electronic portfolios are an effective, direct measure of student achievement in the classroom and has initiated a dialogue with faculty and staff to encourage participation in this effort. The committee also supports the use of student surveys to provide indirect measures of student learning.

Many other committees have participated in the various phases of development and implementation of SLOs including the Committee on Instruction, College Council, Academic Senate, Student Services Leads, and District Curriculum Committee. With regard to institutional SLOs, the dean of articulation and research assisted the college in soliciting input from community leaders regarding their viewpoints on what students need to know upon completing a program. SLOs are now used to assess student learning at the course and program level by many departments, programs, and units; results of the assessments are beginning to be used to guide changes in curriculum as well as in programs and services.

With the ongoing construction and renovation of classroom and student services buildings, faculty members have been and will continue to be active participants in the planning process. SLOs have informed the approach of faculty involved in planning and creating new student learning environments, including classroom and program space design, equipment, climate, and conditions to enhance both teaching and learning.

As the college continues to make progress in formulating and using SLOs, it will be

able to assess student progress toward achieving specific outcome measures at all levels throughout the college.

Student learning outcomes is an **emerging strength** at College of San Mateo as based on evidence gathered through the self-study process.

Institutional Commitments

College of San Mateo's commitment to providing high quality education is reflected in the college Mission Statement, which serves as the foundation for all planning activities. It gave direction to the planning committees that drafted subsequent Vision, Values and Diversity Statements; together, these significant documents reflect the guiding principles of the institution. Specifically, they provide the foundation for the development of college strategic objectives and action plans, inform the work of college committees, and guide the development of new institutional plans and processes, such as the Enrollment Management Plan and College Assessment Plan. The Mission, Vision, Values and Diversity Statements are posted in highly visible areas throughout campus and appear on the college website and in the catalog.

The mission, designed to be broad and inclusive, articulates the intended student population and the college's commitment to achieving student learning. Furthermore, it is a dynamic document that is reviewed annually by the Strategic Planning Committee and revised as needed; the most recent revision was made in 2005 to emphasize a focus on student learning.

The institution demonstrates its commitment to student learning through a number of institutional actions. There are several institutional committees that play important roles in improving student learning. Governing Council of the Academic Senate addresses curricular issues and questions regarding academic freedom. The College Assessment Committee has devoted particular attention to guiding the college's approach to student learning outcomes. The Committee on Instruction advises the vice president of instruction on curriculum and instructional procedures, long-range planning, and curriculum planning.

One of the most important activities that demonstrates the institution's commitment to student learning is the annual program review process. The data from this evaluative process document the college's adherence to the mission and become the basis for strengthening programs and services and for continuously improving student learning. Program review data inform the development of the annual action steps for carrying out the college's strategic objectives, the college budget, instructional planning, the student services planning document, and facilities master planning efforts. Over the past several years, the college has had a very high rate of programs participating in program review; every student services program and most instructional programs have submitted annual program review reports. The remaining units that need to implement program review are largely in the operational areas of the college.

The college also offers various modes of instruction and delivery systems to meet the diverse needs of the students. CSM has created learning labs and centers to support

classroom instruction and offers a variety of distance learning courses. There are specific programs designed to enhance student learning such as the learning communities initiative that offers students the opportunity to study common themes across disciplines and to foster collaborative and integrative learning. The college also offers enrichment programs including the honors and study abroad programs.

To further support student learning, the college demonstrates its commitment through its facilities master planning efforts by providing safe and sufficient physical resources that ensure the integrity and quality of programs and services. Faculty and staff are actively involved in discussions with facilities staff, consultants, architects, and construction professionals in the many phases of renovation and construction to address facility needs that promote optimum student learning. The college also supports institutional needs identified through program review for updating facilities, technology, and other equipment to enhance learning.

CSM relies on the college mission and strategic objectives as the foundation for financial planning. Financial planning is an integrated process that incorporates college and district information and is linked to the college's strategic plan. This link ensures that institutional planning reflects a realistic assessment of financial resources and allocation of sufficient resources to support student learning programs and services.

Institutional commitments is a **significant strength** at College of San Mateo based on the evidence gathered through the self-study process.

Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

For the past six years, CSM has made significant strides in its commitment to evaluation, planning, and improvement. The college has developed a planning model that encompasses short- and long-range planning within a committee structure of shared governance. The Strategic Planning Committee, a committee of College Council, serves as the primary planning group. Its efforts involve the integration of planning activities that incorporate feedback from all stakeholders to guide institutional decision making. As indicated by the model, planning efforts have a clear relationship linking the mission with the development of the college's strategic objectives, budget, program review, student learning outcomes (SLOs) and assessment, and research and evaluation.

Another committee under the auspices of College Council is the Budget Subcommittee, also a shared governance committee. Over the past six years, it has developed an effective budget process, driven by data and based on the needs of the institution.

At the core of institutional planning is information generated through the annual program review process, designed to provide specific information about evaluation, planning and improvement. Through this process, faculty and staff evaluate the educational effectiveness of courses, programs and services to verify consistency with the college mission and ensure these meet the changing needs and expectations of the students and the community.

The college's dedication to continuous planning and evaluation is reflected in the college assessment plan, which has guided the campus-wide implementation of SLOs and methods of assessment. The College Assessment Committee developed an assessment model referred to as the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle; its goal is to improve institutional effectiveness based on reliable and relevant assessment. This committee has been the catalyst for numerous workshops, discussions, campus-wide meetings, and activities designed to articulate, examine, and implement SLOs and assessment throughout the institution. A large percentage of faculty have incorporated SLOs into their courses and programs and services, and are beginning to use assessment to measure how well students, as a whole, are meeting specific objectives.

The college uses both formal and informal methods for assessing evaluation mechanisms. For example, divisions, departments, and units meet to determine needs, identify concerns, and review recommendations resulting from program review; program staff meet with advisory groups to determine program effectiveness; instruction and student services staff meet to evaluate progress in meeting college goals; Management Council serves as the forum for formative evaluation of programs and services and planning initiatives; and the Strategic Planning Committee, in conjunction with College Council, analyzes data from program reviews and modifies strategic objectives and action steps on an ongoing basis.

A key element contributing to institutional effectiveness and fostering a climate of evidence is the resources provided by the Office of Articulation and Research. The office is engaged in a broad range of research activities that support the college and the district, providing information for program improvement, strategic planning, institutional effectiveness, and formal program review. It conducts surveys of various populations to obtain feedback used to improve the quality of educational programs and services, and it generates information for departments and committees to incorporate into goal setting. The college leadership ensures that data, research, and survey reports are accessible and available to help drive planning of programs and services, assuring their relevancy to higher education and the needs of the community.

Financial planning has been integrated into strategic planning. The college relies upon its mission and strategic objectives as the foundation for its financial planning. This ensures that the annual action steps that are developed have adequate financial resources needed to support activities. The strategic plan defines the relationship between planning and budget development so that institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resources.

Evaluation, planning, and improvement is a **strength** at College of San Mateo based on evidence gathered from the self-study process.

Organization

The decision making and communication structures at College of San Mateo are driven by the college's mission statement and based on a collegial and inclusive approach. College decision making is carried out through various shared governance groups.

These groups ensure representation and participation by all constituency groups, and representatives are expected to communicate decisions, questions, and information back to constituent members. With a few exceptions, most institutional committees are comprised of students, classified staff, administrators, and faculty to ensure participation by all groups. College Council and its committees, Strategic Planning and Budget, serve as the principal shared governance groups.

In 2004, the college established the College Assessment Committee, a shared governance committee with broad campus representation, comprised of faculty from various disciplines, administrators, classified staff, and students. Its goal is to assist faculty and staff to improve teaching and learning at the course, department/program/unit, and institutional levels. This initiative provides both structure and direction for the college.

The Academic Senate's Governing Council, the policy-making body of the senate, is the venue for addressing curricular issues, academic freedom, and program review. The Committee on Instruction plays an important role in student learning by advising the vice president of instruction on curricular and instructional procedures, long range education priorities, and curriculum planning. The Student Services Leads group serves a similar function by advising the vice president of student services on scope, depth and relevance of student programs and services. Management Council is comprised of administrators and is advisory to the president. It implements policies and procedures adopted by the president, district, and Board of Trustees and addresses issues related to campus climate, facilities, and general improvements.

To provide timely and accurate information for decision making, evaluation, and institutional improvements related to student learning, the college has established a broad-based, integrated system of research, evaluation, and planning. The Office of Articulation and Research supports the college's need for data and reports to ensure college learning programs and services match the needs of the student population and to help the college improve the quality of educational programs and services. This office provides data for the systematic program review process, strategic planning, and measures of institutional effectiveness.

The college has systems in place to communicate quality assurance to the public including traditional methods such as the College Catalog, schedules, and program brochures. The college also publishes CSM Scene, a newsletter for the high school population; holds open house events to provide general and program specific information to prospective students and the general public; produces a community newsletter twice annually for all households in the college service area; and utilizes the resources of KCSM FM and TV to communicate with the public. The public can access a wide range of information, including college publications and forms, through the college website. The Office of Articulation and Research produces Research Briefs, a publication that focuses on a range of institutional and student performance outcomes, and it is distributed campus-wide and on the college intranet site. In spring 2005, the college conducted a survey of local business leaders through the San Mateo Area Chamber of Commerce and received feedback on how well CSM is educating

students; it also asked for opinions regarding the extent to which CSM students acquire skills and competencies believed to be important.

The college has an effective process of allocating financial resources to support student learning programs and services; this process is reflected in the planning process. The college's Budget Subcommittee is the primary financial decision making group and is responsible for reviewing data and making recommendations on the annual budget. The budget process is clearly defined; it begins at the department level with program review. Recommendations are forwarded to the President's Cabinet and then to the Budget Subcommittee, which is comprised of all constituencies. Recommendations proceed to College Council for review and are then forwarded to the president. The college and district budget processes work together to coordinate activities. The District Committee on Finance and Budget determines the allocation each college receives and develops an annual assessment of financial resources, using shared governance, to ensure that all major constituencies are represented throughout the budget development and planning process.

The Board of Trustees directs the chancellor to work closely with each college president to coordinate resource allocation and identify short- and long-term resources. The board stays informed and monitors learning programs and services through commissioned reports and studies. Each president also makes monthly executive reports to inform the board about college accomplishments and newsworthy events.

Organization is a **strength** at College of San Mateo based on the evidence gathered through the self-study process.

Integrity

The college's commitment to institutional integrity and ethical responsibility is underscored in the preamble of the college Values Statement: "We have an individual and collective responsibility to manage this (community) resource and to fulfill our mission and vision to the best of our ability."

Integrity is a consistent theme present throughout the college's policies, practices, and procedures. CSM assures quality of its institutional courses, programs and services through a number of processes: course approval, hiring, and evaluation processes for all categories of employees; tenure review process; grievance process; academic honesty policy; academic freedom and responsibility policy; program review; and consultation with advisory committees for certain programs. Information about college and district policies is made readily available on the college website and intranet and in publications such as the Faculty and Student Handbooks.

Openness at CSM is demonstrated by honest, accurate, and timely communication with internal and external communities through meetings of the Academic Senate, College Council, and its committees; by posting institutional meeting summaries and minutes and information on the website and intranet; by holding open forums and all-college meetings; and through the sending of all-college email messages, community

newsletters, and press releases.

CSM makes every effort to represent itself accurately to the college community and the public so that students have access to clear, accurate information about programs, degrees, certificates, and transfer policies through the College Catalog, schedule of classes, and website. The college has a well-established, clearly-defined process for the production of all publications that includes review, clarity, access, and currency of print materials and website information. Furthermore, minutes and meeting notes of college and district institutional committees including College Council, Strategic Planning Committee, Budget Subcommittee, Academic Senate Governing Council, and District Shared Governance are routinely posted on the college intranet and district websites.

CSM has a strong shared governance philosophy that is evident throughout the institution. It encourages ongoing collegial and self-reflective dialogue about continuing improvement in student learning and institutional processes. The primary shared governance committee, College Council, has as its goal, “to facilitate and implement shared governance throughout the college in a way that recognizes and respects the functions and responsibilities of the four governing groups.”

The institution ensures financial integrity and responsibility in the use of its resources by following an effective allocation process to support student learning programs. CSM has a financial review process that is inclusive and consistent with the missions of the college and district. Documentation of the process, from the college business office to the district level, lends credibility to internal assessment and external audits and assures all accounting principles are followed. By managing bond funds wisely and with significant oversight, the college ensures that assets are safeguarded and expended in a cost-effective manner. The San Mateo Grand Jury in 2004-2005 praised the district’s processes in the report, “School Construction Management in San Mateo County,” as a model for other school districts.

The college demonstrates its regard for issues of equity and diversity in a number of ways. In 2002 the college launched the President’s Lecture Series to strengthen the positive campus climate and foster dialogue on issues of diversity. The Diversity In Action Group (DIAG), institutionalized in 2004, provides leadership for college-wide discussion and activities that focus on supporting student success. DIAG engages all campus constituencies in lectures, workshops, and focus groups to broaden perspectives and enhance understanding and appreciation of the college’s diverse population. The campus further supports its diverse population through approximately 45 student clubs appealing to career interests, ethnic and cultural heritage, social/political concerns, and sports interests. Clubs sponsor events that recognize and increase awareness of the value of diversity. The college also has a diversity statement that emphasizes the college’s commitment to inclusiveness.

CSM has long-standing cooperative relationships with numerous external educational agencies, including the State Chancellor’s Office, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, schools, colleges, universities, and local and state agencies. One recent, notable partnership between the college and more than 20 local and state law enforcement agencies culminated in the planning and construction of a

new regional public safety center at CSM. Also of significance are the solid relationships the college has forged with architects and contractors in conjunction with the capital improvement and construction projects.

The delineation of operational responsibilities and functions of the colleges and the district is articulated in District Rules and Regulations; its policies regarding governance and process are shaped by the Board of Trustees and subsequently implemented by chancellor's staff and college presidents. Policies are updated as needed, and the complete document is made accessible to all employees on the district portal site. At the college level, the college president and administrative structure effectively support the dissemination of information and implementation of new policies and procedures. President's Cabinet ensures actions are put into practice and provides feedback on implementation results.

At CSM, there are many avenues—those already enumerated as well as others—which allow for expression and discussion of differing opinions. These opportunities for open dialog have created a climate of respect that permeates the campus and demonstrates the college's regard for all members of its community.

Integrity is a **significant** strength at College of San Mateo as based on evidence gathered through the self-study process.

