

PEER REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Merced College
3600 M St
Merced, CA 95348

This report represents the findings of the Peer Review Team that conducted a focused site visit to Merced College on February 13 - 14, 2024. The Commission acted on the accredited status of the institution during its June 2024 meeting and this team report must be reviewed in conjunction with the Commission's Action letter.

Roger W. Schultz, Ph.D.
Team Chair

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**Merced College
Peer Review Team Roster
TEAM ISER REVIEW**

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Dr. Jennifer Zellet, Vice Chair
Superintendent/President
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Dr. Gohar Momjian
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**Merced College
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FOCUSED SITE VISIT**

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Vice President
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Summary of Focused Site Visit

INSTITUTION: Merced College

DATES OF VISIT: February 13-14, 2024

TEAM CHAIR: Roger W. Schultz

This Peer Review Team Report is based on the formative and summative components of the comprehensive peer review process. In October 2023, the team conducted Team ISER Review (formative component) to identify where the college meets Standards and to identify areas of attention for the Focused Site Visit (summative component) by providing Core Inquiries that the team will work to validate compliance, improvement, or areas of excellence. The Core Inquiries are attached to this report.

A 6-member peer review team conducted a Focused Site Visit to Merced College on February 13 and 14, 2024 for the purpose of completing its Peer Review Team Report and determination of whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and U.S. Department of Education regulations.

The team chair and vice chair held a pre-Focused Site Visit meeting with the college CEO on Thursday, February 1, 2024, to discuss updates since the Team ISER Review and to plan for the Focused Site Visit. During the Focused Site Visit, team members met with approximately 30 faculty, administrators, classified staff and students in formal meetings, group interviews and individual interviews. Team members met with three trustees from the College in the meet and greet session and observed a board meeting. The team held two open forums, one virtual and one during the site visit, which were well attended, and provided the College community and others the opportunity to share their thoughts with members of the Focused Site Visit team. Both open forums evidenced a student-centered community built on mutual respect and collaboration. The team evaluated how well the College is achieving its stated purposes, providing recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement. The team thanks the College staff for coordinating and hosting the Focused Site Visit meetings and interviews and ensuring a smooth and collegial process.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the Peer Review Team Report

Commendations

Commendation 1:

The team commends the College for how it lives its mission and uses data in cross-disciplinary initiatives to support student learning and student achievement. The College has intentionally cultivated a capacity for data-informed decision-making via Student Success Teams which has resulted in exemplary projects like the Learning Resource Center. (I.A.2, I.B.4, II.B.3)

Recommendations

None

Recommendations to Meet Standards:

None

Recommendations to Improve Quality:

None

Introduction

Merced College was founded from a vote of the Le Grand and Merced Union High School Districts in 1962. The first classes in fall of 1963 were offered at a temporary site on Merced County Fairgrounds. Since 1966, classes have been offered at its current site, with a service area of 2,184 square miles. The main campus covers 269 acres, and the district has expanded to a Center in Los Banos to serve the communities of Los Banos and Dos Palos. The Center began in 1971 and expanded into new facilities in 2007. Serving a majority Hispanic student population, Merced College has been designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution, and the College received a 5-year grant as a *Developing Hispanic Serving Institution*. While enrollments and FTES are not back to pre-pandemic levels, the enrollment trends at this institution are not anomalous compared to other colleges in the system.

The College Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) accurately portrays the mission of the College, the leadership structure, and the policies and processes in place to ensure compliance during execution of its duties to the community. The team reviewed all documents submitted by the College and additional materials that support the ISER and the Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. Evidence reviewed by the team included documents including institutional plans, strategic planning, program review procedures and reports, student learning outcomes data, course syllabi, distance education courses, college policies and procedures, enrollment and student success information, committee minutes and materials, governance structures, and other supporting materials.

The team greatly appreciated the organization and hospitality shown before and during the focused-site visit. Merced College's Superintendent/President and key staff members including the accreditation liaison officer, faculty coordinator, and executive assistant to the president, assisted the team with requests throughout the evaluation process.

The team is impressed with Merced's use of disaggregated data to support the success of its students. The institutional Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGs) have been utilized to revamp pedagogical practices across academic departments to be more inclusive. (I.B.6) The team observed several concrete examples shared by interviewees of assessment results being utilized to devise and implement changes to SLOs, curriculum, resourcing, student support, and pedagogy. (II.A.16) The team applauds the College's use of Student Success Teams, including instructional faculty, recruitment and retention specialists, student support, and financial aid, to leverage data and insights across various facets of the College. (II.C.5) Throughout the visit, the team identified multiple innovative instances of this exemplary cross-disciplinary work, including the Equity Hub, the Learning Resource Center, the Early Alert System, and the securing of multiple grants to support these and other student-centered initiatives, all of which leverage multi-faceted data points to inform planning for student success. (I.A.2, I.B.4)

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

The team confirmed that Merced College has been operating continuously since 1963. The College derives its authority to operate as a two-year Community College under the State of California and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. The College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education.

The College meets the ER.

2. Operational Status

The team confirmed that Merced College is providing educational services leading to certificate and associate degree attainment for 16,625 students as of Academic Year 2022-2023. In the same Academic Year, the College granted 2,938 total awards consisting of 1,422 certificates, 746 associate degrees for transfer (ADTs), and 770 associate degrees.

The College meets the ER.

3. Degrees

The College offers 80 associate degrees and 50 certificates in academic and career and technical education fields. The team confirmed that all associate degrees require a minimum of 60-degree applicable units, including an appropriate general education component and relevant concentration in a major or area of emphasis.

The College meets the ER.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The team confirmed that the College has a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who does not serve as chair of the college governing board. Board policies ensure that the CEO has appropriate powers of authority delegated to him. Appointed in January 2017, Dr. Chris Vitelli is qualified and meets all requirements to serve as CEO.

The College meets the ER.

5. Financial Accountability

The team confirmed that Merced College uses a qualified external auditor to conduct audits of all financial records. The audit also includes an assessment with Title IV federal requirements. All audits are certified, and explanations of any findings are documented appropriately. Audit reports are made public through Board Reports and on the institution's website.

The College meets the ER.

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; other evaluation items under ACCJC standards may address the same or similar subject matter. The peer review team evaluated the institution's compliance with Standards as well as the specific Checklist elements from federal regulations and related Commission policies noted here.

Public Notification of a Peer Review Team Visit and Third-Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|---|---|
| X | The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third-party comments in advance of a comprehensive review visit. |
| X | The institution cooperates with the review team in any necessary follow-up related to the third-party comment. |
| X | The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Rights, Responsibilities, and Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions</i> as to third-party comment. |

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

| | |
|---|--|
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements. |

Narrative:

The College meets this requirement. No applicable third-party comments were received.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|---|---|
| X | 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. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards) |
| X | 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. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards) |
| X | 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. (Standard I.B.3, Standard I.B.9) |
| X | The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and student achievement and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not expected. (Standard I.B.4) |

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

| | |
|---|--|
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements. |

Narrative:

Merced College’s mature processes ensure that institutional planning and inclusive discussions are data informed. The College’s program review and the planning process demonstrates systematic assessment, analysis, and program improvement.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|-----|--|
| x | Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure). (Standard II.A.9) |
| x | 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). (Standard II.A.9) |
| x | Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). (Standard I.C.2) |
| N/A | Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education’s conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice. (Standard II.A.9) |
| x | The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Credit Hour, Clock Hour, and Academic Year</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):

| | |
|---|--|
| x | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements. |

Narrative:

Policies are in place and compliant regarding unit/hour calculations, graduation requirements, and course level assessments.

Transfer Policies

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|---|---|
| x | Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public. (Standard II.A.10) |
| x | Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits |

| | |
|---|--|
| | for transfer, and any types of institutions or sources from which the institution will not accept credits. (Standard II.A.10) |
| x | Transfer of credit policies identify a list of institutions with which it has established an articulation agreement. |
| x | Transfer of credit policies include written criteria used to evaluate and award credit for prior learning experience including service in the armed forces, paid or unpaid employment, or other demonstrated competency or learning. |
| x | 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)(11).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

| | |
|---|--|
| x | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements. |

Narrative:

The Curriculum Committee and Articulation Officer collaborate to ensure that systems and processes are in place to align curricula and pathways.

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| For Distance Education: | |
| X | The institution demonstrates regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor in at least two of the methods outlined in the Commission <i>Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> . |
| X | The institution ensures, through the methods outlined in the Commission <i>Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> , regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors prior to the student’s completion of a course or competency. |
| X | The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for distance education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1) |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| X | The institution verifies that the student who registers in a distance education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. |
| For Correspondence Education: | |
| X | The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for correspondence education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1) |
| X | The institution verifies that the student who registers in a correspondence education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. |
| Overall: | |
| X | The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings. (Standard III.C.1) |
| X | The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>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):

| | |
|---|--|
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the Institution does not meet the Commission's requirements. |
| | The College does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education. |

Narrative:

Face to face services including, library collection, tutoring support through the Student Success and Tutorial Center (SSTC), embedded tutoring, student success workshops, computer lab services, access to learning technology, and ongoing instruction for users of library and learning support services are offered in the Downey Learning Resource Center (LRC). Services are also offered virtually for distance education students. Per the team's review of randomly selected online courses, the College continues to be compliant with federal regulations and Commission Policies.

Student Complaints

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|---|--|
| x | 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. |
| x | The student complaint files for the previous seven years (since the last comprehensive review) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures. |
| x | The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards. |
| x | 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. (Standard I.C.1) |
| x | 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):

| | |
|---|--|
| x | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements. |

Narrative:

The College has clear policies related to student conduct and it is exciting to see the implementation of Maxient, a software platform/records management system that improves communication and collaboration across the institution to support the student complaint process. Upon being notified that there was a need to add links to both the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) Complaint Process, as well as the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges' (ACCJC) Complaint Form to the College's Student Complaint web page, this matter was immediately addressed.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|---|--|
| X | The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies. (Standard I.C.2) |
| X | The institution complies with the <i>Commission Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> . |
| X | The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status. (Standard I.C.12) |

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

| | |
|---|--|
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements. |

Narrative:

The institution provides timely, relevant, and required information in an accessible manner both in print and virtually.

Title IV Compliance

Evaluation Items:

| | |
|---|--|
| X | 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 U.S. Department of Education (ED). (Standard III.D.15) |
| X | If applicable, the institution has addressed any issues raised by ED 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. (Standard III.D.15) |
| X | If applicable, the institution’s student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by ED. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates |

| | |
|-----|--|
| | near or meet a level outside the acceptable range. (Standard III.D.15) |
| N/A | If applicable, 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. (Standard III.D.16) |
| X | The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-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:

| | |
|---|--|
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| | 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. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements. |

Narrative:

The College has established policies and procedures for review and approval of contractual agreements through the appropriate delegation of authority. The College has not had any audit findings pertaining to Title IV compliance.

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

I.A. Mission

General Observations:

Merced College demonstrates a strong commitment to its mission which focuses on student achievement. The Educational Master Plan outlines goals for all major areas of the College in alignment with its mission. Plans to achieve and evaluate progress toward these goals are articulated via the Strategic Implementation Plan. Results of assessment efforts are made publicly available in the Program Review Library, and achievements and updates are communicated widely within the Annual Report. Data is used to inform resource allocation and establish updated and/or new goals in alignment with the mission, as outlined in the Integrated Planning Cycle. The mission is periodically reviewed, and recommended updates are approved by the Board as necessary.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College's mission statement describes its focus on student success and its broad educational purpose to transform lives through education and workforce development. The College's vision and values further elucidate how it promotes student success with a focus on student achievement and includes the types of educational experiences and support services Merced College offers to its students. (I.A.1)

The College's values include a focus on data-driven self-reflection, objective assessment, and dialogue for continuous improvement. These espoused values are enacted through an integrated planning process, which aligns learning outcomes assessment with the resource allocation process to maintain a focus on student achievement. Disaggregated data is made publicly available through Tableau dashboards. The Program Review Library provides public access to program assessment results, and progress updates and achievements are shared via the annual report. The Student Equity Committee analyzes data to inform goals in the Student Equity and Achievement Plan and to evaluate the impact of previous actions. (I.A.2)

Merced College ensures alignment with its mission in its planning via the Education Master Plan (EMP), which outlines strategic goals in all major areas of the College. The College demonstrated its practice of data-informed continuous improvement by re-evaluating and updating the EMP prior to its completion in 2020 to leverage lessons learned and address identified needs for a focus on both equity and innovation during and after the pandemic. The College's Integrated Planning Cycle (included in the Strategic Implementation Plan) charts the cyclical process of goal planning, resource allocation, implementation, and evaluation to

support the adaptation or development of new goals. This is executed in alignment with the College's mission and with a focus on student achievement. (I.A.3)

The Merced College mission was previously revised in 2017 and most recently reviewed and revised in 2022 by a subcommittee of the Educational Master Planning Committee. The mission was approved by the Board of Trustees and is widely published across the College's web presence and is made publicly available in institutional documents such as the Educational Master Plan, Annual Report, College Catalog, etc. (I.A.4)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:

Merced College has developed processes that ensure data-driven and inclusive discussions of the mission and values that drive institutional planning. Using the program planning process as the backbone, the College demonstrates that it systematically assesses learning outcomes and student achievement data to evaluate how well it is accomplishing its mission. Its assessment process shows that significant effort has been put into not only completing assessments but ensuring that conversations surrounding the data occur with each program. There is a data-driven resource allocation process that ensures all program requests help fulfill the mission.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College has a well-developed program planning process that is key to the creation of data-driven dialog throughout the campus. Using the participatory governance structure, the program planning process ensures that the resource allocation process supports the mission and vision. The Program Review Outcomes and Assessment Committee (PROAC) fully integrates program planning and learning outcomes, providing a structure and support for both instructional and student services programs to come together to discuss data. The College has a 2-year planning process where the odd year is used to assess learning outcomes. This ensures integration of assessment data and planning. The process includes ample opportunities for dialog such as discussion of student learning and achievement. (I.B.1)

All instructional and student service programs must have SLOs or SOAs and routinely assess them. The program planning process provides a systematic and regular review structure for all programs and all SLOs/SOAs. PROAC is responsible for ensuring the timeline for SLOs/SOAs are being met by every program. The committee routinely reviews the process and makes changes when needed. This can be seen most recently in the creation of a post-assessment form that is used by the program to generate discussion and plans for improvement after analyzing

assessment data. In addition to the assessment of course level outcomes, the planning process is used to evaluate data from PLOs assessment. (I.B.2)

Using the mission and data on student achievement, Merced develops Institution-set Standards (ISS) for the College. Examples of data used to develop their Annual Report of ISS include ED College Scorecard, CCCCCO Student Success Metrics, licensure examination pass rates and job placement rates. The College provided ample evidence that ISS are widely disseminated across the campus through the participatory governance committee structure and to the Board of Trustees. The Strategic Implementation Plan ensures the ISS are aligned with the College's mission and that the College reviews its progress on meeting these goals annually through the program planning process and annual updates. When necessary, the College will adjust the ISS following the procedures developed by the College. If the College does not meet its success standards, the Student Equity Plan and program plans are used to develop and implement improvement projects in order to meet its benchmarks. (I.B.3)

The College uses assessment data during its program planning process to evaluate progress made in student learning and achievement. The program plan for instructional and student services specifically asks programs to report the dialog that occurred surrounding the planning and evaluating of learning outcomes. Resource requests for all programs must go through the program planning process. The process ensures that all programs link resource requests by including a section that specifically requires such, "Link to EMP goal or other institutional plans (technology, facilities, etc.)". Programs are also asked to link resources requests to "...SAO/SLO/Program Goal/Student Equity." (I.B.4)

The Education Master Plan (EMP), guided by the College's mission/values, provides the foundation for all planning. The Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) operationalizes the EMP. The two-year program planning process links all programs to the SIP and the EMP. As part of the program planning process, programs are provided with relevant student achievement data, learning outcome data and service area data. This data is disaggregated by mode of delivery and includes student equity data for each program. Using this data, programs evaluate progress made towards supporting relevant actions plans developed in the SIP. (I.B.5)

The College uses disaggregated data in its program planning. Each program is provided with student achievement data disaggregated by modality. General Education data is disaggregated by subpopulations but not course level outcomes. The Student Equity Plan analyzes College-wide learning and achievement gaps disaggregated by subpopulation. The Plan has identified gaps and instituted changes to close these gaps. Programs requesting resources must go through the program planning process and identify how the requested resource(s) will support the College's mission. (I.B.6)

The College Council regularly evaluates processes and procedures. This body is responsible for the regular update of the College's Participatory Governance Handbook. Each committee undergoes a yearly self-evaluation process so the institution can systematically evaluate its

governance structure and decision-making processes. The content of the evaluation is discussed by the committee and may result in changes. There is a regular review of all master planning documents such as the EMP and SIP. PROAC oversees the program review process, as well as the evaluation of the program review and resource allocation processes. The Board of Trustees tracks all board policies and administrative procedures to ensure their regular review. (I.B.7)

The College posts all program plans on its website ensuring that they are publicly accessible to internal and external stakeholders. Results of assessments are also available on the College's website. In addition, the College recently strengthened the way in which assessment and evaluation data is communicated. It will now report the results of program review and learning assessment at its annual convocation. Program review summaries will also be reviewed by the Education Master Planning Committee to help inform institutional priorities. All planning documents can be found on the College's website under Master Planning Documents. The Board of Trustees receives updates on progress made on the EMP. (I.B.8)

The backbone of the College's planning rests in its program planning process. This process integrates regular assessment (every 2 years for instructional programs and 1 year for non-instructional) and discussion of learning outcome data, student achievement data, equity data and ensures resource allocation is linked to the data. Faculty prioritization requests also go through the program planning process. Resource requests are forwarded to the appropriate committees to handle review and budgeting. The program planning process is described in detail in the Integrated Planning Handbook which provides a consistent, documented process and a wide constituency. The program planning process incorporates the SIP which is linked to the EMP. (I.B.9)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

I.C. Institutional Integrity

General Observations:

Merced College provides accurate information about its mission, learning outcomes, support services, and educational programs to the community. This information is accessible through various platforms, including websites and the College catalog. The institution also presents student achievement data, encompassing metrics such as enrollment, student retention, success rates, and program awards. Degree and certificate programs are comprehensively outlined through resources such as the eLumen website, academic program maps, and the program mapper tool. Merced College's adherence to board policies and administrative procedures pertaining to academic freedom reflects its commitment to upholding the intellectual liberty of faculty and students. Additional board policies and administrative

procedures delineate codes of conduct, disciplinary protocols, and alignment with accreditation standards and eligibility criteria. Merced College ensures that students have access to information concerning the total cost of attending the institution. This information is conveniently available on the College's website and within the catalog. The College's policy and procedure review mechanisms, as well as its planning and decision-making practices, serve as tangible demonstrations of its commitment to maintaining institutional integrity.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College ensures the clarity, accuracy, and integrity of information presented to students, prospective students, staff, and all stakeholders as it relates to its mission statement, learning outcomes, educational programs, accreditation, and student support services through the College Catalog and website. These platforms serve as the primary sources of information for students, staff, and the general public. To enhance accessibility and usability, the District recently launched a new College website in March 2023, designed to provide an improved user experience and easier navigation for students in search of resources. Learning outcomes are readily available in the catalog, program mapper, course outline of record, and eLumen. A collaborative effort of annual verification and updates by staff and administrators ensures that the catalog remains up-to-date and provides reliable information to all stakeholders. (I.C.1)

Merced College provides comprehensive information to its students and prospective students through the provision of a print or online catalog. The catalog includes precise, accurate, and up-to-date details on all essential facts, requirements, policies, and procedures outlined in the "Catalog Requirements." Starting with the 2023-2024 Catalog, the District adopted a new web-based catalog format, departing from the traditional PDF format, to enhance accessibility and user-friendliness for students, making it easier to access, search, and navigate through critical information regarding degrees, programs, and essential College information. Past catalogs are available and archived on the website. (I.C.2)

Merced College employs a structured approach for assessing and appraising student learning and accomplishments, and to communicate matters of academic quality to various stakeholders, including current and prospective students and the general public. The outcomes of this process are made available to the public through the College website, including the Program Review Library and various other public institutional reports. Merced College employs a well-documented process for assessing student learning and evaluating their achievements. (I.C.3)

Merced College provides comprehensive information about its certificates and degree programs, encompassing their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected learning outcomes. This information is presented in an organized and clear manner in the College Catalog. The Catalog includes detailed descriptions of associate in science and associate in arts degree requirements, as well as transfer requirements for both CSU Breadth and IGETC general education patterns. Additionally, the Merced College website offers access to the Program Pathways Mapper, listing all academic programs. (I.C.4)

Merced College has established several processes for the annual review of policies, procedures, and publications to ensure the integrity of its representations related to its mission, programs, and services. Administrative Procedure 2410, Policy and Administrative Procedure, delineates the process for revising board policies and administrative procedures. Revisions to existing policies and procedures are proposed by recognized constituency groups and subsequently presented to the College Council. A schedule governing the review of Board Policies and Administrative Procedures is maintained by the President's Office and serves to schedule these policies and procedures for discussion in College Council meetings. Merced College has implemented a process for the annual review of both the class schedule and College Catalog to ensure their accuracy and consistency. (I.C.5)

Merced College conveys precise and comprehensive information to both current and prospective students regarding the total cost of education. The primary sources for this information are the College Catalog and the College website. Additionally, the District's financial aid website offers a detailed overview of the comprehensive cost of education through a net price calculator. (I.C.6)

Merced College upholds and disseminates its academic freedom policy to safeguard institutional and academic integrity. This policy, as outlined in Board Policy 4030, Academic Freedom, underscores the District's commitment to promoting open dialogue and unrestricted inquiry. It establishes these principles for students, faculty, administrators, and staff. The board policy imposes an obligation on all members of the District, students, faculty, administrators, and staff, to engage in the presentation, discussion, and interpretation of ideas with knowledge, fairness, and objectivity, while remaining receptive to the viewpoints of others. This academic freedom policy is accessible to the public and the College community through BoardDocs and the College Catalog. (I.C.7)

Merced College maintains clear and accessible policies and procedures that promote honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity among all stakeholders. The institution's commitment to fostering honesty and responsibility in its community is guided by Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3050, Code of Ethics, Professionalism, and Civility. In addition, Merced College has instituted policies to uphold academic integrity for students. Administrative Policy 5500, Standards of Conduct, defines violations, such as cheating and plagiarism. Administrative Procedure 5540, Academic Honesty Procedure, outlines student and faculty responsibilities related to academic honesty. The website, Student Handbook, and College Catalog further detail the student Academic Honesty policy as well as code of conduct requirements. The College has also established policies governing student behavior, outlined in Administrative Procedure 5520, Student Discipline Procedures, and Administrative Procedure 5530, Student Rights and Grievances. The Merced College Standards of Student Conduct are accessible in the College Catalog and on the website and provide clarity on behaviors warranting disciplinary action. (I.C.8)

Merced College has implemented Board Policy 4030, Academic Freedom and an Ethics Statement, endorsed by the Board of Trustees and Academic Senate, to require that faculty clearly differentiate between personal beliefs and universally professionally accepted perspectives within their respective disciplines. The evaluation of faculty performance incorporates a peer review mechanism to oversee their adherence to established policies and collectively agreed-upon practices outlined by the Academic Senate to ensure faculty impart information and data in an impartial and unbiased manner. (I.C.9)

Board Policies and administrative procedures on codes of conduct, ethical standards, and nondiscrimination practices are established by the Merced College Board of Trustees. The District mandates that students adhere to a Student Code of Conduct, which is accessible through the College Catalog and the Student Handbook. The Faculty Handbook is distributed to all faculty members and is also accessible online and outlines faculty expectations and features the revised Ethics Statement for faculty. (I.C.10)

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

Merced College complies with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, guidelines, and requirements for public disclosure. The College's website for accreditation is one click from the home page and provides links to current and former ISER's, team reports, midterm reports, commission letters, substantive change proposals, and commission reports. Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3200 Accreditation, ensure that the District complies with accreditation processes and standards of ACCJC. (I.C.12)

Merced College upholds honesty and integrity in its interactions with external agencies. The District adheres to all standards, guidelines, policies, and eligibility criteria outlined by ACCJC, the accrediting commission. Accreditation reports are made accessible on the website for transparency. The District offers various programs that meet the additional requirements of external accrediting bodies. The District ensures compliance with all regulations and statutes, maintaining a consistent description when communicating with accrediting agencies through the submission and presentation of reports and supporting evidence. (I.C.13)

Merced College demonstrates its commitment to high quality education, student achievement, and student learning through the Mission Statement, Educational Master Plan, Strategic Implementation Plan, the Foundation, established policies and procedures, and through the leadership of the Superintendent/President. The Educational Master Plan serves as the foundational framework for all institutional planning, emphasizing the District's dedication to enhancing student achievement and learning through its eight goals. (I.C.14)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Support Services

II.A. Instructional Programs

General Observations:

Merced College offers courses, programs, and student support services in alignment with its mission. Programs are commensurate with higher education standards and are regularly reviewed for quality and equity among modalities. Faculty are provided with both opportunities and requirements for professional development and are regularly evaluated. Programs are reviewed using relevant data and resource requests are aligned with identified needs and student learning outcomes. There is an articulated schedule and tracking for course- and program-level learning outcomes assessment. The team met with individuals during the site visit to discuss the institution's work regarding standards II.A.9 and II.A.16 and found ample evidence of the robust assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the use of these assessment results to continuously improve both courses and programs.

Findings and Evidence:

The College offers courses and programs at different physical locations and through in-person, distance education, and correspondence modalities. All instructional programs provided by the College are consistent with its mission. Programs have identified student learning outcomes and culminate in student attainment of identified student learning outcomes, degrees, certificates, or transfer to other higher education programs. (II.A.1)

The Merced College Curriculum Committee, comprised of full- and part-time (adjunct) faculty as well as administrators, meets twice monthly to review curriculum proposals and regularly engage in ensuring content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards. Faculty further ensures content and methods meet accepted academic and professional standards through discipline-focused faculty discussions of curriculum and the program review process. Faculty conduct systematic and inclusive program review, on a two-year cycle, utilizing student achievement and student learning outcomes data. Elements of the program review process include identifying faculty professional development activities to improve teaching and learning strategies, ensuring program currency and promoting student success. In addition to regular curriculum committee meetings, the program planning process, faculty evaluation and student learning outcomes assessments provide regular opportunities for all faculty to exercise collective ownership over the design and improvement of the learning experience. (II.A.2)

The College identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees. The College has established institutional procedures for the assessment process and timeline, the approval of course outlines, and the inclusion of student learning outcomes on the course outline of record. The College uses student learning outcomes as the base level for assessing program level learning outcomes and has an established process for 'mapping' course level learning outcomes to program level learning outcomes. Assessments of learning outcomes follows a 2-year cycle of course and program assessment and is clearly evidenced in program review. The College's Curriculum Committee reviews and approves course and program outlines and ensures student learning outcomes are included. Course syllabi are provided to students in every class section in formats appropriate to the instructional delivery method and are available in course shells within the LMS. Syllabi are reviewed by the Area Coordinator to ensure student learning outcomes are included on the documents. (II.A.3)

The College offers pre-collegiate level courses in direct support of students learning the knowledge and skills necessary to advance to and succeed in college level curriculum. Pre-collegiate level curriculum is designated as such by the course numbering system. The College Catalog and support materials clearly identify courses as pre-collegiate or collegiate. (II.A.4)

Degrees and programs offered by the College follow practices common to American higher education. The team verified the degrees and programs are of the appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. After reviewing the College's self-evaluation report, the team reviewed the course catalog, minutes of curriculum meetings, course offering scheduled, procedures, and policy documents to verify the degrees and programs are of the appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. The College uses the inclusion of core courses, sequencing of courses within programs, and student attainment of program level student learning outcomes to ensure and monitor synthesis of learning. The College ensures a minimum degree requirement of 60 semester units for an associate level degree. The College does not offer baccalaureate degrees. (II.A.5)

The team verified that the institution schedules courses in a manner that allows students to complete certificate and degree programs within a period of time consistent with established expectations in higher education. The College has prioritized enrollment management and student success in its Educational Master Plan. Students are provided a visual and interactive term-by-term pathway to completion via the Program Mapper. Enrollment and waitlist data as well as four-semester program maps are utilized by Deans to schedule course offerings in various modalities and lengths and in various locations and times to ensure students have a pathway to completion in four semesters. Accelerated options are available for some programs. Part of the College's Education Master Plan focuses on enrollment management so that students transfer/complete in a timely manner. Each Dean reviews the courses offered in their division along with relevant enrollment data to help plan the next semester including offering courses as distance education, of different lengths of time and accelerated programs. The

College has developed program mappers for all degrees which help both students see the time to completion and sequencing of classes. The program review process provides data on time-to-completion. (II.A.6)

The team verified that the College effectively uses delivery modes in support of equity in success for all students. The College uses in-person, on-line, and correspondence delivery modes to provide access to courses and programs and access to different teaching methodologies as well as support services. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness results in decisions for optimal use of delivery modes for programs and student success for different groups. The College provides learning support services through in-person, online, and asynchronous communication methods in response to the changing needs of students.

The College uses a faculty evaluation process, curriculum review, professional development, and program review to ensure effectiveness of teaching methodologies. The College uses identified standards for evaluating the effectiveness of courses delivered through distance education modalities. On-going reflection on the effectiveness of teaching methodologies and learning support services is expected and documented at course and program levels through the student learning outcomes documentation and in program review. Further evidence of effective use of delivery modes and teaching methodologies is found in institutional plans such as the Student Equity and Achievement Plan.

Success and completion rate data, provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, is disaggregated by modality, gender, race/ethnicity, and age for analysis in program reviews. Disaggregated data informs improvements (i.e., teaching methodologies, learner support, etc.) to equity across and within instructional modalities (i.e., parity across in-person, hybrid, online learning experiences and equitable success among various student populations in each modality). (II.A.7)

The College follows a documented process for validating the effectiveness of course and program examinations. The College stopped using department-wide assessments as a result of the validation process. The College has a defined process for providing direct assessment of prior learning. The validity of direct-assessment processes and instruments are evaluated by area designated persons with industry specific knowledge as each assessment is developed and monitored for continued validity during of the program review cycle and curriculum review process. In determining credit for prior learning, proficiency is assessed with exams through external agencies that control validity and reliability. (II.A.8)

The College awards course credit, degrees and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with the policies adopted by the College and reflect accepted norms in higher education. The policies reflect generally accepted norms in higher education for awarding of credit. Policies for unit/hour calculations follow Federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions. (II.A.9)

To facilitate the mobility of students without penalty, the College makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies through publication in the online catalog and through links among various web locations on the College website. The College certifies that expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. The team reviewed the process for accepting transferred courses and noted comparison of the learning outcomes as a defined element for determining the acceptance of courses through transfer. The College has articulation agreements based on patterns of student enrollment between institutions and in support of the institution's mission. (II.A.10)

The team verified that the College includes student learning outcomes in all programs. The student learning outcomes are appropriate to the program level and include outcomes in communication, competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program specific learning outcomes. The College divides the various learning outcomes requirements into subsections as part of the curriculum review process. Learning outcomes specific to the program are identified as 'program learning outcomes' while communication, information, quantitative, analytic inquiry, ethical reasoning, and engaging diverse perspectives are categorized as general education outcomes. (II.A.11)

The team validated the assertion that all degree programs include a general education component. Furthermore, the College has a carefully considered philosophy for general education published in the catalog. The College relies on faculty expertise, culminating in the Curriculum Committee, as to the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education pattern. In following the established process, courses are included in the general education curriculum after consideration of the course(s) alignment with the stated general education philosophy and established learning outcomes for each general education sub-area. Learning outcomes for degree programs and the general education curriculum encompass preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning, and a broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences. (II.A.12)

The team confirmed that all degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in established interdisciplinary cores. Degree programs include courses that lead to mastery, at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study. The inclusion of specialized courses in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core is determined through alignment with industry standards for career-technical education degree programs. Specialized courses are aligned with career-technical requirements and mastery, at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study. Specialized courses associated with career-technical education degrees are assessed for whether the addition provided increased opportunities to meet employment and other applicable standards for external licensure and certification as appropriate to the field of study. (II.A.13)

The team confirmed that graduates completing career-technical certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment standards and other applicable standards and preparation for external licensure and certification. The team reviewed curriculum associated with career-technical certificates and degrees, licensure pass rates and job placement measures. This assessment of the curricular and experiential content is further supported by the evidence provide by the College in the ISER (i.e. Letter from the ASE President commending the program for standards and for meeting industry requirements). (II.A.14)

The College has a procedure in place that requires appropriate arrangements be made so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with minimum disruption. The procedure is detailed in the steps that must be taken in determining the need for elimination or significant modification of a program; it is less detailed in steps for making appropriate arrangements stating, "... a plan to address the needs of students ... will need to be designed and a timeline {developed}." The College included evidence of the detailed investigation and plan development process in the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER). The process followed for determining that a program be discontinued is well defined and standardized. (II.A.15)

The team reviewed agendas and minutes from committee meetings, catalog program descriptions, and program review reports to determine that the College employs a program review process that ensures regular evaluation of all instructional programs offered, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs. The College evaluates the quality and currency of programs offered through different modalities and in different locations as part of the on-going evaluation process. The team determined the College is continually working to improve both the evaluation process and the dissemination of recommendations for improvement of quality. The College has both an administrative procedure and a faculty distance education handbook that detail criteria for regular and substantive contact in distance education courses. The team noted some inconsistencies in the criteria identified in the documents that may result in confusion and suggested the criteria be reviewed for consistency across documents.

Programs and courses are evaluated for currency along with alignment to professional and/or discipline standards. Modifications to programs are developed and approved using the College's curriculum process when identified as necessary to maintain currency. Learning outcomes for programs are evaluated in tandem with program content evaluation. Program learning outcomes are written to encompass the broad knowledge, skills, and discipline associated patterns.

The curriculum approval process adds additional points of evaluation to ensure quality and currency of all instructional programs. The College has multiple formally designated groups and processes for the evaluation of instructional programs. Evaluative information from each of the groups is aggregated and provides triangulation of findings that result in recommendations.

Recommendations to improve instructional programs are implemented following defined processes and are subsequently evaluated.

The improvement process for courses incorporates student achievement and learning outcomes in the determination of course improvement strategies and/or actions. The College provided evidence and examples of where in the process and how data leads to improvement of courses. Assessment results are used to inform the continuous improvement of courses. The College systematically strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students. The team observed several concrete examples shared by interviewees of assessment results being utilized to devise and implement changes to SLOs, curriculum, resourcing, student support, and pedagogy. (II.A.16)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:

Merced College supports student learning and achievement through a suite of learning support services that now reside in the single location of the Downey Learning Resource Center (LRC). These services include library collection, tutoring services both in-person and online through the Student Success and Tutorial Center (SSTC), embedded tutoring, student success workshops, computer lab services, access to learning technology, and ongoing instruction for users of library and learning support services.

Through the resource allocation process the institution reviews recommendations from the librarians and other LRC support staff for materials and equipment to support the library and learning support services.

Relying primarily on the internal 2-year program review cycle and student surveys, the institution evaluates the LRC and support services. The processes work to ensure that the LRC is meeting student and faculty needs for supporting student success, and the conclusions contribute to planning for improvements.

The College has formal agreements in place for working with other institutions as a part of the library and support services programs. These agreements and services are reviewed to determine that they meet intended purposes, accessibility expectations, and projected utilization.

Findings and Evidence:

The College's board policies and administrative procedures indicate a clear commitment to providing library services at the main campus and Los Banos. The recent effort to study the previous library offerings, collect input about how to improve the library and student support, then pursue a remodel project is evidence of the commitment of the district to these services. The execution of the remodel resulted in an impressive facility that is far greater than a library. This investment also ensures that the staff will be able to serve students fully. Additionally, offering chat and SMS support to students through LibChat services provides support regardless of location. The College also support the Rising Scholar Program with a well-developed process for students to access librarians and library content through the resource request form that serves the dual purpose of connecting with library staff and checking out materials. The review of quantity, currency, depth, and variety to support educational programs is done through the program review process, although that is not the expressed purpose of the process. (II.B.1)

Merced College uses the annual resource allocation process to support the maintenance of existing educational equipment and selection of new materials and equipment. This process is rooted in the ongoing program review process and thoroughly demonstrates the faculty and staff expertise leveraged to identify the appropriate needs for the LRC and programs housed in that facility. The meeting minutes provide evidence of input from faculty and other stakeholders in selecting the layout, equipment, and materials for the LRC as a part of the remodel process. The College also relies on the library faculty to ensure that items in the LRC are relevant, in good condition, searchable, and accessible. This is accomplished through a documented weeding process and LRC Internal Procedures Manual. There is an Online Educational Technology Planning Committee that is cross functional in make-up and is responsible for reviewing and recommending adoption of appropriate technologies requested by faculty. (II.B.2)

Merced College evaluates the library and learning support services through program review and student surveys. The program review in evidence also provided a supplement with student feedback on the instruction offered by the librarians. The program review for the Student Success Program was thorough and included student feedback from a survey focused on the initiatives of that program. It was reported that the identified needs to support the library in the program review process were addressed. The new LRC is also evidence that the results of evaluation and survey efforts are used for improvement. The Facility Master Planning process evaluated the library and support services and made many conclusions that were used to drive plans for the new LRC. The next program review cycle could be critical to ensuring long term success of the of the new LRC through identifying areas for improvement early in the life of the facility. The team particularly commends Merced College for its culture of collaboration. Cross-departmental representation is evident when new initiatives are implemented at the College. The LRC is an example of how multiple areas (Library, student support services, IT, Instruction, etc.) worked together to create a space that would elevate the student experience. It is also clear that student voices helped to inform and evaluate ongoing use of the facility. (II.B.3)

The College has board policies and administrative procedures in place to ensure proper protocol exists when collaborating or contracting with other institutions for library or other learning support services. The Smarthinking online tutoring and library chat offered through its contracted service, Springshare, is evaluated by usage data provided by the OIE and reviewed by the Student Success Committee. The Technology Master Plan documents the College's commitment to ensuring security and reliability of the technology that is provided through the agreement with SpringShare. (II.B.4)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

II.C. Student Support Services

General Observations:

Merced College effectively assesses learning support outcomes for students through program reviews and surveys. It ensures that services are suitable for students to achieve these outcomes. The college provides support to students regardless of their location or how they access services, and it evaluates these services to guarantee they are comprehensive, reliable, and accessible.

The institution offers co-curricular and athletic programs that align with its mission, follow established policies, and maintain integrity. It provides counseling and advising services in various ways to assist students throughout their educational journey. Information on graduation and transfer requirements is readily available, and the college offers training, onboarding support, counseling, and workshops.

Merced College has clear policies and procedures for admission and program completion, both in print and online. It provides students with clear pathways through the Catalog, Program Mapper, and Student Education Plans that can be updated as students' progress. The College is also implementing Student Success Teams to provide ongoing support.

The institution regularly evaluates its admissions and placement practices, striving to minimize biases. It has robust policies and procedures to ensure the secure and confidential storage of student records, with established processes for students to access their records within the Catalog and on the website.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College maintains a consistent and thorough assessment of the quality of student support services, regardless of their location or mode of delivery. This assessment is carried out through the Program Review cycle, aligning with the institution's Mission and Educational Master Plan (EMP). The evaluation process encompasses three distinct phases: the annual SAO

Assessment, Program Goals assessment, and the development of Proposed Action Plans. The Student Services Master Planning Committee (SSMPC) convenes regularly to oversee and guide the planning process for student services, including updates on the program review cycle. Student satisfaction and needs surveys are employed within department meetings, committees, and during each program review. The data from these surveys is then used to analyze student information and formulate recommendations for improvement at both the departmental and institutional levels. (II.C.1)

Merced College takes a systematic approach to identify and evaluate learning support outcomes for its students. It offers a range of specialized programs to address specific student needs and objectives. The College relies on assessment data to continually enhance its student support programs and services. Each year, all student support service programs undergo an Annual Program Review that includes assessments and survey evaluations to gauge effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The College collaborates with both internal and external data sources, including the Chancellor's Office Data Mart and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) survey, to review assessment data and improve student support programs and services continually. (II.C.2)

Merced College ensures the provision of appropriate, comprehensive, and dependable services at its various locations, including the Merced and Los Banos campuses. The College ensures that all students have equitable access to student services, which are made available through a variety of delivery methods as well. Information about these services is easily accessible on the College website and in the Catalog. The College provides both online and in-person options for accessing student services, including remote access. Counseling services are accessible both in-person and remotely at both the Merced and Los Banos campuses. The College ensures that student services are appropriate, comprehensive, and dependable, regardless of the service location or delivery method. The Student Equity Plan considers student needs from an equity perspective to plan support services that are suitable and comprehensive. Programs evaluate the appropriateness and reliability of services through the program review process and student surveys. In addition to CCSSE, the District conducted the Racism, Inclusion & Belonging Pilot survey in 2021, which informed decisions about Student Achievement Outcomes (SAO) in Student Services programs. (II.C.3)

Merced College's co-curricular and athletic programs align with the institution's mission and enrich the social and cultural aspects of students' educational experiences. The College provides a range of co-curricular programs, including A2Mend, Athletics, Umoja, Puente, and Rising Scholars. To support social and cultural dimensions, "The Hub: Center for Equity and Diversity" was established on campus. Additionally, the District responded to student needs by creating the Basic Needs Center, offering a centralized location for students to access essential resources, including housing, food, and mental health support. The Associated Students of Merced College (ASMC) plays a role in fostering a sense of community and cultural enrichment through student committee participation and club activities. Co-curricular activities are administered and controlled by the District, with finances integrated into the overall budgetary process. ASMC is responsible for authorizing student activities and allocates funds through a

transparent decision-making process. ASMC is funded through student fees, ensuring student involvement in program support. (II.C.4)

Merced College offers comprehensive counseling and academic advising services, both in-person and online, to support student development and success. These services include academic planning, development of Student Educational Plans (SEPs), and guidance on educational and career goals. Beginning in the spring of 2023, counseling transitioned to Navigate Next Generation Academic Planning, which aims to streamline the SEP process with embedded degree and certificate options. Counseling sessions provide guidance on academic and personal development and connect students with resources to help them achieve their educational goals. These services are integrated into various student services programs, such as the Student Success and Tutorial Program, DSPS, and EOPS. The College ensures that counseling faculty and advising personnel receive appropriate training to support students effectively. The Counseling Program orients students to program requirements and offers an onboarding process, including workshops by retention specialists. The College also provides tools like the Program Mapper Tool to help students plan their degrees and certificates. Student Success Teams (SSTs) are assigned to each major, offering targeted communications and support. Merced College ensures students receive timely information about academic requirements by posting them in the College Catalog and on the website. Admissions and Records maintains important dates and deadlines on their webpage. The Transfer Center and Transfer Evaluation System (TES) support students in navigating transfers to four-year institutions. The team applauds the College's use of Student Success Teams, including instructional faculty, recruitment and retention specialists, student support, and financial aid, to leverage data and insights across various facets of the College. (II.C.5)

Merced College has established admission policies consistent with its mission to determine student qualifications for its programs. These policies are outlined in Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 5010, Admissions, and reflect the institution's open access approach for individuals aged 18 and older who can benefit from its instruction. Special admissions guidelines, including concurrent enrollment for high school and younger students, are detailed in related policies such as Administrative Procedure 5011 and Board Policy 5052. Enrollment priorities for specific student groups are determined by Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 5055, Enrollment Priorities, and the College follows established procedures regarding student residency, including international students and military personnel. Information regarding admissions is readily available in the College Catalog and on the Admissions and Registration webpages, including instructional videos and step-by-step guides for applicants. Students receive guidance on initiating program pathways to identify their educational goals. The College has enhanced its onboarding process by incorporating tools like the Pathways Program Mapper, Enrollment and Retention Specialists, and dedicated K-12 counseling to create a seamless enrollment process, particularly for high school partners. Additionally, the District supports post-enrollment Student Success Teams to ensure students

have comprehensive educational plans and is also in the preliminary stages of implementation of an Early Alert system to address concerns initiated by faculty and staff. (II.C.6)

Merced College assists students in understanding clear pathways to complete degrees, certificates, and transfer goals. Program requirements and General Education (GE) breadth criteria are provided in the College Catalog and Program Mapper Tool. Counseling services, offered in various modalities, help students establish and modify their Student Education Plans (SEPs) using Self-Service Student Planning. Transfer-seeking students can access specialized counselors in the Transfer Center for assistance with transfer pathways. Requirements for transferring to the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems are accessible in various resources. (II.C.6)

Merced College consistently assesses its admissions and placement methods to ensure their effectiveness and reduce biases. In alignment with Assembly Bill 705, the College eliminated placement exams for math and English courses and adopted a multiple-measures approach for placement. To facilitate the implementation of Assembly Bill 705, the College formed the Assembly Bill 705 Task Force, comprised of English and math faculty, institutional research personnel, counseling staff, and the dean of student equity. This task force collaborates across departments to provide recommendations and oversee the legislation's implementation at the institution, ensuring a coordinated effort. (II.C.7)

Merced College ensures the permanent, secure, and confidential management of student records. The Office of Admissions and Records follows established policies and procedures to safeguard student records and maintain a high level of security. The protection of these records, including backup files, is outlined in Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 5040, Student Records and Directory Information. Retention guidelines for various document types are categorized according to Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3310, Destruction of Records. The College ensures the secure backup of all files, regardless of their format, and has converted microfilm transcript records into Laserfiche documents, making all Merced College catalogs accessible online to students and the public. The College adheres to established policies, which are outlined in the Catalog. Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3300, Access to Public Records, defines the process for record management and public access. (II.C.8)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

Standard III

Resources

III.A. Human Resources

General Observations:

Merced College has board policies, administrative procedures, and collective bargaining agreements that govern Human Resources activities. The College adheres to the policies and procedures in place for the efficient and effective recruitment and hiring of personnel. The College uses a 5-year hiring plan (Merced College Staffing Plan 2022-2025) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan and training procedures to ensure that hiring committee members are trained with appropriate hiring practices and seek a diversified workforce for the College. Merced College has allocated resources to ensure professional development opportunities are provided for all employee groups and legally required safeguards for employee records are utilized.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College employs administrators, faculty and staff qualified by the appropriate education, training and experience to support the quality of its programs and services in support of student success. The College's recruitment and hiring procedures are defined by Board Policies and Administrative Policy 3420. Job descriptions are continually updated for accurate definition of duties, responsibilities, and qualifications. The College tracks the training of screening and hiring committees for acceptable practices. The 5-year staffing plan has components for succession planning. (III.A.1)

Faculty positions are reviewed and hired consistent with the Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Educational Administrators in California Community Colleges document published by the Chancellor's Office for developing job descriptions. Policies and procedures (Series 7000 and some 3000) have all been reviewed in recent years. These policies and procedures document and define faculty service areas, minimum qualifications, and equivalency processes and requirements. Recruitment information includes appropriate degrees and job descriptions and the need to participate in the curriculum review. Recruitment documentation includes statements to ensure that potential candidates are aware of the mission, values, and goals of Merced College. (III.A.2)

Review of the evidence also indicates that the College has a process to ensure that administrators and other employees responsible for educational programs and services possess the qualifications and experience required to perform associated duties in support of institutional effectiveness and academic quality for student success. (III.A.3)

Procedures are in place and followed to ensure that required degrees held by faculty, administrators and other employees are from institutions accredited by United States accrediting agencies. Policies exist that define minimum qualifications and equivalencies. The reviewed job announcements include notice that degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalencies have been established by certified transcript evaluation services. (III.A.4)

Merced College has established evaluation frequency for all personnel at stated intervals. Evaluation procedures are documented in collective bargaining agreements and in board policy. The evidence reviewed indicates that evaluations are current for a very high percentage of all personnel at the College. (III.A.5)

Per ACCJC, this standard is no longer applicable. (III.A.6)

Merced College maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty, including both contract and adjunct faculty, to uphold the faculty's responsibility for maintaining and improving the quality of the educational services and programs in support of the institution's mission. The College defines a sufficient number of faculty based on local requirements, guidelines, and other requirements from the Chancellor's Office. The College presently employs 191 full-time faculty. (III.A.7)

The Merced College website and review of the evidence indicate employment policies and practices for hiring, orientation, oversight, evaluation, and professional development of faculty. The collective bargaining agreement for faculty includes faculty assignment and evaluation requirements. The College provides opportunities for adjunct faculty to be a part of campus activities through participation opportunities for professional development, student life, Academic Senate, and in-service training. (III.A.8)

Merced College employs a sufficient number of administrators and staff to support the institution's operational and support needs. The staff are appropriately qualified to carry out their function(s), ensuring quality experiences for students. While administrative positions have been reduced in recent years, the annual program review process allows for additional positions to be requested and considered. The College Staffing Plan guides staff levels, however, the College routinely evaluates staffing requirements and reorganizes as needs arise. The College maintains job descriptions for each staff and management position and bases recruitment opportunities on the job description. The College currently employs 46 managers and administrators and 280 Classified Staff to support operations. (III.A.9, III.A.10)

The College develops, maintains, and administers board policies and procedures regarding personnel matters. These are publicly available on the College website. (III.A.11)

Merced College creates and follows appropriate programs, procedures and practices to support a diverse personnel population consistent with its 5-year hiring plan and EEO plan. (III.A.12)

The College has a documented written code of professional ethics for personnel which includes consequences for violations. In addition, the Board of Trustees adopted Board Policy 2715 - Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice Policy, which includes consequences for violations of the policy. The team reviewed and confirmed these policies and confirmed them in conjunction with other policies and procedures and collective bargaining contracts. Training exists for personnel regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment prevention and other misconduct categories. (III.A.13)

The College has multiple layers of professional development for all employee groups and in recent years has taken specific steps to include Classified personnel in professional development days. The College reviews survey data from professional development activities to update and refine offerings as needed. (III.A.14).

Human Resources maintains the security and confidentiality of personnel records consistent with education and labor code requirements. Each employee has access to their personnel records in accordance with the laws and collective bargaining agreements. (III.A.15)

Conclusions:

The College meets the standard.

III.B. Physical Resources

General Observations:

Merced College provides and maintains a comprehensive range of facilities in support of its' educational goals and mission. Participatory governance committees, specifically the Health and Safety Committee meets regularly and prepares recommendations for consideration for College administration. Recent activities include campus-wide analyses for mobility and safety issues, access control methods, general campus safety, and hazardous materials controls and procedures. Safety is approached in a multi-layered manner with Merced College's own police force and effective use of security cameras, physical access controls, and event management systems. The College maintains a Facilities Master Plan which provides a comprehensive overview of current facilities and plans for the future. Past Bond measures have supported the majority of the funding for the upgrades and build-out in accordance to the Facilities Master Plan.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College provides and maintains a safe and secure campus that provides for the needs of its instructional, administrative, student services, and operational requirements. The College makes appropriate use of outside agencies such as, the California Community College

Chancellor's Office's Facilities Planning Unit, the Foundation for California Community College's Facilities Condition Assessment and its own personnel to ensure that facilities are safe and sufficient at all locations the College supports and conducts business at. (III.B.1)

Merced College integrates its comprehensive Facilities Master Plan with the Educational Master Plan to help plan and guide facilities construction and improvements. Bond measures are overseen by a public oversight committee and the College has creatively financed the building and remodeling of facilities for its Raj Khalon Agriculture and Industrial Technology Complex.(III.B.2)

Mid and long-term facilities planning is coordinated with short-term variable requirements with effective communications and work order system(s) that allow the College to react in a positive manner to changing facilities requirements. The Facilities department is allocated sufficient funds to address necessary repairs and facilities upgrades which are identified through the work order system. (III.B.3)

Merced College analyzes total cost of ownership criteria for its campus facilities to assess aspects of sustainability for personnel, utilities, and facility efficiencies. The College has utilized an Energy Savings Project to implement new lighting and central plant technologies and has installed a number of EV charging stations at the Los Banos and Merced campuses to support sustainability and cost of ownership considerations. The College has secured past bond resources, Measure J & H, to help fund some of the capital improvements at the College and utilizes the support of a Citizens Oversight Committee to ensure compliance and status of various activities. (III.B.4)

Conclusions:

The College meets the standard.

III.C. Technology Resources

General Observations:

Merced College plans for, implements, maintains, and evaluates its technology resources with a focus on academic quality and institutional effectiveness in support of its mission. The College uses data to inform professional development for employees as well as technical support for employees and students. Technology security has been prioritized in policies, procedures, and personnel.

Findings and Evidence:

The College's Technology Committee (comprised of staff, faculty, management, students, and admin) uses data from surveys and program review resource requests (aligned with student

learning outcomes) to inform the priorities in the College's Technology Master Plan, which aligns with the College's mission and Educational Master Plan. The Technology Committee tracks the progress of plan tasks via the Strategic Implementation Plan, documenting the task, plan for evaluation, responsible person(s), target completion term, challenges, next steps, and status updates. Technology and infrastructure/facilities purchases have demonstrated responsiveness to pandemic-influenced changes to instructional modality (including post-pandemic shifts to HyFlex) as well as the needs of employees (e.g., a virtual desktop environment and additional technologies to allow for remote work) and student needs (e.g., extended WiFi, loaner laptops). Around-the-clock technology support is provided and tracked via the in-house ITS Helpdesk and BlackBeltHelp (contracted). Updates to human resources, including hiring and reorganization, occurred in early 2023 to address identified needs. (III.C.1)

The College evaluates, plans for, and tracks replacement of technology via the program reviews, the Technology Master Plan, and the Strategic Implementation Plan. The grant planning process integrates a technology review to ensure sufficient support for any additional technology needs a proposal may yield. Technology planning is a holistic endeavor and utilizes shared governance structures for an inclusive process. Master Lease-Purchase Agreements are utilized on a five-year cycle for major network upgrades and on an ongoing schedule for upgrades and replacement of software and hardware to ensure continuity and currency. (III.C.2)

The College is able to efficiently maintain its technology resources through the standardization of technology and a client and mobile device management system. Managed detection and response is employed on College-owned devices, and single sign-on multi-factor authentication are used to ensure security when logging into Web-based accounts. The College security-related policies and procedures for technology are kept current; the Information Security and Privacy Policy was recently updated in 2023 and points to administrative procedures that were updated in 2022. An information security team was recently established, including a Director of Information Security and a Cybersecurity Specialist, and the College regularly self-assesses for cybersecurity risks and reports on after-action plans from identified vulnerabilities. (III.C.3)

Many of Merced College's technology-related professional development offerings are informed by survey data and requests resulting from program reviews. The Trident Innovation Center offers weekly professional development both in-person and online to align teaching methodologies with technology and allows faculty the opportunity to meet with Faculty Support Coaches and Instructional Designers for one-on-one support. The Excellence in Online Teaching series prepares faculty to effectively teach in an online modality, and the first half of the series is a requirement for online teachers. The Vision Resource Center and FLEX program also offers technology-focused professional development to employees. While information on College technology, including Canvas is available to students online, the Student Help Desk provides multiple ways for students to access just-in-time support on campus, via phone, email, chat, Zoom, or social media messaging. (III.C.4)

The College outlines acceptable use for e-mail, Internet access, telephones, and other campus electronic networks for end users and provides accessibility guidelines both for digital products and communications used for teaching and learning and for the procurement accessible technologies. Professional development and one-on-one supports offer faculty assistance in identifying and utilizing appropriate technologies for teaching and learning. (III.C.5)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

III.D. Financial Resources

General Observations:

Merced College has policies and procedures to properly, efficiently and effectively manage the finances of the College. The annual budget process integrates planning and budget while engaging all of the constituent groups to actively participate. The College has appropriate internal controls and their effectiveness is documented in annual independent audits. The College plans, manages and utilized its resources and has appropriate reserves to meet its mission and goals.

Findings and Evidence:

Merced College has annual budgeting processes that integrates annual resource requests into the planning and budgeting process leading to the adoption of an annual budget. The College is adopting balanced budgets with appropriate resources and provides evidence that financial resources are sufficient to support and sustain the programs and services that the College values in support of student success. (III.D.1)

The College has policies and procedures that it follows for budget development and the goal of reserves for the general fund; budgets have exceeded the minimum policy requirements over the last 5 years averaging above 14%. Board Policy 6250 – Budget Management, seeks to maintain reserves of no less than two months of unrestricted fund expenditures and provides guidelines that budget allocations will support the College mission and the annual program review process links financial resources together with the budget. Financial information is presented throughout the fiscal year with all constituent groups through governing committees. Funding allocation decisions are shared with the campus community at in-service events. (III.D.2)

All College constituencies and the public have multiple opportunities to provide input in the development of institutional plans and budgets. In addition to regular budget discussions at the cabinet level, the Vice President of Administrative Services also provides presentations to the Board Ad-hoc Budget Committee; this committee endeavors to discuss current and projected

financial issues, educate Board members on budgetary proposals and policies and report of budget issues related to the College. (III.D.3)

Public presentations for the adoption of yearly budgets document the assumptions used to prepare and establish the budget. The budget is presented and adopted is balanced with sufficient ending fund balance projections. The budget documents provide year-over-year fiscal information for comparative purposes to inform the various constituencies of the budget status for the College. (III.D.4)

Policies and procedures and the results of external audits were reviewed to establish that the College has appropriate internal controls to ensure that financial records are timely and accurate and represent the current financial status of the College. Financial information is shared on routine time schedules and state required financial reports are filed in a timely manner. (III.D.5)

Team members reviewed published financial and audit information for Merced College. Budget development documents clearly identify assumptions and thought processes involved with the development of the budget all the way through the audit completion are consistent and accurate. Any audit findings are addressed in a timely manner. As a result of the integrated and well communicated budget process the adopted budgets deserve a high level of credibility within the College community. (III.D.6)

The College contracts for and completes a yearly external financial audit. The College complies with all of the annual external audit requirements. Audits are presented annually to the Board and are archived on the College website for view by any interested parties. (III.D.7)

Merced College ensures financial and internal control systems primarily via use of an integrated enterprise management system – Ellucian’s Colleague. The College also reviews and acts on any findings in the annual external audit which supports the regular analysis of financial and internal control systems. (III.D.8)

The College is currently maintaining appropriate and prudent financial reserves to allow consistent financial management for sufficient cash flow and to address unanticipated situations. Board Policy 6250 - Budget Management seeks to maintain reserves of no less than two months of unrestricted fund expenditures. In addition, the college has appropriate levels of comprehensive insurance for property and liability coverage. The College participates in the Alliance of Schools for Cooperative Insurance Programs (ASCIP) to cover buildings and assets. They are also members of the Schools Excess Liability Fund (SELF) to supplement property and liability coverage. (III.D.9)

Merced College appropriately separated duties and fiscal services authorities for the awarding and disbursement of financial aid. In addition to federal and state resources, Merced College Foundation is a separate audit entity. Budget managers throughout the College are responsible for managing and monitoring all budgets including grant and categorical program expenditures.

Annual external audit results indicate that the College has effective and timely oversight of financial resources of the College. The annual external audits confirm appropriate financial management of the Foundation, past bond issuances and compliance with the College's major federal funding program requirements including Title IV. (III.D.10)

Merced College plans for and allocates sufficient resources to cover OPEB required funding for employee post-employment benefits. An annual plan and audit is obtained to ensure funding requirements are known and resources are allocated appropriately.

Review of information within the audit and the Citizens Oversight Committee indicated that the College has policies and procedures that address bond debt and future obligations. Long-term debt obligations are budgeted for and disclosed in the audited financial statements. (III.D.11)

Team members reviewed and confirmed the information presented for Other Post-Employment Benefits and the timeliness of such information as required by law and accounting standards. The College has planned for and applies appropriate resources for the payment of OPEB obligations consistent with the actuarial information presented in such documents. (III.D.12)

Budget and audit documents were reviewed to confirm that the College determines and allocates resources for the repayment of any locally incurred or annual debt instruments. No issues were identified. (III.D.13, III.D.14)

The College has policies and procedures to manage and track student loan default rates, revenue streams, and assets. Forbearances due to COVID resulted in a 0% default rate over the last 3 years. (III.D.15)

Merced College has board policies governing contractual agreements with vendors and external entities. College administrators and Administrative Services personnel are responsible for reviewing contracts to confirm that they are required for meeting the goals and mission of the College. Per Board policy contracts are enforceable only after consent or ratification of the Board. (III.D.16)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

IV.A. Decision-Making Roles & Processes

General Observations:

Merced College has distinct, transparent, and well-communicated decision-making processes. The District delineates roles and responsibilities in participatory governance at the College. A review of the evidence confirms that the College is committed to participatory governance and ensures broad opportunities for engagement in collective decision-making. Committee charges and compositions as well as meeting agendas and minutes are communicated broadly and available through the College website. Governance bodies provide for broad input capable of producing decisions leading to resource allocation and student success. Merced College embraces participatory governance and facilitates a climate which not only supports evidence-based self-reflection, but also encourages all constituents regardless of their position at Merced to contribute fully.

Findings and Evidence:

The College's Educational Master Plan (EMP) serves as the foundation for the District's long-range planning, which is operationalized through their Strategic Implementation Plan (SI). Goal 7 of the EMP was developed amid COVID to advance innovative practices and has resulted in the Merced College Trident Innovation Center. The state-of-the-art center is described as advancing unique collaborations between faculty and staff in order to build a "21st century innovative community College." The team found that the District supports all employees and students offering improvements and innovations. (IV.A.1)

Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3700 – Shared Governance, delineate the participatory roles of leadership throughout the organization to promote student success through effective decision-making. Specifically, the Participatory Governance Handbook describes facilitating effective faculty, classified professional, management, and student participation in governance at Merced. (IV.A.2, IV.A.3)

The District uses participative processes through the master planning committees and the other participatory governance committees to assure effective planning and implementation of institution wide processes, as well as learning programs and services. (IV.A.4)

Additionally, there are multiple opportunities for broad involvement in decision-making and planning at Merced including but not limited to semesterly forums and surveys, Coffee and

Conversation, and informal gatherings with senior administrators such as Cabinet members and the Superintendent/President. (IV.A.5)

Finally, the chief executive officer's (CEO) weekly message and the College's Fall Convocation are examples of District-wide communications that ensure the entire community remains abreast of decisions made by senior leaders and the Board of Trustees as well as the outcomes from evaluations and subsequent improvement efforts. One example is the collaboration grant process, which provided a participative process with key departments for effective planning and implementation. (IV.A.6, IV.A.7)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

IV.B. Chief Executive Officer

General Observations:

The College Superintendent/President serves as the chief executive officer (CEO) for Merced College. The Merced Community College District (MCCD) Board of Trustees delegates to its Superintendent/President primary responsibility for the quality, planning, implementation, and leadership of the institution. Further, Merced's (CEO) has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution and represents the Board of Trustees in governance matters. In Board Policy 2430 - Delegation and Authority to Superintendent/President, the Board delegates to the Superintendent/President the responsibility for administering policies adopted by the board and executing all the decisions of the Board that require administrative action. Board Policy 6100 - Delegation of Authority, states the Board delegates authority to the Superintendent/President to supervise the general business procedures of the district; to assure proper administration of property and contracts; the budget, audit, and accounting funds; acquisition of supplies; and the protection of assets and persons. Board Policy 7110 - Delegation of Authority, establishes the authority of the Superintendent/President to authorize employment, facilitate communication, and solve problems related to participatory governance. The policy places responsibility on the Superintendent/President to facilitate the review of and proposed changes to District policies and procedures. Merced's Superintendent/President assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies through the vice presidents that oversee the operations of the institution and the administrators and managers of the departments and programs they supervise.

Findings and Evidence:

The Superintendent/President has primary responsibility for the quality and day-to-day operations of Merced College. The Superintendent/President uses a variety of different methods for engaging and communicating with the community, including, but not limited to,

the annual report, campus forums, stakeholder events and convenings, and institution wide messages. An Annual Report is produced every year to inform the District and community of the annual progress made by the College. The Superintendent/President maintains regular meeting schedules with student leadership, classified professionals, and faculty leadership representatives. The Superintendent/President meets with all constituency leadership monthly for one-on-one meetings. The regular meetings with the leadership of the various constituency groups allow the Superintendent/President to provide leadership and to assess institutional effectiveness.

The College president leads Merced College in the implementation of its 5-year Educational Master Plan and more specifically, directed the efforts of devising a 5-year operational plan for each of the EMP goals and objectives with a focus on Enrollment Management strategies overarchingly and many aspects of guided pathways in particular. (IV.B.1)

The CEO ensures that administrative organization is appropriately staffed to reflect the College's purposes, size, and complexity. The Cabinet is structured to support the work of the District in alignment with the institutional mission as well as the Superintendent/President's annual goals. Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 7110 delegates authority to the President or designee to authorize employment and actions related to other personnel actions. While Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 6100, delegates authority to the President with respect to the general business procedures including the overall budget and fiscal management of the District. Finally, Board Policy 2430 empowers the Superintendent/President to enact all policies adopted by the Board of Trustees executing all Board decisions that require administrative action. Further it provides for the Superintendent to delegate any of his powers and duties as appropriate. (IV.B.2)

The Superintendent/President and the Standing Accreditation Committee (SAC) sets the District's institutional performance standards. Further, the Board of Trustees authorizes the final approval of the ACCJC annual report that includes Merced College's institutional set standards. Additionally, Board Policy 4025 - Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degrees and General Education, assures that the Superintendent/President sets the standards for degree requirements and attainment. Further, the Superintendent/President facilitates the improvement of learning and student achievement via Board Policy 3250 – Institutional Planning, which ensures that the District's evaluation and planning processes are guided by research and analysis of external and internal conditions. Merced College's CEO leads the integrated planning process at the institution through the various master planning committee structures, which is aligned with program review so that resource allocation supports planning goals and overall institutional improvements. The Educational Master Planning Committee and the College Council annually evaluates the recommendations for institutional improvements through the work of each participatory governance committee and alignment of the EMP and the SIP. (IV.B.3)

Board Policy 3200 – Accreditation, outlines the Superintendent/President’s role for ensuring the District is in compliance with the accreditation process and all applicable ACCJC standards. Employees in each of the constituent groups through the Standing Accreditation Committee (SAC) have a responsibility for assuring compliance with accreditation requirements; the Vice President for Instruction, who serves as the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), chairs the SAC and the Dean of Institutional effectiveness supports the ALO and the SAC in compile data and reports to ensure Merced College remains in compliance. (IV.B.4)

The Superintendent/President through Board Policies 6100 – Delegation of Authority, and 6300 – Fiscal Management, ensures his active engagement in the daily institutional operations, fiscal oversight of the District’s budget and resources as well as direct participation in District governance and administrative proceedings such as the Board of Trustees, College Council and Executive Cabinet meetings. The Superintendent/President ensures effective control of the budget and expenditures that are in direct alignment with the District mission and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The District’s Budget Committee is the primary governance committee that ensures evaluation, development and revision of policies and procedures related to the budget as well as disseminating District financial information. The Committee’s recommendations go to the Superintendent/President, including those resource allocation requests from the program review process, which are then considered in light of the District’s mission, priorities, and available resources. Board Policy 6400 – Audits, ensures that the Board of Trustees each receive an annual audit report. (IV.B.5)

The Superintendent/President utilizes a variety of methods to engage and communicate with the community such as hosting campus forums and stakeholder events, compiling, and distributing institutional messages and annual reports. Live events are recorded, and all forms of communication are posted and accessible on the District’s website. Further the CEO facilitates meaningful partnerships with the community by providing presentations to a wide range of community groups, and also serves on multiple boards and maintains memberships with local community-based organizations. Finally, the Superintendent President meets with educational partners such as K-12 schools and districts, 4-year colleges and universities, and many others. (IV.B.6)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

IV.C. Governing Board

General Observations:

The Merced Community College District (MCCD) Board of Trustees (Board) has established policies to assure the academic quality, integrity, and responsibility for fiscal stability. The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies. The Board’s website provides

public access to all Board-related documentation ranging from agendas and meeting minutes of the Board, the Trustee Handbook as well as Board Policies and Administrative procedures. Board meeting agendas and minutes demonstrate that the Board receives the necessary information to exercise their authority. The Board receives updates on the progress of the College, and it provides for ample stakeholder participation in the governance process, while retaining ultimate authority and responsibility for the District. The Board acts as a collective body and all board members are expected to comply with the tenets outlined in the Board of Trustees Handbook with respect to the norms and protocols of board members. Thus, the Board adheres to policies and procedures for the selection and evaluation of the Superintendent/President, the evaluation of the Board itself, as well as those that evaluate governance policies, procedures, and processes, which serve as the foundation for improvements at the District. The Board ensures that planning processes are in place, including strategies for resource allocation that provides the necessary funds to support to the District for the delivery and improvement of the College's programs and services. Further, the Board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement. Likewise, the Board reviews all institutional plans for improving academic quality, student success and financial stability of the institution. The Board espouses a code of ethics and conflict of interest policy that regulates the behavior of individual board members and guides the appropriate actions of the Board as well. This includes having a full awareness of the accreditation process, purpose, policies, and the District's status. Finally, the Board empowers the CEO to fulfill board policies yet holds the CEO accountable for the daily operations of the College without interference.

Findings and Evidence:

The responsibilities of the Board have been established through board policies coded in the 2000's. Administrative Procedure 2410 - Policy and Administrative Procedure, establishes the process for adoption of board policies and administrative procedures by the Board.

The Superintendent/President acts on behalf of the Board by implementing the policies and procedures to assure academic quality, integrity, and the effectiveness of programs and services. Specifically, Board Policy 2750 - Consulting Collegially on Academic and Professional Matters, establishes the importance of participation in governance by the faculty ensuring that the District will collegially consult with Faculty Senate. Further, the Board addresses the academic quality, integrity and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services through a number of board policies.

The Board has authority over and responsibility for policies to assure financial stability of the institution. Board Policy 6400– Audits, establishes the annual review of the finances of the District through annual audits by an external organization.

Additionally, the outcomes of the annual audits are published and presented at public meetings as well as provided to the Chancellor's Office. For instance, audits and budgets are shared with the Merced Community College District in several ways including within Budget Committee meetings, college community forums, and at Board meetings. Finally, the Board has a Budget

Sub-Committee that meets regularly with District administration to review the alignment of the budget with educational priorities and to ensure financial stability of the District. (IV.C.1)

The team noted the Board's healthy engagement through the District as members carry out their well-defined roles as set forth in the Board of Trustee Handbook. The Board keeps the District focused on learning and achievement for all students, governs with Board-adopted policies and procedures, ensures opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community and keeps stakeholders informed of Board deliberations. The Board understands that the authority rests with them as a whole and not with any individual and ensures compliance with regulations, accreditation, and other applicable policy guidelines for the College.

It is clear to the team that although Trustees have noted in their Board goals that they will individually represent the College at campus and community events, they understand the necessity of acting as a collective entity and are committed upholding the final decisions as the Board. (IV.C.2)

The Board maintains policies related to selecting and evaluating the District and CEO with detailed Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2431 - CEO Selection, which were successfully utilized in the selection and appointment of the current Superintendent/President in 2017. Further, the annual evaluation of the Superintendent/President is detailed Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2435 - Evaluation of the Superintendent/President, which includes an evaluation by the Board, informed by a self-evaluation and written narrative by the Superintendent/President and a review of goals from the previous year along with supporting documentation. (IV.C.3)

Board Policy 2200 - Board Duties and Responsibilities, outlines board duties and responsibilities as well as the Board of Trustees Handbook. This policy offers a framework for the Board to act in the public's interest through the convening of public meetings and forums, notes the public's right to engage in public comment on items both on and off the agenda, and denotes the seriousness the Board's role to lead by example protecting the district from undue influence or political pressure by adhering to Board protocols and meeting norms. Additionally, Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2710 - Conflict of Interest, establishes that neither the Board or employees hold a financial interest in contracts with the institution and ensures they do not participate in incompatible activities. Further, Board Policy 2715 - Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, outlines the Board's requirement to maintain ethical conduct. Both sets of policies and procedures safeguard against undue influence or political pressure. (IV.C.4)

All agenda items for Board meetings are linked to Education Master Plan (EMP) goals and objectives to ensure alignment and focus of District priorities and that the Board of Trustees have established policies that support and facilitate the mission of Merced College. The EMP and subsequent goals and objectives are reviewed by the Board annually with opportunities for Board Members to engage with the District around progress towards and efforts to ensure the goals and objectives are being met. The Integrated Planning Handbook describes the broad-

based comprehensive, systematic and integrated system of planning supports the District's ability to ensure the quality, integrity, improvement of student learning programs and services, as well as provided the needed resources. Board Policy 3250 - Institutional Planning, supports the functional relationship between the Superintendent/President and the Board having ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity and stability. (IV.C.5)

The team confirmed that Merced College has codified board policies (the BPs in the 2000s) that specify the size of the board, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. Also, the Board of Trustees Governance Handbook includes a purpose statement, board protocols pertaining to board meetings, board members' role in the public, self-monitoring, board communication, and site visits. (IV.C.6)

According to Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2745 - Board Self-Evaluations, the Merced College Board of Trustees acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws established by the board's commitment to assessing its own performance and to identifying areas that may need improvement. As part of the self-evaluation the Board develops an evaluation tool and conducts the self-assessment bi-annually. The results of the self-evaluation are discussed and analyzed, and bi-annual board goals are developed, tracked, and monitored. All meeting agenda, minutes, and action reports are publicly available on the District's website. (IV.C.7)

The Board ensures the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success through regular reviews of key indicators of student learning and achievement including but not limited to the following: 1. Educational Master Plan ongoing monitoring and annual updates; 2. Annual Reports and, 3. Ongoing monitoring and review at Board meetings and workshops. For instance, The Board reviewed and approved the 2022-25 Student Equity Plan (SEA) Plan in November 2022. The 2022-25 SEA Plan was developed to determine a series of goals and related activities to support students in overcoming barriers to academic success. The Board reviews institutional plans to ensure the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success. (IV.C.8)

The team corroborated that the Board has ongoing board development, including new member orientation. The team is impressed by the District's commitment to Board education as outlined by Board Policy 2740 – Board Education, which details ongoing board development and the trustee education program including new trustee orientation. In addition, the team verified that Board members are elected every two years, on staggered terms that aligns with the Board's process for elections of Board members and filling vacancies on the Board to provide continuity of Board membership. (IV.C.9)

Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2745 - Board Self-Evaluations, and the Board of Trustees Governance Handbook provides protocols for the evaluation of the Board that include using a workshop setting or other mutually agreed upon format to carry out the evaluation of the Board's effectiveness in promoting and sustaining academic quality and institutional

effectiveness. The team verified that Board engages in public discussions of the Board Self-Evaluation and Board Goals. The most recent Board Self-Evaluation was completed in November 2022 and the results were reported on December 13, 2022 at a Board of Trustees Organizational Meeting. During that meeting the Board's 2022-24 goals were shared and discussed. Prior to that, the November 8, 2022 Board Study session addressed these topics. (IV.C.10)

The team validated that the Board has established Board Policy 2715 - Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, which outlines the guidelines for ethical conduct for the Board. The policy also contains a Censure Policy that states that Board members will be prepared to investigate the factual basis behind any charge or complaint of Board member misconduct. Additionally, the Board of Trustees Governance Handbook delineates expectations that include Board members lead by example and ensure compliance for regulations, accreditation, and other applicable policy guidelines for the College. This is in alignment with BP 2715 which states members of the Board are responsible for, “ensuring public input into board deliberations, adhering to the law and spirit of the open meeting laws and regulations.” (IV.C.11)

The Superintendent/President is the District’s CEO. The team verified that according to BP 2430, Delegation and Authority to Superintendent/President that the governing board delegates authority to the district Superintendent/President to implement and administer board policies and holds the CEO accountable in accordance with BP 2200, Board Duties and Responsibilities. Further evidence includes the adopted motion at the December 13, 2022 Board Organizational Meeting to authorize the Superintendent/President to sign necessary reports, documents, agreements, applications, and contracts as the authorized representative of the Board, including authorization to act for the District on matters relating to Federal and State laws pertaining to the allocation of funds for educational purposes, per Board Policy 6150, Designation of Authorized Signatures. (IV.C.12)

The Merced College Board is informed about all aspects of the accreditation process, including requirements, standards, commission policies, and the accreditation status of the institution through presentations at regular meetings of the Board, workshops, and study sessions. In Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3200 - Accreditation, the Superintendent/President ensures Board involvement in the accreditation process and that the Board is provided with accreditation reports in sufficient time for review prior to approval for submission to the accrediting agency on behalf of the District. The Board’s approval of ACCJC related documents including the ISER, follow up reports, and midterm reports are noted by the adoption of the most recent ISER at the June 2023 board meeting, which was following review of the ISER within the District’s participatory governance process. (IV.C.13)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

Quality Focus Essay

Merced College has designed a meaningful project for the Quality Focus Essay. The Data Equity Coaching Program supports planning around student equity, builds a culture of equity-mindedness, and the practice of conducting equity conversations infused with student data. The project is well-designed including thick description of the anticipated impact on student learning and achievement, the outcome measures, and an achievable project action plan. This well-conceived plan is designed around SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals, and the team congratulates the College for choosing to focus on one foundational plan that implements a sustainable structure of training, mentoring, and execution of data analysis and usage.

Designed in four phases, the last phase is entitled “Prepare for Cultural Shift”. The team suggests moving toward implementation of change and aligning with the last activity in the Project Action Plan, “Integration”. Already in progress, the project is scheduled to achieve all four phases by Spring of 2024.

Appendix A: Core Inquiries



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CORE INQUIRIES

Merced College
3600 M Street
Merced, CA 95348

The Core Inquiries are based upon the findings of the peer review team that conducted Team ISER Review on October 20, 2023.

Dr. Roger Schultz
Team Chair

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Merced College Peer Review Team Roster

Team ISER Review October 20, 2023

| | |
|---|---|
| Dr. Roger Schultz, Team Chair Mt. San Jacinto College Superintendent/President | Dr. Jennifer Zellet, Vice Chair Antelope Valley Community College District Superintendent/President |
| ACADEMIC MEMBERS | |
| Dr. Lee Ballestero Moorpark College Faculty, Political Science | Dr. Sharyn Eveland Taft College Faculty, Psychology |
| Dr. Jamie Sickel Kapi'olani Community College Faculty, Instructional Designer | |
| ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBERS | |
| Dr. Travaris Harris Cabrillo College Assistant Superintendent/Vice President for Instruction | Dr. Lisa Cooper Wilkins City College of San Francisco Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs |
| Dr. Chad Houck Cerro Coso Community College Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services | Mr. Robert Suppelsa El Camino College Vice President, Administrative Services |
| Ms. Rebecca Teague Mt. San Jacinto College Vice President of Student Services | |

| | |
|--|--|
| ACCJC STAFF LIAISON | |
| Dr. Catherine Webb, Vice President ACCJC | |

Summary of Team ISER Review

INSTITUTION: Merced College

DATE OF TEAM ISER REVIEW: October 20, 2023

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Roger Schultz

A ten-member accreditation peer review team conducted the Team ISER Review of Merced College on Friday, October 20, 2023. The Team ISER Review is a one-day, off-site analysis of an institution’s self-evaluation report. The peer review team received the college’s institutional self-evaluation report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the Team ISER Review. Team members found the ISER to be a comprehensive, well written, document detailing the processes used by the College to address Eligibility Requirements, Commission Standards, and Commission Policies. The team confirmed that the ISER was developed through broad participation by the entire College community including faculty, staff, students, and administration. The team found that the College provided a thoughtful ISER containing several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement. The College also prepared a Quality Focus Essay.

In preparation for the Team ISER Review, the team chair attended a team chair training workshop on August 1, 2023, and held a pre-review meeting with the college CEO on August 18, 2023. The entire peer review team received team training provided by staff from ACCJC on August 30, 2023. Prior to the Team ISER Review, team members completed their team assignments, identified areas for further clarification, and provided a list of requests for additional evidence to be considered during Team ISER Review.

During the Team ISER Review, team members spent the morning discussing their initial observations and their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the College for the purpose of determining whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and US ED regulations. In the afternoon, the team further synthesized their findings to validate the excellent work of the college and identified standards the college meets, as well as developed Core Inquiries to be pursued during the Focused Site Visit, which will occur on February 13 and 14, 2024.

Core Inquiries are a means for communicating potential areas of institutional noncompliance, improvement, or exemplary practice that arise during the Team ISER Review. They describe the

areas of emphasis for the Focused Site Visit that the team will explore to further their analysis to determine whether standards are met and accordingly identify potential commendations or recommendations. The college should use the Core Inquiries and time leading up to the focused site visit as an opportunity to gather more evidence, collate information, and to strengthen or develop processes in the continuous improvement cycle. During the Focused Site Visit, the ACCJC staff liaison will review new or emerging issues which might arise out of the discussions on Core Inquiries.

Core Inquiries

Based on the team’s analysis during the Team ISER Review, the team identified the following core inquiries that relate to potential areas of clarification, improvement, or commendation.

| |
|---|
| <p>Core Inquiry 1: The team would like to learn more about how the results of learning outcomes assessments are used to inform the continuous improvement of courses.</p> |
| <p>Standards or Policies: II.A.9, II.A.16</p> |
| <p>Description: It is apparent to the team that learning outcomes are articulated in the Course Outline of Record, which is reviewed by the Curriculum Committee; program review is completed using robust data and is tied to requests for resources (aligned with SLOs); there is a schedule (every other year) for learning outcomes assessment, and course SLOs are mapped in eLumen to program SLOs, and course-level SLO assessment completion has been tracked in the Master Assessment Schedule.</p> <p>The team is interested in seeing how assessment results are utilized for continuous improvement at the course level.</p> |
| <p>Topics of discussion during interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The process for utilizing results from assessment and leveraging it to inform changes, modifications, updates to courses b. Examples of how continuous improvement of courses is informed by analysis of course-level learning outcomes assessment |
| <p>Request for Additional Information/Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Procedures and/or templates demonstrating how the College utilizes course-level learning outcomes assessment for course planning b. Examples of modifications in curriculum based on learning outcomes assessment at the course level and resultant data analysis |

- c. Example of curriculum modifications that point to course-level outcomes assessment data
- d. Examples, if any, of professional development derived from course-level outcomes assessment analysis
- e. Any other examples of how learning outcomes assessment has informed the continuous improvement of instructional courses in alignment with the College's mission

Request for Observations/Interviews:

Interviews with assessment coordinator, department chairs, program coordinators, instructional faculty, and anyone else involved with the course-level assessment and/or course-related curricular processes (e.g. Professional Development Coordinator or committee)

Core Inquiry 2:

The team would like to better understand how the College uses disaggregated data to inform improvements across and within instructional modalities.

Standards or Policies: II.A.7

Description:

The team noted in the ISER a variety of equity-related endeavors, including but not limited to those included in the Student Equity and Achievement Plan, which outlines data-informed goals to address equity gaps and has yielded a number of initiatives to address identified needs. The team also noted that success and completion rate data, provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, are disaggregated by modality, gender, race/ethnicity, and age for analysis in program reviews.

The team would like to see evidence that demonstrates the usage of disaggregated data to evaluate and continuously improve equity in its delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. The process for and examples of utilizing disaggregated data to evaluate and continuously improve equity in delivery modes
- b. The process for and examples of utilizing disaggregated data to evaluate and continuously improve equity in teaching methodologies
- c. The process for and examples of utilizing disaggregated data to evaluate and continuously improve equity in learning support services
- d. The process for determining equity actions, such as discussions or decisions to offer

specific professional development, community of practices formed around identified equity concerns, or areas for potential continuous improvement

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Procedures outlining how the College utilizes disaggregated data to evaluate and continuously improve equity in its delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services.

Examples of how the College utilizes disaggregated data to evaluate and continuously improve equity in its delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

Interviews with individuals involved with planning and facilitating professional development activities, especially those focused on equity and/or equitizing courses and programs

Core Inquiry 3:

The team recognized a synergy around the new LRC and would like to learn more about how the use of data and planning culminated in the development of the new space, ongoing use, and sustainability of the facility and programs.

Standards or Policies: II.B.2, II.B.3, III.D.4

Description:

The outcome of the project is significant and exemplary. The processes were represented by the FMP, a memo and presentation of a taskforce summary, and a donation agreement.

It was mentioned in the ISER that there was a connection between funding and planning; the team would like to learn more about the development of this project.

There may be more evidence of the connection between the taskforce and final project, and several of the recommendations indicate that there was more work done after the taskforce and before the project started.

The team would like to learn more about the ways the use of space will be evaluated in the future.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

The story from data to construction of LRC...how did the college get from analysis to project completion?

The relationship between the external funding used to support the project, the planning of the space, and the programs included in the facility

The team would like to learn more about the ongoing efforts to collect and use data to ensure the space fulfills the potential of multiple student services in one location.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Any relevant planning documents or minutes from committee meetings

Student input via surveys or other methods

Any additional relevant information the college wishes to share

Request for Observations/Interviews:

Facilities Planning Committee

- a. Foundation
- b. Librarians and other end users/stakeholders of building
- c. Student Success Master Planning Committee
- d. Any other groups or individuals that may have useful input
- e. Any students or student groups involved in this process

Core Inquiry 4: The team was impressed by examples of college-wide collaboration across multiple student success efforts and would like to learn more about how various constituencies across the college engage in planning, developing and implementing those initiatives.

Standards or Policies: II.C.1-5, IV.A.1

Description:

In the ISER and the virtual Open Forum, the Team noted multiple examples of collaboration:

- a. The Equity Hub
- b. The LRC
- c. The Early Alert System
- d. Securing multiple grants

The Team is curious to discover the efficacy of these initiatives and other programs, services or supports

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Impact of initiatives on student success
- b. Design and delivery of programs
- c. Impact of the role of leadership and empowerment to bring initiatives to fruition
- d. How are all stakeholders/constituency groups engaged throughout the process of designing and delivering programs

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Student success anecdotes and/or data that demonstrate impact of programs and services

Request for Observations/Interviews:

Representative group of individuals from the various constituency groups who were engaged in these processes

- a. Students
- b. Facilities staff and classified professionals