

Taft College

**Institutional Self Study
in Support of Reaffirmation of Accreditation**

Submitted by

**West Kern Community College District
29 Emmons Park Drive
Taft CA 93268**

to

**Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

November 22, 2002

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Certification of the Self Study Report

Date: November 22, 2002

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Taft College
29 Emmons Park Drive
Taft CA 93268

This Institutional Self Study Report is submitted for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institution's accreditation status.

We certify that there was broad participation by the campus community, and we believe that the Self Study Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

Signed:

Larry Buttke, President, Board of Trustees

Dr. Roe Darnell, Superintendent/President

Dr. Loretta Garcia Lipscomb, Accreditation Liaison Officer

Dr. Eric Bérubé, Chair, Accreditation Steering Committee

Dennis McCall, President, Academic Senate

Judy Wade, President, California School Employees Association

Virginia Welborn, Student Representative

Abstract of the Report

Taft College has changed considerably since its last accreditation reaffirmation in 1997. There has been a dramatic increase in seat count, especially in the vocational programs and distance learning programs. There have been substantial changes in both the demographic makeup of the community served by Taft College and the demographic makeup of the students attending the college. Taft College has a new superintendent/president, two new vice presidents, one new dean, and a number of new faculty and staff.

All of these changes have added to the vitality and energy that exist at Taft College as we critically examine the needs of our students, our purpose, our organizational structure, and how we will best meet the needs of our students in the 21st century. This critical examination goes well beyond the accreditation self study and is driven by a genuine desire on the part of all Taft College employees to expand continuously and to improve the learning opportunities afforded to the community we serve.

Standard One: Institutional Mission

The current Taft College mission statement, including vision and value statements and several institutional goals, was adopted by the college in 2001. The mission statement was conscientiously developed with input from all members of the college community and has served well to guide Taft College in the fulfillment of its mission. The mission statement will soon be reevaluated and revised, if necessary, to reflect Taft College's embracement of the learning college philosophy.

Standard Two: Institutional Integrity

Taft College represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through all its publications. The *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook* is the primary source of information for students and the community which it serves. Taft College personnel responsible for publishing the catalog go to great measures to ensure the accuracy, comprehensiveness, and usefulness of all information contained in the catalog. Access to the catalog can be obtained through the college's Web site.

The Board policy specifically addressing the issue of academic freedom in research, teaching, and learning is reviewed periodically by the Academic Senate to keep it current and complete. Board policy also addresses the presentation of controversial issues in course material. Academic honesty

policies are fully described in the college catalog, *Faculty Handbook*, and the *West Kern Community College District Board Policies and Procedures*.

Staff and student diversity and student equity are of great importance to Taft College as reflected in the mission statement and Student Equity Plan. Taft College embraces the concept of equal opportunity. Every effort is made to be fair and objective.

Integrity and honesty are practiced in all Taft College athletic programs. All coaches are evaluated annually, and each student athlete has an education plan on file with the Athletic Director, who verifies enrollment, academic progress, and eligibility of the student on a monthly basis.

Taft College faculty and staff engage in sincere efforts to comply with accrediting commission standards, policies, guidelines, self-study requirements, and commission recommendations.

Standard Three: Institutional Effectiveness

Since its previous self study, Taft College has created an institutional researcher position to coordinate its research, budget, and planning efforts. The resources available to the institutional researcher are adequate to fulfill required functions but have been limited at times due to budget restraints affecting the entire district. The Institutional Research Committee has developed new program review procedures to integrate the budget and planning processes, and, in conjunction with the Planning and Budget Advisory committees, is developing a new five-year strategic plan and planning cycle process. The new program review procedures will ensure that the campus community is informed of its progress in achieving its mission.

The Planning Committee is designated as being the vehicle for shared governance at Taft College and has broad representation from the campus community. The Institutional Research Committee, working closely with the Planning Committee and Budget Advisory Committee, is currently defining and publishing a planning process that will result in a new educational master plan.

Taft College has informally adopted the Partnership for Excellence criteria as institutional indicators of effectiveness. Reports on how the campus has met these criteria have been disseminated at various committee meetings, and it is planned to post future reports on the campus Web site. The Institutional Research Committee is cognizant of its role in increasing institutional effectiveness and evaluates how campus research efforts can be better organized and utilized toward this objective.

Standard Four: Educational Programs

Taft College is dedicated to serving the diverse and changing population of its community. Consequently, Taft College offers a broad curriculum in transfer, occupational education, general education, and basic skills programs. The economic and demographic needs of potential students are carefully considered when undertaking activities such as scheduling courses and developing curriculum. Taft College is currently reviewing its course scheduling to further ensure that all courses leading to degrees can be taken by students in the most efficient manner. To make more effective use of limited resources, Taft College has created a Budget Advisory Committee to make recommendations on budget matters, and it has created and filled a director of human resources position. All programs are reviewed on a six-year cycle to evaluate their effectiveness and assess their need for resources.

Effective counseling and academic advising are acknowledged to be keystones in student success. Accordingly, Taft College places great emphasis on effective and timely advising. Since the last accreditation self study, the number of counselors and advisors has been doubled, and a new lead counselor position has been created. Academic advising procedures have been the topic of inservice sessions and new procedures are continually being developed, implemented, and evaluated.

All programs demonstrate their alignment with the institutional mission through the program review process. Course sequencing is further evaluated by the Instructional Committee, and is an institutional priority at the time of this self study. The Curriculum and General Education Committee serves to develop and improve educational programs, as well as reviews course sequencing and certificate offerings. Course outlines specify how students must demonstrate subject mastery, including competence in language and computation skills.

The Taft College catalog states that a general education component is required of all Associate degrees (including occupational) and all transfer programs. Board policy describes the process for establishing as well as evaluating programs. All courses, regardless of delivery method or location, must be approved by the curriculum committee.

Standard Five: Student Support and Development

The Taft College catalog, college Web site, and schedule of classes all include information on programs, admission policies, and refund policies, among others. Taft College has a wide variety of learning support services and

educational programs available to meet the diverse needs of all of its students, including on-campus, distance learning, Taft Correctional Institution, and Westside Energy Services Training Education Center, Inc. students. Tutors from the Library Learning Resource Center visit on-campus classes during the semester to announce the availability of their services. Students receive extensive personal contact and assessment using a variety of methods prior to receiving placement recommendations. Instruments used in the placement process are continuously evaluated to ensure they are valid, reliable, culturally appropriate, and otherwise bias free.

A variety of co-curricular activities leading to intellectual, ethical, and personal growth are offered to students, and student input regarding all areas of institutional function is actively sought. Student records are kept secured using a variety of measures. Student services are continuously evaluated using multiple objective and subjective methods. The campus climate is evaluated biannually through the use of a student satisfaction questionnaire, the results of which are used to improve services to students.

Standard Six: Information and Learning Resources

The Taft College Library Learning Resource Center currently has 28,000 print holdings. Of these, 70% were published before 1970; 90% were published before 1980. Only 3% of the holdings were published after 1990. In a massive collection redevelopment effort, the Library Learning Resource Center has subscribed to over 20 online information and learning resources and has begun a major withdrawal project. It is estimated that at least 50% of the current print holdings, specifically those with outdated information, those that have not circulated for several years, and those that no longer support the curricula, will be withdrawn. New books and multimedia resources will be selected and acquired as funds allow.

Standard Seven: Faculty and Staff

Taft College currently has 40 full time faculty, 55 adjunct faculty, 130 classified positions, 13 supervisory positions, and 7 administrators. The selection process as stated in board policy has proven effective in hiring knowledgeable and competent faculty and staff. All faculty and classified staff are evaluated on a regular basis, and procedures for evaluating administrators are being developed. Pre-employment data surveys are supplied to all applicants and reviewed by appropriate screening committee members and annually by the Human Resources Director. All personnel records are kept confidential.

Funds for staff development were eliminated in the most recent state budget. The campus is evaluating ways to offset the lack of funds to maintain adequate staff development.

Standard Eight: Physical Resources

Current space inventory reports indicate that Taft College has adequate classroom and laboratory space for its instructional offerings; however, there is an identified need for additional space in the Library Learning Resource Center. There is also a need for a student center.

Main campus buildings and grounds are in good condition, although several places such as parking lots, sidewalks, and dorms are in need of attention. Taft College has contracted with an architect to develop a maintenance schedule for all facilities. Several projects addressing Americans with Disabilities Act deficiencies have recently been completed, including a new elevator on the administration/classroom building, automatic access doors, and access ramps in the parking areas. A new Facilities Master Plan is being developed.

Equipment for educational programs and services is generally adequate and properly maintained. The college has recently upgraded technological equipment to support its educational programs.

Standard Nine: Financial Resources

Several efforts have been made to link financial planning to other campus planning and institutional goals, including the formation and expanded role of the Budget Advisory Committee, new program review procedures, and a new master planning process. Given state budget uncertainties, Taft College has opted to practice conservative approaches to assessing revenues and expenditures. The district maintains a \$1 million reserve, well above the state requirements.

Additionally, the college has become more aggressive in seeking capital outlay funding from the state and is developing an enrollment management plan to help obtain its enrollment targets. The district has made changes to simplify budget reports to the campus community. Taft College has hired a new part-time accountant to help increase timeliness and accuracy of reports.

Standard Ten: Governance and Administration

The Taft College Board of Trustees has a long history of stability. The board, whose members are elected to serve staggered terms in office, has established prudent financial policy, participated fully in the development of a mission statement, and is currently reviewing existing policies and procedures. After a nationwide search, the board selected a new Chief Executive Officer who started in November 2001.

All new board members receive appropriate orientation. At least one trustee is a member of the Accreditation Steering Committee, and the board receives regular reports on the accreditation process. The Chief Executive Officer, under board direction, has assumed full responsibility in the development of the budget.

The Academic Senate represents the faculty. Although the functions of the Academic Senate and Planning Committee are described in board policy, there is some opinion that the Planning Committee is not as effective as it should be in setting institutional priorities and goals. Taft College is currently reviewing its committee and administrative structure and functions, with the aim of implementing a more effective governance structure. The Planning Committee, which is the designated shared governance body at Taft College, has representatives from all segments of the campus community, including faculty, classified staff, administration, and students. Students are encouraged to participate on all committees and their input has often been found to be very helpful.

Organization of the Self Study

Planning for the self study began in fall 2001 with the establishment of a steering committee. Announcements were made to recruit volunteers to assist in the self study. Volunteers were encouraged to participate on one or more standard subcommittees, including standard subcommittees outside their area of specialty. Many volunteers indicated they would serve where needed. Each standard subcommittee as well as the steering committee had at least one faculty member, a classified staff member, and a student representative.

In December of 2001, each standard subcommittee elected a chair who also served as a member of the steering committee. Standard subcommittees reviewed copies of the standards, the previous accreditation report, Commission evaluation report, the midterm accreditation report, examples of self-study reports from other colleges, and a timetable for completion of the self study. After reviewing these materials, the standard subcommittees began writing their sections of the report. An electronic bulletin board accessible to faculty and staff was created. Standard subcommittee members could easily share document drafts, notices of meetings, and any other relevant information.

In January of 2002, the standard subcommittee members were asked to review a student satisfaction questionnaire and faculty/staff institutional priorities questionnaire and to submit to the steering committee additional questions if needed. Additional questions were reviewed and revised by the steering committee. A total of nine additional questions were included in the student questionnaire and eight questions in the faculty/staff questionnaire.

The student satisfaction survey and the faculty/staff priorities survey were conducted in March of 2002. The results from the surveys were made available to the standard subcommittees in April of 2002. Copies of the student and faculty/staff survey reports are included as supporting documentation.

The steering committee met monthly to review progress of the self study. The standard subcommittees met as often as required. A draft of the self study was completed in October 2002, and made available to the college community and board of trustees for review. The final report was completed in October 2002, and submitted to the Accrediting Commission visiting team in December 2002.

Descriptive Background and Demographics

Descriptive Background

Taft Junior College was established August 30, 1922, as part of the Taft Union High School District. Classes were first held on the high school campus. The school title officially became Taft College on July 1, 1954, and in September of 1956 a separate campus opened in the current location at 29 Emmons Park Drive adjacent to the high school.

The West Kern Junior College District was formed in an election on June 19, 1962, and became operative on July 1, 1963. Two years later the Maricopa Unified District was annexed to the West Kern Junior College District, and on July 1, 1971, the district's name was changed to the West Kern Community College District. The West Kern Community College District is a single-campus district under the guidance of a five-member Board of Trustees. The chief executive officer is the superintendent/president of the district.

Taft College is located in the City of Taft in the southwestern corner of the San Joaquin Valley. The district contains 735 square miles and is composed of the elementary school districts of Taft, Midway, McKittrick, and Elk Hills, and the Taft Union High School District and Maricopa Unified District.

The service area of Taft College has a population base of about 27,000 people.

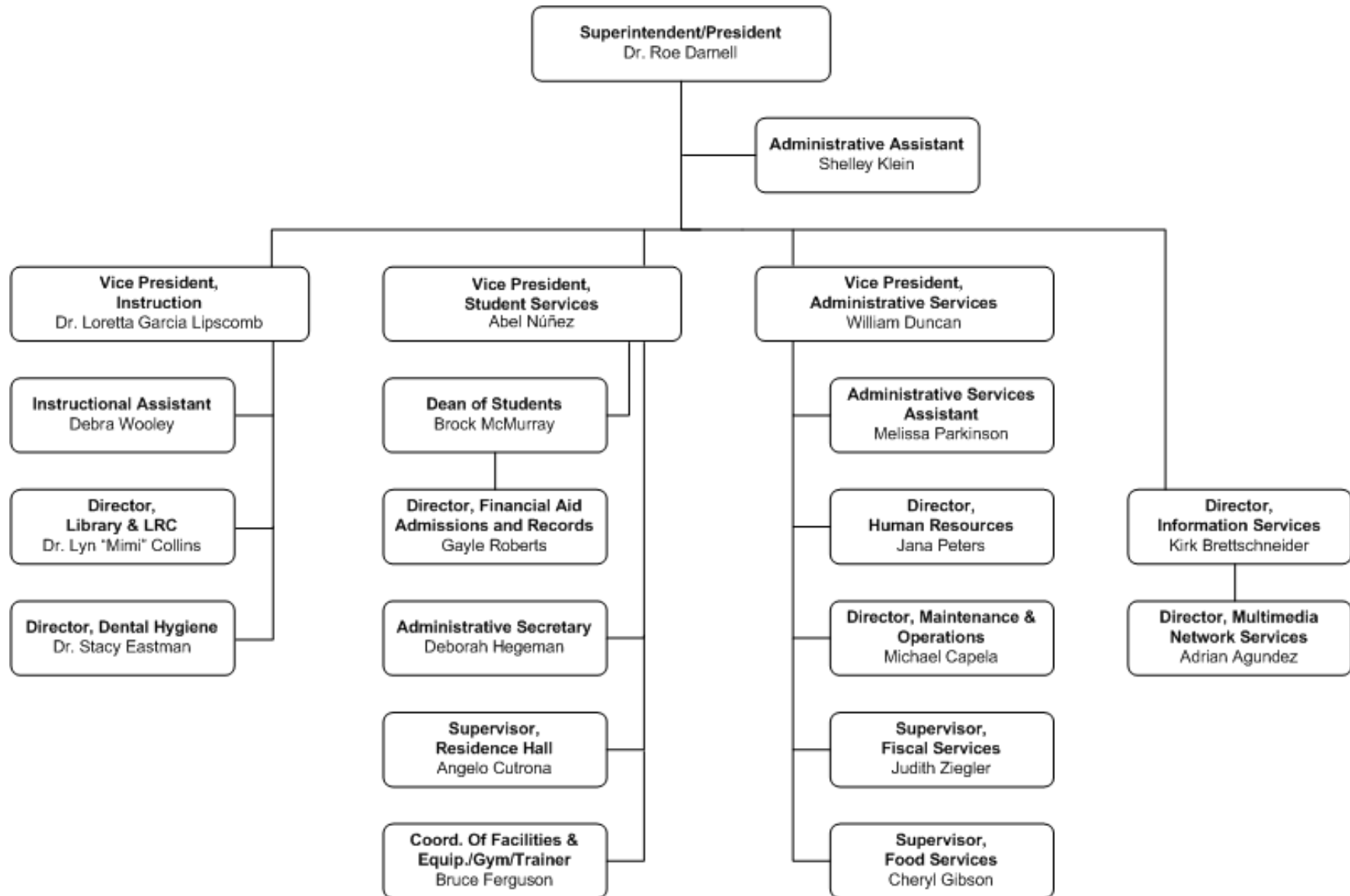
Demographics

Demographic profiles of the Taft College student body can be found in the *West Kern Community College District Educational Master Plan Fact Book—2002*, a copy of which is included as supporting documentation to this report. The fact book is filled with a variety of tables and figures containing information on the community served by Taft College, enrollment trends, and demographic profiles of the employees of Taft College. Additionally, the fact book contains information on indicators of student success at Taft College such as numbers of degrees and certificates awarded, course success rates, basic skills improvement rates, and counts of students who transferred to four-year institutions. The fact book is updated annually to assist with Taft College's planning needs.

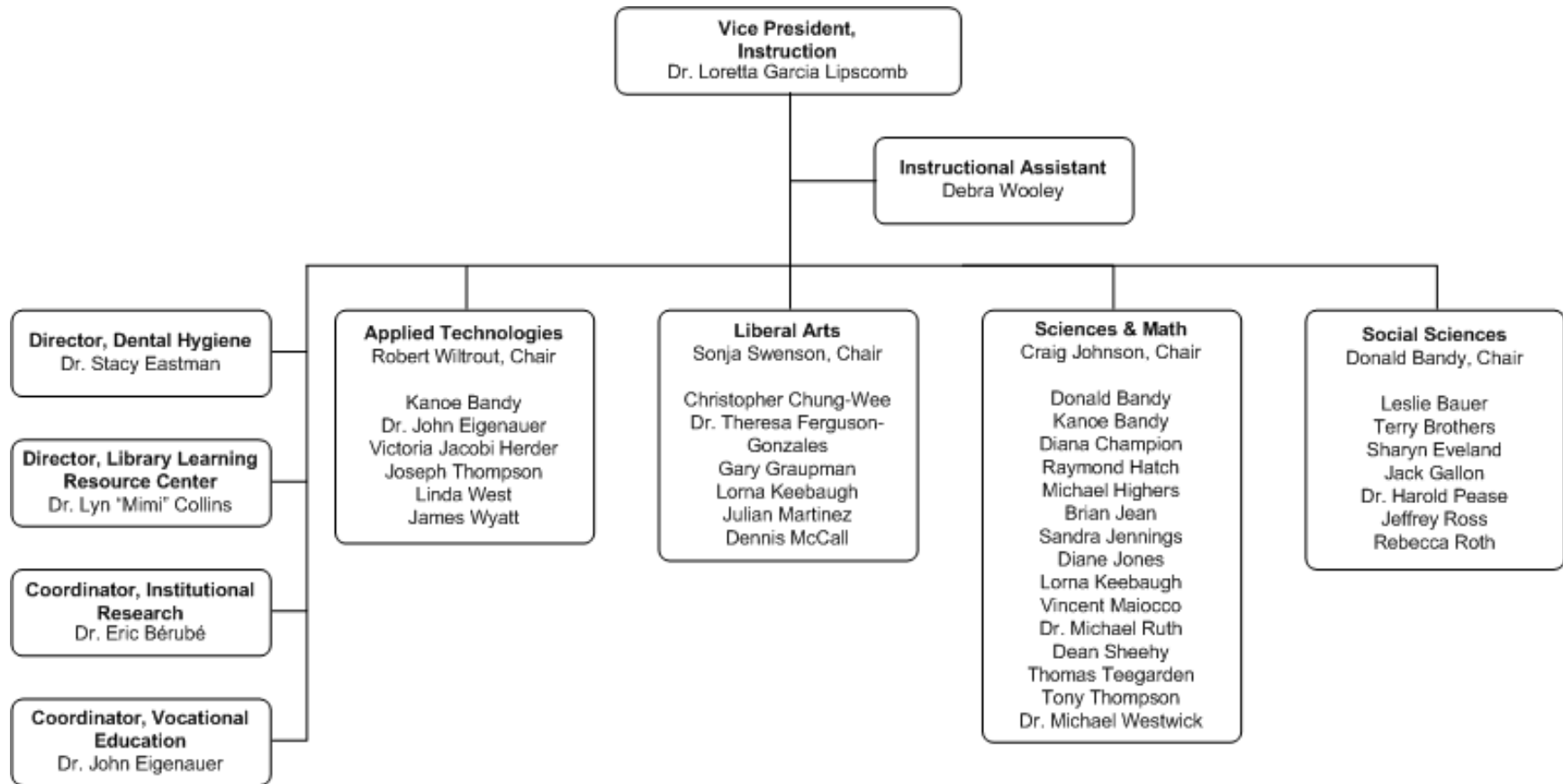
Organization of the Institution

Taft College's organizational structure is shown on the following pages. Descriptions of the various committees and their functions can be found in the *Faculty Handbook*.

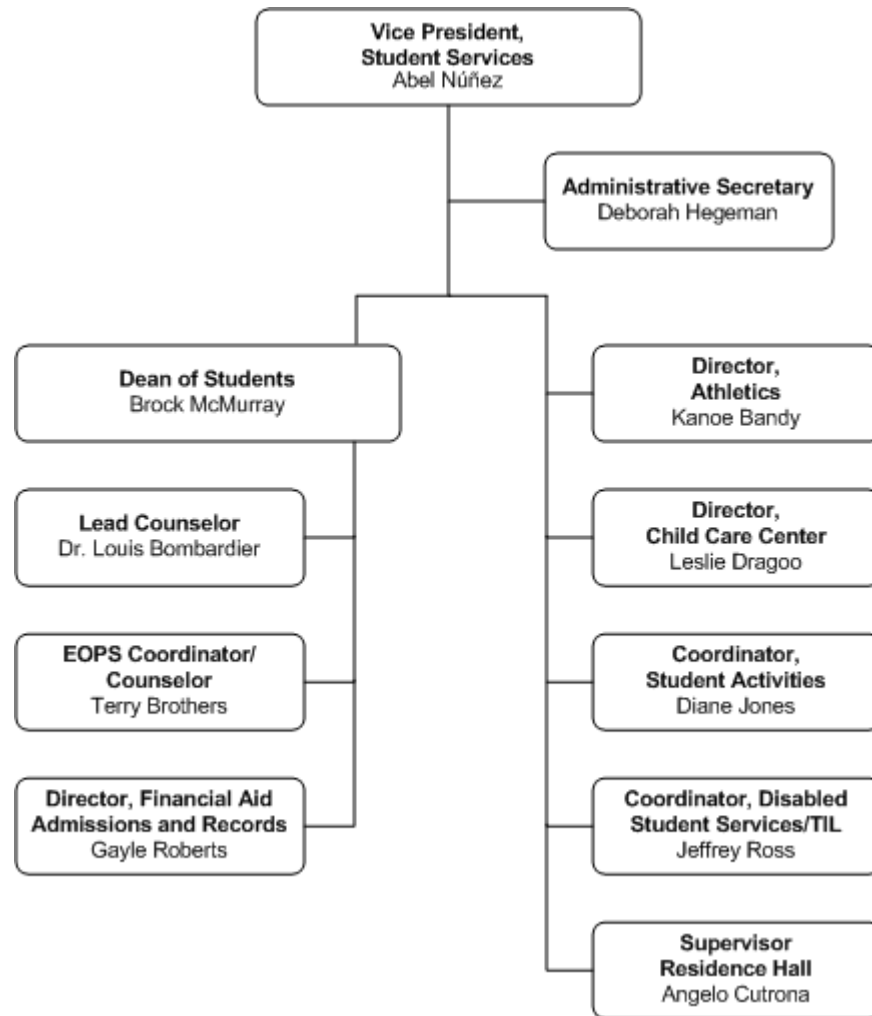
Administration



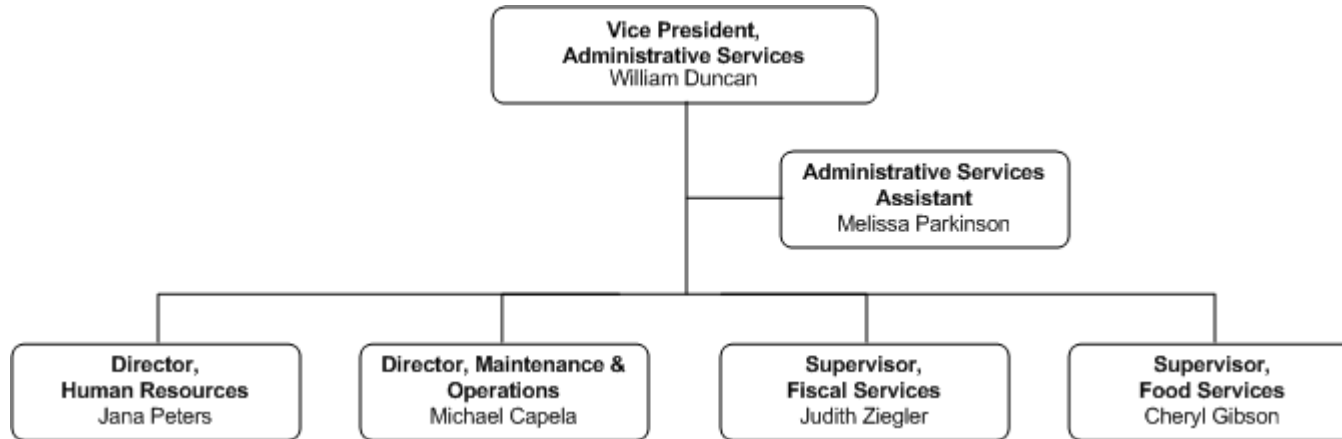
Instruction



Student Services



Administrative Services



Certification of Continued Compliance with Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Taft College has been continuously accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. A statement regarding accreditation is included on page 2 of the *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook 2002–2004*.

2. Mission

Taft College's current mission statement was adopted by the Board of Trustees in October 2001. The mission statement, along with a vision statement, was created by a campus-wide collaborative effort headed by the Planning Committee. The Taft College Mission Statement, which is currently being reviewed, appears on page 8 of the catalog/student handbook.

3. Governing Board

The West Kern Community College District has a five-member Board of Trustees which oversees the quality and integrity of Taft College. Board members are elected at large and serve staggered terms. A student representative is also elected by the Associated Student Body (*West Kern Community College District Board Policies and Procedures*, Article IV, Section 10). The board meets once each month. Agendas for board meetings are published and distributed well in advance of meetings. The public is invited to participate in all board meetings (Board Policy Article VI, Sections 5 and 12), and time is allotted each month for public participation (Preamble to Bylaws, Item 15).

4. Chief Executive Officer

The Superintendent/President of Taft College is appointed by the Board of Trustees. The position is currently held by Dr. Roe Darnell, whose primary responsibility is to Taft College.

5. Administrative Capacity

Taft College has a sufficient number of staff with appropriate experience and qualifications to provide administrative services. Organization charts are included as part of this report.

6. Operational Status

Students at Taft College are enrolled in a variety of courses and programs leading to a two-year degree, transfer to a four-year institution, basic skills proficiency, or a vocational certificate.

7. Degrees

The majority of Taft College's offerings are in programs leading to degrees as described in the catalog/student handbook. Transferable courses are clearly marked in the catalog. Descriptions of degree requirements begin on page 32 of the 2002-2004 catalog/student handbook, and a listing of suggested curricula requirements for various majors begins on page 42 of the catalog/student handbook.

A listing of student matriculation goals, as shown in the fact book, indicate that most students, excluding Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center students, have as their goal earning an Associate degree and transferring to a four-year institution.

8. Educational Programs

Taft College's principal degree programs are consistent with its mission, are based on recognized higher education fields of study, are of sufficient content and length, and are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the degrees offered. The second sentence of Taft College's Mission Statement reads, "The college strives to be accessible and provides transfer and vocational education supported by precollegiate courses to meet the needs of students and the larger community it serves." Taft College offers a well-balanced mix of basic skills English and math courses to prepare students for college-level coursework, college-level courses leading to an Associate degree or transfer, and vocational courses leading to certification in several high-demand occupations. Pages 42 to 54 of the catalog/student handbook list suggested courses for degree and certificate programs.

9. Academic Credit

Taft College strictly adheres to Title 5 of the California Administrative Code in the awarding of academic credit.

10. Educational Objectives

Taft College defines and publishes educational program objectives in the catalog/student handbook, in brochures distributed by the Counseling Center, and on the college Web site.

11. General Education

All degree and transfer programs at Taft College are presented with the values of general education in mind. These values are to develop in the student a breadth of knowledge that will increase their awareness of themselves and the world, as well as enhance their effectiveness as members of their respective communities. The goal of general education is to deepen the students' appreciation of their artistic and cultural legacy as well as demonstrably strengthen their ability to reason, communicate, and critically evaluate information. Toward this end, Taft College incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education. General education courses approved for transfer are listed in the catalog/student handbook on pages 36 to 41.

12. Faculty

Taft College has 40 full-time faculty and 55 adjunct faculty as of fall 2002. The student to faculty ratio at Taft College is 16 to 1, ensuring personalized attention to every student. All faculty are listed on pages 96 to 98 of the catalog/student handbook along with their degrees (full-time only) and beginning date at Taft College. Faculty responsibilities are listed in the *Faculty Handbook* and in Chapter 300 of the *West Kern Community College District Board Policies and Procedures*.

13. Student Services

Taft College has an extensive array of student services designed to meet the varied needs of its diverse student population. A comprehensive listing of student services is found in the Taft College catalog/student handbook on pages 22 to 29. Demographic descriptions of the student population can be found in the fact book.

14. Admissions

Admission policies at Taft College are consistent with its mission and appropriate for its programs. The admission policies and procedures are fully explained on pages 9 to 14 in the *Taft College Catalog/Student*

Handbook. Students can enroll in person, and they can also find admission policies and enroll online.

15. Information and Learning Resources

The Library Learning Resource Center provides one student lab of fifteen computers in the learning assistance and tutoring center and seven public computers in the library all of which have e-mail and Internet access. The library's collection of proprietary databases is accessible from all on-campus computers. The library has a print collection of 30,000 volumes as well as 3,000 e-books. Journal, magazine, and newspaper subscriptions total 160. The learning assistance and tutoring center has a variety of instructional software loaded for student use and video and audio equipment for other instructional media.

16. Financial Resources

Most of the financial resources of the college come from local property taxes and the State of California. Projected allocations are used to develop budgets on an annual basis. Those allocations are then tracked and monitored at all times and adjustments are made as needed. Additional funding is also obtained from federal, state, local, and private sources. The college maintains adequate reserve levels for contingencies and for future expansion. The college maintains conservative financial management policies and practices that ensure fiscal stability.

17. Financial Accountability

The college is audited on an annual basis by an independent audit firm. The firm is selected by evaluating the scope of their experience, the size of the firm, and their ability to provide backup personnel and a wide range of expertise. The audit firms employ as a guide *Audits of Colleges and Universities* published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants as well as the California Community College's *Contracted District Audit Manual*. The Governing Board reviews the audit findings, any exceptions, letter to management, and any recommendations made by the contracted audit firm.

18. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

The Planning Committee at Taft College meets each month or more often if required to coordinate and oversee planning activities. Currently, the college is in the initial stages of preparing a five-year strategic plan, the first part of which is the *Educational Master Plan Fact Book*. The institutional

researcher and the Management Information Systems unit are developing procedures whereby information on indicators of institutional effectiveness such as student success outcomes will be disseminated to the campus community on a regular basis and used to improve programs and services.

19. Public Information

Taft College has integrated its catalog and student handbook. Students have a single, comprehensive source of accurate information on admission requirements and procedures (pages 9 to 14), rules and regulations affecting students (pages 15 to 21, 102 to 116), programs and courses, degrees offered and degree requirements, costs and refund policies, grievance procedures, academic credentials of faculty and administrators, and other items regarding attending and withdrawing from the college. Much of this information is also presented in the schedule of classes and on the campus Web site.

20. Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The West Kern Community College District Board of Trustees provides assurance that Taft College adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the Accrediting Commission, describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.

Taft College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, as noted on page 2 of the catalog/student handbook, and by the American Dental Association, as noted on page 48 of the catalog/student handbook.

Responses to Recommendations from Most Recent Evaluation

Standard One

- 1.1 It is recommended the college establish a clearly defined budget development procedure linked to a comprehensive planning process.

In 1998, a subcommittee of the planning committee was created, designated as the Budget Advisory subcommittee. The primary duty was to devise and implement a process for faculty and staff involvement in recommendations for the allocation of Partnership for Excellence (PFE) funds and Block Grant funds. This process involved project proposals and a rating system based upon the college mission statement and the PFE goals and objectives. In 1999, the role of the committee was enlarged and the committee renamed as the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC).

As part of the budgeting process, each budget manager presents her or his budget requests to the BAC. In this presentation it is expected that the relationship to the college plan be identified.

Standard Two

- 2.1 It is recommended the college strengthen program review procedures to include:
- a. A statement that the purpose of program review at Taft College is program improvement.
 - b. A process for providing unedited Program Review Committee findings and recommendations to the campus-wide planning committee.

The college has a program review procedure which acknowledges program improvement as its purpose and provides for the unedited presentation of recommendations.

- 2.2 It is recommended the Curriculum and General Education Committee include a mechanism in the course outline submission process that would alert the faculty and staff to consider issues of diversity and an awareness of different cultures and student backgrounds.

In the fall 1999 inservice days, the Staff Development Committee included a major presentation on diversity. Materials from the consultant were shared in meetings with division chairs, through which course outline submission

process begins. Diversity is an issue receiving institutional attention. An inservice class was given for faculty in which a project was assigned requiring the inclusion of diversity issues in course outlines.

- 2.3 It is recommended the college and Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center, Inc. (WESTEC) develop a written policy indicating:
- a. Faculty teaching credit courses through WESTEC meet college defined minimum qualifications.

This has always been the case. A WESTEC employee teaching credit courses must submit transcripts and evidence of competency to Taft College. Appropriate college staff members evaluate these documents based upon the state minimum qualification standards. A standard form that certifies minimum qualifications have been met is then issued, and that WESTEC employee has a written contract with Taft College to teach the course(s).

- b. Credit courses taught through WESTEC undergo the same curriculum approval as regular college courses.

This has always been the case. Only courses approved by the Curriculum and General Education Committee may be taught for credit, and all credit courses taught through WESTEC have gone through that process. It remains unclear why this topic never got cleared up with the evaluation team.

Standard Five

- 5.1 It is recommended the college develop a plan of action to upgrade the library and ensure the responsibilities of a professional library director are assigned to a qualified academic employee and that the performance of these responsibilities be closely monitored and evaluated.

The professional position of Library Learning Resource Center Director was filled in the summer of 1999.

Standard Seven

- 7.1 It is recommended the college conduct an actuarial study to assess its long-term liability for retiree benefits and establish a special reserve fund for these benefits which would ensure the college's regular operating budget is not unexpectedly impacted adversely in the future.

An actuarial study assessing the long-term liability for retiree benefits has been completed. Because of inadequate state funding the district is reviewing ways to address the liability in addition to establishing a special reserve fund.

Standard Eight

- 8.1 It is recommended the Board of Trustees develop and utilize a process by which its own performance can be formally evaluated.

The Board has participated in an annual self-evaluation process that began in fall 2001. This process was conducted by a representative of the Community College League of California. An evaluation session is scheduled for fall 2002.

STANDARD ONE

Institutional Mission

The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution, its educational purposes, its students, and its place in the higher education community.

1. *The institution has a statement of mission, adopted by the governing board, which identifies the broad-based educational purposes it seeks to achieve.*

Description

The Taft College mission represents the consensus of institutional purpose from a broadly-based campus constituency. In March 2001 a retreat of students, faculty, administration, support staff, and board members met to develop a new mission, vision, values, and goals for the 21st century. The Planning Committee approved by consensus the new mission statement on April 23, 2001. After three readings, the mission and vision statements were adopted as Board Policy No. 101 by the governing board on October 10, 2001.

Self-Evaluation

The Taft College mission was developed from the input of all segments of the college community and reflects Taft College's broad-based educational purposes. The

Board of Trustees has adopted it by adding it to official board policy.

2. *The mission statement defines the students the institution intends to serve as well as the parameters under which programs can be offered and resources allocated.*

Description

The mission of Taft College, which includes a mission statement, vision statement, values and goals, defines students in response to the many purposes of a community college. The college broadly defines its target students as lifelong learners preparing for future challenges by seeking learning experiences that will enable them to begin or advance in a chosen occupation, transfer to a four-year college, improve pre-collegiate skills, and effectively participate in the larger community.

The mission provides parameters under which the college will operate. These parameters include attention to the needs of the college's larger community, the

appropriate use of technology, response to the community's cultural and social diversity, a student support system, and a focus on learning. Central to the mission statement is an integrated partnership among students, faculty, and staff that focuses on empowering students to adapt to future challenges.

Self-Evaluation

The Taft College mission effectively defines the students Taft College serves, as well as the parameters of programs offered and resources allocated.

3. *Institutional planning and decision-making are guided by the mission statement.*

Description

The college is guided by the mission, vision, and values statements. These are used by the Planning Committee and the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) to guide the planning and budgeting processes. Annually the Planning Committee uses the mission to develop criteria that the BAC applies in evaluating budget proposals. The President has applied the mission to his vision of Taft College becoming a learning college.

Self-Evaluation

The use of the mission in planning, budgeting, and the President's

vision demonstrates the college's commitment to the mission, vision, and values to develop successful lifelong learners; to pursue, adapt, and utilize appropriate new technology; to reflect and embrace the cultural and social diversity of our community; and to maintain fiscal integrity.

4. *The institution evaluates and revises its mission statement on a regular basis.*

Description

The Planning Committee annually reviews the mission as part of its development of budget criteria. It was during the January 2001 review that the Planning Committee determined the need for a major update of the Taft College mission. Forty-two members of the college community, including students, faculty, classified staff, management, and trustees, participated in the March 2001 retreat, and developed drafts of a new institutional mission, vision, values, and goals. The drafts were reviewed by the Planning Committee and consensus to adopt was reached in April 2001. The new mission and vision statements were approved as board policy by the Board of Trustees in October 2001.

Self-Evaluation

The importance ratings of selected items from the student and staff

questionnaires are an affirmation of the correctness of the mission statement. The high importance placed by both students and staff on student centeredness, adequacy of computer labs, career services, variety of courses and programs, and responsiveness to diverse populations are all reflected in the mission, vision, and values statements.

Planning Agenda

As the Planning Committee and Board of Trustees grow in their understanding of Taft College becoming a learning college, they will review the college's mission, vision, and values for their continued appropriateness.

The Taft College Master Plan, to be completed by the Planning Committee with support from the Institutional Research Committee and BAC in 2002-03, will be guided by the goals of the mission, vision, and values statements.

Supporting Documents

- 1.1 Planning Committee Minutes, January 2001
- 1.2 Taft College Mission and Vision Statements, Board Policy No. 101, 101.1
- 1.3 Planning Committee Budget Criteria for New Positions, January 2002
- 1.4 President's Vision for Taft College, January 14, 2002

STANDARD TWO

Institutional Integrity

The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates honesty and truthfulness in representations to its constituencies and the public; in pursuit of truth and the dissemination of knowledge; in its treatment of and respect for administration, faculty, staff, and students; in the management of its affairs and in relationships with its accreditation association and other external agencies.

1. *The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to its constituencies, the public, and prospective students through its catalogues, publications, and statements, including those presented in electronic formats. Precise, accurate, and current information is provided in the catalog concerning (a) educational purposes; (b) degrees, curricular offerings, educational resources, and course offerings; (c) student fees and other financial obligations, student financial aid, and fee refund policies; (d) requirements for admission and for achievement of degrees, including the academic calendar and information regarding program length; and (e) the names of administrators, faculty, and governing board.*

and vision statements presents a clear and distinct message concerning its educational purposes. Production of the catalog is based on a two-year publication cycle with the incorporation of an addendum listing all changes occurring during the year. The college adopted for the 2002-2004 catalog the inclusion of a student handbook. The handbook covers in an explicit manner the following: Student Rights and Responsibilities, Academic Honesty, Standards of Student Conduct, Student Grievance Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Sexual Harassment Procedures, Student Parking Regulations, Student Computer Use, Procedures for the Posting of Information on Campus Property, Institutional Prohibitions and Policies Regarding Illegal Drugs and Alcohol Use, Student-Right-to-Know—Campus Security Statistics for 1997-2001, Procedural Guidelines for Reporting Criminal Actions and Other Emergencies on Campus, and Taft College's Nondiscrimination Notice.

Description

The catalog through its mission

The nature and type of student fees and financial obligations that students may be held responsible for are delineated in the catalog and during the online Web registration process. Admission and registration procedures and guidelines are clearly stated and detailed. As of spring 2002, the college adopted an online Web application and registration process. The catalog provides a comprehensive description of the process needed for students planning to transfer to California's public four-year universities to complete a bachelor's degree. Curricula are presented as guidelines to those students engaged in one or more of the college's three major curricular divisions: Division I—Lower Division Transfer Curricula, Division II—Occupational Curricula, and Division III—Certificate Programs. A two-year academic calendar is provided to cover the two-year publication cycle of the catalog. The catalog provides listings of the college's Board of Trustees, administrative personnel, adjunct and full-time faculty, and support staff.

Self-Evaluation

The college catalog is the primary source of information for students and the community which it serves. Information is also provided in the fall and spring class schedules. Production of the catalog is based on a two-year publication cycle with the incorporation of an

addendum listing all changes occurring during the year. Revisions and updates to the catalog are sought from those areas responsible for each of the primary sections of the catalog. Access to the catalog can also be obtained through the college's Web site. Online Web application and registration procedures are based upon the input provided by the Web Registration Task Force, whose membership includes a wide range of student services, Management Information Systems (MIS), administrative, and college support staff. A pilot study was conducted during the spring registration cycle (November 2001-January 2002) to evaluate online Web application and registration procedures. Data and experiences from this study were utilized to refine and modify content, procedural guidelines, and the method of presentation used in bringing about campus-wide access to online Web application and registration. The college has undertaken during the 2001-02 academic year a major upgrade of the college's Web site, bringing about greater uniformity and consistency in Web site content and quality. These actions have greatly increased the amount of information presented on the Web site and have considerably improved its usefulness.

2. *The institution has a readily available governing board-adopted policy protecting academic freedom and*

responsibility which states the institutional commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge and fosters the integrity of the teaching-learning process.

Description

"Academic Freedom," Board Policy No. 118 of the *West Kern Community College Board Policies and Procedures* (revised and issued 1991-1992), was originally adopted in 1967. This policy statement is also published in the *Faculty Handbook* which is distributed to all full-time and adjunct faculty members. The statement includes endorsement by the California School Boards Association (CSBA).

The statement addresses "freedom in research and in the publication of the results," "freedom in the classroom in discussing his/her subject," and the teacher as "a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer in an educational institution."

Self-Evaluation

Board Policy No. 118 contains language supporting academic freedom in research, teaching, and learning. It also contains limitations and guidelines regarding academic freedom and controversial material.

Planning Agenda

The Academic Senate will review the policy on academic freedom and responsibility. Additionally, the Academic Senate will review the need for developing a faculty code of ethics.

3. *Faculty and other college staff distinguish between personal conviction and proven conclusions and present relevant data fairly and objectively to students and others.*

Description

"Controversial Issues," Board Policy No. 113 of the *West Kern Community College Board Policies and Procedures* (revised and issued 1991-1992), addresses this issue specifically and recognizes controversial issues have a legitimate role in the teaching and learning process. The Board of Trustees permits the introduction of controversial issues provided "fair representation and open mindedness are encouraged, a spirit of scholarly inquiry prevails, instigation is by curricular design, and the widest feasible range of resources are drawn upon for information and insights." A teacher may express his or her personal opinion in the discussion of any issue but must identify it as such and not express an opinion for the purpose of persuading students to his or her own point of view.

Self-Evaluation

Spring 2002 Student and Faculty/Staff survey results demonstrate a strong satisfaction level with the quality of instruction in general. Survey results also indicate students, faculty, and staff agree faculty are knowledgeable in their fields and are unbiased in their treatment of individual students. In addition, students generally support the statement that faculty present information objectively on controversial subjects. Specific results regarding this issue may be found in items 13, 18, and 40 on the Faculty/Staff survey and items 18, 29, 58, and 78 on the Student survey.

4. *Institutions which strive to instill specific beliefs or world views or to require codes of conduct of faculty, administrative and support staff, or students give clear prior notice of such policies.*

Description

Taft College is a public, nonsectarian institution and makes no attempt to instill specific beliefs or world views.

Faculty, administrators, support staff, and students, must adhere to district policies regarding sexual harassment, smoking, and the use of drugs and alcohol. Policies are distributed in print format and are also posted and may be accessed on the college Web site.

The Student Handbook is published in the college catalog. The handbook contains information regarding Student Rights and Responsibilities, Standards of Student Conduct, Student Grievance Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure, and the Student Computer Use Policy. The college catalog including the Student Handbook is also posted and may be accessed on the college Web site.

Self-Evaluation

All new permanent faculty, administrators, and support staff receive written copies of the college's policies regarding sexual harassment and use of drugs and alcohol. Written copies are distributed by campus mail to all employees in the event revisions are made to either policy. The current process adequately serves to inform employees regarding college policies.

All new matriculating students receive copies of the college catalog containing the Student Handbook. Catalogs are also available in the Counseling Center at no cost to any student who requests a copy.

There is concern that some students, particularly non-matriculating students, may not obtain a copy of the catalog and may not access the online catalog.

Planning Agenda

The Lead Counselor will work with the Public Information Committee to develop a plan to incorporate information regarding Student Rights and Responsibilities, including Student Conduct, in the tabloid schedule of classes produced each semester in order to reach a greater number of students.

5. *The institution provides faculty and students with clear expectations concerning the principles of academic honesty and the sanctions for violation.*

Description

The college has maintained its current policies and procedures regarding academic honesty and the sanctions for violating that policy. These policies and procedures are located in the college catalog under the following headings:

- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Code of Conduct
- Academic Honesty
- Student Grievance Policy

These policies and procedures are also available on the Taft College Web site under the heading of "catalog." Board policy also addresses academic honesty (Board Policy No. 514).

In part, academic dishonesty is defined by this college as any

illegitimate act by any student, such as plagiarism or falsifying documents, that would gain that student an advantage in grading, graduating from the college, or qualifying for entrance into any academic program. The following violations for which students are subject to college discipline include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the college.

Penalties for such conduct, depending on its severity, may range from a simple reprimand to an action which could result in expulsion from the college. These policies and procedures are available to students and faculty in the college catalog and in the *Faculty Handbook*.

The Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC) proctors tests and quizzes. Instructors provide explicit test-taking instructions regarding what testing materials they can or cannot use. Also posted in the testing room are notices stating that cheating is prohibited and the possible sanctions for cheating.

Self-Evaluation

While academic honesty policies are clearly stated and defined in the college catalog, *Faculty Handbook*, and *Board Policies and Procedures*, an informal survey of faculty revealed some were unaware or unsure of the exact

policies and standards. This topic was brought to the attention of the Academic Senate, and the complete sections of the college catalog regarding academic honesty were read and then discussed during two separate meetings of the Academic Senate. Integrity in the instructional area is also being discussed in the Academic Senate.

The 2002 Student and Faculty/Staff survey results (item 77) indicated students felt this issue was important and that the college provided clear expectations concerning the principles of academic honesty and the sanctions for violation.

Planning Agenda

Students, faculty, and staff could benefit by more widespread publication and distribution of the college's academic honesty policy. As a result, the policy will be printed in the college newspaper, *The Cougar Echo*, along with information on the location of academic honesty policies.

6. *The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.*

Description

Board Policy No. 410 recognizes that diversity in the academic

environment fosters cultural awareness, mutual understanding and respect, and harmony and creativity while providing suitable role models for all students. The district is committed to involving all staff in actively promoting campus diversity by recruiting members of underrepresented groups and providing a working and learning environment conducive to open discussion and free of intimidation, harassment, and unlawful discrimination. The Board of Trustees commits the college to vigorous equal opportunity in all aspects of its employment program including selection, assignment, promotion, and transfer. The Board of Trustees also assures that all employees and applicants for employment will have equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, status as a Vietnam era veteran, or marital status.

Self-Evaluation

Staff diversity is of great importance to Taft College. Mission and philosophy statements are insufficient unless they are supported with actions to achieve true diversity.

Student equity and diversity are nurtured by the college's Student Equity Plan that is dedicated to improving the components of student equity in curriculum and services. This is an ongoing process, and the college has committed funding in support of

the student equity program. Student recruitment is an ongoing process. Counseling and admissions staff members make regular visits to all local area high schools. In addition, staff members visit several outlying high schools and participate in countywide career days in an effort to attract greater diversity to the campus. Taft College also presents an annual career day and invites other educational institutions, industry, and government agencies to participate. Recruitment is recognized as a priority, and the college provides funding to support these activities.

Student and staff survey results support the position that the college environment embraces diversity and provides an atmosphere where each person is treated with respect. The survey results demonstrated that students and staff feel the college environment fosters diversity. On a scale of 1–7 with 4 being neutral, staff ranked commitment to evening students, underrepresented populations, and students with disabilities over 6 (items 63, 64, 66). Using the same scale, students ranked the commitment in these areas over 5 (items 83, 84, 86).

Campus hiring practices embrace the concept of equal opportunity, and every effort is made to be fair and objective. Screening committees are representative of the campus as a whole. In

general, committees are made up of faculty members, classified staff, and administrators. Procedures are outlined in the *Board Policies and Procedures* (Board Policy No. 300).

7. *The institution demonstrates honesty and integrity in its athletic programs.*

Description

Taft College offers five intercollegiate athletic programs: men's baseball and soccer, and women's softball, volleyball, and basketball.

The Taft College Athletic Department is governed by rules and regulations set forth by the Athletic Code of the California Community College Commission on Athletics (COA) and Central Valley Conference Constitution and By-laws for all sports except soccer, and the Western States Conference Constitution and By-laws for soccer, with special emphasis in the areas of recruiting, participation, eligibility, and behavior.

Each coach is required to attend athletic department meetings concerning annual review of recruiting rules and eligibility. All coaches are given a copy of the code and by-law sport supplements specific to their sport. Copies of the COA Code and Conference Constitutions are on file with the Athletic Director and Vice President

of Student Services for further review. All coaches must sign a form stating that they understand the rules and regulations as stated by specific governing bodies. All student athlete COA eligibility forms are individually examined and signed by the student athlete, coach, Athletic Director, and Vice President of Student Services.

Self-Evaluation

A goal of the Taft College athletic department is to develop the student athlete in the classroom and on the field/court. Each sport seeks to teach every student athlete the value of discipline, loyalty, hard work, good health, and good sportsmanship. The ultimate goal of the Taft College athletic department is for each student athlete to graduate with an Associate degree after two years at Taft College.

Athletic program integrity is encouraged through coach orientation and advising. The Athletic Director is responsible for the evaluation of all coaches on an annual basis.

There is systematic collection of student athlete commitments to follow athletic codes of ethics and academic progress. Each student athlete has an education plan on file with the Athletic Academic Advisor. The Athletic Academic Advisor verifies enrollment, academic progress, and eligibility on a monthly basis. The college

exhibits a good record of athletic integrity and will continue its vigilance in this respect.

In the past year, Taft College has initiated dramatic improvements in its sports facilities. With recent budget cuts, some of the scheduled improvements have been placed on hold. It is hoped that Taft College will continue these improvements so that the facilities are on par with those of other members of our intercollegiate athletic conferences.

As a result of severe budget problems in 1994, all sports at Taft College were cut. Of the sports cut, football, track and field, and cross country have not been reinstated. The Taft College athletic program is still suffering from those cuts years ago. Many high school coaches who had sent student athletes to Taft in years prior to the cuts have severed ties with Taft College or are still reluctant to send their student athletes to Taft.

The 2001-02 hiring of a full-time physical education/health instructor has greatly improved program and course offerings available to student athletes majoring in physical education. The recent hiring of the head soccer coach as a full-time residence hall supervisor will improve coach/athlete contact and communication and should have a positive effect on the academic performance of student athletes in that sport.

8. *The institution demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with the Commission and agrees to comply with Commission standards, policies, guidelines, public disclosure, and self study requirements.*

Description

In the history of Taft College accreditation dating back several decades, the institution has always taken the process seriously, with the clear understanding that the self study and the accreditation process lead to a continuously improving institution. The current guidelines are followed carefully, and the institution pays intense attention to recommendations made.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College faculty and staff engage in sincere efforts to comply with commission standards, policies, guidelines, and self-study requirements.

9. *The institution regularly evaluates and revises institutional policies, practices, and publications to ensure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.*

Description

The Administrative Council meets

monthly and is comprised of the Superintendent/President, Vice President of Instruction, Vice President of Administrative Services, Vice President of Student Services, Dean of Student Services, Director of Dental Hygiene, Director of the Library Learning Resources, Academic Senate President, Faculty Association President, Division Chairs, and a member of the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Executive Committee. Institutional policies and procedures are often discussed at these meetings and revisions recommended as needed.

College board policies are updated as necessitated by revisions in federal and state regulations as well as by other external and internal changes. New and revised policies are approved by the board and copies of new or revised policies are distributed.

The *Faculty Handbook* is produced, updated as needed, and distributed by the Instructional Office.

The Public Information Committee is charged with coordinating and ensuring the integrity and accuracy of college publications. This committee oversees production of the college catalog. The catalog is published every two years and addenda reflecting changes since the last catalog publication date are issued as needed. The catalog plainly states the college's mission, programs, and services. The

college views the catalog as its "contract with students" and great care is taken to ensure its accuracy prior to its publication. An electronic version of the catalog can be accessed from the college Web site.

The Public Information Committee oversees the maintenance and accuracy of content of print and non-print materials including the college Web site. Under current policy, content posted on the Web site must receive prior approval from the Public Information Committee.

The schedule of classes is prepared each semester and reviewed for accuracy prior to its publication. Printed copies of the schedule are widely distributed and an electronic version of the schedule is posted to the Web site.

Self-Evaluation

Newly hired personnel and changes in key positions have focused greater attention on the general evaluation of the college's existing policies, practices, and publications. Many revisions have occurred as a result of these evaluations.

At the present time, the *Board Policies and Procedures* needs to be updated to reflect new and revised board policies and procedures. Due to serious workload issues, administration has not always distributed new and

revised board policies in a timely manner.

Workload issues in the Instructional Office also interfere with the timely review, update, and distribution of the *Faculty Handbook*.

The college catalog has recently undergone a major reorganization in an attempt to make it more "student friendly." A Student Handbook has been incorporated into the 2002-2004 version of the catalog.

The approval process required by the Public Information Committee for the posting of material to the college's Web site can move slowly and sometimes prevents the posting of material in a timely manner. The Public Information Committee meets monthly and does not meet during the summer. As a result, prompt approval is not always possible.

The district subscribes to Community College League of California (CCLC) Board Policy and Administrative Procedure Service. The Administrative Assistant to the President will be working with the Vice President of Instruction, the Vice President of Administrative Services, and the Vice President of Student Services to review and revise as necessary the *Board Policies and Procedures* using samples or templates for policies that are either legally required, legally advised, or suggested as

good practice by the CCLC.

Planning Agenda

In consultation with the Human Resources Director, Instructional Office staff will review, revise, and distribute the *Faculty Handbook* annually.

Supporting Documents

- 2.1 *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook*
- 2.2 Schedule of classes
- 2.3 *West Kern Community College District Board Policies and Procedures*
- 2.4 Student survey spring 2002
- 2.5 Faculty/Staff survey spring 2002
- 2.6 Student Equity Plan
- 2.7 *Faculty Handbook*

STANDARD THREE

Institutional Effectiveness

The institution, appropriate to its mission and purposes as a higher education institution, develops and implements a broad-based and integrated system of research, evaluation, and planning to assess institutional effectiveness and uses the results for institutional improvement. The institution identifies institutional outcomes which can be validated by objective evidence.

A. Institutional Research and Evaluation

A.1 Institutional research is integrated with and supportive of institutional planning and evaluation.

Description

Activities of the Institutional Research Committee are coordinated with the Planning Committee. The Institutional Research Committee is currently involved in operationally defining and examining Partnership for Excellence (PFE) outcomes and in the development of the college master plan. Results from institutional research are shared with the Planning Committee and Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) and other committees where planning decisions are made.

Self-Evaluation

As a result of the midterm accreditation report, Taft College identified a need for a full-time institutional researcher to

coordinate its ongoing research activities. As of fall 2001, Taft College had created and filled the position of Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, Research, and Planning. As of spring 2002, the Institutional Research Committee has ten members, meets monthly, and has increased its role in prioritizing of research projects, determining appropriate avenues for dissemination of research results, developing the new Taft College master plan, sharing of information with the Planning Committee, program evaluation vis-à-vis standardized measurement variables, and program review.

Planning Agenda

Communication and dissemination of information among the Institutional Research Committee, Planning Committee, and BAC should be increased.

Data and tracking information should be provided to each committee to improve inter-committee communication and

decision-making.

A.2 The institution provides the necessary resources for effective research and evaluation.

Description

A full-time position for Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, Research and Planning was filled in fall 2001. The coordinator has received sufficient funding for necessary hardware and software to begin research activities. Additional funding for expanded activities has been identified through PFE. To ensure coherent and cohesive evaluation of research data, other departments, such as Management Information Systems (MIS) and network maintenance, have provided support for the coordinator.

Self-Evaluation

In the previous evaluation cycle it was determined that the institution lacked sufficient resources for effective research and evaluation. As a result, Taft College stated the intention of restoring a previously eliminated position in the Information Services department. In moving toward that goal, it was decided that a more appropriate and viable fix would be to create an independent position specific to research and evaluation. Therefore, a full-time position of Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, Research and

Planning was created and approved in academic year 2000-01. This position was filled in August 2001.

Funds were appropriated for the purchase of industry standard hardware and software, research materials, and validity-checked instruments, such as Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey. Existing on-campus resources, such as the MIS and the new online student registration system, have only limited availability to the institutional researcher due to lack of support personnel. All existing and planned on-campus data collection, storage, and organization systems are being reviewed for continuity of procedures and usefulness of data coding with the goal of fully-integrated data sharing/tracking for the institutional researcher.

Planning Agenda

The Institutional Research Committee evaluates on-campus resources to make existing databases available to the institutional researcher.

Information Services and the institutional researcher will create during 2002-03 a data warehouse for longitudinal studies. The Institutional Research Committee will review the feasibility of developing a decision support system.

Taft College will review the need for a Planning/Research Technician

to give additional support to the institutional researcher.

A.3 The institution has developed and implemented the means for evaluating how well, and in what ways, it accomplishes its mission and purposes.

Description

Taft College currently uses program review to evaluate how well and in what ways it accomplishes its mission. Data on institutional outcomes are provided to division chairs and faculty during the program reviews and annual assessments. Taft College has recently rewritten its mission statement and is in the process of developing a new strategic educational master plan.

Self-Evaluation

Partnership for Excellence (PFE) goals provide benchmarks for college-wide progress in five performance outcome areas. Ongoing program review processes help evaluate the effectiveness of individual divisions. Research provides objective data concerning aggregate college performance, program performance, and student performance. Research also provides productivity measures, community and student demographics, and regional job trends. Articulation and certification agreements provide periodic verification of the transfer curriculum. Advisory committees

serve a similar function in occupational programs.

Instructional program reviews make use of procedural indicators, such as full-time equivalent students (FTES). Taft College is integrating the use of quantitative performance indicators derived directly from the mission of the college. Program review procedures are currently being developed for non-instructional service areas. Additionally, all instructional and non-instructional areas are evaluated periodically using a student satisfaction survey. Results from the survey will be incorporated into the program review process. As of this time, the techniques are being refined.

Taft College is in the end-cycle phase of the master plan and is, with a new college Superintendent/President, re-examining the efficacy of existing procedures, delineation of responsibilities to committees, and information feedback mechanisms.

Planning Agenda

The Institutional Research Committee will evaluate current use of PFE goals as relevant to institutional goals.

The Institutional Research Committee will facilitate design and implement additional measures of program and institutional progress toward the institutional goal of becoming a learning college.

A.4 The institution provides evidence that its program evaluations lead to improvement of programs and services.

Description

Program evaluations incorporate the use of standardized performance indicators and student satisfaction surveys. Areas of concern are identified and brought to the attention of the appropriate committees where interventions are developed.

Self-Evaluation

Academic and non-academic program review procedures are being revised to incorporate commonly used indicators of participant performance and measures of program effectiveness. The participant performance indicators include the PFE measures of transfers to the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems, transfer prepared students, degrees and certificates awarded, course completion rates, vocational course enrollments and completions, and basic skills improvement. Measures of program effectiveness are specific to the program under review and include results from surveys, course fill rates, service contacts, etc. The revised program review procedures follow a goal-based evaluation model, where programs compare their achieved

performance on the identified indicators to previously determined goals and objectives. The first cycle of program reviews using the revised procedures are scheduled to be in the spring 2003 semester. Results from all program reviews are made available to all members of the campus community.

Planning Agenda

The institutional researcher in consultation with the Institutional Research Committee will develop instructional program review procedures and guidelines measuring evidence of learning outcomes.

B. Institutional Planning

B.1 The institution defines and publishes its planning processes and involves appropriate segments of the college community in the development of institutional plans.

Description

In response to the requirements of shared governance, Taft College's planning process uses multiple departments to ensure input from a broad segment of the college community. The Planning Committee has representation from all college community segments. The Planning Committee is comprised of division chairs, Faculty Association President, California School Employee's

Association (CSEA) President, board member, Associated Student Body (ASB) Student Representative, Honor Society Representative, management personnel and administrators, Academic Senate President, classified representative, and faculty representatives.

Self-Evaluation

Prior to 1998-99 the Director of Information Services managed the planning and research efforts in chairing both the Planning and Institutional Research committees. Since that period, Taft College has experienced a 228% growth in students and the Director of Information Services' time shifted almost exclusively to developing processes and implementing new software to handle this growth. Responsibility for the Planning Committee shifted to "tri-chairs" (Academic Senate President, Vice President of Student Services, and Director of Information Services) in 1998. However, this structure has created a situation in which no one has clear responsibility for the planning function. Thus, the Planning Committee has lost focus with a "quad-chair" (now including the Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, Research and Planning) structure.

Taft College recognizes the need for establishing a clear planning process; hence, with the development of a new master plan, redefining the planning process is a

priority. The process of planning includes participants from all segments of the college community. Taft College is at the end of its present planning cycle. The Planning Committee is formulating new institutional plans directly related to the institutional mission. The Planning Committee membership represents all facets of the institution. While this broad representation ensures a multitude of perspectives, it also tends to be cumbersome. The planning process has been documented in the meeting minutes of the Planning Committee and the BAC.

Planning Agenda

The Superintendent/President, with appropriate campus collaboration with the Planning Committee, will review, during 2002-03, the restructuring of institutional committees, including the Planning Committee, to improve their effectiveness.

B.2 The institution defines and integrates its evaluation and planning processes to identify priorities for improvement.

Description

Evaluation is integrated into the planning process at Taft College. Results from various evaluations, such as PFE, are presented at meetings of the Planning Committee, BAC, Academic Development Committee,

Instructional Committee, inservice presentations, and board meetings. Evaluation results are discussed and priorities identified in several committees prior to making decisions that have a substantial impact on the college community.

Self-Evaluation

The integration of educational, financial, physical, and human resources planning operations can be improved. To improve continuity of programs and services, measurable objectives consistent with the college mission statement are now required for all PFE proposals.

The master plan has been focused according to perceived needs. Departments assist with planning as necessary, implement plans as directed, and give feedback regarding program/activity outcomes. The Planning Committee, Instructional Committee, and Institutional Research Committee work to provide smooth integration and implementation of planning and evaluation.

The integration of evaluation and planning processes to identify priorities for improvement is exemplified by an annual student satisfaction survey conducted during the spring 2002 semester. An "institutional priorities" survey was administered concurrently among faculty and staff. A report on the results of these surveys was

disseminated to the campus community via an electronic bulletin board. The results from these surveys are being used to identify areas for further scrutiny and to establish benchmarks and set goals. These particular surveys are one component of a developing, integrated, decision support system that will include information from sources such as the 2000 Census, California Department of Education, California Employment Development Department, and the National Center for Education Statistics.

B.3 The institution engages in systematic and integrated educational, financial, physical, and human resources planning and implements changes to improve programs and services.

Description

The Planning Committee has focused on the college mission and institutional goals while the BAC has focused on preparation of the annual budget and allocation of special project PFE funds. The Facilities Task Force has had limited activity for the past year and has recently been reformed. A human resources position has just been created and filled during summer 2002. The Information Technology Committee makes recommendations to the BAC regarding technology adaptation,

improvement, and purchases, and makes recommendations to the Staff Development Committee regarding technology training and development. A number of planned changes have been implemented to improve programs and services, for example, Web registration and the faculty access system.

Self-Evaluation

While system-wide integration is limited within the various programs and divisions at Taft College, systematic planning and program improvement implementation occurs on an ongoing basis.

Planning Agenda

The Planning Committee will review/revise the structure of committees and review administrative structure as Taft College moves toward becoming a learning college.

C. Institutional Outcomes Assessment

C.1 The institution specifies intended institutional outcomes and has clear documentation of their achievement.

Description

The Taft College Master Plan (in progress) specifies goals and objectives related to the college mission statement as signposts to

determine progress and achievement levels.

Self-Evaluation

Prior to 1998, the Planning Committee annually published and updated its five-year strategic plan. The Planning Committee followed a cycle of review of environment and achievement of objectives during the fall. During the spring, the Planning Committee updated the strategic plan with emphasis on the next year's goals, thus reflecting the budgeting cycle. However, by 1998, the Planning Committee lost its cyclical focus.

The strategic plan has not been updated since that time. Consequently, the college has begun work on a five-year strategic, educational master plan that will incorporate goal-oriented institutional outcomes. The Taft College Master Plan will specify goals and objectives related to the college mission statement as signposts to determine progress and achievement levels. Furthermore, strategies for achieving these goals and objectives will be delineated therein. Taft College uses the PFE criteria, in part, as indicators of its achievement. Documentation of achievement on the PFE criteria has been disseminated through the Planning Committee and at inservice sessions.

Planning Agenda

The institutional researcher will complete a comprehensive fact book by spring 2003 to be used as the basis for an educational master plan. The fact book will include information such as student learning outcomes, demographic trends of Taft College and the community served by Taft College, growth projections of the community and college, and job trends.

C.2 The institution uses information from its evaluation and planning activities to communicate matters of quality assurance to the public.

Description

Information released to the public is based on the results of both a formal and an informal evaluation and the subsequent decisions made regarding college activities and community involvement. The Public Information Committee acts as liaison between the public and Taft College. Additional sources of information-release include a weekly president's editorial in the local newspaper and articles in the student news publication.

Annual analysis of program success is reported and published for Transition to Independent Living (TIL) and the Dental Hygiene programs. This information is released to the public in a variety

of formats as TIL is a nationally recognized program and the Dental Hygiene program highly rated in the state.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College communicates matters of quality assurance to the public in several ways. Reports are presented at governing board meetings at least monthly. All board meetings are open to the public and time is included on each agenda for public participation on matters regarding the college. In addition, as appropriate, the college administration communicates matters of quality assurance through the news media. Recently, the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges compiled results of the college's performance as measured by the PFE goals. These results are available to the public on the Chancellor's Office Web site. Student-Right-To-Know data are published on the Taft College Web site.

C.3 The institution systematically reviews and modifies, as appropriate, its institutional research efforts, evaluation processes, institutional plans, and planning processes to determine their ongoing utility for assessing institutional effectiveness.

Description

Taft College reviews and modifies

its institutional research efforts, evaluation processes, institutional plans, and planning processes based on input from the Institutional Research Committee, the Planning Committee, and various other stakeholders to determine their ongoing utility for assessing institutional effectiveness. The institutional researcher position was created to systematically evaluate processes and plans to determine their ongoing utility for assessing institutional effectiveness.

Self-Evaluation

The Planning and Institutional Research committees have always included the review for improvement of processes in their annual cycles. The Planning Committee's annual fall review of the Strategic Plan resulted in the creation of a focused BAC in 1997 to better prioritize budgeting to achieve college goals. The Institutional Research Committee's 1999 annual review of research efforts and effectiveness of program review, added a program assessment requirement to programs to be completed during years when comprehensive program reviews were not scheduled. The BAC added a budget narrative requirement to its process in spring 2000 to better link program budgeting to annual goals. A prioritization for new positions was first done in fall 2001.

The Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, Research and Planning has included evaluation activities in all phases of the strategic and operational planning cycles that Taft College will follow. This system of integrating the improvement of the processes that guide the Planning Committee, BAC, and Institutional Research Committee will result in continuous improvement of the planning process.

Planning Agenda

The Planning Committee with support from the Institutional Research Committee will develop measurable objectives to be reviewed annually to ensure the continued appropriateness of the college mission.

Supporting Documents

- 3.1 Roe Darnell's editorials to the *Daily Midway Driller*

STANDARD FOUR

Educational Programs

The institution offers collegiate level programs in recognized fields of study that culminate in identified student competencies leading to degrees and certificates. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all educational activities offered in the name of the institution, regardless of where or how presented, or by whom taught.

A. General Provisions

A.1 The institution seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with its institutional mission and purposes and the demographics and economics of its community.

Description

Taft College is dedicated to serving the diverse and changing population of its community. The college offers comprehensive transfer, occupational education, general education, and basic skills programs.

Consistent with the college mission, courses and programs serve the needs of students with varied backgrounds, interests, and educational goals. Classes are offered throughout the year, in various time frames, and in various modes. Typically courses are offered Monday through Friday including evenings and periodically on weekends.

Class scheduling is the result of a comprehensive effort by members of the college's faculty, academic advisors, and the Vice President of Instruction. The curriculum development and instructional planning process, along with university articulation and effective use of advisory committees, all assist in the development of courses and programs that meet the economic and demographic needs of the community.

In 1980, the college established the Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center, Inc. (WESTEC), which provides occupational programs in areas including the oil industry, safety, and corrections. In 2000, the college purchased an abandoned elementary school and converted it into what is now the North Kern Training Center (NKTC), located in Shafter, California, approximately 38 miles from the main campus of Taft College.

Taft College provides a number of services in an effort to extend an opportunity to people who desire to

further their education. These include Financial Aid programs, Extended Opportunities, Programs, and Services/Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (EOPS/CARE), Student Support Services (SSS), free tutoring, and textbook rental. Taft College also has the largest single-site community college child care facility in the state of California. The college offers an increasing number of distance learning courses, eliminating geographic boundaries for students.

Self-Evaluation

Because of the fiscal restraints of recent times, Taft College has continued to reduce costs without compromising our services and programs offered to students. Serving students has always been at the core of our philosophy. The staff understands and accepts the concept that in lean times people are expected to continue to provide the same programs and services, often with fewer resources than are desirable.

The mission of Taft College is based on serving students in Taft and the surrounding areas and providing them with opportunities to achieve their educational goals, as it has always been since its founding in 1922.

Planning Agenda

In addition to maintaining our solid base, Taft College will explore

responsible expansion including the physical plant, programs and services, and personnel to increase the already high quality of education provided today.

A.2 Programs and courses leading to degrees are offered in a manner which provides students the opportunity to complete the program as announced, within a reasonable time.

Description

The college catalog includes the required course work to complete the programs listed—course offerings are provided in sufficient numbers, frequencies, and varieties of days and times. Samples of programs are listed by fields of study and are suggested as guides to help students plan their programs in a timely fashion. The catalog is revised every two years in an effort to provide accurate information to students on program and course availability.

Self-Evaluation

Every effort is made to accommodate students' needs for the completion of programs and courses in a timely manner. The district institutional researcher also compiles information regarding student completion rates. In addition, Taft College has articulation agreements with other educational institutions which ensure a seamless transfer

process. In order to better serve students, Taft College provides classes online and offline. Classes are also conducted at the NKTC, WESTEC, and the Taft Correctional Institution (TCI).

Planning Agenda

The Vice President of Instruction will adopt, in cooperation with student services and faculty, a student focused strategic schedule.

A.3 When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

Description

Taft College ensures that courses required for a major are offered to facilitate the achievement of student goals in a timely manner. Courses that often have low enrollments are cycled into the schedule either every other semester or at least every other year to ensure that this goal is met. This scheduling process is a combined effort of departmental faculty, counseling and advising staff, and the Vice President of Instruction.

If a program requirement is changed, or a program eliminated,

accommodations are made for students who are adversely affected by that change. Minimum enrollments in many courses are waived in order to accommodate students who need the course.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College demonstrates its dedication to providing students opportunities to achieve their educational goals by providing flexibility in scheduling of courses.

A.4 The institution provides sufficient human, financial, and physical (including technological) resources to support its educational programs and to facilitate achievement of the goals and objectives of those programs regardless of the service location or instructional delivery method.

Description

Taft College attempts to provide sufficient resources to support its educational programs. A Human Resources Director has been hired to handle all personnel issues. The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), a subcommittee of the Planning Committee, has been added in an attempt to improve the ability to quantify needs and respond to funding challenges. This subcommittee makes recommendations to the Planning Committee which in turn makes recommendations to the

Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees.

and other personnel responsible for the advising function.

According to the 2001-02 West Kern Community College District Budget, approximately 45% of the annual budget goes to instructional programs. Funding for instructional programs comes from both restricted and unrestricted sources. Faculty salaries take a considerable portion of the college budget; however, the college was able to increase the number of full-time faculty for this academic year.

Since our last accreditation visit, several facilities on campus have undergone major renovations. Modular buildings have been acquired to increase the facilities that house the Distance Learning Institute (DLI), Business Services, and SSS. Grant funding has enabled the college to add an elevator to our only two-story building, thus eliminating the need to move classes in order to accommodate physically-challenged students.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College is moving close to meeting the financial guidelines which require 50% of the budget goes to instructional programs.

A.5 The institution designs and maintains academic advising programs to meet student needs for information and advice and adequately informs and prepares faculty

Description

Counseling/advising services have been increased greatly since the last accreditation visit. Since the last accreditation of Taft College, the number of academic counselor/advisors has grown from five to ten. Advising services are provided by the Counseling Center, Transfer Center, EOPS/CARE, and the DLI.

Student records, the ASSIST articulation database, EUREKA, College Source, and most all community college, University of California (UC), and California State University (CSU) catalogs are easily accessible by all academic counselors/advisors. The college Web site has been upgraded to include *Campus Blues* and *Career Online* to assist students.

All academic counselors/advisors are encouraged to take advantage of the annual UC and CSU counselor conferences and two of our advisors are now members of National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Weekly meetings of the counseling staff provide training and interaction to keep all members abreast of updates and changes.

The Transfer Counselor/Articulation Officer arranges for representatives from the CSU and UC systems to

meet with individuals and groups regarding the transfer process for their institutions.

The Transfer Center has undergone a major remodel making it more student-friendly and better maintained. Additional computers with links to EUREKA, ASSIST, and CSUMENTOR are included in the center.

Self-Evaluation

Prospective, new, and continuing students at Taft College have an ample selection of resources available to them for academic advisement.

Traditional advising procedures are well developed. Although the campus Web site is in place, there is no online advising.

B. Degree and Certificate Programs

B.1 The institution demonstrates that its degrees and programs, wherever and however offered, support the mission of the institution. Degree and certificate programs have a coherent design and are characterized by appropriate length, breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, synthesis of learning, and use of information and learning resources.

Description

The college strives to review all instructional programs every six years. This process provides information about how well program objectives are being met, how closely objectives align with the college's mission statement, and how well community needs are served. The Curriculum and General Education Committee serves to develop and improve educational programs as well as to review course sequencing and certificate offerings. The formal responsibility for introducing new courses and programs lies with the faculty in collaboration with administration. They assess student and community needs forwarding recommendations to the Curriculum and General Education Committee.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College students complete degree and certificate programs in both the academic and vocational areas. The breadth pattern for the CSU System and the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) serve as guidelines for transfer students. The Vocational Education Advisory Committee provides direction for vocational degree and certificate program requirements. Taft College follows the regulations outlined in the California Community Colleges Program and Course Approval Handbook.

B.2 The institution identifies its degrees and certificates in ways which are consistent with the program content, degree objectives, and student mastery of knowledge and skills including, where appropriate, career preparation and competencies.

Description

Recommendations for degree and certificate programs are the purview of the Curriculum and General Education Committee. The Academic Senate has designated the committee to address all curriculum matters, including degrees and certificates. Faculty and the Curriculum and General Education Committee review degrees and certificates in conjunction with the program review process. Substantive changes are submitted by departments to the Curriculum and General Education Committee. All certificates undergo an approval procedure beginning at the department level and concluding with the Board of Trustees. Each department ensures that the content of all courses aligns with learning objectives that will lead to subject mastery appropriate for career preparation and academic competence.

Self-Evaluation

The college catalog identifies degrees, certificates, program

objectives, courses of study and, where possible, career paths that may follow courses of study. The description of the early childhood education program, for example, contains a rubric of career opportunities, potential wages, and prerequisites for advancement.

B.3 The institution identifies and makes public expected learning outcomes for its degree and certificate programs. Students completing programs demonstrate the achievement of those stated learning outcomes.

Description

Taft College publishes its catalog in hard-copy and online. The catalog contains lists and descriptions of degrees and certificates available as well as detailed course listings and requirements to receive each degree or certificate. Each degree or certificate listing specifies a coherent sequence of courses leading to certification or graduation.

Self-Evaluation

Course outlines specify how students must demonstrate subject mastery, which is measured by exams, research papers, in-class presentations, laboratory work, and other discipline-specific methods.

B.4 All degree programs are

designed to provide students a significant introduction to the broad areas of knowledge, their theories and methods of inquiry, and focused study in at least one area of inquiry or established interdisciplinary core.

Description

General education courses leading to an Associate degree are designed to give students a broad understanding of writing, oral communication, mathematics, science, and history. These courses require that students prove knowledge of the particular fields, as well as of their methods of research and general theories of practice. Course objectives require students to analyze, synthesize, explain, assess problems, define questions, and formulate answers and solutions to problems.

Degree programs require that students focus on at least one significant area of study. Courses are sequenced to require mastery of increasingly sophisticated skills. Students demonstrate competence by completing course requirements and receiving a passing grade.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College follows California Education Code Title 5 guidelines in designing programs that adequately address state requirements of knowledge breadth and depth. Survey courses are

included and all courses emphasize critical thinking. Students receiving an Associate degree focus on at least one area of inquiry.

B.5 Students completing degree programs demonstrate competence in the use of language and computation.

Description

Degree holders are required to meet competency requirements in three different areas: reading, written expression, and mathematics.

Self-Evaluation

Competency in reading is demonstrated by placement in English 1A based on placement testing or successful completion of English 54 or a higher level reading course with a grade of "C" or better. Written expression is demonstrated by placement in English 1A on the basis of placement testing, or successful completion of English 50 or a higher level writing course with a grade of "C" or better. Competency in mathematics is demonstrated by placement in Mathematics 52 on the basis of placement testing, or successful completion of Business 50, Petroleum Technology 59, Mathematics 50, or a higher level mathematics course with a grade of "C" or better.

B.6 The institution documents

the technical and professional competence of students completing its vocational and occupational programs.

Description

The Registrar's Office documents grades, certificates, and degrees. Degrees and certificates are not issued until all program requirements are completed.

Self-Evaluation

Students in dental hygiene and welding are administered national certification examinations, and students in automotive technology have the opportunity to take similar exams. Students in computer application courses are encouraged to pursue industry-recognized certification. A dental hygiene student follow-up is done yearly. Personal contact is made with each student by the director of the program. The vast majority of dental hygiene students are well placed upon receipt of their licenses.

C. General Education

C.1 The institution requires of all degree programs a component of general education that is published in clear and complete terms in its general catalog.

Description

A general education component is required for the Associate degree. The general education component and course descriptions outlining the relevant prerequisites, if any, are published in clear and complete terms in a detailed orientation packet and in the college catalog. In addition, the catalog lists "pre-professional program" requirements intended to use as an initial guide in planning the student's program. Since each college and university has its own major requirements and these requirements may vary greatly, students are encouraged to meet with an academic counselor/advisor and visit the career/transfer center to find out the exact major preparation required by their intended transfer school.

Self-Evaluation

The Curriculum and General Education Committee, along with board approval, and upon recommendation of the Superintendent/President, has reviewed the Associate degree, certificate programs, and transfer curriculum and has determined that the general education component is present and published in clear and complete terms in the college catalog.

C.2 The general education component is based on a philosophy and rationale that

are clearly stated. Criteria are provided by which the appropriateness of each course in the general education component is determined.

Description

Taft College's general education philosophy states that general education is a pattern of courses designed to develop in students a breadth of knowledge that will increase their awareness of themselves and the world as well as enhance their effectiveness as members of their respective communities.

Through general education, students expand their understanding of the physical world in which they live and the complex interrelationships of individuals and groups within their natural and social environments. Students deepen appreciation of their artistic and cultural legacy as well as strengthen their ability to reason, communicate, and critically evaluate information. Although courses may be designed with one or the other of these purposes as the primary aim, all courses are presented with the values of general education in mind. College education then becomes the sum total of all the student's experience in college.

Each course proposed for the Associate degree is reviewed by the department faculty and the

Curriculum and General Education Committee for course content to ensure that it is consistent with Title 5 guidelines. It is then recommended to the Superintendent/President, who submits it to the board for final approval.

Self-Evaluation

The Curriculum and General Education Committee continues to review all general education courses to ensure they are consistent with Title 5 guidelines. These guidelines are also used in evaluating new course proposals for inclusion in the general education requirements for the Associate degree.

C.3 The general education program introduces the content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. The general education program provides the opportunity for students to develop the intellectual skills, information technology facility, affective and creative capabilities, social attitudes, and an appreciation for cultural diversity that will make them effective learners and citizens.

Description

The general education program

requirements for the Associate degree appear in the *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook* that is available in printed and Internet accessible formats. The criteria for fulfilling each area of general study are clearly identified. Taft College supports the premise that it is the primary responsibility of each faculty member to ensure that students have the opportunity to develop intellectual skills, information technology skills, affective and creative capabilities, and responsible social attitudes.

Appreciation for cultural diversity is a theme that is emphasized throughout Taft College activities involving classified staff, faculty, administrators, and students.

Self-Evaluation

Although Taft College is small, it is committed to maintaining a spectrum for choice of courses in each general studies area to meet the diverse interests among Taft College students. A number of courses meet the requirement of each area.

C.4 The students completing the institution's general education program demonstrate competence in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and critical analysis/logical thinking.

Description

Taft College has established minimum competency requirements in reading, writing, and mathematics in order to earn a two-year degree. Additionally, Taft College has added a critical thinking component to all new course outlines for degree-applicable courses. Each student who completes a degree at Taft College demonstrates competence in mathematics.

The areas of English Composition and Communication and Analytical Thinking stress the development of competency in oral and written communication and the ability to employ critical analysis and logical thinking. Students demonstrate competency in written communication by successfully completing English 50, English Fundamentals, or English 1A, Composition and Reading. Students who have completed English 1A are encouraged to take English 1B, Critical Thinking, Literature, and Composition. The areas of Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, and Communication and Analytical Thinking have a minimum requirement of a three-unit course for graduation.

All course outlines require that outcomes/objectives be expressed in terms of specific measurable student accomplishments. The critical thinking component mentioned above requires students

to independently analyze, synthesize, explain, assess, anticipate and/or define problems, formulate and assess solutions, apply principles to new situations, etc.

Self-Evaluation

The general education requirements for the Associate degree require students to take at least one course from the five areas mentioned above. The emphasis on performance objectives and the required critical thinking component of all degree-applicable courses as defined in the course outline clearly require students to develop intellectual skills. Multiculturalism is expected in general education courses.

D. Curriculum and Instruction

D.1 The institution has clearly defined processes for establishing and evaluating all of its educational programs. These processes recognize the central role of faculty in developing, implementing, and evaluating the educational programs. Program evaluations are integrated into overall institutional evaluation and planning and are conducted on a regular basis.

Description

The Taft College Board of Trustees in conjunction with the administration and Academic Senate established a Board Policy No. 119 to set a procedure in place to evaluate Taft College's educational programs at least once every six years. As well as this extensive review, each academic division performs a yearly program review. Each program in a division uses an Instructional Program Assessment Worksheet to gather data for program assessment. Three areas of each program are studied: previous program objectives, new program objectives, and resources required to achieve program objectives. The Institutional Research Committee consisting of administration, faculty, and classified support personnel manages this review.

New programs are established using the guidelines in the Program and Course Approval Handbook published by the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges. Once the guidelines for program development have been completed they are submitted for local approval and then to the appropriate state office for approval.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College has recognized the importance of associating program effectiveness with budgetary

support. The Institutional Research Committee has identified areas of improvement in this effort. One is to improve planning and budgeting mechanisms to include program assessment outcomes. Budget priorities need to match program assessment. To this end each division in 2000 first developed a tool, the Instructional Program Assessment Worksheet for program planning and assessment. Major areas covered are a review of program objectives, identification of new program objectives, and resources required to achieve program objectives. The process was standardized in 2001 and has been further refined in 2002.

D.2 The institution ensures the quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness of all of its courses and programs regardless of service location or instructional delivery method.

Description

The institution ensures the quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness for all of its courses and programs in several ways. First, all courses and educational programs must be approved by the Curriculum and General Education Committee, whether they are taught in the classroom, online or offline. They must also follow the same course

outline as approved by the committee. In addition, all courses and instructors must go through an evaluation process no matter where or how the courses are offered. The DLI works closely with the Vice President of Instruction to ensure the quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness for all distance learning courses and programs.

Self-Evaluation

All courses are reviewed for rigor and educational effectiveness by the Curriculum and General Education Committee. The Evaluation Task Force recently revised our instructor evaluation forms to fit all categories of instruction, including online, offline, and face-to-face courses. The Task Force, working with the Vice President of Instruction, updated our evaluation process to include visitations of new adjunct instructors every semester by the Division Chair and Vice President of Instruction.

D.3 The evaluation of student learning and the award of credit are based upon clearly stated and published criteria. Credit awarded is consistent with student learning and is based upon generally accepted norms and equivalencies.

Description

Criteria for the evaluation of student learning and the awarding of credit are clearly stated in the catalog, in course outlines, and on individual instructor's syllabi. Other areas where the evaluation of student learning is addressed are Title 5 regulations and Board Policy No. 103-108 and 503-505.

In addition, Taft College has articulation agreements with most California State Universities including CSU, Bakersfield and CSU, Fresno. These agreements help Taft College stay current with the generally-accepted norms and equivalencies of higher education.

Self-Evaluation

Students receive most of their course information from the college catalog, class schedule, an orientation session, and academic counselor/advisors. The current grading policy is described on pages 16-17 of the new Student Handbook. During the first class meeting, additional information is available from the course syllabus. According to the student surveys, most students agree that program requirements are clear and reasonable.

Planning Agenda

The evaluation of student learning will be one of our major points of emphasis the next few years in our attempt to convert Taft College to

a learning college.

D.4 The institution has clearly stated transfer of credit policies. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the credits accepted, including those for general education, achieve educational objectives comparable to its own courses. Where patterns of transfer between institutions are established, efforts are undertaken to formulate articulation agreements.

Description

Taft College accepts transfer credit from various sources including work completed at other accredited colleges, via the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), in the military, and as a part of the Advanced Placement Program of the College Entrance Examination. This acceptance is clearly outlined in the *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook* (pages 10 and 17-18).

In the case of articulating course work from other institutions, academic counselor/ advisors will work to compare courses for equivalency with courses taught at Taft College. If a course is from an out of state institution or private school, the academic counselor/advisor will ask for help from the subject instructor, division chair, and the Academic

Policies and Procedures Committee, in reviewing the catalog description from the institution the course was originally taught. If equivalency is not apparent, a formal process is in place to request acceptance of courses from other colleges.

Self-Evaluation

The Taft College Articulation Officer is currently assigned 50% articulation and 50% counseling. She is currently working on matching the Taft College numbering system to the California Articulation Number System (CAN) to better identify transferable courses. Under the leadership of the Articulation Officer both Taft College course numbers and CAN course numbers will be available to students. The college has also entered into articulation agreements with most California State Universities.

D.5 The institution utilizes a range of delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the needs of its students.

Description

Taft College offers courses in a variety of settings and delivery modes. Courses are offered face-to-face, online, and offline. Face-to-face classes are offered at Taft College's main campus, WESTEC,

NKTC, and TCI.

Self-Evaluation

Face-to-face courses are offered in the traditional manner and serve students within a reasonable driving distance or resident students. Distance learning degree programs are in place. Student Satisfaction Inventory survey responses indicated that the student population agrees that they are treated as individuals, classes are scheduled at convenient times, faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course, and the lab equipment in the lab facilities is kept up-to-date. During 2002 Taft College implemented a variety of computer-based applications (e.g. speech recognition) to assist students with learning disabilities. Inservice sessions were conducted to assist faculty in the use of these tools.

D.6 The institution provides evidence that all courses and programs, both credit and non-credit, whether conducted on or off-campus by traditional or non-traditional delivery systems, are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures. This provision applies to continuing and community education, contract and other special programs conducted in the

name of the institution.

Description

The institution uses several procedures to provide evidence that all courses and programs are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated. All courses taught on-campus or off-campus and by traditional or non-traditional delivery systems must be approved by the Curriculum and General Education Committee. All programs are reviewed periodically as part of a campus-wide program review.

An evaluation task force recently developed a new faculty evaluation process applicable to contract, tenured, and adjunct faculty.

Self-Evaluation

Established procedures provide evidence that all courses and programs are appropriately designed, approved, administered, and thoroughly evaluated by the Curriculum and General Education Committee. This evidence is an integral component of the program review and planning processes.

D.7 Institutions offering curricula through electronic delivery systems operate in conformity with applicable Commission policies and statements on Principles of Good Practice in Distance Education.

Description

Taft College offers Associate degrees available through distance learning. About three years ago Taft College adopted the Easy to Use Distance Education Software (ETUDES) course management system to help Taft College faculty develop and deliver courses and degrees online that are in conformity with Commission policies and statements on Principles of Good Practice in Distance Education. Taft College has built a strong technology infrastructure to support online delivery of courses. The DLI was formed to foster the growth of online education as well as other forms of distance learning. The DLI has support staff in place to assist faculty with network services, course management software, multimedia presentation tools, and Web page management. The DLI also has a student services component that includes academic counselor/advisors, help desk, and other support staff to assist distance learning students.

Self-Evaluation

In 2002 Taft College implemented several improvements in electronic course delivery support services to facilitate online course instruction. Online registration is in place for all students. Online bookstore for course material acquisition and credit card payment for registration and bookstore purchases are also available. The process of

debugging and fine-tuning is currently the main self-evaluation activity. Evaluation of all online instruction was instituted in the 2001-02 school year and will be monitored for effectiveness. Student and faculty survey responses were agreeable to Taft College efforts in electronic course delivery.

Supporting Documents

- 4.1 *Taft College Catalog 2000-2002* pp. 32-33
- 4.2 Board Policy No. 119
- 4.3 Taft College Instructional Program Assessment Worksheet

STANDARD FIVE

Student Support and Development

The institution recruits and admits students appropriate to its programs. It identifies and serves the diverse needs of its students with educational programs and learning support services, and it fosters a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, and success.

1. *The institution publishes admissions policies consistent with its mission and appropriate to its programs and follows practices that are consistent with those policies.*

Description

Taft College publishes policies consistent with California Education Code Title 5 regulations, district board policy, and the college mission. The admissions policies and procedures are published in the *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook*, schedule of classes, and Taft College Web site. Admissions policies for the Transition to Independent Living (TIL) Program and Dental Hygiene Program are available from these programs.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College, like all California community colleges, is an open enrollment institution. The following criteria satisfy the requirements for admission: high school graduation, possession of a

certificate of proficiency, or attainment of 18 years of age or older. Previous training or experience of prospective students must indicate that they will profit from the offerings of the college.

The dental hygiene program requires that students meet specific course prerequisites before applications will be reviewed. These courses are described in the college catalog and in a dental hygiene information packet. If the pool of applicants exceeds the number of slots in the program, students are selected through a combination of a lottery for the first twelve slots and a review of the applications for the remaining twelve.

The TIL program has developed very specific criteria individuals must meet for program consideration. A formal interview is scheduled to assess pre-independent living skills and aptitude to determine if a candidate qualifies. Individuals from Kern County are given first priority. Fifteen individuals are

selected to enter the program each year.

Results from the Taft College Student Satisfaction Inventory, which was administered in spring 2002, indicate that students have a high level of satisfaction by scoring 5.86 out of a possible 7 on the following item: "Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized." The college has not received complaints from students concerning admissions policies and practices in general or for specific programs. We have, however, identified the need to provide admissions and registration materials in Spanish.

Planning Agenda

Taft College will develop admissions and registration materials for the Spanish-speaking population.

2. *The institution provides to all prospective and currently enrolled students current and accurate information about its programs, admissions policies and graduation requirements, social and academic policies, refund policies, student conduct standards, and complaint and grievance procedures.*

Description

The *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook*, Taft College Web site,

and the schedule of classes provide information on programs, admission policies, social and academic policies, refund policies, student conduct standards, and complaint and grievance procedures. The catalog is given to all students who participate in orientation. Copies of the catalog and the schedule are available for students in the Counseling Center and online.

Access to admission procedures and online registration is available, using dedicated computer stations, in the Admissions Office, enabling prospective and current students to access policies and procedures online.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College uses various methods to ensure accurate and current information is available for potential and current students. The college catalog, schedule of classes, Taft College Web site, and program flyers and brochures are the main resources for documenting the programs offered, admission policies, graduation requirements, academic policies, refund policies, student conduct standards, and complaint and grievance procedures.

In the Taft College student satisfaction survey in spring 2002, the students rated the question, "Program requirements are clear and reasonable," at 5.52 on a scale from 1 (not important) to 7 (very

important).

Taft College provides on-campus and online orientation for new matriculating students. The online orientation is made available in three formats to accommodate distance learning students and the different levels of technology available to each student. Both on-campus and online orientation is designed to provide students with basic information regarding admission requirements, the matriculation process, and student responsibilities. Academic policies, fees, and refund policies are also covered during orientation. Programs offered at Taft College are introduced during orientation and information is provided to the students on where to contact the various program departments for specific details.

The spring 2002 student satisfaction survey results indicate the students rate the question, "New student orientation services help students adjust to college," at 5.89 on a scale from 1 (not important) to 7 (very important).

Students are provided with the opportunity, on the admissions application, to request more information about services and programs offered by the college. It is a goal of Taft College to design an automated process to provide each program/service department with the student's mailing and telephone information, therefore allowing the departments to

provide detailed information about their programs or services.

3. *The institution identifies the educational support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.*

Description

Taft College collects Management Information Systems (MIS) demographic information for use in matching student needs to the types of services provided. Services include matriculation, childcare, financial aid (grant and loan programs), Student Support Services (SSS), transfer evaluation, vocational interest evaluation, employment assistance, tutoring/basic skills, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Extended Opportunities Programs and Services/ Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (EOPS/CARE).

Self-Evaluation

The admissions application (electronically scannable or online) obtains information such as age, gender, ethnicity, educational goal, and special services needs such as childcare, financial aid, SSS, transfer services, employment assistance, tutoring/basic skills, ESL, and EOPS/CARE. A newly adopted instrument known as the American College Testing (ACT) ASSET test also provides academic

advisors with valuable information on individual placement and service needs of students. Each semester students continuing their education at Taft College are required to complete a registration form from which advisors continue to assess the academic and service needs of students. Updating demographic data is constant with this process. In the event that a student needs to complete the General Education (GED) program, an extensive demographic profile is required at the time registration forms are completed.

Additional student information is gathered during orientation, assessment, and through the advisement and placement process. Assessment data are manually entered into a student history computer file. Matriculating students meet with an academic counselor/advisor during registration periods. All prior high school, college, trade school transcripts and/or GED proficiency certificates are formally requested at this time. A Student Education Plan (SEP) is initiated in the first advising session. The staff relies heavily on personal contact with the individual students to assess learning and counseling needs, and to provide referral information on an individual basis.

Taft College has adopted a questionnaire to provide additional means of measuring need for programs and services. This questionnaire also addresses less

quantifiable aspects of student support and development such as student satisfaction and student perception of need for services.

Academic advising, counseling, and other support services such as the Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC), SSS, EOPS/CARE, Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Career/Transfer Center, Child Care, and the Migrant Program, are available to all day and evening students as well as students taking classes via distance learning. Registration, matriculation, and other services are available to students attending classes at the Westside Energy Services Training Education Center, Inc. (WESTEC), North Kern Training Center (NKTC), and Taft Correctional Institution (TCI) facilities.

Local high school counselors are invited to the college once each year to update them on current and upcoming events and issues that affect students. The college admissions, counseling, and financial aid staff visit local high schools each semester to provide information about programs and services. High school and junior high school staff and students are invited to an annual career/transfer day event.

Multiple measures for placement assessment are being evaluated for effectiveness with our student population. Ongoing evaluations of these measurement tools will ensure timely and effective student

placement.

Planning Agenda

Taft College will improve online enrollment and registration.

The newly implemented online early alert process will be evaluated for its effectiveness in increasing student success.

4. *The institution involves students, as appropriate, in planning and evaluating student support and development services.*

Description

Student representatives serve on the following committees: Planning, Financial Aid, Curriculum and General Education, Instructional, Academic Development, and the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC).

There is a student trustee on the Board of Trustees. Students completed a survey to be used in the accreditation self study and also serve on various standard subcommittees including the Accreditation Steering Committee.

Students involved in certain programs such as child care and EOPS/CARE are encouraged to evaluate the program's effectiveness and services by filling out surveys.

Self-Evaluation

According to committee chairs, many students assigned to committees have not met their commitments. Although meetings are often scheduled to meet the needs of the student representatives, their input has declined from past years.

Planning Agenda

The faculty, staff, and administration will encourage student participation in planning and developing student service activities. The activities coordinator and club advisors will work directly with different committee chairs to establish student representation in all necessary areas. Committee chairs will meet with prospective student members to provide inservice training in specific committee procedures and duties.

5. *Admissions and assessment instruments and placement practices are designed to minimize test and other bias and are regularly evaluated to assure effectiveness.*

Description

Taft College uses a variety of methods to determine placement in reading, writing, and mathematics. This occurs through the use of assessment instruments approved by the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges as

identified on the "Annual Update List of Approved Assessment Instruments" that are validated through research as being unbiased assessments. Taft College uses the ACT ASSET assessment to assist in course placement. Assessment instrument validation studies are conducted consistent with state guidelines. The assessment process also includes using multiple measures for determining course placement.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College went through a formal validation process involving ACT ASSET in consultation with the Academic Senate, ACT representatives, and the Chancellor's Office in the spring of 2001. ACT ASSET, state approved for six years, was formally adopted during the summer 2001 session as a result of this validation process. Taft College does not currently have a standardized assessment test instrument for ESL placement. Placement into either of the two levels of ESL occurs by the careful application of multiple measures criteria.

Academic counselor/advisors report satisfaction with the ACT ASSET instrument in terms of use, interpretation, and reliability.

Planning Agenda

Taft College will research and select an ESL assessment

instrument during the 2002-03 academic year.

6. *The institution provides appropriate, comprehensive, reliable, and accessible services to its students regardless of service location or delivery method.*

Description

Taft College offers a full range of services to students attending courses on campus during the day and evening hours, the WESTEC, NKTC, and TCI facilities, and the local high schools. In addition, services are delivered via the Web, telephone, and in person to our remote population.

On campus students can find most services available from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Fridays. Counseling, academic advising, admissions, financial aid, job placement, and career/transfer services are located in the Counseling Center. The EOPS and CARE programs can be found directly behind the Counseling Center, and the SSS program is located across the quad from the Counseling Center.

The college admissions, counseling, and EOPS/CARE staff provide full matriculation services to over 400 students at the TCI throughout the academic year. Students requiring assistance from SSS complete a request for services form, and a

support representative assesses the request to determine if reasonable accommodations can be made. Registration for students attending WESTEC and the NKTC are handled on-site while students are referred to the main campus for other services.

The college admissions, counseling, and financial aid staff visit local high schools each semester to provide information about programs and services and administer placement tests. High school and junior high school staff and students are invited to an annual career/transfer day event.

Accurate descriptions of student services programs are found in the college's catalog, class schedule, campus publications such as newspaper, brochures, and fliers, and on the college's Web site. Remote students have access to the college catalog, current class schedule, application, transcript request forms, financial aid forms, and distance learning processes and procedures. A help desk was implemented to assist remote students with a one-stop approach. A toll-free number and e-mail addresses allow easy access to help desk staff. All other remote services that are requested are provided via telephone, e-mail, and postal mail. Students can use computer labs, LLRC, Career/Transfer Center, or home computers to access online services.

Student Support Services assists disabled students with their application, registration, assessment testing, counseling, and other appropriate accommodations. Examples of these accommodations include test proctoring, interpreting services, note taking, mobility assistance, assessment services, education planning, and special classes. Web accessibility issues are being monitored.

Self-Evaluation

Students who need services may call, e-mail, or visit the campus to receive information and service. The college's Web pages also provide information regarding student services available. The new Web registration process and online access to student records have significantly enhanced the delivery of student services. All service areas are described in the college catalog and on the college's Web site. The Web site is currently undergoing a complete revision with many areas updating and/or creating their Web pages.

The spring 2002 student satisfaction survey indicated an overall level of satisfaction with the admissions and registration processes. Furthermore, students rated the college's responsiveness to diverse populations as satisfactory, with most over 6.0 (agree/satisfied) on a scale of 1 to 7.

Planning Agenda

All student services areas will update or develop a Web page by May 2003.

7. *The institution, in keeping with its mission, creates and maintains a campus climate which serves and supports its diverse student population.*

Description

In keeping with our mission of Taft College to reflect and embrace the cultural and social diversity of our community, the staff maintains a positive campus climate through support service programs celebrating diversity in all areas. During the spring 2002 semester, Taft College supported 9,230 students.

Taft College serves the diverse population of learners through the EOPS/CARE Program, the Learning Assistance Program, the International Club, the Migrant Education Program (implemented summer 2001), Distance Learning, LLRC, the CalWORKs Program, and the bilingual instruction aides (implemented August 2001). Through these services support is given as follows:

- Access to adaptive educational equipment, technology, materials, and supplies
- Test-taking facilitation for students with disabilities
- Assessment to determine

functional, educational, and vocational levels

- Interpreter services both in the classroom and in the tutoring program
- Academic/personal counseling for coping strategies to meet demands of school and home
- Peer advising
- EOPS/CARE book services, financial grants, and transfer information
- Priority registration
- Learning skills classes in both English and Spanish for Out of School Youth
- Side-by-side classroom learning in English and Spanish
- Events focusing on diversity, social and cultural heritages, and awareness of disabilities
- Financial assistance for child care, textbooks, transportation, and tuition
- On-site job placement, job training, and career counseling
- College courses online to reach out to other communities
- Grants to enable academic success and assist single parents
- Celebrations with a focus on respectful, cultural awareness

Self-Evaluation

Taft College is firmly committed to supporting and embracing the policy of non-discrimination. The

policy states, "Taft College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age in any of its policies, procedures, or practices, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 404 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975." These acts pertain to race, color, national origin, gender, handicap accessibility, and age.

Several committees/programs focus on the issue of diversity. Committee membership includes, faculty, administration, classified staff, students, board members, and community partners. Feedback is solicited from all members regarding issues and concerns, as well as outcomes. An overall goal is to continue to meet the changing needs of the college's diverse populations.

Weekly, monthly, or quarterly meetings are held by the following:

- Staff Development Committee
- Student Equity Committee
- EOPS/CARE
- Learning Assistance Program
- International Club
- Migrant Education Program
- Distance Learning
- Student Services Managers and Coordinators Committee
- Student Services Committee
- Dorm Council
- Early Childhood Educators/Migrant

Coordinator Council

8. *The institution supports a co-curricular environment that fosters intellectual, ethical, and personal development for all of its students and encourages personal and civic responsibility.*

Description

Taft College offers a variety of avenues for students to gain invaluable experiences through participation in co-curricular activities that promote intellectual, social-emotional, ethical, personal, and peer development. The campus supports the Associated Student Body (ASB), including a leadership course, and Executive Council, International Club, Best Buddies Club, Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) organization, and men's and women's athletic programs. These clubs promote:

- Liaisons for off-campus leadership groups
- Group and individual environments for positive learning
- Campus retreats
- College inservice or outside conference participation
- Personal growth in all developmental levels
- Work-study mentoring programs
- Support groups for out-of-area students
- Community service participation
- Civic interaction and

involvement

Self-Evaluation

Students participate in monthly, yearly, or as needed meetings and/or retreats. These meetings focus on information gathered from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, community input, surveys of staff, faculty, and students, and day-to-day issues and concerns.

9. *Student records are maintained permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provision for secure backup of all files, regardless of the form in which those files are maintained.*

Description

Taft College collects student data from many sources, including scannable admissions applications, online applications, transcripts, grade rosters, and petitions. Hard copies of confidential individual and system records are housed in vaults, locked filing cabinets, and locked storage cabinets in the Administration Office, Counseling Center, and the Information Services Office. Access to the information is limited to appropriate staff.

The online application information is encrypted through a secure socket layer to guarantee security and confidentiality. Student data records and state-mandated

system records are maintained in secure computer data files by information services. The data files are password-protected and access is limited. Data files are backed up daily.

Self-Evaluation

Student records are private, accurate, complete, and permanent. Strict confidentiality is maintained and access to the records is limited to appropriate staff members on a need-to-know basis. Permanent records are archived using a high-speed laser fiche system. Backup is performed on a routine basis to prevent loss of data.

10. *The institution systematically evaluates the appropriateness, adequacy, and effectiveness of its student services and uses the results of the evaluation as a basis for improvement.*

Description

Taft College uses multiple quantitative and qualitative sources to evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of student services.

Self-Evaluation

Manager and coordinator meetings, consisting of representatives from EOPS/CARE, SSS, Articulation, Matriculation, Distance Learning, and Veterans Affairs, are

conducted monthly to set goals and objectives for each area of student services. Currently, managers and coordinators are developing program action plans. Student Services has established a Dorm Council that is a forum style meeting between students residing in the residence halls and student services personnel. The objective of the Dorm Council is to solicit feedback from students regarding their needs as it pertains to residence hall life. The Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory was completed by students during the spring 2002 semester. The results of the inventory are being reviewed by the Vice President of Student Services. A matriculation complaint form is available to students to alert academic counselor/advisors to issues regarding matriculation from the student's point of view. A formal program review for student services has not been completed in several years, although individual areas, such as EOPS, SSS, and Financial Aid have undergone regular external reviews.

Planning Agenda

The Vice President of Student Services will increase communication, interaction, and cooperation among the diverse student services groups to ensure Taft College is meeting the needs of the diversified student population without duplication of efforts.

Supporting Documentation

- 5.1 *Taft College Catalog/Student Handbook*
- 5.2 Schedule of classes
- 5.3 Admissions policies for TIL Program
- 5.4 Admissions policies for Dental Hygiene program
- 5.5 Admissions application
- 5.6 Annual update list of approved assessment instruments

STANDARD SIX

Information and Learning Resources

Information and learning resources and services are sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currentness to support the institution's intellectual and cultural activities and programs in whatever format and wherever they are offered. The institution provides training so that information and learning resources may be used effectively and efficiently.

1. *Information and learning resources, and any equipment needed to access the holdings of libraries, media centers, computer centers, databases and other repositories are sufficient to support the courses, programs, and degrees wherever offered.*

media. The LLRC is open sixty hours per week.

The e-book and proprietary database collections are available on the LLRC Web site via login information that is provided to authenticated users. The LLRC Web site also offers online tutoring and other instructional support.

Description

The Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC) provides one student lab of fifteen computers in the learning assistance and tutoring center and seven public computers in the library all of which have e-mail and Internet access. The library's collection of proprietary databases is accessible from all on campus computers. The library has a print collection of 30,000 volumes as well as 3,000 e-books. Journal, magazine, and newspaper subscriptions total 160. The learning assistance and tutoring center has a variety of instructional software loaded for student use and video and audio equipment for other instructional

Information Services provides three student labs totaling sixty computers all of which have e-mail, Internet access, and a variety of instructional software loaded for student use.

Self-Evaluation

Library book and multimedia resources currently are not sufficient to support Taft College's courses, programs, and degrees. Compared to other student support services there was a relatively large difference between students' perceived importance and their perception of the adequacy of library resources and services in recent survey results; resources were perceived as inadequate.

Resources are also seen as inadequate when compared with the recently proposed "Standards for Community College Libraries" (Association of College and Research Libraries) which actually focuses more heavily on outcomes than have previous standards.

Instructional support media specific to individual classes are available in the learning assistance and tutoring center, and the library is developing a collection of video, DVD, audiotape, and CD resources in addition to redeveloping the entire print collection.

With the benefit of Telecommunication and Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP) funds, library electronic resources are extensive for a college of this size, but more training and promotion of these resources are needed for prospective users. The library currently subscribes to 20 proprietary databases, all of which are accessible on campus; login information is provided to students, faculty, and staff. The "virtual" LLRC continues to be developed to increase the number of online resources available to onsite and remote users.

Equipment needed to access holdings is adequate; for example, audiovisual equipment in the learning assistance and tutoring center is being updated for access to DVDs. Computer centers are scattered throughout the campus allowing students a great deal of

flexibility.

2. *Appropriate educational equipment and materials are selected, acquired, organized, and maintained to help fulfill the institution's purposes and support the educational program. Institutional policies and procedures ensure faculty involvement.*

Description

The LLRC provides course-specific software and audiovisual materials in the learning assistance and tutoring center that are selected and acquired by instructors then organized and maintained by LLRC staff.

The broader library collections of educational, informational, and recreational materials are selected, acquired, organized, and maintained by LLRC staff in accordance with the current collection development policy. Library collection development, including selecting and weeding print and non-print materials based on need and use, is managed by the LLRC director, a professional librarian, who solicits input from faculty, students, staff, and the general public.

Appropriate equipment for all materials is selected, acquired, and organized by LLRC staff and maintained by Information Services staff.

Self-Evaluation

With the availability of TTIP funds, library development has focused on electronic resources and considerable growth has taken place in that area. Appropriate members of faculty are consulted as new electronic resources are considered, and all faculty are kept informed and are trained as staff resources allow. Request forms for materials are readily available to all library users. A major overhaul of the print collection and development of a multimedia collection will rely extensively on faculty involvement, providing funding for this effort is retained. Not only has there been no extensive collection development since the 1970s, the collection no longer effectively supports campus curricula.

In the learning assistance and tutoring center, faculty select and acquire supplementary instructional audio, video, and software resources that are organized and maintained by the learning resource center instructional aides.

Planning Agenda

The LLRC will update its collection development policy and develop an online materials request form.

3. *Information and learning resources are readily accessible to students, faculty, and administrators.*

Description

Taft College is dedicated to providing universal access to informational and instructional resources in a variety of enabling technologies reflective of physical, cultural, economic, learning, and other diversities for the students, faculty, and staff. To facilitate the needs of each of these groups, the LLRC hosts an online "virtual" LLRC and maintains onsite hours. The library, learning assistance center, and tutoring center are open 60 hours per week, Monday through Friday. Online access to the "virtual" LLRC is 24/7.

The LLRC offers a wide range of opportunities to the student population as well as to the faculty and staff at Taft College. The on-campus facilities are readily accessible to all who are interested in utilizing their services. The physical facilities and accessibility workstations, through cooperative efforts with Student Support Services (SSS), are designed to accommodate all users including those with physical and/or learning disabilities. Distance learners may receive onsite test proctoring and tutoring in the learning assistance and tutoring center; online tutoring is offered to remote students.

Access to information and learning resources is also readily available to onsite users through twice-weekly interlibrary loan courier stops. As a charter member of the Library of California, Heartland

Region, Taft College participates in the Kern County Library interlibrary courier program.

The LLRC has available computer laboratories with up-to-date computers all of which are connected to a local area network (LAN) with Internet access and e-mail. In addition, these machines can access library databases, instructional servers, Web sites, and instructional software.

Through progressive technology replacement/upgrades, technology training, library automation, video conferencing and satellite technologies, Taft College provides access to all aspects of modern technology. These efforts are critical for the success of the students, faculty, and staff of Taft College regardless of physical or learning disabilities.

Self-Evaluation

The option is being discussed of opening two to three evenings per week, rather than four, and adding Saturday hours (there is not sufficient staff to add hours).

Research assistance is not readily accessible. The only faculty librarian position is an un-funded part-time position. As a result, basic reference service is provided by library technicians who are trained and supported by the Director of the Library Learning Resource Center. Research assistance is provided by the

director, depending on availability, but averages fewer than half of the hours the library is open. The director also answers online research assistance requests.

Survey results indicate that students perceive a sizeable gap between the availability (less) and the importance (more) of library resources and services, and of study areas. Survey results also indicate that faculty and staff perceive a sizeable gap between the availability (less) and the importance (more) of up-to-date equipment in the lab facilities.

4. *The institution has professionally qualified staff to provide appropriate support to users of information and learning resources, including training in the effective application of information technology to student learning.*

Description

The LLRC staff consists of a director, a faculty coordinator of learning assistance and tutoring, two full-time classified staff members, and four part-time (19-hour) classified staff members. There is an unfilled 19-hour faculty librarian position. Currently the director serves as the instructional librarian and the reference librarian. The director, a full-time classified staff member, and two part-time classified staff members are located in the library; the

coordinator, a full-time classified staff member, and two part-time classified staff members are located in the learning assistance and tutoring center. Each building has the benefit of five student workers per semester.

All LLRC staff members are proficient with a variety of information technologies including the online environment. Taft College selected the integrated library system Endeavor Voyager and subscribes to over twenty information databases. All staff members receive inservice training from the director in assisting students, faculty, staff, and the general public (as appropriate) in basic reference activities. The director also offers inservice workshops to faculty and staff and teaches several online and onsite sessions of Information Competency 48, Information Competency and Bibliography which is a graduation requirement. The faculty coordinator teaches Sociology 48, The Role of the Tutor in Society and Education.

Self-Evaluation

There is insufficient professional staff for library reference service and collection development including multimedia and electronic resources and the promotion of and training for these information and learning resources. Of the 60 hours per week the LLRC is open, the director is available for direct service to library users

approximately 20 hours per week.

The full-time faculty coordinator of the learning assistance and tutoring center, while not an information specialist, offers support and training to faculty and students but has increasing demands on his time for proctoring tests. Hiring a part-time proctor and scheduling proctoring sessions in a classroom may alleviate the time and facility constraints imposed by the growing proctoring service.

Since the last review, the library clerk position has been upgraded to library technician, and the long-vacant library technician position has been filled leaving only the unfunded librarian position vacant. The LLRC staff is divided between two buildings and depends on student assistants' help at public service desks. Each of the two buildings (the library, and the learning assistance and tutoring center) has three full-time equivalent people to cover sixty hours per week.

The two 19-hour library technicians and the two 19-hour learning resource center instructional aides for learning assistance and tutoring have been cross-assigned as part of the ongoing LLRC staff development program. The technicians and aides "job swap" a minimum of six hours per week.

Taft College provides considerable opportunity to faculty and staff for

training in the effective application of information technology to student learning. The Distance Learning Institute (DLI) and Multimedia Networking Services (MNS), as well as contracted instructors from other colleges, offer training and support.

5. *The institution provides sufficient and consistent financial support for the effective maintenance, security, and improvement of its information and learning resources.*

Description

Library collection development has been funded in recent years with lottery funds; for fiscal year 2002-03, lottery funds will not be identified separately from the general fund. The 2002-03 district/lottery allocation to LLRC operations and equipment is 42% less than the 2001-02 allocation and includes a 34.5% decrease in collection development funds. It is possible that the loss in collection development funds will be offset by Instructional Equipment and Library Materials (IELM) funds.

Telecommunication and Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP) funds have been a boon to the development of information and learning resources. The library purchased the Endeavor Voyager integrated library system and subscribes to over twenty online databases with TTIP funds. This

has provided a considerable upgrade in both collection management and the scope and currency of research resources.

The library's security system has been inoperable and too outdated to be repairable and has been removed.

Self-Evaluation

Three years ago, nearly half of library collection development funding was going toward standing orders; since then, several serial publications were converted to online subscriptions as this alternative became available, freeing more funds for collection development. The library has been building electronic resources with TTIP funds and "rolling over" lottery funds for an extensive long-range collection development effort in books, videos, DVDs, audiocassettes, CDs, and emerging information technologies; it is estimated that nearly \$500,000 will be needed to rebuild the book collection and to add multimedia resources, since very little development has been done since the 1970s. Because of recent budget constraints, it is unknown at this time if the library will retain the funds that have been set aside for the extensive long-range collection development effort. Learning resources that are housed in the learning assistance and tutoring center are paid for by the departments that select them.

A new security system will be needed as library collections are upgraded.

6. *When the institution relies on other institutions or other sources for information and learning resources to support its educational programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate, easily accessible, and utilized.*

Description

In 1988, the present director of the LLRC attended the first planning meeting of what was to become the Library of California (LoC); in 2000, Taft College became a charter member of the new LoC, Heartland Region. Through the Heartland Consortium, reciprocal interlibrary loan is formalized among members and includes van delivery of information and learning resources among academic, public, school, and special libraries such as law and medical libraries. Through another consortium, the Council of Chief Librarians (CCL), the LLRC subscribes to nearly two dozen proprietary databases and has purchased some 3,000 e-books at consortium rates. The CCL contracts with vendors on behalf of members. Taft College provides CCL vendors its full range of IP addresses so that LLRC subscriptions may be accessed from any campus computer.

Self-Evaluation

Resource sharing via the LoC and the CCL has been an incredible "shot in the arm" for our small, rural college especially as compared with our physical collection. To improve access for remote users, the LLRC is working with Information Services to install a proxy server with remote authentication software such as EZProxy so that remote users authenticated by the college may access all proprietary resources without using different logins for different databases.

The excellent resources and services of the LoC and CCL have not been as well-utilized as we would like, primarily because there is insufficient local staff to develop and implement an effective training and promotion program.

7. *The institution plans for and systematically evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of its learning and information resources and services and makes appropriate changes as necessary.*

Description

Quantitative data collected for annual reports to the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges and other agencies are reviewed and used in decision-making. Efforts are being made to collect more qualitative data

particularly with regard to student learning outcomes.

Recently, Information Services developed a program for reporting the age of the library's print collection which has been very useful in collection development efforts. Since the initial findings, a comprehensive weeding project has begun in an effort to retain only those print resources that will most adequately support current curricula and those that will be most likely to be utilized for other informational and recreational purposes. Research has shown that a well-weeded collection circulates more effectively than does a collection that has simply grown over time.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College continues its efforts to plan for and develop adequate and effective learning and information resources and services and to make appropriate changes as necessary. Evaluation of these efforts was formalized with the Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Faculty and Staff Institutional Priorities Survey (spring 2002).

Of the findings in the recent questionnaires, the most significant regarding information and learning resources and services was the gap between students' perceived importance and their perception of the adequacy of library resources and services (student survey item 10). There was less difference in

the perceptions of faculty and staff (staff survey item 14). The other most significant findings were student satisfaction with the number of study areas on campus (student survey item 21) and faculty/staff agreement that the equipment in the lab facilities is kept up-to-date (staff survey item 29). As a result of these findings, efforts are being increased to improve the adequacy of library resources and services; the number of study areas on campus; and the currency of the equipment in lab facilities.

The least difference between perceived importance and adequacy of information and learning resources fell into the following four areas: the adequacy and accessibility of computer labs (student survey item 34), the availability of tutoring services (student survey item 50), the helpfulness and approachability of library staff (student survey item 26), and the adequacy of academic support services (student survey item 55).

Other evaluation processes will be developed from resources such as the proposed new national standards for community college libraries. These standards are being revised by the Association of College and Research Libraries to reflect not only inputs (the materials, facilities, staff, etc. of a learning resources/library program) and outputs (quantifiable measures of service) but also

outcomes, that is, the ways in which student learning is changed by the library's information and learning resources and programs.

Supporting Documents

- 6.1 CVC4 Distance Learning
Institutional
Assessment/Library Survey
- 6.2 Technology Priorities of Taft
College (Taft College Retreat
and Information
Technology Committee, May
2001)
- 6.3 TTIP Expenditure Plan
(Information Technology
Committee, November 2001)
- 6.4 TTIP Expenditure Report
(September 2002)

STANDARD SEVEN

Faculty and Staff

The institution has sufficient qualified full-time and part-time faculty and staff to support its educational programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds by making positive efforts to foster such diversity.

A. Qualifications and Selection

A.1 The institution has sufficient faculty and staff who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to support its programs and services.

Description

Taft College has grown substantially since the last self study was written. There are more classes and sections being taught, and the college has experienced dramatic increases in the distance learning offerings. The program we offer through the local correctional facility also experienced growth. As a result of this growth, more instructors and staff have been hired following to approved procedures.

According to Taft College's Human Resources Department, there are currently 39 full-time faculty, 55 adjunct faculty, 130 classified positions, 13 supervisory

management positions, and 7 administrators serving a population of approximately 2,200 students. This number includes all full-time, part-time, distance learning, and Taft Correctional Institution (TCI) students and comes from Taft College's current registration system. There are also over 50 Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center, Inc. (WESTEC) instructors serving a population of approximately 7,000 students through the WESTEC program offered off campus. Most of these students take only one or two-day classes.

Self-Evaluation

With the rise in the number of courses being taught and new programs being offered, Taft College responded by hiring adequate numbers of new faculty and staff members. In the last self study there was an expressed need for an increase of faculty in the mathematics curriculum. Taft College now has four full-time faculty members teaching

mathematics courses.

Another concern from the previous accreditation review that was addressed was the staffing of the Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC). Besides hiring a new LLRC Director in 1999, an Instructional Support position was filled. There is one full-time staff person and two part-time staff members in the learning assistance and tutoring center, as well as five master tutors covering most subjects offered at Taft College.

A.2 Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selecting all personnel are clearly stated, public, directly related to institutional objectives, and accurately reflect job responsibilities.

Description

The criteria, qualifications, and procedures for the selection of all personnel are clearly stated in Board Policy No. 204, 226, and 351. Job descriptions for staff positions accurately reflect job responsibilities.

Self-Evaluation

Job descriptions and position announcements include duties and responsibilities as well as knowledge, skills and other characteristics that pertain to the position. Minimum qualifications are also stated and separated into three areas: education, experience,

and personal attributes which are necessary to perform the designated duties. The selection committee uses the stated minimum qualifications on the job description and position announcement when determining whether an applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the position.

A.3 Criteria for selecting faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed, effective teaching, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution.

Description

According to Board Policy No. 301, "It shall be the policy of the West Kern Community College District (WKCCD) that a faculty hiring process be established to provide for highly-qualified college faculty who are expert in their subject areas, who are skilled in teaching and serving the needs of a varied student population, who can foster overall college effectiveness . . ." This policy is consistent with the philosophy of the learning college.

Taft College maintains an interview process which includes a twenty-minute teaching demonstration by candidates to determine teaching effectiveness. The interview committees include members of the faculty, division chair, members of the administration, and classified staff.

Self-Evaluation

The selection process as stated in board policy has proven effective in hiring faculty who are not only knowledgeable of the subject matter but are also effective teachers as verified by the student satisfaction survey and faculty evaluations.

A.4 Degrees held by faculty and administrators are listed in the institution's primary catalog. All U.S. degrees are from institutions accredited by recognized accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalency has been established.

Description

All degrees held by faculty and administrators are listed in the back of the Taft College catalog and are from accredited institutions. Official transcripts for all faculty and administrators are kept in their personnel files.

Self-Evaluation

The Instructional Office staff has the responsibility of verifying that the degrees held by faculty and administrators are from accredited institutions when a new faculty member or administrator is hired. The Counseling Center staff updates the degree listing prior to each new copy of the college

catalog being printed.

B. Evaluation

B.1 The evaluation of each category of staff is systematic and conducted at stated intervals. The follow-up of evaluations is formal and timely.

Description

Formal evaluation procedures have been established for groups of employees including full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, supervisory management, administrators, and classified staff.

The evaluation process for full-time non-tenured faculty is a four-step procedure that includes classroom observations by the Vice President of Instruction, classroom observations by a peer committee, student evaluations, and a self-evaluation. The process is conducted during the first, second, third, and fourth years of employment.

The evaluation process for full-time tenured faculty includes student evaluations, a self-evaluation, and peer review every two years.

The evaluation process for adjunct faculty includes observation by the Vice President of Instruction and the Division Chairperson, and student evaluation. The process is conducted during the first two semesters they teach a new course

and then again every three years.

The Vice President conducts the evaluation process for the administrators and management employees in his/her area. It is conducted once a year and consists of a written statement by the Vice President and is submitted to the Superintendent/President.

Evaluation procedures for classified staff include a written and oral evaluation between the supervisor and employee. Probationary classified staff are evaluated after two, four, and six months of employment. Following the probationary period, classified staff members are evaluated every year.

Self-Evaluation

The current evaluation process for full-time non-tenured faculty and adjunct faculty was implemented for the first time during the fall 2001 semester. The process was established by the collaborative efforts of the Taft College Interest-Based Bargaining (TCIBB) Team. The evaluation process is one way to provide supporting evidence of the faculty's commitment to high quality instruction. Faculty members were provided with a timeline for each evaluation activity, and the evaluations were carried out with the cooperation of the Vice President of Instruction, division chairpersons, peer observers, and faculty members being evaluated.

The majority of the classified staff support the evaluation process currently in place. The evaluation process provides classified staff members with input from their supervisors to assess their effectiveness and encourage their improvement. There is a feeling among some staff members and supervisors that a new evaluation form needs to be developed.

Planning Agenda

Evaluation procedures will be established for administrators.

Evaluation procedures for classified staff will be reviewed and revised as appropriate.

B.2 Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness and encourage improvement.

Description

All of the employee evaluation procedures use multiple measures that allow evaluators to assess the employee's effectiveness and encourage improvement. Proposed changes in the evaluation process for all faculty and classified staff may be addressed through the interest-based bargaining process.

Self-Evaluation

The evaluation process provides employees with input from a variety of sources to assess their effectiveness and encourage their improvement.

B.3 Criteria for evaluation of faculty include teaching effectiveness, scholarship or other activities appropriate to the area of expertise, and participation in institutional service or other institutional responsibilities.

Description

The classroom observations and student evaluations that are a part of the faculty evaluation process include criteria to address teaching effectiveness and scholarship or other activities appropriate to the area of expertise. Full-time faculty members are required to serve on two institutional committees, and their participation on these committees is included in the evaluation process. Full-time faculty members are also encouraged to address all of the above topics in their self-evaluation.

Self-Evaluation

The four components of the evaluation process for faculty fully address all of the following criteria: teaching effectiveness, scholarship, community service, and institutional responsibilities.

C. Staff Development

C.1 The institution provides appropriate opportunities to all categories of staff for continued professional development, consistent with

the institutional mission.

Description

Funds are available for each staff member with the approval of the appropriate administrator to ensure that staff have the opportunity for professional development.

Programs developed by the Staff Development Committee are offered during three days at the beginning of the fall semester and nine days at the beginning of the spring semester as required by Board Policy No. 311.2-H. A survey is conducted annually to determine staff development activities.

Additional salary schedule credit may be earned by attending a course offered by the college at the end of the spring semester. Past courses have included technology, diversity training, and understanding learning styles. Both faculty and classified staff have the opportunity to take this three-credit course.

Self-Evaluation

Due to state budget considerations, the \$10,000 Staff Development budget for the 2002-03 fiscal years was eliminated. Since next year's budget does not currently contain funds for staff development, outside speakers may not be available for inservice programs.

The 1997 faculty-staff accreditation survey found some staff concern as to the availability of inservice activities. Some of these activities are conducted during times when registration and counseling staff are heavily impacted.

Planning Agenda

With the future of professional development funds being uncertain, the Staff Development Committee will survey the faculty and staff to identify those staff members who are willing to conduct a professional development activity.

C.2 Planning and evaluation of staff development programs include the participation of staff that participate in, or are affected by, the programs.

Description

Development activities are planned and coordinated by the Staff Development Committee. This committee includes two administrators, six faculty, and two classified staff. The activities are publicized in posted announcements, e-mails, and mailings to faculty and staff.

Staff and faculty are encouraged to attend conferences and workshops in addition to those offered by the college. The Staff Development Committee is open to ideas for development activities from any

faculty or classified staff member.

Self-Evaluation

The Staff Development Committee has the primary responsibility for planning professional development activities focused on student learning. Many faculty and staff participate in a three-day, three-credit course offered by the college following the spring semester. Last year's diversity workshop was well attended by both groups, and received an outstanding evaluation. This year's course centered upon "Learning Styles" since many faculty and staff members expressed interest in the topic and was conducted by Taft College faculty members. This course was also well attended and received excellent evaluations.

D. General Personnel Provisions

D.1 The institution has and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

Description

The Human Resources Director (who also serves as the Equal Opportunity Officer) and the Personnel Technician follow the employment processes established in the *Board Policies and Procedures*. The Superintendent/President monitors the entire process, and all employment is subject to approval

by the Board of Trustees.

Self-Evaluation

Policies regarding equal opportunity employment are written in the *Board Policies and Procedures*. The Human Resources Director serves as the Equal Opportunity Officer and the Personnel Technician as recorder on each screening committee to ensure fairness and that all employment procedures are followed. The college presently complies with these written policies.

D.2 The institution regularly assesses and reports its achievement of its employment equity objectives, consistent with the institutional mission.

Description

Pre-employment data surveys are supplied to all applicants. Participation by the applicants is voluntary and anonymous. Data are collected and maintained regarding age, gender, ethnicity, and disability. Annual reports are compiled and supplied to the Human Resources Director.

Self-Evaluation

The pre-employment data surveys are used as an instrument for compiling statistical reports on the categories of gender, ethnicity, age, and disability. The data are

supplied to the Human Resources Director and shared with screening committee members in aggregate form.

D.3 Personnel policies and procedures affecting all categories of staff are systematically developed, clear, equitably administered, and available for information and review.

Description

Personnel policies have been developed and are subject to revision in consultation with appropriate campus constituencies and the appropriate vice president. The proposal is then submitted to the Superintendent/President. If the Superintendent/President supports the proposal, the policy is submitted for two readings at consecutive board meetings before becoming official.

Self-Evaluation

The information contained in a variety of documents affecting personnel policies and procedures is complete and comprehensive. The bargaining contracts are provided to each new faculty and classified staff member, and the *Faculty Handbook* is given to each new faculty member.

D.4 The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Personnel records

*are private, accurate,
complete, and permanent.*

Description

The college has a database system that ensures all employee records are securely maintained. It is password-protected, and only authorized persons can access the data. The records are updated on a regular basis. Data backup is performed every day, and the backup tapes and hard-copy personnel records are maintained in the fireproof vault located in the administration building.

Self-Evaluation

Personnel records are private, complete, accurate, and secure. Strict confidentiality is maintained, and access to this information is limited.

Supporting Documents

- 7.1 1997 Evaluation Report, Taft College
- 7.2 1999 Midterm Accreditation Report
- 7.3 *Board Policies and Procedures*
- 7.4 2002 Faculty and Staff Survey
- 7.5 Pre-Employment Survey
- 7.6 Taft College Employee Contracts
- 7.7 2001 Taft College *Faculty Handbook*
- 7.8 Taft College Personnel Records

STANDARD EIGHT

Physical Resources

The institution has sufficient and appropriate physical resources to support its purposes and goals.

1. *The institution ensures that adequate physical resources are provided to support its educational programs and services wherever and however they are offered.*

Description

Taft College on-campus facilities include a two-story administration building, library, Learning Resource Center, Distance Learning Center, vocational and technical arts buildings, science building, cafeteria, Counseling Center, Associated Student Body (ASB) Office, bookstore, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services/Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (EOPS/CARE) building, Child Care Development Center, sports center, dental hygiene buildings, vehicle maintenance building, Ash Street and 7th Street residence halls, Transition to Independent Living (TIL) buildings/Student Support Services (SSS), maintenance and operations warehouse, groundskeeping shop, and five modular buildings for a total square footage of 242,954. Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center, Inc. (WESTEC) and the North Kern

Training Center (NKTC) are located off campus.

Self-Evaluation

According to our current space inventory reports, the district has adequate classroom and laboratory space for its instructional offerings. The Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC) could benefit from additional space. There is also a need for a designated student center.

The facilities task force is working on a facilities master plan that will be used to ensure adequate space for optimum instruction. Through the Planning Committee and the Facilities Task Force, the plan should be revised and updated as appropriate.

2. *The management, maintenance, and operation of physical facilities ensure effective utilization and continuing quality necessary to support the programs and services of the institution.*

Description

Maintenance of all facilities is under the supervision of the Director of

Maintenance and Operations who reports directly to the Vice President of Administrative Services. Buildings and grounds are maintained on a regular schedule and are generally in good condition.

offered are constructed and maintained in accordance with the institution's obligation to ensure access, safety, security, and a healthful environment.

Self-Evaluation

Main campus buildings and grounds are well maintained although several places require attention, including paving or sealing some of the parking or driving areas, concrete sidewalk replacement, and residence hall facilities. In order to assist in the maintenance of facilities, the district has contracted with an architect. The architect is developing maintenance schedules for all facilities, including roofs and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units. The district applies annually for scheduled maintenance funds to help defray the cost. Due to budget constraints, routine maintenance of the above-mentioned facilities is performed on a priority basis.

The Superintendent/President and Director of Maintenance and Operations will continue to evaluate the Taft College campus and grounds. The referenced areas requiring attention will be repaired or replaced as additional funding and staffing become available.

3. *Physical facilities at all site locations where courses, programs, and services are*

Description

All physical facilities at all sites are regularly reviewed for access and barrier removal, safety, and a healthful environment. The district also maintains a comprehensive scheduled maintenance program. Safety, access, and security are the driving forces behind the prioritization of project scheduling. The college employs both in-house and outside security personnel. Disaster planning is an ongoing process through appropriate Kern County offices with which the Director of Maintenance and Operations has constant involvement. There are systems and programs to deal with hazardous materials and waste, an injury prevention program—Senate Bill 198, and a chemical hygiene plan for science division staff and dental hygiene staff and students.

Self-Evaluation

The campus has recently completed several projects to address the major Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) deficiencies. These projects include the addition of an elevator to the administration/classroom building, access doors for people with disabilities, and modification of the

parking lot and sidewalks. Security and safety on campus do not present a problem. In order to ensure a safe environment, round-the-clock security is provided. According to student and faculty surveys, however, parking lot lighting may be a safety issue. College involvement with disaster planning is adequate.

Planning Agenda

Taft College will continue to view safety and security as a top priority issue. Parking lot lighting will be reviewed and increased if necessary. A document outlining safety procedures will be developed and made available to staff.

4. *Selection, maintenance, inventory and replacement of equipment are conducted systematically to support the educational programs and services of the institution.*

Description

Equipment for educational programs and services is adequate and properly maintained. Equipment is purchased with state instructional equipment funds; technology, telecommunications, and infrastructure programs funds; vocational educational funds, and the district general fund. Routine maintenance of equipment is performed by the multimedia staff and the maintenance/operations staff. Outside contractors are used

when special circumstances arise. Inventory control is supervised through the administrative services area. Department heads are responsible for recommending periodic equipment replacement as needed.

Self-Evaluation

The college has made an effort to upgrade its equipment and technology to support its educational programs and services. Recent examples are the implementation of Easy to Use Distance Education Software (ETUDES) to instruct distance learning, LCD projectors, library materials, and an array of technological tools.

Planning Agenda

Department heads are responsible for inventory and periodic equipment replacement as needed. A scheduled system should be considered and implemented as necessary.

5. *Physical resource planning and evaluation support institutional goals and are linked to other institutional planning and evaluation efforts, including district or system planning and utilization where appropriate.*

Description

The district has a five-year facilities plan, as per Chancellor's Office,

California Community Colleges requirements. A formal master plan for campus development is in progress. The Planning Committee and the Facilities Task Force play an important role in overall facilities planning. Affected staff are consulted with regard to modifications in their area. The plan will be based upon the mission goals and objectives of the college as approved by the involved committees.

Self-Evaluation

With the help of the Facilities Task Force and the district architect, a Facilities Master Plan is being developed. Recommendations from the Facilities Task Force will be taken to the campus Planning Committee for review and recommendations.

Supporting Documents

- 8.1 Space Inventory
- 8.2 Schedule of Maintenance Plan
- 8.3 Student-Faculty Survey
- 8.4 Five-Year Facility Plan

STANDARD NINE

Financial Resources

The institution has adequate financial resources to achieve, maintain, and enhance its programs and services. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of financial viability and institutional improvement. The institution manages its financial affairs with integrity, consistent with its educational objectives.

A. Financial Planning

A.1 Financial planning supports institutional goals and is linked to other institutional planning efforts.

Description

During the college's planning retreat held in the spring of 2001, the mission, vision, and values statements were reviewed and revised to incorporate maintaining the fiscal integrity of the institution. This was the basis for expanding the scope of fiscal planning to include a greater segment of the campus community and led to an expanded role of the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). This committee, which reports to and gets direction from the campus-wide Planning Committee, is co-chaired by a faculty member and by the Vice President of Administrative Services. The BAC includes representatives from administration, faculty, supervisory management, support staff, and the student body. In conjunction with the Planning Committee, the

BAC played a key role in prioritizing expenditure reductions necessitated by projected cuts in the 2002-03 state budget.

Each spring, all departments and academic divisions prepare budget requests for the next academic year. Prior to planning for the 2002-03 budget, each faculty member submitted requests to division chairpersons who reviewed the proposals for consistency with annual departmental assessments and submitted the budget requests to the Vice President of Instruction. The Superintendent/President and Vice Presidents reviewed the requests to ensure consistency with campus goals. Preliminary budgets were then presented to the BAC for overview.

Self-Evaluation

Strides have been made in the move to involve a greater segment of the campus community in the budgeting process. The role of the BAC has been expanded and consideration is being given to include greater involvement in

evaluating budget requests. The Planning Committee is providing increased oversight.

A.2 Annual and long-range financial planning reflects realistic assessments of resource availability and expenditure requirements. In those institutions which set tuition rates, and which receive a majority of funding from student fees and tuition, charges are reasonable in light of the operating costs, services to be rendered, equipment, and learning resources to be supplied.

Description

The Vice President of Administrative Services carefully watches revenue forecasts from the state and the county assessor who is responsible for determining the assessed value of the district. Beginning in the late fall and extending into early winter preliminary income estimates are developed that are the basis for planning expenditures. The Superintendent/President and Vice Presidents assemble their respective preliminary budgets that are presented to the Vice President of Administrative Services who reviews them before they go to the BAC and then to the Superintendent/President. They are submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval. During planning for the 2002-03 budget,

the Superintendent/President gave each Vice President an expenditure "target" rather than have them submit a request that had the potential to be unrealistic. For long-term planning, the BAC annually requests proposals for new positions and projects and equipment should funds become available. The proposals are prioritized and forwarded to the Planning Committee.

Self-Evaluation

Standard procedure dictates a conservative approach to assessing available revenue and expenditure requirements. Precise financial planning can be made difficult by fluctuations produced by revenue revisions from the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges. Last year, for example, the college's anticipated revenue was reduced by \$800,000 by the state's periodic revisions. That adverse impact on the ending balance was offset by a healthy reserve fund.

The Vice President of Administrative Services will continue to carefully monitor revenue projections. Given the turbulent state budget situation, the Board of Trustees has determined that the college shall maintain a reserve of at least \$1 million which is well above state requirements.

A.3 Annual and long-range capital plans support

education objectives and relate to the plan for physical facilities.

Description

Additions to campus facilities over the past five to ten years have usually been portable or temporary structures. The result has been a campus that is a blend of buildings built mostly from the mid-50s to mid-70s and a scattering of trailers and other mobile units.

Self-Evaluation

The college is becoming more aggressive in seeking capital outlay funding from the state to construct permanent buildings. Last spring a Facilities Committee was formed and an architect who specializes in community college construction was hired. The committee began assessing campus facilities with an eye toward replacing temporary structures with permanent buildings, and the architect submitted a proposal for state funding for a permanent addition to the Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC). The goal of the committee is to develop a facilities master plan that will be the driving force to obtain funding for new construction.

A.4 Institutional guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development are clearly defined and followed.

Description

The Vice President of Administrative Services develops a budget calendar that guides the college through the budget process. That process is driven by deadlines mandated by the state for tentative, preliminary, and final budget approval by the Board of Trustees. Expenditure planning is driven by the "best guess" on incoming revenue that remains a moving target throughout the year because of the state's periodic revisions.

Self-Evaluation

The budget timeline, as presently structured, has not allowed the BAC adequate time to review budget requests and offer recommendations.

Planning Agenda

Greater effort will be made to adjust the budget timeline to make it more effective in terms of allowing the BAC sufficient time for review and recommendations.

A.5 Administrators, faculty, and support staff have appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of financial plans and budgets

Description

As mentioned above, there are ample opportunities for campus-

wide budget planning with the Planning Committee and BAC both composed of members representing all constituencies of the college. Initially, the BAC was responsible for determining how Partnership for Excellence (PFE) and instructional equipment revenue was to be spent, but the scope of that committee grows each year to incorporate more facets of fiscal planning.

Self-Evaluation

The BAC and Planning Committee are in the process of accepting greater responsibility for budget and financial planning for the district.

B. Financial Management

B.1 The financial management system creates appropriate control mechanisms and provides dependable and timely information for sound financial decision-making.

Description

The college uses a purchase order system and provides monthly reports to its budget managers. Each department and division receives concise reports that show at a glance the budget status of each department and division.

Self-Evaluation

A part-time accountant has been hired to help ensure oversight of

the accounting process. Coding and formatting have been changed to simplify the reports to make them more user-friendly to the departments and instructional divisions.

Planning Agenda

The financial management system will be updated to allow for more efficient use. We will make changes in our financial reporting system in order to meet new Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 34 and 35 standards.

B.2 Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support institutional programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive and timely.

Description

Appropriate allocation and use of financial resources that support institutional programs and services are evident in both the budget and the annual audit. The Vice President of Administrative Services is responsible for responding to audit recommendations. When findings are reported, they are promptly addressed.

Self-Evaluation

The Taft College budget is reviewed thoroughly by the BAC and the Board of Trustees. The college has developed a reputation for earning audits that result in few findings.

B.3 The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, externally-funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments.

Description

All budget and finance oversight is centralized in the administrative offices and driven by the Business Office. Double signatures are required on all transactions. The signature of the Vice President of Administrative Services is required for all financial aid disbursements. A part-time accountant was hired last spring to provide additional services in maintaining the fiscal integrity of the institution.

Self-Evaluation

All financial services are treated with the same degree of scrutiny.

B.4 Auxiliary activities and fund-raising efforts support the programs and services of the institution, are consistent with the mission and goals of

the institution, and are conducted with integrity.

Description

External fund-raising is channeled through the Taft College Foundation that has an independent board of directors. The Superintendent/President and Vice President of Administrative Services provide leadership and oversight. College staff provide coordination for many of the Foundation's activities. The Business Office oversees the financial operations of the Foundation.

Self-Evaluation

Our Foundation is a separate 501C(3) corporation which can operate independently of the college. However, it limits its activities to those that are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, thus emphasizing the integrity under which it operates.

B.5 Contractual agreements with external entities are governed by institutional policies and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.

Description

Contractual agreements are governed by board policies and procedures and coordinated by the

Vice President of Administrative Services who reviews all contracts before forwarding them to the governing board for approval.

Self-Evaluation

As well as following all board policies and procedures, Taft College adheres to all state laws and regulations.

B.6 Financial management is regularly evaluated and the results are used to improve the financial management system.

Description

Board policies and procedures govern financial management of the district. The Vice President of Administrative Services and the newly hired accountant are reviewing all fiscal policies to ensure the effectiveness of all internal controls.

Self-Evaluation

The financial management system and procedures are continuously under informal review. The annual external audit of the district provides a formal review.

C. Financial Stability

C.1 Future obligations are clearly identified and plans exist for payment.

Description

The district has Certificates of Participation issued for refinancing of the Ash Street Residence Hall that will be paid in full in 2007. Other indebtedness includes a balance of \$500,000 owed on the North Kern Training Center (NKTC) amortized over five years that will be paid off in December 2005 and a small indebtedness of \$30,000 on the T-dorms that will be paid off soon.

The district maintains a Capital Outlay Projects Fund. Money placed into the fund will be used to provide matching funds for future capital projects.

A consultant company conducted an actuarial study to assess the district's long-term liability for retiree benefits and recommended the district establish a special reserve fund of \$7 million to cover the projected liability.

Self-Evaluation

The district has recently employed an architect to assist in the development of a facilities master plan and is beginning to aggressively seek capital outlay money from the state to assist in funding future capital projects.

At the present time, no special reserve fund has been established to cover the projected liability for retiree benefits. The recommended reserve of \$7 million

is not considered feasible given the college's current financial position.

Planning Agenda

The Vice President of Administrative Services will explore alternative plans for addressing the district's long-term liability for retiree benefits.

C.2 The institution has policies for appropriate risk management.

Description

The college belongs to Joint Powers Associations (JPAs) Self-Insured Schools of California (SISC) for employee health and worker's compensation benefits and Statewide Association of Community Colleges (SWACC) for property liability insurance and risk management. The consulting services provided by the JPAs also assist in the development of board policies.

Self-Evaluation

Currently, the college does not have a health and safety program in place. The need for an overriding health and safety policy has been recognized by the Vice President of Administrative Services and plans are underway to develop such policy.

Planning Agenda

The Vice President of

Administrative Services will work in consultation with other appropriate campus personnel to develop a comprehensive health and safety policy.

C.3 Cash flow arrangements or reserves are sufficient to maintain stability.

Description

Cash flow is reviewed on a monthly basis by management. The 2000-01 budget provided a general reserve of \$2.1 million which is 21% of operating income, well above the 5% considered prudent by the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges guideline. Taft College also participates in Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes to provide additional cash flow.

Self-Evaluation

The Board of Trustees has directed that the general reserve should not fall below \$1 million. Due to the tenuous state financial situation, cash flow management will be even more important, and special attention will be devoted to maintaining cash flow stability.

C.4 The institution has a plan for responding to financial emergencies or unforeseen occurrences.

Description

The general fund reserve is

currently sufficient for responding to financial emergencies or unforeseen occurrences.

Self-Evaluation

The Planning Committee and BAC, with their broad-based campus constituencies, provide a forum for discussion. During periods of past financial crises, the input of these committees has been instrumental in the successful development of plans of response. In the event of a future financial emergency or unforeseen occurrence, these committees would again be involved in developing a plan of response.

Supporting Documents

- 9.1 Preliminary department budgets
- 9.2 Request for Proposal Prioritization
- 9.3 Minutes from BAC meetings

STANDARD TEN

Governance and Administration

The institution has a governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution. The institution has an administrative staff of appropriate size to enable the institution to achieve its goals and is organized to provide appropriate administrative services. Governance structures and systems ensure appropriate roles for the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students, and facilitate effective communication among the institution's constituencies.

A. Governing Board

A.1 The governing board is an independent policy-making board capable of reflecting the public interest in board activities and decisions. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.

In recent years individual board members have resigned mid-term. One trustee moved his residence from the district and another trustee accepted a new professional appointment, which created an incompatibility of position. To ensure consistency, the board has chosen to appoint trustees to the vacant positions according to California law.

Description

The five-member governing board is elected during even year November elections for four-year, staggered terms of office. Two board positions will be on the November 2004 ballot, and the remaining three seats will be on the November 2006 ballot. Qualifications for board members and the election process are defined in Board Policy Article IV.

Additionally, the Associated Student Body (ASB) appoints a student representative as a non-voting member of the board.

Self-Evaluation

The staggered office terms ensure the continuity of leadership necessary for the positive functioning of the district. In an effort to ensure this continuity the board has appointed trustees to fill vacant positions, thus allowing the board to select those that have the best interests of the district as their focus. In this effort the board has followed an open process that includes advertising the open position and conducting interviews of all prospective candidates during open board sessions. This approach has provided for the consideration of all interested

citizens.

The board has experienced a long period of stability. There has not been a contested election since 1994 and appointments to fill vacancies have not been challenged. This indicates an overall community satisfaction with the leadership of the board. The combination of veteran board members, some having served on the board for twenty-five years, and new board members has been beneficial to the district.

A.2 The governing board ensures that the educational program is of high quality, is responsible for overseeing the financial health and integrity of the institution, and confirms that institutional practices are consistent with the board-approved institutional mission statement and policies.

Description

The governing board reviews and approves the educational programs provided by the district. Prior to board approval all programs and courses are reviewed and recommended by the Curriculum and General Education Committee and the instructional administration to assure that the needs of students are met and the district mission and vision are realized.

The board has established direction

regarding a prudent financial reserve, reviews and takes action on all contracts, has established expectations regarding salaries, and approves the annual budget. In support of this responsibility the board conducts annual study sessions prior to the adoption of the budget, receives details of all expenditures in the monthly board packet, and reviews monthly and quarterly financial reports. The Vice President of Administrative Services attends all board meetings to keep the board updated on fiscal affairs and provides input on the fiscal impact of any agenda item.

The board has participated in establishing and approving the college mission, vision, and values. Representatives of the board attended a college-wide retreat in 2001 that included faculty, administration and classified staff to draft the college mission, vision, and values statements. The mission statement was adopted by the board during its November 2002 meeting. Board priorities identified in a fall 2002 retreat, are consistent with the mission statement and guide institutional practices.

Self-Evaluation

In light of the uncertain economy, the board has maintained a healthy reserve and has established a \$1 million reserve as a minimum.

The board is interested in all

educational programs and actively supports the district's efforts in expanding services to Hispanic, developmentally disabled, and vocational students.

As part of its effort to remain apprised of the district's programs, the board has adopted a schedule of focused reports which deal with student performance and educational programs. The board has supported the college's emphasis on becoming a learning college

A.3 The governing board establishes broad institutional policies and appropriately delegates responsibility to implement these policies. The governing board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.

Description

The West Kern Community College District (WKCCD) Board of Trustees maintains responsibility for adopting policy and delegates responsibility to implement policies to its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is also the Superintendent/President. As part of that delegation, the board has established an expectation that its administration will implement policy in a collaborative manner. As part of this expectation, representatives of the board participate in the institution's

interest-based bargaining process.

During the board's 2001-02 planning retreat a goal of reviewing the *Board Policies and Procedures* was adopted. The new Superintendent/President began a review of all policies in the spring of 2002 that included a systematic consideration of each policy by the Superintendent/President and Vice Presidents. New policies are presented to the governing board for a first and second reading prior to being adopted. To ensure that policies are followed, procedures are presented to the board as information items when new policies are adopted.

Self-Evaluation

In discussions with the new district CEO, it has been determined that policies and procedures do not always agree. Earlier, during its August 2001 planning retreat the board identified the need to update its policies. As a result the board has directed the Superintendent/President to review all of the board policies, recommend changes, and review all district policies to enact the new policies. It is also recognized that the district will benefit from a systematic and periodic review of board policies.

The board understands and supports its policy-making role.

Planning Agenda

The Superintendent/President will submit a review of all board policies to the board for consideration. This review will include college constituent groups such as the Academic Senate and classified staff in all appropriate policy sections. Each policy, when reviewed, will include a projected target date for future review and identification of the position responsible for the review.

A.4 In keeping with its mission, the governing board selects and evaluates the chief executive officer and confirms the appointment of other major academic and administrative officers.

Description

After 21 years, the former chief executive officer retired. The governing board, using Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), conducted an extensive search for new leadership. A committee made up of board, faculty, staff, students, and community members reviewed, interviewed, and recommended applicants to the board. The governing board was diligent in their search and did not make a selection until they found a candidate with the experience, knowledge, and vision to move the college forward based on its mission. The current CEO began employment November 1, 2001.

The board interviews and selects Vice Presidents. A screening committee comprised of members representing the college community, working with the Superintendent/President, recommend at least two candidates to the board for interview and selection.

A new evaluation process for evaluating the Superintendent/President is now in place. This process includes an annual evaluation of progress toward mutually identified goals, a written self-evaluation, and survey input from all college constituents. The board met with the new Superintendent/President at the end of his third month to review progress and to identify the expectations of both. Additionally, a new evaluation process for all administrators has been identified. In this process evaluations will be conducted annually with an extensive evaluation including faculty input every three years.

Self-Evaluation

The board recently identified a new CEO. In this endeavor the board used the services of an outside consultant in conducting a national search. During the process the board identified the need to extend the search beyond the original timeline. Although the board recognized the immediate need to identify a replacement and actively worked with ACCT to identify viable candidates, they also recognized

the value of involving the college screening committee.

Vice Presidential level positions are advertised nationally and are subject to a screening committee process that makes recommendations to the board. The board then acts on individual appointments. This process has worked well.

A.5 The size, duties, responsibilities, ethical conduct requirements, structure and operating procedures and processes for assessing the performance of the governing board are clearly defined and published in board policies or by-laws. The board acts in a manner consistent with them.

Description

Board Policy Section II identifies the authority, duties, and powers of the Board of Trustees. These items are further delineated in the board by-laws that include twenty-one statements of good conduct and a statement of the board's "ten commandments."

The governing board conducts annual retreats for the purpose of goal-setting and self-evaluation. The most recent evaluation resulted in the determination that the board acts in a manner that is consistent with their policies.

Self-Evaluation

The board, in August 2001, completed a self-evaluation workshop conducted by a representative of Community College League of California (CCLC). This evaluation process included a review of programs and their progress, consideration of the district's financial soundness, growth, and other aspects of the district. Each board member discussed his/her strengths and weaknesses as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the board as a whole. The board then adopted broad goals for the district. In addition to an evaluation of the board's actions, the board considered the CEO transition process and evaluated its actions in that process.

Planning Agenda

In addition to conducting an annual self-evaluation workshop each fall, the board will develop and adopt a questionnaire directed toward board self-evaluation.

A.6 The governing board has a program for new member orientation and governing board development.

Description

New board members meet with the Superintendent/President to review responsibilities, ethical conduct, and policies. They are given a board of trustee's handbook which

explains the governing board role, trustee ethics, policy and policy-making, board/CEO relationship, and other pertinent information for a new trustee. New board members are also provided with information concerning the Brown Act. They are encouraged to attend the new board member orientation conducted by ACCT and CCLC.

Board members actively participate in conferences provided by ACCT and CCLC and bring information back to share with other board members.

Self-Evaluation

Since the last accreditation three new board members have been appointed, all due to resignations. In the appointment process the board has provided for orientation of candidates regarding individual board member's responsibilities and ethical requirements as well as the board procedures. Upon appointment the board has provided for an orientation of the newly appointed members and supported attendance at CCLC and ACCT new member training sessions.

Recognizing the need to counterbalance the isolation of a small, rural college, all board members are encouraged to participate in conferences presented by ACCT and CCLC as part of their on-going professional development. Board members who

attend these meetings regularly report on the conferences to their colleagues.

A.7 The board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.

Description

A representative of the board participated in the self-study process as a member of the Accreditation Steering Committee and a member of the Standard Ten Subcommittee. The Accreditation Liaison Officer makes regular reports to the board regarding the accreditation process. The final self study report is presented to the board for review.

Self-Evaluation

The board recognizes the value of the accreditation process and actively participates. The board representatives to the process solicit the opinions of their colleagues.

Institutional Administration and Governance

B.1 The institutional chief executive officer provides effective leadership to define goals, develop plans, and establish priorities for the institution.

Description

The institutional chief executive officer provides leadership for and supports a process of shared governance within the college. The institutional CEO is a member of the Planning Committee which is designated as the major shared governance structure on our campus. A standing committee that reports to the Planning Committee is the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) of which the CEO is an administrative representative. The primary function of this committee is to integrate the budget with planning and make recommendations to the Planning Committee. The CEO meets twice monthly with the Administrative Council which includes vice presidents, division chairs, the Faculty Association President, the Academic Senate President, and the California School Employees Association (CSEA) President to coordinate the administrative services of the college. In addition, the Administrative Council provides feedback and direction on administrative issues. The CEO also reviews and advises on budget matters, program reviews and recommendations, and new programs and proposals.

Self-Evaluation

The institutional chief executive officer has been with us since November 2001. He brings with him knowledge and experience from an institution of similar size

and location. The CEO has established near-term and long-term initiatives or goals which are based on the goals identified by the Board of Trustees at their Fall 2001 Planning Retreat. These initiatives were shared with the Board of Trustees in the fall and later presented to administration and faculty during the January inservice meetings.

During the hiring process of our new CEO, an important qualification was identified: "Vision." The vision or direction has been identified as establishing Taft College as a learning college. This vision has also been shared on campus during the January inservice.

The Planning Committee and its various subcommittees are responsible to make recommendations to the CEO concerning the future of Taft College. After gathering information from the Planning Committee and all other groups on campus, it is the CEO's ultimate responsibility to guide the Board of Trustees in making final decisions regarding the future of Taft College. For example, the Facilities Committee, a subcommittee of the Planning Committee, is currently working with an outside consultant to develop a physical plant master plan that will be presented to the Board of Trustees. Taft College is also guided by a strategic plan.

B.2 The institutional chief

executive officer efficiently manages resources, implements priorities controlling budget and expenditures, and ensures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and board policies.

Description

The institutional chief executive officer efficiently manages resources and implements priorities controlling budget and expenditures by relying on the recommendations of the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee guides the budget planning process by utilizing the BAC. The Institutional Research Committee also advises the institutional CEO by determining the need for institutional research activities of the college and the district. The institutional CEO and the vice presidents are responsible for monitoring policies and administrative regulations to ensure that they reflect California Education Code Title 5 regulations. Each administrator is responsible for ensuring that practices and policies are followed. Reporting structures and budget monitoring procedures are in place to assure that departments and offices do not exceed their budgets.

Self-Evaluation

The chief executive officer has clearly assumed full leadership responsibility in the development

of the budget. The CEO has had to rely heavily on the Vice President of Administrative Services to determine the current financial position and to forecast the future financial position of the college amid tremendous uncertainty. Based on input from the Planning Committee, BAC, employee associations, and various financial assumptions, the CEO has directed his vice presidents to submit their budgets for next year based on appropriate allocations determined by the CEO. It has been the goal of our CEO to honor all negotiated raises for faculty and staff, thus instructing vice presidents to find budget reductions in other areas.

The CEO has shown effective leadership by guiding the college through the budget uncertainty. He has made difficult decisions in the best interest of the college.

B.3 The institution is administratively organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. The administration provides effective and efficient leadership and management which makes possible an effective teaching and learning environment.

Description

As a single college district, the administrative staff includes a Superintendent/President, a Vice President of Instruction, a Director

of Dental Hygiene (.50), a Director of the Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC), a Vice President of Student Services, a Dean of Student Services, a Director of Athletics (.58), and a Vice President of Administrative Services. This structure is outlined on the Taft College organizational chart.

Self-Evaluation

The administration is staffed to reflect institutional purposes and to provide economical and effective management.

B.4 Administrative officers are qualified by training and experience to perform their responsibilities and are evaluated systematically and regularly. The duties and responsibilities of institutional administrators are clearly defined and published.

Description

Administrative officers are qualified by training and experience as delineated in their job descriptions. In the past officers were evaluated informally and at various time intervals; currently, formal annual procedures are in place. The job descriptions clearly define the responsibilities of institutional administrators.

Self-Evaluation

There is still a need to expand the administrative evaluation procedure to include faculty input.

B.5 Administration has a substantive and clearly-defined role in institutional governance.

Description

The Taft College Planning Committee is the primary shared governance body. The BAC, a standing subcommittee of the Planning Committee, develops recommendations to the body as a whole. Both of these committees include administrators, faculty, classified staff, and students. The Superintendent/President maintains ultimate responsibility for all decisions made by and for the institution. The Superintendent/President's Administrative Council meets monthly to keep the lines of communication open. With one exception all standing committees on the campus have administrative representation.

Self-Evaluation

In keeping with the requirements of AB 1725, management has a global involvement in governance.

B.6 Faculty have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance; exercise a substantial voice

in matters of educational program and faculty personnel, and other institutional policies, which relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise.

Description

Board policies state that faculty have the responsibility of developing and implementing policies that relate to areas of their expertise. Board policy stipulates that the Academic Senate represents the faculty in academic and professional matters. The Planning Committee has the responsibility to provide input into the creation of new programs and facilities, and includes ten faculty members, including division chairs. The BAC, with six faculty members, reviews budget requests and sets priorities for the expenditure of available monies. The BAC reports to the Planning Committee.

The Administrative Council includes the division chairs, the Faculty Association President, the CSEA President, program directors, and members of the administration. This committee coordinates administrative services and opens lines of communication among the faculty, staff, and administration.

All hiring committees include members of the Academic Senate as well as members of the administration. Faculty members have the opportunity interview candidates during the hiring

process, and, along with the appropriate administrators, select candidates.

Self-Evaluation

The role of the Academic Senate is described both in board policy and in the Academic Senate Constitution. Members of the senate are well represented on all committees, and the Academic Senate President or a designated representative attends all board meetings.

There is some concern that the duties delegated to the Academic Senate and to the Planning Committee have not been completely described. The 1999 Midterm Accreditation Report Standard 8D.2 suggested that a "more precise description of the authority delegated to the senate" needed to be developed. This process is ongoing and has yet to be fully accomplished. The Planning Committee, which is co-chaired by the Academic Senate President, includes a minimum of six faculty members. It is the opinion among some faculty members that this committee is not as effective as it should be in setting priorities for planning and budgeting processes.

Planning Agenda

The Academic Senate along with members of the administration will seek to further define the duties of the Planning Committee as it

relates to the governance of the college. A written clarification of these duties as well as the authority delegated to the Academic Senate shall be placed in a central location along with copies of the *Board Policies and Procedures* and the Academic Senate Constitution.

B.7 Faculty have established an academic senate or other appropriate organization for providing input regarding institutional governance. In the case of private colleges, the institution has a formal process for providing input regarding institutional governance.

Description

The Academic Senate represents the faculty as stated in Board Policy Article IX Section 2. The President of the Academic Senate or his/her representative attends all board meetings and makes a report or makes recommendations as necessary. By mutual agreement, the board relies primarily on the academic senate regarding academic and professional matters. Board policy states that senate recommendations are normally accepted and only in exceptional circumstances are they not accepted. The policy also states that when agreement cannot be reached, current policies will stand.

The Academic Senate constitution

further describes the role of the Academic Senate, and many of these responsibilities are also described in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Self-Evaluation

As the Academic Senate meets monthly, the concerns of full-time and adjunct faculty are heard and discussed. Additional meetings are scheduled as pressing issues develop. The Academic Senate President regularly attends the Board of Trustees meetings and presents the concerns and views of the faculty. Some faculty feel that the senate should have a separate agenda listing. Currently the Academic Senate has an opportunity to have its voice heard under Faculty and Staff Reports at board meetings.

Planning Agenda

The Academic Senate shall seek to have its concerns and views listed on the Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda as a separate item.

B.8 The institution has written policy which identifies appropriate institutional support for faculty participation in governance and delineates the participation of faculty on appropriate policy, planning, and special purpose bodies.

Description

Policy identifying institutional

support for shared governance is in the *Board Policies and Procedures*, the *Faculty Handbook*, the Academic Senate Constitution, and the California Teacher's Association (CTA) Contract Agreement.

Faculty shared governance occurs through the Planning Committee, the Academic Senate, Taft College Interest-Based Bargaining (TCIBB), the BAC, and the Administrative Council. Faculty serve on each of these committees. The committees are described in the *Faculty Handbook* and in board policy. The Academic Senate President posts a current list of committees and members. A schedule of committee meetings is also posted regularly. The CTA contract identifies support in the form of reassigned time for the Academic Senate President. The contract also specifies that division chairs, who are on all of the major committees listed above, receive compensation.

The CTA Constitution and By-laws are maintained by the CTA President. All faculty members have contracts and receive updates as soon as possible after a change is made.

The Academic Senate President maintains the Academic Senate Constitution.

The Academic Senate Constitution and the CTA Constitution are available through the presidents of each organization.

Putting the *Board Policies and Procedures*, the *Faculty Handbook*, and the Academic Senate and CTA constitutions in a centralized location and online will facilitate access to faculty and staff.

B.9 The institution clearly states and publicizes the role of staff in institutional governance.

Description

The CSEA classified contract specifies that classified members serve on the Planning Committee, BAC, and all major campus committees. The CSEA President is on the Administrative Council. When hired, all classified personnel are given copies of the contract; all updates are provided quickly. The CSEA President announces assignments and institutional governance issues at the monthly meetings.

Self-Evaluation

The staff is made aware of their role in institutional governance. The CSEA President feels that the present method is effective.

B.10 The institution clearly states and publicizes the role of students in institutional governance.

Description

The ASB Advisor is responsible for facilitating student involvement in

institutional governance processes by assigning students to serve on various college committees which allows for student input into college governance.

The ASB President guides and directs the student body organization. The ASB President also represents the students on the Planning Committee. The Vice President of the ASB is the Student Trustee who represents the students on the Taft College Board of Trustees. Students are also represented on the following committees: Academic Policies and Procedures Committee, BAC, Curriculum and General Education Committee, Financial Aid Committee, Special Events Committee, and Student Equity Committee.

A student representative is on every accreditation standard subcommittee, which allows for student input into the self-study process.

Self-Evaluation

Taft College is fortunate to have a dedicated ASB advisor who is responsible for teaching leadership and guiding students through the planning process of activities. This training is useful for our students who serve on the various campus committees. It is also the advisor's responsibility to ensure that the students understand the importance of their input into college governance.

One-year terms of office and class schedule changes every semester have an impact on the long-term involvement of students who serve on campus committees and the true value of their input.

Committee chairs are aware of this problem and make every effort to solicit student input.

Supporting Documents

- 10.1 Board Agendas
- 10.2 Preamble to *Board Policies and Procedures*
- 10.3 Board Goals for the District
- 10.4 President's January 2002 Inservice Vision
- 10.5 1999 Midterm Accreditation Report

Planning Summary

This section of the Accreditation Report presents a distillation of the planning agendas identified by the accreditation study committees. Six general planning areas were identified. Planning items affecting the college community were categorized under one of these areas.

1. Taft College will develop a new planning process and Educational Master Plan.

The planning process will be as follows:

- Cyclical, allowing for continuous improvement, and have broad institutional representation
- Integrated with the budget process

The Educational Master Plan will include the following:

- A comprehensive Fact Book describing external and internal factors affecting Taft College, updated annually
- A Mission Statement, Vision, and institutional goals reflecting a learning college perspective
- A comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan incorporating alumni surveys, employer surveys, strategic scheduling of courses, an early alert system to identify and intervene with at-risk students, continuous evaluation and improvement of placement procedures, and continuous evaluation and improvement of online enrollment and registration procedures
- A comprehensive, long-term facilities plan
- A health and safety plan
- Multiple dissemination methods, including online, CD, and hardcopy

2. Taft College will develop new program review procedures for all instructional, administrative, and student services programs.

The program review procedures will do the following:

- Facilitate the alignment of the planning process with the budgeting process
- Identify measurable objectives for all learning outcomes
- Include a means to facilitate the tracking of projects by the college community
- Foster a learning college environment
- Include all modes of instructional delivery

3. Taft College will review and revise as necessary the West Kern Community College District Board Policies and Procedures, the Faculty Handbook, and the policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility.

The reviews will have target dates for completion and identify persons responsible for the reviews. The policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility will be based on templates from the Community College League of California (CCLC) and will include provisions for expressing faculty concerns and a section on faculty ethics.

4. Taft College will review its committee structure and functions and make changes if appropriate.

The review of the committee structure and functions will identify problem areas, clearly define committee functions, clarify reporting responsibilities, and make recommendations if appropriate for restructuring the committees. The new committee structure and functions will be published and made easily accessible to the college community.

5. Taft College will review its administrative structure and make changes if appropriate.

6. Taft College will develop and implement evaluation procedures for all faculty, administrators, classified staff, and Board of Trustee members.

Acronyms Used in the Self Study Report

Acronym	Meaning
ACCT	Association of Community College Trustees
ACT	American College Testing
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ASB	Associated Student Body
BAC	Budget Advisory Committee
CAN	California Articulation Number System
CCLC	Community College League of California
CCL	Council of Chief Librarians
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLEP	College-Level Examination System
COA	Commission on Athletics
CSBA	California School Boards Association
CSEA	California School Employees Association
CSU	California State University
CTA	California Teacher's Association
DLI	Distance Learning Institute
EOPS/CARE	Extended Opportunities Programs and Services/Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETUDES	Easy to Use Distance Education Software
FTES	Full Time Equivalency Student
GASB	Governmental Accounting Standards Board
GED	General Education
IELM	Instructional Equipment and Library Materials

Acronym	Meaning
IGETC	Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum
JPA's	Joint Powers Associations
LAN	Local Area Network
LLRC	Library Learning Resources Center
LoC	Libraries of California
MIS	Management Information Systems
MNS	Multimedia Networking Services
NACADA	National Academic Advising Association
NKTC	North Kern Training Center
PFE	Partnership for Excellence
PTK	Phi Theta Kappa
SEP	Student Education Plan
SISC	Self-Insured Schools of California
SSS	Student Support Services
SWACC	Statewide Association of Community Colleges
TCI	Taft Correctional Institution
TCIBB	Taft College Interest Based Bargaining
TIL	Transition to Independent Living
TTIP	Telecommunication and Technology Infrastructure Program
UC	University of California
WESTEC	Westside Energy Services Training and Education Center
WKCCD	West Kern Community College District

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