

Special Visit Report

Modesto Junior College
435 College Ave
Modesto CA 95350

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission
for Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited

Modesto Junior College

on

November 7, 2008

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Date: December 14, 2008

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

FROM: Deborah G. Blue, Ph.D., Team Chair

SUBJECT: Report of Special Visit
Modesto Junior College, November 7, 2008

Introduction

A comprehensive accreditation evaluation visit was conducted at Modesto Junior College in October, 2005. At its meeting of January 11-13, 2006, the Commission acted to require of Modesto Junior College a Progress Report and visit.

The Progress Visit Report team conducted the site visit to Modesto Junior College on November 19, 2007. The purpose of the visit was to verify the Progress Report prepared by the college and to determine if sustained, continuous, and positive movement toward institutional good practice had occurred. The team concluded that the college had made little progress in meeting the recommendations. At its meeting of January 9-11, 2008, the Commission reviewed the Progress Report submitted by Modesto Junior College and the report of the Progress Visit evaluation team which visited on Monday, November 19, 2007. The Commission took action to accept the report and acted to place Modesto Junior College on Probation and to ask that the college correct the deficiencies noted. The college was required to complete a Special Report in conjunction with the Midterm Report by October 15, 2008, to be followed by a Special Report Visit by Commission representatives. The Commission action letter advised the college that the Commission expected full resolution by the time of the Special Report in October 2008 of the issues identified in Recommendation 4, first noted by the Commission in June 2000, following the March 2000 comprehensive visit; and Recommendation 7, first noted by the Commission in January, 2006, following the October 2005 comprehensive visit. The Midterm Report and Special Report were expected to document resolution of the issues identified in Recommendations 4 and 7 as follows:

Recommendation 4: The team recommends that the College develop a planning initiative to address issues of staffing, support services, and programs on the East and West Campuses. (IB.2; IB.3; IB.4; IB.6; IIB; IIB.3a; IIIA.2; IIIC.1a,b,c) Note: This recommendation was also given to the college by the previous accreditation team (prior standard 4A.4).

Recommendation 7: The team recommends that the college develop and implement a strategic planning process for connecting long-term program and services planning to financial resource development, as well as to facilities, human resources, and technology planning, consistent with the mission of the college. In addition, the team recommends that to accomplish its plans, the college develop and implement a short-

term cyclical process that includes (a) clear institutional goals that are archived through tactical actions that are based on institutional data and research, allocation of resources, timelines, and primary office of responsibility, (b) a method to report accomplishments on each tactical action, and (c) measures of institutional effectiveness that document achievement of the college mission and demonstrate continuous improvement. (IA.4, IB, IIA.1, IIA.2, IIA.3, IIB, IIB.1, IIB.3, IIB.3a, IIC, IIC.1, IIC.1c, IIIA.6, IIIC.1a, IIIC.1d, IIIC.2, IVA.1, IVA.5)

The Special Report Visit to Modesto Junior College was conducted on Friday, November 7, 2008. The team found that the college had prepared well for the visit by arranging for meetings with the individuals and groups agreed upon earlier with the team chair and by assembling appropriate documents in the meeting room used by the team. Over the course of the day the team met with the President of the college, college Executive Team, Chancellor of the District, Vice Presidents of Instruction and Student Services, Academic Senate President, CSEA President and leadership, Associated Student President, SLO Coordinator, and college Director of Research. The team also observed meetings of the college's Planning and Budget Committee, and the Accreditation/Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

The College provided links to numerous evidentiary documents in its Special Report and Midterm Report, and provided the following documents of evidence in the team room during the visit: *Special Report, October 15, 2008; Midterm Report, October 15, 2008; 2008 Institutional Effectiveness; Strategic Plan 2008-2013; Accreditation and Midterm Report Update, November 7, 2008; and Decision Making at Modesto Junior College, 2008-2010.*

The entire leadership of Modesto Junior College, including the President and his executive team, Academic Senate, Classified Staff (CSEA), Associated Students of Modesto Junior College, and the administrative team are commended for the collegial and transparent manner in which the college is responding to the issues identified in Recommendations 4 and 7, as well as its planning agenda, and the remaining recommendations of the comprehensive accreditation evaluation team that visited the College in 2005, as reported in both the Special Report and the Midterm Report. The college is evolving into a culture of evidence with college research that is conducted to guide decision-making, and the establishment of budget and other resource allocation priorities. The college is also commended for the diligent and focused manner in which it is using data for resource allocation decisions, and providing evidence of institutional effectiveness by implementing processes for ongoing integrated planning, evaluation and improvement. The team observed the college's use of collaborative processes in their committee meeting processes, as a result of Interest Based Decision Making training the college received. The team observed positive, effective approaches to planning and problem solving in group interviews and committee meetings; and there were consistent reports of optimism for the future, and pride in the college's progress in transforming into a culture of evidence.

College Responses to the Team Recommendations

Recommendation 4: The team recommends that the College develop a planning initiative to address issues of staffing, support services, and programs on the East and West Campuses. (IB.2; IB.3; IB.4; IB.6; IIB; IIB.3a; IIIA.2; IIIC.1a,b,c) **Note:** This recommendation was also given to the college by the previous accreditation team (prior standard 4A.4).

At the time of the visit, the college had developed planning processes to address East / West Campus issues. Plans include the Facilities Master Plan, Educational Master Plan, and College Strategic Plan. The planning processes blend data from student records (e.g., program review) with division-level internal agreement on prioritization, along with various satisfaction or opinion surveys that inform decisions about programs and services at both campuses. The processes also provide opportunities for representative input from all constituent groups, through membership in the Planning and Budget Committee, the Accreditation / Institutional Effectiveness Committee, and the College Council. The team was able to verify these activities by reviewing committee minutes, conducting interviews, and observing committee meetings.

Through its new planning processes, the college implemented and/or is in the process of implementing a number of program, staffing, and service decisions, resulting in a clear distribution of programs between the campuses, and an increase in services available to students on the West campus. Ongoing review of these decisions is also in place, to make changes to initial plans as additional data become available.

Conclusion: The College has developed a clear planning initiative and process to address issues of staffing, support services, and programs on the East and West campuses. The planning processes are clearly defined and articulated, and include full constituent representation. The team believes that the college has resolved the issues in Recommendation #4, and meets the expectations of the Commission.

Recommendation 7: The team recommends that the college develop and implement a strategic planning process for connecting long-term program and services planning to financial resource development, as well as to facilities, human resources, and technology planning, consistent with the mission of the college. In addition, the team recommends that to accomplish its plans, the college develop and implement a short-term cyclical process that includes (a) clear institutional goals that are archived through tactical actions that are based on institutional data and research, allocation of resources, timelines, and primary office of responsibility, (b) a method to report accomplishments on each tactical action, and (c) measures of institutional effectiveness that document achievement of the college mission and demonstrate continuous improvement. (IA.4, IB, IIA.1, IIA.2, IIA.3, IIB, IIB.1, IIB.3, IIB.3a, IIC, IIC.1, IIC.1c, IIIA.6, IIIC.1a, IIIC.1d, IIIC.2, IVA.1, IVA.5)

At the time of the visit, the college had completed a strategic plan that includes revised vision, mission and core value statements, and describes the strategic planning process which includes seven steps: 1.) review and update of mission, vision, and core values; 2.) analyze data and identify issues; 3.) share vision and goals with stakeholders and

College Council; 4.) develop strategies and measures and determine resources/needs; 5.) assign responsibilities; 6.) implement plan; and 7.) closing the strategic planning cycle. The plan includes goals, specific objectives to achieve the goals, completion dates, positions with implementation responsibility, and a matrix that maps the college's and district's goals. In addition to completion of the college strategic plan, as noted in *Decision Making at Modesto Junior College 2008-2010*, a process was developed for the review of the College's master plans, as well as, a model for integrated planning, which was completed and presented in various college groups, and approved by the Academic Senate in mid-September, 2008.

The college streamlined its planning processes by reducing the number of committees from over 50 to four standing committees and eight advisory committees. The college created a taxonomy of college group types with five categories: governance (Academic Senate and standing committees), organizational, advisory, workgroups, and task forces; formed two new committees, Accreditation/Institutional Effectiveness, and Planning and Budget; developed and approved charters for standing committees, descriptions of organizational groups, and charges for advisory committees; and developed and implemented an annual master calendar for 2008-2009 with meeting dates and times for the four standing committees and other organization groups.

The college has prioritized three goals for focus in 2008-2009 as follows:

Goal #2: "Modesto Junior College will tie program review, including all instructional and student services programs, to resource allocation decisions: staffing, technology/instructional equipment and facilities." Goal #7: "Modesto Junior College will create a culture of evidence and measureable improvements." Goal #8: "Modesto Junior College will expand and enhance the learning environment and instructional delivery options."

During the visit the team observed the Planning and Budget Committee engaging in dialogue about the proposed faculty hiring prioritization work flow, and reviewing the division/unit 2008 Program Review results and prioritization of division/unit requests for faculty positions, classified positions, technology, equipment, facilities, and supplies, to guide the college's budget and resource allocation decisions.

Conclusion: The team found evidence that Modesto Junior College has utilized the assistance of experienced, retired community college administrators to facilitate the involvement of all college constituents in the development of a college strategic plan and the annual tactical elements identified in Recommendation #7 to ensure long-range planning, annual cyclical planning, implementation processes, evaluation processes, and a process for reporting on progress. Continued adherence to the planning processes and decision making processes should result in an ongoing system of integrated planning, evaluation and continuous improvements. The team believes that the college has resolved the issues in Recommendation #7, and meets the expectations of the Commission.