



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

10 COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD  
SUITE 204  
NOVATO, CA 94949  
TELEPHONE: (415) 506-0234  
FAX: (415) 506-0238  
E-MAIL: [accjc@accjc.org](mailto:accjc@accjc.org)  
[www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org)

Chairperson  
SHERRILL L. AMADOR  
Public Member

Vice Chairperson  
STEVEN KINSELLA  
Administration

President  
BARBARA A. BENO

Vice President  
SUSAN B. CLIFFORD

Vice President  
KRISTA JOHNS

Vice President  
GARMAN JACK POND

Associate Vice President  
JOHN NIXON

Associate Vice President  
NORVAL WELLSFRY

July 3, 2013

Mr. Jeff Akens  
President  
Carrington College California  
7801 Folsom Blvd., Ste 210  
Sacramento, CA 95826

Dear President Akens:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on June 5-7, 2013, considered the Institutional Self Evaluation Report and the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited Carrington College California March 4-7, 2013.

The Commission took action to **reaffirm accreditation** with the requirement to complete a **Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2014** demonstrating that the College has fully addressed Recommendation 3, resolved the deficiencies noted in the recommendation noted below, and fully meets Accreditation Standards. Reaffirmation is granted when an institution is found to substantially meet or exceed the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies, but recommendations on a small number of issues should be addressed.<sup>1</sup>

Recommendation 3: In order to fully meet the Standard, the College should take action to address the gap in student performance in writing as evidenced in the General Education Learning Studies conducted in 2009 and 2011. (II.A.1.c)

Recommendation 7: In order to fully meet the Standard and to provide appropriate services, the College should restore full access to the online library catalog. (II.C.1.c; II.C.1.d)

With regard to Recommendation 7, the Commission notes that, to the College's credit, the issue of lack of access to the library catalog for online students that was noted by the team was resolved shortly after the visit. The Commission wishes to ensure that steps taken to resolve the issue have been sustained.

Mr. Jeff Akens  
Carrington College California  
July 3, 2013

All colleges are required to file a **Midterm Report** in the third year after each comprehensive evaluation. Carrington College California should submit the Midterm Report by **March 15, 2016**. A Midterm Report indicates resolution of any team recommendations made for improvement, includes a summary of progress on College-identified plans for improvement as expressed in the Self Evaluation Report, and forecasts where the College expects to be by the time of the next comprehensive evaluation.<sup>1</sup>

Carrington College California conducted an educational quality and institutional effectiveness review as part of its self evaluation. The Commission suggests that the plans for improvement of the institution included in its self evaluation efforts be taken into account in the continuing improvement of the College.

The External Evaluation Report that was sent to the institution provides details of the team's findings with regard to each Eligibility Requirement and Accreditation Standard and should be read carefully and used to understand the team's findings.

The recommendations contained in the External Evaluation Report represent the best advice of the peer evaluation team at the time of the visit, but may not describe all that is necessary to come into compliance. Institutions are expected to take all action necessary to comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission wishes to remind you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, Carrington College California is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve educational programs and services and to resolve issues identified by the Commission.

A **final copy** of the External Evaluation Report is enclosed. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that the College give the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Team Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to College staff and to those who were signatories of the College Self Evaluation Report. This group should include the campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the College's Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Team Report, and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the College website. *Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no farther than one click from the institution's home page.* If you would like an electronic copy of the External Evaluation Team Report, please contact Commission staff.

Mr. Jeff Akens  
Carrington College California  
July 3, 2013

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational programs and services. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness, and educational quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. Danika Bowen, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
President, Board of Trustees, Carrington College California  
Dr. Roland "Chip" Chapdelaine, President, Los Angeles Trade Technical College, Team Chair

Enclosure

---

<sup>1</sup>Institutions preparing and submitting Midterm Reports, Follow-Up Reports, and Special Reports to the Commission should review *Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports to the Commission*. It contains the background, requirements, and format for each type of report and presents sample cover pages and certification pages. It is available on the ACCJC website under College Reports to ACCJC at: (<http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>).

# **EVALUATION REPORT**

## **Carrington Colleges of California**

7801 Folsom Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95826-2600

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited  
The Carrington Colleges of California March 4, 2013 through March 7, 2013

Dr. Roland "Chip" Chapdelaine, Chair

## LIST OF TEAM MEMBERS

Dr. Roland "Chip" Chapdelaine (Chair)  
President  
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Dr. Mary Gallagher (Team Assistant)  
Vice President,  
Administrative Services  
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Dr. Laura Demsetz  
Professor of Engineering and CIS  
College of San Mateo

Ms. Evelyn Lord  
Head Librarian  
Laney College

Dr. Julie Marty-Pearson  
Manager of Testing and  
Assessment Office  
Cal State University, East Bay

Mr. Don Palm  
Dean  
Davis Center  
Sacramento City College

Dr. Rajen Vurdien  
President  
Fullerton College

Ms. Donnetta Webb  
Dean of Advanced Technology,  
Sacramento City College

Ms. Christie Dam (Chair Assistant)  
Executive Assistant to the President  
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Dr. Anna Badalyan  
Dean, Institutional Effectiveness and  
Innovation  
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Dr. Diane Dieckmeyer  
Vice President, Academic Affairs  
Norco College

Dr. Richard Mahon  
Professor of Humanities  
Riverside City College

Dr. Anne Newins  
Vice President  
Personnel  
Merced College

Dr. Randy Peebles  
Associate Vice Chancellor – Economic  
Development  
South Orange County Community College  
District

Dr. Teresa Ward  
Instructor, Language Education and  
Development  
Butte College

Mr. Charalambos (Harry) Ziogas  
Director of Accounting  
Los Angeles Community College District

## SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INSTITUTION : Carrington College California

DATE OF VISIT : March 4 - March 7, 2013

TEAM CHAIR : Dr. Roland "Chip" Chapdelaine  
President, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

A team of 16 professional educators visited Carrington College California on March 4 through March 7, 2013, for the purpose of evaluating the institution for reaffirmation of accreditation. The team members prepared for the visit in advance by reading the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER), reviewing evidence, and preparing a draft report of their conclusions regarding the College response to the recommendations from the most recent educational quality and institutional effectiveness review, their draft analysis of the institution's performance on their assigned standards, and their opinion of the overall Self Evaluation Report. The team arrived for the visit fully prepared to validate the information contained in the Self Evaluation Report and to evaluate the College against Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College (ACCJC) Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Policies. The chair had occasion to request additional information for the team in advance of the visit and the information was provided promptly by the College.

The team found that the College was prepared for the site visit. The team also confirmed that there was an understanding by the College of the accreditation process. The accommodations for the team worked very well, with a large conference room at the hotel for team meetings, and a secure team meeting room on all campus sites as well as the home office, fully equipped for team members to complete their work efficiently.

The Institutional Self Evaluation Report for Carrington College California was written in such a manner that reads like an executive summary. While the report provided information on the processes used by the institution to meet the Eligibility Requirements and the Commission Standards, the citation of evidence was sparse so the team was challenged with seeking the evidence needed. Responses to the Standards were relatively brief, and the team expended considerable effort searching for evidence to support statements made in the report. Of concern was the level of redundancy present in the supporting documents. This gave an impression that there was limited evidence available to confirm widespread participation in assessment and program review. Some critical aspects of data were likewise missing in support of the responses to the recommendations. Examples included the number and percentage of courses with SLO's, the number and percentage of courses which have completed a full cycle of PLO and SLO assessment, evidence that mapping of course SLO's to PLO's had occurred, the current number of full and part-time faculty, specific information related to library holdings, and examples of the "data packages" provided to faculty for the purpose of program review. Additionally, the responses to each recommendation were relatively brief and under-developed. The team was provided an electronic link to evidence files, but there were some technical difficulties associated with accessing the electronic information. The institution was responsive to providing requests for access and with

requests for additional information, so the team was able to complete their work. The team's overall impression was that Carrington College did have evidence to support how it meets accreditation standards, the College lacks the experience with inserting all of the evidence needed into the ISER.

Visits at all of the campuses presented information in support of the ISER and created an image of the College that was almost hard to imagine because the portrayal was so positive. At the site visits, the team confirmed that what was written was indeed the College culture – one of caring and nurturing resulting in substantial numbers of students achieving success. A familial feeling penetrates the campus and creates a great team atmosphere. Campuses behave as a small community, with some formalized processes in place to ensure that student learning remains the center of the campus dialog and resources are utilized efficiently.

This is a College with solid programs in workforce training delivered by committed faculty and staff.

### **Commendations**

Commendation 1: The team commends the College for the degree to which faculty and staff at all campuses know their students and their students' circumstances personally and work to promote the success of all students, regardless of the circumstances from which students come.

Commendation 2: The team commends the College's commitment to the ASPIRE program, which provides their students with a level of support that is unusual in higher education - students and their families are provided access to information and counseling that meets and substantially exceeds the standards.

Commendation 3: The team commends the College for its commitment to excellence as seen in the collaboration between the library and program directors working together to ensure that all students achieve institutional information competency outcomes, and in consistently supporting student learning through exceptionally high-quality, welcoming, and cutting edge laboratories and facilities.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: In order to further improve, the College should develop a specific and consistent process for reviewing the missions statement, including an evaluation of the process used to update the mission statement. (I.A.4)

Recommendation 2: In order to further improve the programs and services, the College should continue to formalize and document processes relating to college wide communication and participation around institutional effectiveness. This includes providing additional information to the general student body on the roles, capacity, and accomplishments of the Student Advisory Committee. (I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.7; II.B.3.b; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.3)

Recommendation 3: In order to fully meet the Standard, the College should take action to address the gap in student performance in writing as evidenced in the General Education Learning Studies conducted in 2009 and 2011. (II.A.1.c)

Recommendation 4: In order to further improve, the College should consolidate the integrated program review and assessment processes in a single document, the program review document. Additionally formalizing and clearly delineating processes and functional responsibilities, including the role of faculty and staff in making decisions, will further improve operations, including the process through which curriculum is developed, proposed, reviewed, and revised. (II.A.2.f; III.A.5; IV.A.2; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b)

Recommendation 5: In order to further improve, the College should infuse ethical citizenry, effective interpersonal skills, and cultural diversity and sensitivity into the curriculum. (II.A.3.c)

Recommendation 6: In order to further improve, the College should indicate in the grievance/complaint section of the catalog how complaints could be made to ACCJC and other regulatory agencies. (II.B.2.c)

Recommendation 7: In order to fully meet the Standard and to provide appropriate services, the College should restore full access to the online library catalog. (II.C.1.c; II.C.1.d)



## INTRODUCTION

Carrington College California was originally founded as Northwest College of Medical Assistants and Dental Assistants in 1967 in Sacramento, California. In 1983, the college was purchased by the Education Corporation of America (EdCOA) which, in turn, was acquired by U.S. Education Corporation in 2003. In 2008, DeVry Inc., a global provider of educational services, acquired U.S. Education Corporation. As the programs they offered extended beyond the world of healthcare, they became known as Western Career College and remained so until 2010.

The mission of Carrington College California is to provide learning opportunities to individuals in the communities it serves through postsecondary programs of study, which include general studies and professional preparation in career-focused majors. The Carrington College California philosophy centers on outcome-based learning. The College's focus is on retention, career services, job performance, and outcome-based learning allowing the College the ability to adapt to its changing needs.

Carrington College California offers 13 certificate and 22 Associate degree programs in: Accounting, Architectural Design Drafting, Business, Computer Tech, Criminal Justice, Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Graphic Design, Health Care Administration, Health Info Tech, Medical Billing and Coding, Massage Therapy, Medical Assisting, Physical Therapist Assistant, Pharmacy Technology, Paralegal Studies, Registered Nursing LVN to RN, Renewable Energy, Respiratory Care, Sales & Marketing, Surgical Technology, Veterinary Technology and Vocational Nursing.

The College has nine instructional campuses located in: Antioch, Citrus Heights, Emeryville, Pleasant Hill, Pomona, Sacramento, San Jose, San Leandro, and Stockton with Sacramento and San Jose having the largest numbers of enrollees at 834 and 560, respectively. At the associate degree level, programs with the highest graduation rates were Dental Hygiene (97%), Diagnostic Medical Sonography (93.1%), Surgical Technology (82.9%), Registered Nursing (80.7%), and Respiratory Care (76.6%). At the certificate level, programs with the highest graduation rates included Vocational Nursing (76.6%), Diagnostic Medical Sonography (76%), Massage Therapy (74.6%), and Dental Assisting (74.5%). (These rates were calculated based on the number of students who had a status of "graduate" and excludes students who were a "no show" or "cancel" on enrollment.)

The College has 144 full-time faculty (40 hours per week), 72 permanent part-time faculty (20-39 hours per week), and 53 adjunct faculty (fewer than 20 hours per week). The average student to faculty to student ratio is 15:1 across all campuses. Staff members, including administrators at campuses and the home office, total 184 and most are employed full time.

The College serves approximately 4,300 students throughout their 9 instructional sites. The majority of students are within the 22 to 24 year old age range, with females making up about 80 percent of the student population. White students made up the largest ethnic group at the College at over 30 percent, with Hispanic/Latino students following as the College's second largest ethnic population at 27 percent.

Carrington College California was initially accredited by ACCJC/WASC in June 2001. ACCJC/WASC approved a change of ownership in January 2003. In February 2004, the purchase of the college by U.S. Education Corporation (USEC) was finalized and after submitting a Substantive Change report to ACCJC/WASC, the College opened campuses at Citrus Heights and Stockton. The College expanded in August 2005 by merging Silicon Valley College (SVC) with Western Career College. The ACCJC/WASC re-accreditation process was completed in March 2007 and accreditation was reaffirmed in June 2008. The College regularly communicated proposed changes to ACCJC. The following actions have occurred since the last comprehensive review in 2007:

- September 2007 – a Substantive Change was approved for change of ownership of the College's parent corporation, U.S. Education Corporation, to DeVry Inc.
- June 2009 – a Substantive Change was approved for a new campus location in Pomona, CA and the offering of four programs through online delivery: Criminal Justice, Health Care Administration, Health information Technology, and Graphic Design.
- September 2009 – a Substantive Change was approved for ownership of selling stock of parent corporation U.S. Education Corporation, to DeVry Inc.
- December 2009 – a Substantive Change was approved for two new campus-based programs: Physical Therapist Assistant and Fitness Training.
- January 2010 – a Substantive Change was approved for a change of the college name and mission.
- May 2010 – ACCJC approved General Studies and General Business online programs.
- July 2010 – ACCJC approved new online programs in: Computer Technology, Renewable Energy, and Paralegal Studies.
- September 2010 – ACCJC approved the Oxnard and Long Beach campuses.
- November 2011 – Substantive Change was denied for Veterinary Technology and Veterinary Assisting programs.
- March 2012 – Substantive Change was denied for Veterinary Technology Associate of Science program and Computer Networking Associate of Science program.
- October 2012 – ACCJC approved to move Vocational Nursing program to the Antioch campus.

The team reviewed past evaluation reports, as well as follow up and midterm reports, received and analyzed the self evaluation, requested and reviewed additional evidence provided by the College, and extensively viewed evidentiary information provided by the College.

## COMMENDATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

### Commendations

Commendation 1: The team commends the College for the degree to which faculty and staff at all campuses know their students and their students' circumstances personally and work to promote the success of all students, regardless of the circumstances from which students come.

Commendation 2: The team commends the College's commitment to the ASPIRE program, which provides their students with a level of support that is unusual in higher education - students and their families are provided access to information and counseling that meets and substantially exceeds the standards.

Commendation 3: The team commends the College for its commitment to excellence as seen in the collaboration between the library and program directors working together to ensure that all students achieve institutional information competency outcomes, and in consistently supporting student learning through exceptionally high-quality, welcoming, and cutting edge laboratories and facilities.

### Recommendations

Recommendation 1: In order to further improve, the College should develop a specific and consistent process for reviewing the missions statement, including an evaluation of the process used to update the mission statement. (I.A.4)

Recommendation 2: In order to further improve the programs and services, the College should continue to formalize and document processes relating to college wide communication and participation around institutional effectiveness. This includes providing additional information to the general student body on the roles, capacity, and accomplishments of the Student Advisory Committee. (I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.7; II.B.3.b; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.3)

Recommendation 3: In order to fully meet the Standard, the College should take action to address the gap in student performance in writing as evidenced in the General Education Learning Studies conducted in 2009 and 2011. (II.A.1.c)

Recommendation 4: In order to further improve, the College should consolidate the integrated program review and assessment processes in a single document, the program review document. Additionally formalizing and clearly delineating processes and functional responsibilities, including the role of faculty and staff in making decisions, will further improve operations, including the process through which curriculum is developed, proposed, reviewed, and revised. (II.A.2.f; III.A.5; IV.A.2; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b)

Recommendation 5: In order to further improve, the College should infuse ethical citizenry, effective interpersonal skills, and cultural diversity and sensitivity into the curriculum. (II.A.3.c)

Recommendation 6: In order to further improve, the College should indicate in the grievance/complaint section of the catalog how complaints could be made to ACCJC and other regulatory agencies. (II.B.2.c)

## EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1**

*The College must fully implement program review and integrate it with institutional planning.*

The College has made tremendous improvements in the area of program review and its integration into planning. The College fully implemented program and services review and integrated it with institutional planning and resource allocation processes. From the site visit interviews indicated that faculty and staff are knowledgeable and involved in the program and services review process were evident. The Campus and Online Program Review Handbooks provide purpose, policies, process flow charts, timeline, procedures, tools, the topics that need to be discussed as well as evidence examples that need to be provided in a program review document. Program review integrated into the institutional planning through campus and global recommendations that translates into a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) or the Strategic Plan depending on the scope of the recommendation. It is evident that program and services review became an essential component of the College planning and improvement processes.

The College has implemented program review for instructional programs and services. The program review cycle has been assessed and adjusted. The College has adopted continuous improvement plans as a means of linking program reviews with planning. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

### **Recommendation 2**

*The College must identify and implement student learning outcomes at course, program and institutional levels, then use assessment results to improve student learning as part of an integrated planning process.*

The College identified and implemented student learning outcomes at course, program and institutional levels. The acquisition and utilization of eLumen, a web based software package, enables the College to document and monitor assessment results and use those results for decision-making, planning, and improvement. Posters with institutional learning outcomes were centrally placed in many classrooms. In addition, from the team's interviews and observation, College wide (including students) awareness of student learning outcomes and assessments was evident. Student learning outcome assessment results informed institutional planning and it impact resource allocation. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

### **Recommendation 3**

*The College should strengthen its research capacity in order to support institutional effectiveness, data collection and analysis, and provide support for assessment of student learning outcomes.*

The College has appointed a Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment at the institutional level. Implementation of the eLumen system for collecting data, specifically assessment data, provides at the institutional level for consistent means of reviewing SLO data at all levels of the institution. The College has begun developing institutional level SLO reports that are advanced up from the course and instructor level up through to the institutional level.

Based on interviews and provided documents the following activities strengthened the research capacity the College:

- Hired a Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment
- Acquired and deployed eLumen to enable the documenting and monitoring of assessments as well as generate aggregated reports
- Appointed Student Success Center managers as campus assessment liaisons, who assist faculty in data analysis and improvement of dialogue around student learning outcomes
- Offered professional development workshops on SLO assessment and analysis

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

### **Recommendation 4**

*The College must embark on a systematic approach to planning for and evaluation of its general education program. The College must provide appropriate leadership and resources for this program (e.g. library holdings, facilities, and qualified faculty and staff).*

The College has specified general education courses for all of its programs. The College has developed and implemented appropriate planning for and evaluation of its general education program. The College assesses its institutional learning outcomes for all general education courses. To support general education courses, the College has expanded hours for tutoring services on each campus and allocated \$40,000 per year for library books to support GE education in 2010 and in 2011. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

### **Recommendation 5**

*The College must fully implement a program review process for instructional programs and student services incorporating a formalized assessment of that process. The College must strengthen its institutional dialogue where broad-based participation by all constituencies (e.g. faculty, students, staff, and managers) is central to that implementation and assessment.*

The College has implemented program review for instructional programs and services. The program review cycle has been assessed and adjusted based on feedback from the College community. The College has adopted continuous improvement plans as a means of linking program reviews with planning. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

#### **Recommendation 6**

*The College must proceed with its plan for evaluating institutional, program, and course Student Learning Outcomes. The College must consider specific ways to assess the achievement of core Student Learning Outcomes that are appropriate to the criteria already identified and discrete from grading of student assignments.*

The College has assessed student learning outcomes and made improvements based on analysis of outcomes data. Institutional outcomes include an Information Literacy outcome. There was evidence presented that confirms that the assessment of SLOs is discrete from the grading of student assignments. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

#### **Recommendation 7**

*The College must develop and implement a planning process to address a self-identified shortfall in student support services, particularly the general education print collections in the libraries and tutorial services.*

The College allocated \$40,000 in 2010 and 2011 each to update and increase the GE book holdings of each campus library. A collection development policy is in place and titles (totaling \$18,000 per campus in GE and medical/nursing titles) have been identified. The College has begun purchasing these titles. Part of the program review process is specified outcomes for tutoring services and plans to evaluate the results of targeted strategies including online tutoring and the integration of tutoring with majors in 2013. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

#### **Recommendation 8**

*The College must refine and develop the integrated planning process, with particular emphasis on systematic assessments of Program and Services Review, student learning outcomes, and human, physical, technology and financial resource allocation.*

Based on the *Integrated Planning Manual*, the College has developed an Integrated Planning Process that links the College mission, all institutional goals and plans, program and services review which include assessment of student learning outcomes, prioritization and resource allocation. The planning process has been evaluated and modified based on this review. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

## **Recommendation 9**

*Faculty and students must be given a more substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance. The College must evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the mechanisms for participation and dialogue among management, faculty, staff, and students.*

The Faculty Council and Student Advisory Council provide an explicit, if limited, role for faculty and students in College governance. The College has implemented mechanisms for dialogue and participation and the College understands their need to evaluate the effectiveness of participation in College governance and continue to improve those methods. This recommendation has been fully addressed.



## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS**

### **1. AUTHORITY**

The authority for Carrington College California rests with the Board of Trustees. The College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. According to the *California Education Code, Title 3, Division 10, Part 59, Chapter 8, Article 4, § 94874 (i)*, “an institution that is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges,” is exempt from the approval to operate requirement in the State of California.

### **2. MISSION**

The Carrington College California mission is clearly defined, adopted, and published by its governing board in 2010. The mission statement does mention a focus on outcome-based learning, and although it does not specify “student learning”, it is clear that outcome-based learning is student learning.

### **3. GOVERNING BOARD**

The governing Board of Carrington College consists of five members who are responsible for the quality, integrity, and financial stability of the College. The Board ensures the institution’s mission is being effectively carried out. Its membership is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill its responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has adopted a Board Policy for ethical conduct, which contains language to address breaches of its code. The Board follows a conflict of interest policy, which requires that financial interests are disclosed and do not interfere with the fiscal integrity of the College. The team confirmed the majority of the members of the governing Board have no employment, family, or personal/financial interest in the College. There are currently five Board members, one of whom is an employee of the Carrington Colleges Group, the other four are not affiliated with the College.

### **4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Carrington College has a full-time chief executive officer appointed by the Board of Trustees who is delegated the authority to lead the College. The College president reports to the Board.

### **5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY**

Carrington College California has more than ample administrative capacity. The College is managed by a president with a clear commitment to the College, with sufficient administrative staff to provide the expertise and leadership necessary to support the College’s mission and the students it serves. Despite having nine on-ground campuses and online curricular offerings, every faculty member and student has ready access to individuals with oversight responsibility for enrollment services, financial advising, library and student support services and, most of all, a very supportive instructional environment.

**6. OPERATING STATUS**

The team confirmed that all nine campuses of the Carrington College California group are operational, with students actively pursuing its degree programs.

**7. DEGREES**

All of Carrington College California programs lead to a certificate or degree.

**8. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

The Carrington College California programs are aligned with the mission, and are based on recognized higher education fields of study. The team confirmed that there was sufficient depth and breadth of content taught at a good level of quality and rigor appropriate to the certificates and degrees offered, and culminate in specific outcomes. There are 22 associate degree programs offered by the College that are at least two years in length.

**9. ACADEMIC CREDIT**

The team found evidence that the College complies with the clock to credit hour requirements generally accepted in degree granting institutions. The team confirmed that one semester of credit is awarded for 15 hours of lecture, for 30 hours of applications, or for 45 hours of laboratory or practicum.

**10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT**

The College defines and publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and achievement outcomes in the College Catalog and syllabus. The College conducts regular and systematic assessments on an established schedule to ensure that students who complete programs are achieving these outcomes no matter where or how they are offered.

**11. GENERAL EDUCATION**

The team found evidence that general education courses are designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. This will be further strengthened as assessment results are used to improve student learning

**12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

The team found evidence that the Governing Board of Carrington College California has adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility.

**13. FACULTY.**

A majority of the College courses are taught by full time faculty, all of whom meet established qualifications. The faculty play the central role in curriculum development and review, as well as assessment of learning.

**14. STUDENT SERVICES**

The student services provided by the college are appropriate and support personal, professional, and academic development.

## **15. ADMISSIONS**

Carrington College California admissions policies are relevant to its mission and are specific about the qualifications required for each of its programs.

## **16. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

The College provides sufficient library resources in a variety of formats (print, online and audiovisual). Information competency instruction is offered through orientations, individual instruction and assignment-targeted instruction through an online chat reference service. The College provides both onsite and online tutoring services at all campuses. Each campus provides computers, printers, and study space for students. Remote access to electronic resources is provided with a secured login.

## **17. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The majority of the College revenues are through Title IV programs. There was evidence that the institution monitors and complies with the 90/10 rule percentage as of 6/30/12 was 80.63%, for 2011 was 85.28%, and for 2010 was 85.85%. The College relies on gross tuition revenue, enrollment fees, and tuition income to fund its operations. The team found these revenues are adequate to support student learning, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability.

## **18. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

The team confirmed that the College annually undergoes an external financial audit by a certified public accountant and meets the financial requirements. The team also confirmed compliance with federal requirements.

## **19. INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

The College has formalized its program review and planning, including the evaluation of its planning processes to document the assessment of student learning and ensure that the educational goals of its students are being accomplished. This review has been developed in a systematic manner and is an ongoing activity for the College. The College utilizes an Institutional Effectiveness Plan as a means of assuring educational outcomes are met and institutional effectiveness is paramount to the activities of College faculty and staff. The College has reached the level of Continuous Quality Improvement in the assessment of student learning, including the linkage to the program review process and institutional planning.

## **20. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Carrington College California publishes an online catalog which describes all of its programs and major policies as they affect students. The catalog clearly and prominently addresses the College's mission, programs (which are quite varied in length), academic freedom and student integrity expectations, financial aid, learning student support services, names of the corporate and college governing board members, and the names and preparation of administrators and faculty.

The College and campus websites provide accurate and current information about the institution. Prominent tabs on the home page take the prospective student or the public to

additional information regarding Programs of Study, Campus Locations, Financial Aid Support, Student Services, and Accreditation Information. Additional tabs lead to information regarding the College's mission, the College catalog, and Student Consumer Information. The last tab takes the visitor to even more detailed information and required public disclosures regarding Crime and Security, Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention, Student Privacy, and Complaint Processes, among others. The College's Transfer Credit Policy is included on this page, as are additional tabs leading to campus information, information about student diversity, and graduation rate data by campus and by program. The site is clearly laid out and gives every indication of making information readily available to the public.

## **21. RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION**

The Team confirmed that the College provides assurance that it complies fully with the eligibility requirements, Accreditation Standards, and policies of the Commission, demonstrating honesty and integrity in representations to all constituencies and the public and in relationships with the Accreditation Association and other external agencies.

## **STANDARD I – INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS**

### **Standard IA – Mission**

#### **General Observations**

In general the mission statement for Carrington College California is very broad. The constant changes at the institution over the last several years, with name changes, mergers, adding campus locations and programs, all impact the institution as a whole and its ability to keep up with the demands of its growing and ever-changing student population. The Self Evaluation Report does give some specific examples of how implementation of areas around this Standard have occurred more recently, but the broad nature of the mission itself, and the generalized manner in which a great deal of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) is written made it a challenge to determine the effectiveness of the mission as stated.

Student learning is generally mentioned in the mission of the College. The development of institutional student learning outcomes is a positive step, although the format of those ISLOs as only words, with more descriptive statements involved, may pose a challenge for alignment purposes.

One area generally lacking in the Self Evaluation Report is that of DE/CE areas. There is a brief reference to online courses, such as in the area of Standard I.A and in its mission, but no specifics are given in the report or in the evidence, especially about how different the needs are with online type of courses, curriculum, students, etc.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

The institution does have a mission statement that defines its educational purposes broadly. The statement only refers to "in community it serves" - giving no specifics about the student population, the diversity of the students, the needs of students, etc., despite the consistent information presented at the campuses about the focus on the individual students, the needs that are special to the population that they serve, and how they support students throughout their educational experience.

The mission statement does mention a focus on outcome-based learning, and although it does not specify "student learning", it is clear that outcome-based learning is student learning. The processes used to foster institution-wide commitment to student learning are found in program review, strategic planning, and master planning. It is only seen as broadly reaching to student learning at the mission level, but gets more specific as one drills down in the master plan and other processes, such as program review. There was evidence as to the development of institutional student learning outcomes. The College needs to continue to focus on alignment to program and course level, including General Education (GE), and collecting data based on that alignment, which has begun through the eLumen process.

The only mention of Distance Education (DE) is where online courses are listed under how the College achieves its mission. There is no mention of specific DE commitment in the mission or master plans.

There is little evidence in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) that the institution has investigated the relevance for its community and student population that courses, specifically GE, are offered online; however, the commitment to DE has been modified on campuses through the development of the Student Success Centers, which support students who are completing their GE coursework online by allowing students to use computers on campus for their online work. The Student Success Center directors and other staff and faculty on campus also monitor students' progress in online coursework, giving them one-on-one support as needed, while aligning that support to the courses the students are taking within their degree program at the same time in the classroom. Program directors and faculty work together to make decisions about when GE courses should be taken within the format of their degree program curriculum, aligning with the content and skills students are learning in the classroom with what they will learn in the online/DE format. (I.A.1)

The mission statement was reviewed and revised when the institution changed its name from Western Career College to Carrington College California. The College submitted a Substantive Change Report to ACCJC in September 2009. Evidence shows that feedback was received at the campus level on the mission and sent up to the home office, where that feedback was incorporated into the new mission, which was then proposed to and approved by the Governing Board in September 2010. (I.A.2-3)

There was evidence that the mission statement is included on all College documents. The mission is also a part of any major change processes from the master plan, to strategic planning, to budget processes, and programs and service reviews. The evidence showed conflicting information on how often the mission statement is reviewed: in the strategic planning process it states that the mission statement is revisited both bi-annually and annually, but in master plan document it states that the mission statement is reviewed and updated every three years. The Self Evaluation Report stated that proposals for any new programs and campus locations are reviewed based on the mission statement; however with the mission being as broad as it is it is unclear if this is an effective process for review. (I.A.4)

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the institution's mission statement broadly defines its educational purposes with respect to the student population at large that it serves across all of its campuses. The institution has a strong commitment to its students and their achievement of learning both at the certificate and degree levels. The institution has developed and improved its processes for fostering its commitment to student learning, including strategic planning and programs and service reviews. The mission statement only briefly mentions the DE component of their educational programs despite the current efforts on all campuses with online general education coursework. The institution holds regular discussions about and involving the mission statement through its strategic planning and program and service review processes. More attention during these processes should focus on how the institution is addressing the needs of its student population and specifically how this is being done in the online courses students are completing.

The current mission was approved by the governing board in 2010, after a process by which feedback was requested at all levels of the institutions and by all stakeholders during which the development of the mission was communicative effectively to all involved. This statement continues to be central to all planning and decision making process institution-wide. The entire process would be improved if the College develops a specific and consistent process for reviewing the mission statement, including an evaluation of the process used to update the mission statement.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

**Recommendation 1:** In order to further improve, the College should develop a specific and consistent process for reviewing the missions statement, including an evaluation of the process used to update the mission statement. (I.A.4)

## **Standard IB – Institutional Effectiveness**

### **General Observations**

In general the Self Evaluation Report on Standard IB was well written. The institution made substantial improvements in developing policies and procedures to establish very robust ongoing and systematic evaluation, planning and resource allocation processes. The integration of program and services review, outcome assessments, institutional planning and resource allocation is evident.

The areas that need more attention and improvement are the college wide dialogue, communicating and participating around these processes, defining and assessing student learning outcomes in student support services, as well as focusing more on using the assessment results to improve student learning as the central part of an integrated planning process.

### **Findings and Evidence**

According to Self Evaluation Report, interviews, and documentation provided to the team, the institution maintains ongoing dialogue through established routine (weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually) managerial and committee meetings. The meetings are structured by individual campuses as well as across campuses by institutional roles and subject matter. In addition, program and services review and student learning outcome assessment processes include a dialogue component. The scope and involvement of the meetings vary from individual campus faculty meetings to an annual Town Hall meeting and institution wide Executive Council meetings. The subjects discussed in the meetings diverge accordingly, but are mainly focused on administrative and managerial issues. Programs and services review and student learning outcome assessments are the primary mechanisms for dialogue on student learning.

In the Self Evaluation Report, the College highlights an example of a curricular change which was a result of dialogue around course assessment outcome data and stated, "Course outcome data and course student learning outcome data aligned and strongly indicated a need for curriculum change."

The program review schedules for onsite and online programs are currently not aligned. Based on the *Online Program Review Handbook*: "Currently Carrington College California is in the process of aligning onsite and online program review schedules. Alignment will be completed in 2014. As part of this process all online programs went through the review process in 2012."

In addition, the College is moving toward a standardized syllabus across campuses and course delivery mode, whether online or on the campus. The College believes "The standardized syllabi provides students with a familiar, consistent, high-quality syllabus that is available to them regardless of what course they take, online or on the campus... [it] acts as the foundation for good teaching and assessing."



Dialogue about student learning and the teaching methods used to improve outcomes, is central to the conversation of faculty as outcomes are assessed annually. Department faculty engage in conversation about student learning outcomes at least twice a year. Results of these discussions are used to create the Program Improvement Plan for the campus. The College faculty record course outcomes at the conclusion of each course and they document improvement strategies in their Section Improvement Plan. The team found that dialogue about improving teaching and student learning is evident and ongoing. (I.B.1)

According to the Self Evaluation Report, the College goals and priorities are derived from its evaluation and planning integration process in support of its mission statement, and are articulated in the Strategic Plan (long term) or Continuous Improvement Plan (short term). The planning and implementation processes follow the strong hierarchical structure of the institution. Based on the provided evidence, the Strategic Plan was shared and comments and suggestions were received from different constituency groups such as faculty, staff, and students. In addition, the program review process includes a step for "Global Recommendations" that affect all campuses. These recommendations go to the Executive Committee for review and inclusion in the College priorities.

The College established an annual review and evaluation process for implementation of the Strategic Plan. All goals in the Strategic Plan have detailed objectives. Most of the objectives have measurable target benchmarks. The inclusion of a column on "Progress to Completion (with indication of dates)" of CIP (Continuous Improvement Plan), with monthly input by a responsible person, is a powerful monitoring and evidence gathering tool.

It is clear that the institution initiated procedures and processes directed specifically for DE/CE activities including separate processes for program review of online programs in 2012. Strategic Goal 1 (Student Success), 2 (Teaching and Learning Excellence) and 4 (Institutional Effectiveness) have specific objectives for online activities. (I.B.2)

The College has made tremendous improvements in the area of program review and its integration into planning. The College fully implemented program and services review and integrated it with institutional planning and resource allocation processes. From the site visit interviews, the team confirmed the knowledge and involvement of faculty and staff in the program and services review process. The College developed a comprehensive, well organized Campus and Online Program Review Handbook. The handbook provides purpose, policies, process flow charts, timeline, procedures, tools, the topics that need to be discussed, as well as evidence examples that need to be provided in a program review document.

Program review is integrated into the institutional planning through campus and global recommendations that translate into the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) or the Strategic Plan depending on the scope of the recommendation.

Based on the Strategic Plan development process document, the institution developed a very robust planning and evaluation cycle for a bi-annual Five-Year Strategic Plan. On an annual basis the College compiles and reviews: Previous Year's Strategic Plan Progress Report (revised monthly by the Executive Council); Program and Service Areas Reviews (a third of

programs/services each year); Campus Operations Reviews (monthly by the Executive Council and the campus management teams); Accreditation Self-Study & Institutional Master Plan; Market Assumptions (revised annually by the President, Executive Council, and Carrington College Group); List of Successes and Opportunities (developed annually by the Executive Council, Executive Campus Directors, and the President). Based on the Integrated Planning Manual, planning, review and evaluation, prioritization, and resources allocation processes are integrated into a systematic cyclical process.

According to the Institutional Effectiveness Plan, data is one of the main components of the plan; for example, there is a weekly and quarterly evaluation of data related to goals and targets of the Strategic Plan by the College senior management, campus executive directors, and deans. The above team also reviews student achievement outcomes on a weekly and quarterly basis. The data include: course attendance and unscheduled absences, graduation rates, licensure exam pass rates, and placement rates in occupation areas. (I.B.3)

Based on the campus interviews the College integrates planning and assessment for DE/CE technical and human resources needs into its processes. The College is knowledgeable about current federal regulations related to DE/CE. (I.B.3)

Based on Strategic Plan development process, every other year in February or March, the College President makes a call to the entire college community for comments on the Strategic Plan. In addition, according to the Self Evaluation, "The College has a formal process by which faculty and staff input is considered into its decisions, plans, and long-term goals." In order to provide input, an employee may follow the organizational chart hierarchy or go through its representative at the College committees. However, based on the results of faculty and staff survey (2011) on budget and planning knowledge, this communication mechanism does not work efficiently and needs improvement. (I.B.4)

The Budget Committee is involved in the Strategic Plan development and approval processes. First based on the Strategic Plan draft, they provide the "Preliminary Financial Forecast." Upon approval of the plan, it is forwarded to the Committee for inclusion in the College Operating Budget and Capital Expenditure Budget. This mechanism ensures the availability of resources to fulfill plans and inclusion of these plans into the budget of the College. Several examples were shared by faculty and staff that highlighted the changes that occurred as a result of the strategic plan implementation. (I.B.4)

According to the Self Evaluation and provided documentation, the College collects and distributes, on a scheduled basis, a variety of reports at different levels. For example, based on the Pulse weekly report, the College makes commendable efforts to provide data related to enrollment, attendance, performance, student retention, graduation, placement and services provided. Other reports that are used for information dissemination are: meeting Minutes from Executive Council, Faculty Advisory Committee, Student Advisory Committee, Educational Management Team, President's and Academic newsletters, and the Strategic Plan Report.

At the same time, as it was mentioned earlier based on the staff survey, the campus community is not satisfied with their knowledge on the campus budget and planning processes. One of the comments from the survey by a campus faculty member highlights this issue: "I think that the level of individual's knowledge of the budget depends on both how interested they are in the process and whether they seek out the information, and whether the information is readily given on the process. I feel like most things within the organization, that communication is key, and there seems to be breakdown in communication about some of the major things that effect [sic] us."

Based on the interview with the College administration, they are aware of this issue and have been implementing several strategies to improve college wide communication. The result of 2012 survey shows improvement in the satisfaction on knowledge and participation of faculty and staff with regard to program review and planning processes. (I.B.5)

The program and services review along with assessment of student learning outcomes and analysis of student survey provide the primary mechanisms the institution utilizes to assess the effectiveness of its programs and services, and the effectiveness of its processes. The program directors and deans are surveyed annually on their program review experience and suggestions on improvement. (I.B.6)

The Self Evaluation Report as well as team interviews held during the campus visit with faculty and staff provided examples demonstrating improvement as a result of effective planning. However, the main focus in the provided examples was on the improvement of the policies and procedures on administrative processes rather than on student learning. There were several examples demonstrating the impact on student learning. For instance, student learning outcome assessments of the Medical Assisting program revealed a gap between performance and theory-related outcomes. This data triggered institution wide dialogue on identification of strategies to close this gap.

At the same time, the student and administrative support services did not specify service outcomes rather services are linked and mapped to the institutional level outcome. But a closer look into their program review documents revealed that each program has identified program specific goals with measurable outcomes.

It is advised that each student learning and support unit formulate and assess learning outcomes related to their activity area in order to focus on particular improvements that can be achieved by each service area. (I.B.7)

## **Conclusion**

The College made substantial efforts and acted upon on all recommendations received from the previous site visit evaluation team. The institution made tremendous improvements in developing policies and procedures to establish very robust ongoing and systematic evaluation, planning and resource allocation processes. The integration of program and services review, outcome assessments, institutional planning and resource allocation is

evident. The College has reached the level of Continuous Quality Improvement for student learning outcomes, program review, and institutional planning.

The College makes a commendable effort to set and monitor on regular bases: measurable goals related to enrollment, attendance, performance, student retention, graduation, placement and services provided.

The areas that need further improvements are the college-wide dialogue, communication and participation around processes regarding improvement of institutional effectiveness, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation and reevaluation. In addition, in order to assure the effectiveness and enable systematic review for appropriate modifications and continues improvement in student learning and support service areas each activity area needs to formulate and assess learning outcomes related to their activities in order to focus on improvements that can be achieved by each service area.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

Recommendation 2: In order to further improve the programs and services, the College should continue to formalize and document processes relating to college wide communication and participation around institutional effectiveness. This includes providing additional information to the general student body on the roles, capacity, and accomplishments of the Student Advisory Committee. (I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.7; II.B.3.b; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.3)

## **STANDARD II – STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **Standard IIA – Instructional Programs**

#### **General Observations**

The College has made considerable progress since its last accreditation visit. The team found evidence in Minutes of a Dean of Academic Affairs meeting that participation in the ACCJC accreditation process has helped the college shift toward a more student-centered culture that engages faculty in curriculum development, program review, and decision making. The Senior Director of Academic Affairs is quoted as saying, “We have come so far in six years. The growth is incredible – new committees, flow of set-ups, Governing Board, etc. We are moving along better than we ever have. We still have improvements to make, but we are planning for them.” The College appears poised to grow and develop in ways that will serve students even more effectively and encourage greater involvement of College employees in decision making processes.

Generally speaking, the Self Evaluation Report is well organized. The necessary components of a descriptive summary, self-evaluation, actionable improvement plans, and lists of supporting documents are present. The content of the report, however, is underdeveloped and missing sufficient examples of evidence and explanation, such as those mentioned in the previous section of this report. Overall, it is clear that the institution is attempting to address the Standards and sub-standards; however, the integration of assessment and program review needs to be strengthened, as does the assessment of SLO’s and PLO’s.

Actionable improvement plans for Standard II.A are outlined in the Self Evaluation Report. Some aspects of the plan have already been implemented, and completion dates for all items are in 2013-2014.

- Evaluation and revision of the program review process to more fully utilize institutional research to identify student learning needs, assessment of achievement, and utilization of assessment results as the basis for continuous improvement of programs (2014).
- Evaluation and revision of program review to be conducted every other year as opposed to every three years (2013).
- College-wide task force to revise Technology Plan to align with Strategic Plan and Education Master Plan (2014).
- Training plan for faculty so Technology Plan can be implemented (2014).
- Establishment of Equity team to create a plan to guide course development, provision of services to diverse students, and development of more inclusive campus culture (2014).
- Task Force for Civic and Community Engagement will publish white paper to improve preparation of students to participate fully in their communities (2013).
- Articulation of process for program discontinuance as part of Program Review guidelines (2013).
- Articulation of process for new programs as part of Program Review guidelines (2013).

Because Carrington College California (CCC) is comprised of nine distinct sites, across vast geographical distances, it functions similarly to a multi-college district in which numerous services are centralized at the Home Office. While this model of centralization may be the most efficient way to provide college-wide services, it appears to be leaving a gap in “boots on the ground” leadership at specific campuses; and with faculty support in particular. There is some concern regarding faculty longevity within the institution. Many “lead faculty” positions are listed as TBD across all campuses.

An example of the impact to site-specific leadership is the following. In response to Recommendation 3, a position called the *Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment* was created and housed at the Home Office in Sacramento. The position was filled by an individual, who in earlier documents appeared to serve as the Chair of the SLO Committee (Program Area, Education). According to meeting Minutes, the most recent meeting of the SLO Committee was March 2012. Prior to that meeting the only previous meeting Minutes refer to November 2011. At the time of the March 2012 meeting, the individual was the chair of the committee. One can surmise that the change in the employee’s position to dean left a vacancy in the leadership of the SLO Committee and thus, the committee ceased to meet. This assumption is supported in the Self Evaluation Report which makes reference to the SLO Committee needing to be “reconstituted.” This is an example of the ways in which the turnover of campus-specific leadership may hinder the overall work of the College in assessment and program review.

Though there appears to be a great deal of transition in the positions held by various individuals within the College, site leadership is well-maintained and a core team of managers and faculty continue to meet the overall needs of the College. It is common for faculty members to become managers in the College, providing increased longevity, stability and institutional memory. For example, in one case, an individual who had previously been a faculty member in the Dental Assisting program is now a Dean of Allied Health at the Home Office.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The mission of the institution, which is focused on “programs of study, which include general studies and professional preparation in career-focused majors,” is evident in CCC’s 22 vocationally related Associate of Science Degrees and 13 Certificates of Achievement. At the time of the Self Evaluation Report, all general education courses were offered in an online format with 263 students enrolled online across 10 programs. The College was asked to submit a Special Report to respond to concerns regarding its online educational programs and did so in May 2012. In conducting the Self Evaluation, the College has demonstrated a commitment to improving services for students in the online environment. One way it has done so is by instituting 24/7 online tutoring services. It has written an Online Program Review Handbook to provide professional development support for online faculty, increase academic advising for online students, develop a Critical Thinking course (COL205), restructure its course sequencing model, specifically in math, and increase its online library holdings. The shells for online courses are standardized in nature, promoting ease in navigation. Links for tutorial support, lectures, assignments, and library resources are clear.

Faculty lectures and supporting documents are of a professional quality. In the case of the SOC 101 course, the lecture and writing assignments were rigorous and thoughtful. The efforts of the College are creditable in its response to the Commissions' concerns.

The College studied the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve the online program, and student retention data indicated that none of the interventions made a significant difference in student retention, which remained at approximately 30%. The College is to be applauded for moving to suspend all online associate degree programs effective January 2013. The College will continue to offer 19 general education courses online, but students who enroll in those classes will also take onsite classes. The College plans to survey students and faculty to determine interest in a hybrid degree program, and if there is sufficient interest, a pilot hybrid program will be launched. (II.A)

The institution ensures that its offerings, including DE offerings, fit the stated mission of the institution as printed in the catalog. The College recently changed its name and redefined its mission to include liberal studies, business, and advancing technologies. The overarching mission of the College is to provide learning opportunities through postsecondary programs of study that integrate liberal studies and general education with professional preparation in career-focused majors. (II.A.1)

The College makes an effort to align student learning needs with Student Success Center support resources. Student utilization of Success Center support services is tracked and monitored closely, and the College makes adjustments and changes to services as necessary, for example, enhancing library holdings. The College recognizes the need to utilize institutional research in identifying student learning needs and has included this in the Institutional Master Plan to address Standards. The College created a Critical Thinking Course (COL105) to assist students in their preparation of online courses; however, although student satisfaction with COL105 was high, skills acquired in the six-week course did not increase retention in subsequent online classes. Professional Advisory Committees were noted, indicating the institution's identification of and responsiveness to the needs of its community. (II.A.1.a)

The College offers technical degrees and certificates which include hands-on learning experiences for degree-specific courses. Students who pursue an associate's degree are able to complete general education courses online. Simulation Theater classrooms provide Medical Assisting students the opportunity to practice taking patient vitals, while other lab classrooms allow Pharmacy Technician students to practice filling subscriptions. Veterinarian Technician classrooms contain live animals and have full-time Doctors of Veterinarian Medicine on site. Lecture/lab classrooms are well-equipped with technology, and relevant equipment and materials to promote student learning. (II.A.1.b)

The institution conducts Learning Studies into Student Learning Outcomes in areas identified by the College. Program reviews in General Education identified a number of gaps in the General Education program, specifically in the area of writing. The findings of the Learning Studies have been shared with faculty, but no changes to the curriculum have been made. Learning support for students has been enhanced, however. Library holdings have increased

(\$40,000 augmentation in 2010 and 2011) and student progress is tracked at Student Success Centers, where managers are able to identify at-risk students through weekly progress updates and provide academic coaching immediately if necessary. The College has also launched an online critical thinking course, COL105, to assist in bridging gaps in student preparedness and taking college classes – especially in the online environment. Students have access to online learning support services, such as Tutor.com, the HUB resource center, Career Services, and eBooks. The College has established 5 Institutional Student Learning Outcomes and evidence of assessment of these learning outcomes, and faculty dialogue about their assessment, are evident. Evidence also supports the mapping of course SLO's and ISLO's. (II.A.1.c)

Program Directors, who are subject matter experts, and teaching or non-teaching faculty, develop student learning outcomes in consultation with other faculty in their area of study. Faculty members assess student learning outcomes at the end of each course, inputting SLO data into an electronic data management system. Course data and strategies for improvement are discussed at faculty meetings. Campus managers monitor attendance. Student achievement, course completion rates, grade point averages, and graduation rates are monitored annually. (II.A.2.a)

The institution relies on the expertise of Program Directors (teaching and/or non-teaching faculty), in consultation with other faculty, to develop student learning outcomes for courses, certificates and degrees and assessments at the end of each course. (II.A.2.b)

Instruction is rigorous and appropriate to the character of the programs offered. Many programs prepare students to pass external examinations. (II.A.2.c)

According to the Self Evaluation Report, the College held a dialogue about students' learning needs and possible pedagogical innovations appropriate to the student population. Student demographic data indicates that students are frequently first-generation college students who lack academic preparation and are not familiar with online learning. Faculty professional development has also focused on student success strategies. Full-time faculty are required to complete three Max Knowledge courses per year in order to increase effectiveness in meeting the needs of diverse adult learners. Newly hired online faculty must complete a four week course before they are permitted to teach. (II.A.2.d)

Program Review is conducted across programs and sites, and it will be conducted every two years instead of every three years in order to give the College an opportunity to remain current and serve students effectively. The College has a systematic and established program review process in place led by Program Directors (PD's) who meet with faculty initially in order to "launch" the process. Faculty are provided with "data packages" consisting of success, retention, SLO assessment data, and placement data. The faculty are given time to review the data and then surveyed based on their perceptions. An example of a question on the survey for an online Business course was: "Do the courses reflect student learning outcomes?" The faculty responses are synthesized by the PD's with samples of direct quotations interspersed within the document. The program review process has, as part of its components, a means by which ideas are either forwarded to the Executive Council for



consideration (Global Recommendations) or to the campus to develop a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). (II.A.2.e)

There is a Program Review template for all programs. Executive summaries of program reviews across technical disciplines indicate ongoing, systematic evaluation and planning. Program Reviews included discussions about student performance, progress through curricula, and pass rates on professional exams. Recommendations coming out of the program review process go through college or campus funding activities. One of the concerns with the overall program review process is that the program review documents contain a summary of survey data, but do not contain any direct data. Integration between SLO assessment and program review could be strengthened. Though assessment of SLO's exists, it is not incorporated into the program review document. The "data packages" referred to in the description of the process were not evident in the supporting documents, though isolated elements of the packages such as SLO reports were present for some courses. Also, a recurring theme within the faculty comments was that there is a delay in receiving feedback on ideas or requests which are sent to the Executive Council. (II.A.2.f)

Student learning is monitored, measured and evaluated at course, program, and institutional levels. Project Syllabration was a project implemented in 2012 to standardize curriculum and assessment within programs across campuses. Standardization of assessment instruments continues to be a focus of the program review process. The team found that the College has achieved the Continuous Quality Improvement level for SLOs. (II.A.2.g)

The team found evidence that the College awards credit according to criteria clearly stated in the College catalog. Student learning is evaluated in a number of ways and students are apprised of their progress on a regular basis. One semester unit of credit is awarded for each 15 hours of lecture, 30 hours of applications, or 45 hours of laboratory or practicum (clinical, fieldwork, or externship experience) completed. (II.A.2.h)

The team found evidence that the College awards degrees and certificates based on student completion of course and program requirements stated in the course catalog. (II.A.2.i)

The College has a clearly stated philosophy with regard to General Education, and that philosophy is outlined in the College catalog. Institutional SLOs and GE SLOs are closely aligned. (II.A.3)

Students are exposed to five areas of general education: Communication, Social and Behavioral Science, Humanities, and Natural or Physical Science. The College specifies general education courses required for each program. Institutional Student Learning Outcomes are assessed in all vocational and general education courses. (II.A.3.a)

The following Institutional Learning Outcomes are assessed and mapped with course SLO's:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Information Management and Technical Literacy
3. Personal and Professional Development

4. Communication
5. Respect and Responsibility

The College serves students who often are underprepared for college, and especially the online learning environment. In order to provide the foundational experiences necessary for success, first-term students are required to take a critical thinking course, COL105, which covers learning-to-learn, self-motivation, and self-esteem. CDV198 in all programs helps prepare students to write resumes, interview for jobs, and search for jobs. (II.A.3.b)

Many of the College's programs encourage student involvement in the community. Examples include volunteering to feed the homeless, volunteering at Blood Source, and attending city government meetings. (II.A.3.c)

Students earning associate in science degrees complete at least 60 units that include general education courses in addition to courses in their major. Each program is clearly defined in the College catalog. (II.A.4)

Students are required to complete externships in their field of study. Placements include positions in medical offices, hospitals, pharmacies, animal hospitals and the like. Students are prepared to pass licensure exams and these exam pass rates are a part of programmatic accreditation reviews. (II.A.5)

The College provides clear, accurate information about courses, programs, and services. The College catalog contains course descriptions, programs of study, and various policies relating to transfer and graduation. The College has developed a standard syllabus template in an effort to formalize expectations for the information contained therein. All syllabi contain instructor contact information, course descriptions, textbooks, course schedules, SLO's and grading policies. Tuition costs are published on the website by program as well as the expected length of each program. (II.A.6)

Requirements for all courses and programs are described in the course catalog. The Dean of Academic Affairs makes the final determination about whether to grant transfer credit for courses completed at another institution. Students are informed that courses at Carrington College California are considered terminal. No representation is made concerning the transferability of any credits to any baccalaureate institution. (II.A.6.a)

When programs are eliminated or changed, students are given information and support necessary for success. Entire programs are not eliminated until all students in particular programs have had an opportunity to complete the program. (II.A.6.b)

Information published in the College catalog and other publications is clear, accurate, and current. When changes are made to any policy, practice, or College requirement, a Catalog Addendum is published to update information. (II.A.6.c)

The team found evidence that the Governing Board of Carrington College California has adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility. (II.7)

The team found evidence that all course curriculum and instruction is based on clearly stated objectives and expected student learning outcomes established at the course and program level. (II.A.7.a)

Policies pertaining to student expectations and academic dishonesty exist and are published in the College catalog and on the website. (II.A.7.b)

Ethical and professional codes of conduct are clearly outlined in the College catalog, Employee Handbook, and Student Handbook. (II.A.7.c)

Carrington College California does not offer curricula in foreign locations. (II.A.8)

### **Conclusion**

The College has made considerable efforts to respond to the concerns of the Commission in regards to the quality of its online instruction, assessment of Student Learning Outcomes and program review. As a result of successfully obtaining ACCJC accreditation, the institution has substantially increased its identification and assessment of student learning outcomes. Also, planning practices in regards to programs, resource allocation, and faculty development have become more participatory and inclusive of all stakeholders. The recognition of what it means to be a citizen could be strengthened by infusing ethical and citizenry, effective interpersonal skills, and cultural diversity and sensitivity into the curriculum.

The College does not fully meet this Standard.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendation 3: In order to fully meet the Standard, the College should take action to address the gap in student performance in writing as evidenced in the General Education Learning Studies conducted in 2009 and 2011. (II.A.1.c)

Recommendation 4: In order to further improve, the College should consolidate the integrated program review and assessment processes in a single document, the program review document. Additionally formalizing and clearly delineating processes and functional responsibilities, including the role of faculty and staff in making decisions, will further improve operations, including the process through which curriculum is developed, proposed, reviewed, and revised. (II.A.2.f; III.A.5; IV.A.2; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b)

Recommendation 5: In order to further improve, the College should infuse ethical citizenry, effective interpersonal skills, and cultural diversity and sensitivity into the curriculum. (II.A.3.c)

## **Standard IIB – Student Support Services**

### **General Observations**

Carrington College California has worked diligently to meet the Accreditation Standards. The ability to adapt to the needs of the students as individuals is a hallmark in the delivery of services to support student learning. Specific programs exist such as the Student Success Center at each campus to assure that students have the resources they need to successfully complete their program of study. The concept of student-centered learning abounds in the College system and results in faculty and staff committed to doing whatever is possible to meet student needs. Students have a sense of confidence because they know their instructors are working to help them succeed. There is a very positive feeling that is exhibited on all of the campuses that students and faculty are satisfied working together to achieve results.

The review and improvement of the delivery of services to students is an important component of institutional effectiveness. This was evident to the team in the Self Evaluation Report, the evidence reviewed, and the campus visits.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Carrington College is a private, for-profit institution. The data indicates a relatively diverse student body in terms of ethnicity, with a high percentage of female students. Ethnic/gender information about distance education students was not available. Fewer than 100 students are taking general education classes on line. The number of students enrolled in distance education classes has been dropping, as online paraprofessional programs are being phased out. A report was received that indicated that approximately 380 students are in distance education programs related to paraprofessional careers. All online programs will be terminated within a year to eighteen months. Therefore, most demographic information is provided for the specific programs in which students are enrolled on campus in combination with general education online courses.

The majority of online students have access to on campus support services because they are dually enrolled in on campus and online classes. These include availability of tutoring (online and in person), the Student Success Centers, career services, and assistance with financial aid. (II.B)

The team reported consistency of student support services among each of the campuses. Services are targeted toward helping students succeed in their program of study. These efforts include providing tutoring, access to learning resources, and specific personal support services designed to help the students overcome whatever obstacles may interfere with successful completion of the program.

Career Services is a key department at each campus, assisting with externships, job seeking skills, resume writing, mock interviews, and other activities intended to assist students to successfully find employment. During the evaluation team visit, both students and staff were positive about the program and the level of responsiveness to student needs.

There are few students with major disabilities at the College. The College will help facilitate accommodations for students, but is not obligated to provide services such as interpreters for students with hearing impairments. Student handbooks provide information on where students can seek assistance for disabilities. Team members observed students at campuses with disabilities whose accommodation needs were being met.

The sites are accessible, with Braille on room numbers, elevators, ramps, and wide hallways. Classrooms were not crowded and aisles were wide.

Orientation and support structures are built into the distance education courses, including tutorials on how to navigate the system, complete assignments, communicate with the instructor, and utilize resources. Online tutoring is available. The Student Success Center staff provides support and encouragement.

During a group meeting, some students expressed discomfort with the level of support provided for some distance education classes. This response was quite different from their comments about their classroom instructors, who uniformly were highly praised for their teaching skills, curricula, and interest in their students. They stated that they go to Carrington for "hands on" education, and are not always comfortable in a format that does not allow immediate response from their instructor. Other students seemed comfortable with the distance education courses and the level of support received. As noted above, Carrington College has recognized the differing learning styles of their students and is phasing out many of their online programs. (II.B.1)

Carrington College meets accreditation standards for required information in their catalog and in their student handbooks. The catalog is available both electronically and in hard copy. The catalog is updated on a monthly basis. Students also are notified in writing if there are any major changes to their programs. Students normally have one year catalog rights. The information is consistent between documents, and student materials mirror each other from campus to campus. Information about faculty/student interaction is provided in multiple formats. (II.B.2; II.B.2.a)

Policies regarding admissions, fees, refunds, transfer of credit, grades, academic progress, withdrawals, absences, internet/online usage, privacy, Title IX, non-discrimination, drug screening, crime, and other student oriented policies were found in the catalog. The College catalog contains an academic freedom statement. Although the catalog does list the contact information for ACCJC and other regulatory agencies contact information, it does not indicate in the grievance/complaints section of the catalog how and where to file complaints to the ACCJC and other regulatory agencies. However, the contact information is detailed in the student handbooks. (II.B.2.b; II.B.2.c)

There is extensive information about financial aid policies and procedures in the catalog, online, and in student handbooks. Costs for each program are specified. There is considerable variation in the cost for each program, possibly dependent on length, staffing, and facility

requirements. Policies were consistent whether being offered via distance education or in person.

During interviews, students reported that the information in the catalog, student handbooks, and other materials is accurate and consistent with their experience with faculty and staff. They stated that all financial, attendance and other student requirements are explained clearly. In particular, they noted that financial aid staff attempt to find all possible resources for them, and have assisted family members who are not Carrington College California students with their financial aid applications. Student satisfaction surveys describe an overall high level of satisfaction with student service programs and the information provided to them. (II.B. 2.a through d)

Carrington College identifies the core learning support needs of their attendees, including the Success Centers, ASPIRE program, financial aid, and others. The ASPIRE program is an assistance program for both the student and the student's family. A toll free phone number is used to connect with a professional by phone so that the student or family member can talk about any issue that is affecting their daily life and/or academic performance. These services are prepaid and made available through DeVry Inc., and are free for the student and their family members to use. The ASPIRE Student Assistance Program works with the student or family member to find a solution that meets their specific needs. The team observed at least 100 student contacts to the ASPIRE program each quarter. (II.B.3)

Access is equitable, regardless of service delivery method. Carrington College California is committed to a high degree of personalized service. (II.B.3.a)

In terms of "intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development," student involvement at the campuses is targeted towards community service and activities related to the students' majors. A number of civic activities related to health care were listed in the Self Evaluation. Evidence was provided about student involvement variety of community activities, such as dental clinics and blood drives. Fliers about various career related events were provided, and there are family oriented celebrations during holiday periods. The team observed interaction between classes, including group activities and team teaching. During interviews, students volunteered other activities, such as visits to each other's programs.

Minutes of the Student Advisory Committee indicated that not all sites are always represented at meetings. During interviews with students, their familiarity with the Student Advisory Council was limited. There is regular turnover of the representatives, due to the short duration of the programs. This requires regular and frequent training by both staff and mentor students. Representatives are nominated and selected by the faculty members. Students also may volunteer to serve on the committee. There are two representatives from each site and meetings are held at least quarterly. During interviews, students were uncertain about what questions, complaints, or requests should be directed to the Student Advisory Committee, faculty, or other support staff. Students perceive their faculty members, particularly the program directors, as their advocates and the first source of contact. (II.B.3.b)

Academic advising is provided by instructors, program directors, and the dean of education or executive director. The programs have specific courses already delineated, so once students are admitted, the focus is on academic progress and career planning/placement. Students were complimentary regarding both online and in-person tutoring services provided. The open door policy of the programs is much appreciated. The ASPIRE program is readily available via telephone. In this case, students understood that the issues that would be of concern to them are likely to be private and/or involve support needs that would not be available through Carrington College California, such as housing issues, emotional or substance abuse problems, or child care.

Career advising and placement activities are a high priority for the College. Program requirements include mock interviews for students so that they will be more competitive when entering the work place. Advisory committees for different programs are prominently posted in hallways, and advisory committee members appear to be valued for their ability to provide input for students, programs, and for networking. Career Center employees actively seek externship sites for the students and assist with job placement.

During interviews, several students noted that they appreciate the mentoring approach that is incorporated in both academic and non-academic programs. Senior students are encouraged to provide tutoring, information, and motivation to newer students. (II.B. 3.c)

Several fliers were provided in the evidence about diversity related activities. Examples included field trips to traditional Chinese medicine shops and personal projects about students' own ethnicity. A recent trip to a museum dedicated to the history of medications was mentioned. Several students gave examples of other types of diversity related subjects that are addressed in the class. On an interpersonal level, students emphasized that they felt that there is high degree of acceptance of diverse student backgrounds in their classes. (II.B.3.d)

The College recently discontinued the use of an assessment exam called the CPAT, and moved to using the Wonderlic. The Wonderlic measures both English and math skills, as well as cognitive potential. The College is satisfied with the assessment, which takes less time than the previous exam. Students also may use SAT scores, high school transcripts, or other college transcripts for admission. The minimum Wonderlic score varies by program, with more difficult programs requiring higher scores. The Wonderlic is used widely in similar colleges and for private industry. Evaluation of placement procedures and instruments occurs on a regular basis. (II.B.3.e)

Carrington College maintains student records in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Transcripts and student records are maintained according to common standards. Hard copy information is kept locked securely in vaults. Student records are maintained electronically using the Campus U management information system. Other documents are scanned electronically using ImageNow software. (II.B.3.f)

The processes and schedule for student service reviews are appropriate. Student services program reviews and SLO documents were posted online. The College has moved to

completion of program reviews every two years, instead of three, as in the past. Examples of how student services were modified were shown in the reviews. One example was the incorporation of more practice interviews at both the Career Centers and in classes. Team interviews with the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and campus staff indicated that assessment of student services SLOs are a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis. The Dean indicated that he is searching for additional mechanisms to analyze how student services programs directly affect their success. (II.B.4)

## **Conclusion**

The College demonstrates its commitment to student success through extensive support services such as tutoring, Student Success Centers, and programs to help resolve issues and problems that occur outside of the College realm. The success of students in their program of study is at the heart of all services made available to students. The students expressed belief that they had a better chance of succeeding because of the environment the College creates through the support of faculty, program directors, and staff.

The College is to be commended for the provision of the ASPIRE program, which provides their students with a level of support that otherwise would be difficult to achieve in an institution with widely distributed and small sites. Students are provided access to information and counseling that would be difficult for them to obtain elsewhere, and in many cases, could be quite expensive. The college should provide students information on how and where to file a complaint with the ACCJC in the grievance/complaints section of the catalog.

The College meets this Standard.

## **Recommendations**

Recommendation 2: In order to further improve the programs and services, the College should continue to formalize and document processes relating to college wide communication and participation around institutional effectiveness. This includes providing additional information to the general student body on the roles, capacity, and accomplishments of the Student Advisory Committee. (I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.7; II.B.3.b; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.3)

Recommendation 6: In order to further improve, the College should indicate in the grievance/complaint section of the catalog how complaints could be made to ACCJC and other regulatory agencies. (II.B.2.c)



## Standard IIC – Library and Learning Support Services

### General Observations

The Self Evaluation Report is lacking in quantitative description and qualitative analysis of library and learning resources. Terminology can be confusing, especially with regard to the role of personnel. There is an avoidance of the term “librarian,” except within the context of the *Ask-a-Librarian* online chat reference service. However, there is evidence that the College provides sufficient quality library and learning support services for its students.

### Findings and Evidence

Each campus has a Student Success Manager who provides training and assistance to students in use of library and learning resources, maintains and develops the library collection, and conducts outreach to program directors and faculty. The Director of Library Services is the only Student Success Manager credentialed as a librarian with a Master of Library and Information Studies, and as such provides training and guidance to the campus Student Success Managers.

Students have access to an excellent core collection of full-text general and discipline-specific (e.g. nursing, dentistry, sports medicine, psychology, vocational, etc.) databases, including a *Points of View* database that supports general education (GE) students. The College has purchased a core GE book collection and a core nursing and medical book collection for each campus. The College is exploring collaboration with DeVry University on acquisition of an electronic book resource to support GE and discipline coursework. (II.C; II.C.1)

The library has a collection development and maintenance policy that identifies specific criteria for selection and weeding of materials, as well as a process for collection assessment and evaluation. Program directors and faculty are consulted regarding library purchases and collection assessment in their discipline areas. (II.C.1.a)

The Student Success Managers provide onsite information competency instruction through library orientations and individual assistance. The non-librarian Student Success Managers receive ongoing training (including onsite visits) and guidance in teaching information competency skills from the Director of Library Services. The College also participates in an online *Ask-a-Librarian* chat reference service. The service is provided in cooperation with libraries in the DeVry educational community with only credentialed librarians contributing. In addition to chat reference assistance, the Student Success Centers provide a hybrid model of onsite information competency instruction and assistance to online general education students, who are also enrolled in face-to-face programs. (II.C.1.b)

Each campus library is open five days a week with varying schedules of at least 40 hours per week. Database collections are available to all students remotely via secured login. The online library catalog (*InMagic*) was temporarily unavailable during the site visit following technical changes involved in a recent upgrade. In addition to library resources, the Student

Success Centers provide a range of support services, including tutors, computers, study tables, educational software, printers and copiers. Online students also have access to *Tutor.com*, an online tutorial program. (II.C.1.c)

Students are required to present student identification cards and complete a book checkout card in order to borrow library materials. Library staff monitors the collection during open hours. All library holdings are cataloged in the *InMagic* integrated library system and assigned call numbers for the shelves. (II.C.1.d)

In coordination with DeVry University, the College has contracted with *Ask-a-Librarian* for provision of online chat reference services and EbscoHost databases. The Director of Library Services regularly monitors usage and session activity on both systems. (II.C.1.e)

The Library completed program review in 2008 and 2011. The 2008 program review contains evidence of identification of information competency outcomes that are aligned with critical thinking and information literacy institutional outcomes, assessment methods, analysis of assessment results and use of results. The Director of Library Services and Student Success Managers are currently engaged in program review of the library and learning resources under the new Student Success Center configuration. (II.C.2)

## **Conclusion**

The Library and Program Directors should be commended for working together to explore strategies that ensure that all students achieve institutional information competency outcomes. In an expanding project, fully implemented at one campus, the Library and Program Directors identify a course in each certificate and degree program for which a substantial research paper is assigned. In collaboration with the instructional faculty, the Library provides formalized information competency instruction in support of the research assignment.

The College does not meet this Standard.

## **Recommendations**

Recommendation 7: In order to fully meet the Standard and to provide appropriate services, the College should restore full access to the online library catalog. (II.C.1.c; II.C.1.d)

## STANDARD III – RESOURCES

### Standard IIIA – Human Resources

#### General Observations

The institution's discussion in its Self Evaluation Report of this Standard is very similar to its responses to the recommendations of the previous evaluation team. Each element is discussed and several policies and proposed programs are presented as evidence of the institution's approach to meeting this Standard. The institution demonstrates a good general sense of the Commission's Standard. The Self Evaluation Report has very little specific evidence, but the evidence provided to the team at the team visit has substantiated the College's descriptions of established practices.

#### Findings and Evidence

College policies and procedures suit the Standard and the intention behind the Standard. The team found the College has set appropriate standards for faculty qualifications. Faculty satisfy minimum qualifications for their subject matter. Those minimum qualifications are directly related to the mission and they have been updated recently. Instructors who teach all or part of the courses online go through an orientation to online instruction that includes a four-week course on teaching online.

Faculty play a role in the selection of all new faculty, although that role is most often played through the person of the Program Director (identified in their policies as a manager, rather than a faculty member). The faculty hiring process can be strengthened if the College policies describe the composition of interview committees. Also, the *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty in Carrington College California* (November 2012) has crossed out the position and minimum qualifications for Librarian. However, the current Director of Library Services, who coordinates library services for the College, is a credentialed librarian with a Master of Library and Information Studies from an American Library Association-accredited institution. (III.A.1; III.A.1.a)

The process for evaluating employees and encouraging continuing improvement is based on an admirable statement of values (built into the acronym TEACH). Evaluations occur on a regular cycle and "Individual Performance Plans" (IPP) are developed based on each evaluation. This system is designed to be transparent and provide the basis for continuous improvement. A review of IPP's on file shows that the system is effectively tied to review of data at the program and institutional level. They are still implementing their SLO tracking process in a way that will allow for effective course-level SLO evaluation and course level SLO's are not explicitly a part of faculty evaluations. Of special interest was evidence of how faculty are evaluated for their online classes. The online faculty are observed each term and evaluated according to a form developed specifically for online courses. (III.A.1.b)

The faculty evaluation documents are quite comprehensive and clear, and the college has developed an admirable Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) strategy for working with identified deficiencies. While none of these documents include specific references to student

progress on learning outcomes in the categories for evaluation, a review of actual evaluations and discussions with faculty and managers provided evidence that effectiveness in producing appropriate learning outcomes is a key element in evaluations. (III.A.1.c)

The College has a clear and comprehensive code of professional ethics. Code of conduct training is offered as a part of the routine professional development training and all employees have taken part in this training. (III.A.1.d)

The College has established clear baselines for appropriate Instructor to Student ratios and they maintain those ratios. The college's faculty rosters show 93 full-time faculty and 66 part-time, with an additional 92 part-time faculty and one full-time whose entire load is online. Part time is defined as 20 to 39 hours and thus that faculty also spends significant time in contact and consultation with managers and full time faculty. The ratio of managers to faculty is difficult to measure because the Program Directors act as both managers and faculty. All constituencies report, though, that there is good communication across all levels, evaluations and observations are done regularly (and frequently) and the feedback is focused on student success and the quality is good. Students and faculty show high satisfaction with staff support (students are especially enthusiastic in response to survey questions and in the open forums, both) and the quality and preparation of the staff. (III.A.2)

The College has established a good model for personnel policies and procedures. Evidence of this is the diversity of the faculty and staff. The Human Resources Committee has been tasked to review policies and procedures for the College as a whole and ensure uniformity across the sites. Several documents have been developed to describe these processes, including the "*Employee Process Handbook*," "*Interviewing and Selection Resource Guide*," and "*Manager's Hiring Process Handbook*." Surveys of faculty and staff show that the policies are equitably and consistently administered and those surveys were confirmed in the campus visits. (III.A.3)

The College has a new series of ways in which employees can access information about policies, discuss policies and procedures, and report any concerns anonymously. By making policies available in hard copy and online and by allowing conversations online and anonymous reporting by telephone or via website, the College has created the potential for broad based conversations ensuring fairness in all employment procedures. Usage logs show that the new media have been accessed with a range of comments, questions and concerns, demonstrating awareness. (III.A.3.a)

The College maintains personnel records in a secure manner. Those records are all stored and accessed only at the Home Office. The College adopted an electronic records storage system, ImageNOW, for all employee files in 2011. For all current employees, records are created at the employee's work site on hard copy, those records are then sent to the Home Office where they are scanned into ImageNOW and then the hard copies are shredded. All records from 2010 until the adoption of ImageNOW are maintained in locked cabinets in the human resources office; all records prior to 2010 are locked in secure storage. Employees, regardless of worksite, can request to see their files and they can be provided with copies of documents

in their files; those documents are provided to employees after they sign a legal release form. (III.A.3.b)

Although there is no evidence offered for conversations about diversity, the IPEDS data shows that the College has carried out hiring policies that have resulted in a diverse staff and faculty. The College faculty reflects the diversity of the student body, and that is impressive. (III.A.4)

The College emphasizes diversity in policy statements (such as TEACH values) and has created a number of resources to allow faculty and staff to report any problems regarding diversity (including "Speaking Up" for anonymous reporting). Significant resources are available in the College's faculty development resource, MaxKnowledge. (III.A.4.a)

The College tracks data with regard to diversity and they review that data regularly. It has policies in its hiring handbook and in their catalog emphasizing their commitment to equity and diversity. The College's surveys and the open forums at the site visit confirmed that commitment. (III.A.4.b)

All employees are required to go through training in a number of areas that should encourage a climate of respect and integrity. That training is a part of the employees' orientation period (first 60 days) and then it is renewed annually. Senior managers regularly review the results of that training. (III.A.4.c)

The College has developed an impressive general proposal for a system of professional development. All employees are required to complete professional development activities every year and those activities are carefully tracked. The commitment to staff development in all areas is evident and impressive. Several employees reported ways the College has supported education for them well beyond the minimum requirements and faculty report a good general experience with their sessions in MaxKnowledge. Those latter have been useful immediately and in different ways (strategies for classroom management, ideas for online activities, specific ideas for effective lectures, e.g.). The connections between that professional development and data about student outcomes are still uneven, but managers and faculty are conscious of the need to make those connections more direct. (III.A.5)

Several good opportunities for professional development are made available to faculty. They include mentoring through the Excellence in Teaching Academy and classes through the Center for Excellence in Education. The College's access to The Leadership Center allows employees to partner with people from a number of different kinds of communities (local, company-wide, or international, for instance) to develop professional development activities. Their data show broad participation in these activities, both as part of the required training and as additional development. (III.A.5.a)

The College's in-services (at least two are to be held on each campus, every year) provide an excellent opportunity for training that responds to clearly identified needs, and for that training to evolve in response to staff evaluations and local data every year. All of the sites

have maintained active and appropriate in-service schedules, as evidenced by Minutes they maintain and faculty and staff attendance is strong. (III.A.5.b)

Planning for human resources is integrated with institutional planning through the actions of the Executive Council, where the Human Resources Committee is represented by Director of Human Resources. In describing the integration of Human Resources into institutional planning the College mentions policies and procedures for selection and evaluation of staff, and equity and consistency of policies and procedures generally. Those conversations have been effective at linking human resource planning to student learning, and the evolution of the Student Success Centers and their staffing is a prime example. (III.A.6)

### **Conclusion**

The College has created policies and processes for which they should be commended. Their approach to Individual Performance Plans and Personal Improvement Plans can provide clear paths for consistent quality improvement by employees, whatever their level of achievement. Their new approach for sharing information about the values of the College and inviting employees to report concerns has potential for opening more communication on these topics, and they have several good options for professional development for all employees.

Overall, the basic procedures for good human resource management are in place, but the ties to learning outcomes are still developing. Some faculty have difficulties inputting data or building summaries at the course level in eLumens. As a consequence, the data seem good at the program level (and the gap analysis is yielding solid results at the program level), but faculty cannot quite close the loop for continuous quality improvement at the course level. That is an area where they can improve.

For the evaluation of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes, the team suggests that the College should strengthen the role played by effectiveness in producing learning outcomes by clarifying the programmatic learning outcomes for student services and by improving the faculty's ability to analyze learning outcome data at the course and section levels.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

Recommendation 4: In order to further improve, the College should consolidate the integrated program review and assessment processes in a single document, the program review document. Additionally formalizing and clearly delineating processes and functional responsibilities, including the role of faculty and staff in making decisions, will further improve operations, including the process through which curriculum is developed, proposed, reviewed, and revised. (II.A.2.f; III.A.5; IV.A.2; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b)

## **Standard IIIB– Physical Resources**

### **General Comments**

The College meets the challenge of providing and maintaining appropriate and safe physical resources, including those needed by a variety of lab-intensive disciplines, at nine instructional locations. Its use of standardized classroom/lab layouts and equipment lists help in this regard, as does the need to meet not only ACCJC's accreditation standards but those of discipline-based agencies (Commission on Dental Accreditation, American Society of Health System Pharmacists, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care, American Veterinary Medical Association). The College uses surveys of staff and students, input from advisory boards, program review, and the results of periodic operational and safety reviews to determine physical resource needs. As is the case at many institutions, there has been a recent focus on security measures. Because the College's facilities are leased, the implementation of some measures is tied to the lease renewal schedule. Significant equipment costs are associated with the labs required for many of the College's programs. The weak economic conditions of the past few years have caused the College to postpone previously planned growth.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College ensures safe and sufficient physical resources at its nine campuses and its Home Office through its planning process and through periodic "walk through" inspections of all facilities. The use of standard classroom and lab layouts and Standardized Equipment Lists, updated as part of program review, ensures that the physical resources that are tied directly to instruction meet the College's standards regardless of location. Industry advisory boards find that labs and equipment are sufficient for student learning. Student surveys indicate overall satisfaction with classrooms and laboratories. In the few instances where students have had concerns about adequate space, the concerns have been noted in program review and in the College's Continuous Improvement Plans, and means for improvement have been put into place. The visiting team found the College's physical resources to be commendable, with bright, clean, well-maintained facilities for students and staff. (III.B.1)

The College determines physical resource needs through program review, through advisory boards, and through discipline-specific accreditation processes. Facilities and equipment are maintained by a combination of in-house staff and contracted services. The quality and effectiveness of physical resources is evaluated through student surveys, through faculty feedback in meetings and program review, by staff and administration through facilities walk-throughs, and by industry professionals through advisory boards. (III.B.1.a; III.B.2)

Assurance that the College's physical resources provide access, safety, security, and a healthy environment is based on a variety of inspections and is ultimately the responsibility of each campus's Executive Director. Quarterly safety inspection reports are completed at each campus. A review of these reports shows that in most cases, any problems are resolved promptly. However, at a few sites, a number of issues remained unresolved for periods longer than one year. Each campus has a designated Incident Commander and an

OSHA/Safety Coordinator. OSHA mock-reviews have been carried out in the past; it is not clear whether they have been carried out recently at all campuses. Safety training is provided on a regular basis. A security badge system is in place at all campuses and additional recommendations are being implemented. (III.B.1b)

As part of the budget development process, the administration at each campus projects ongoing expenses and capital expenditures for facility improvement projects. The Operations and Outcomes Committee reviews facilities needs and makes recommendations to the Executive Council. Actual expenditures are compared with projections on a monthly basis. The College has a Facilities Plan that documents existing facilities and describes the processes in place for facilities assessment and planning. Long-range planning for physical resources is informed by program review and by institutional research and is incorporated into the five-year Strategic Plan. (III.B.2.a; III.B.2.b)

### **Conclusion**

The College's physical resources are sufficient to support its programs and services, are well maintained, and are utilized efficiently. Through program review and other reporting mechanisms, physical resource needs are identified and addressed in the College's resource allocation and strategic planning process. To improve its ability to provide a healthful learning and working environment, the College should ensure that safety issues are addressed promptly and that inspection reports are updated accordingly.

The College is commended for supporting student learning through high-quality, welcoming, and well-maintained facilities.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

None.



## **Standard IIIC – Technology Resources**

### **General Observations**

Technology planning is integrated with the institution's planning process through regularly scheduled program reviews, the Information Technology Committee, and the college Strategic Planning Process. The technology is distributed and used effectively. There is a blend of modalities and formats between traditional classroom as well as DE/CE. There is a high degree of integration of technology in traditional classrooms, in technical support and communications with students and faculty as well. The College is fully supported by technology.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The Technology Vision Statement for Carrington College California (CCC) encompasses the following commitments:

- The technological infrastructure needed to deliver programs in our various delivery modes, including onsite and online,
- The pedagogical design and technology resources needed to enhance students' learning through applied interactive educational experiences, particularly in technical areas, whether the student is on a campus or connected remotely,
- The faculty and student support structures needed to enable faculty and students to effectively use these resources to achieve curriculum objectives through a variety of teaching and learning processes,
- The technical support required for both faculty and students in order to overcome technological barriers to effective teaching and learning,
- The efficient student and faculty access to the resources needed for effective course preparation and administration and for convenient access to College administrative and student services. (III.C.)

Technology needs and improvements are identified through the regularly scheduled program review process. In Section 3 of the Program Review Matrix form, which is used for all program reviews, faculty and staff review facilities, equipment, and supplies for the following areas:

- Classrooms – Lecture and Lab
- Student Instructional Support
- Learning and Database Resources
- Lab Equipment and Supplies

Faculty and staff are expected to include data from student end-of-course surveys related to classrooms, laboratories, library services, and computer services. During the program review process, new technologies are identified for the discipline and are discussed with the Information Technology (IT) department to ensure the capacity to support advances in teaching and learning. (III.C.1)

Each program has a Professional Advisory Committee which meets twice a year and provides assistance in identifying current industry standards and practice and direction for technology improvements. Regulatory, licensing, and accrediting bodies for these programs also identify current practices and requirements for technology.

Examples of technology changes driven by student feedback and the faculty input to program reviews include:

- Creating wireless internet access for all campuses as a result of the 2010 and the 2011 student surveys.
- Updating software in Medical Billing and Coding as result of 2010 Program review.
- Increased stations in computer labs as a result of 2008 Tutoring Services Program Review.

Technology needs for online programs and services are also identified through the program review process. (III.C.1)

The College's Student Portal provides students with a communication tool, as well as current information about grades, attendance, and their student account. Students can also receive Alert Messages from faculty and administration electronically.

The CampusVue portal is primarily for faculty and advisors and provides student information about student academic progress, for example attendance and grades. The College encourages open door communication and this includes the IT Committee which is a standing committee of the Executive Council. Faculty and staff are encouraged to bring technology issues to the Executive Council Open Sessions. (III.C.1)

Campus visits by evaluating team members produced positive feedback about support from the IT Department by faculty, staff, and students. At the end of every term, students complete a comprehensive course survey that asks several questions about the effective use of technology. This also occurs for faculty training and workshops. This process is used for traditional as well as online/hybrid program and course offerings. (III.C.1)

The College uses input from program reviews to determine technology needs. Global recommendations for technology, which would affect all programs, are presented to the Education Committee for review and approval and then to the Executive Council for approval. The strategic plan, marketing forecasts, financial forecasts and planning by executives are also included in the long range decisions. Data and feedback from a number of sources are reviewed including students, employers, advisory boards, regulatory and licensing agencies. The IT team is responsible for ensuring that all classrooms meet curriculum needs, including a review of the technical aspects of the system such as firewalls, and bandwidth, etc. (III.C.1.a)

In addition to the data and statistics provided by CampusVue, CCC has additional reporting options through Pulse Report, which provides interactive operating data and metrics and

allows users to manipulate, query, and retrieve specific data as needed, including custom reports. These programs provide the data and information necessary for communication between the IT Department and the faculty and staff to ensure efficiencies and effectiveness. This is primarily used for DE/CE courses. (III.C.1.a)

Servers that run the CampusVue are housed in a secure data center with 24/7 security, redundant power sources, backup generators, and fire suppression systems. Servers are monitored 24/7 and performance and availability data are captured. The Carrington College California IT Director meets with the data center manager to review performance and availability. (III.C.1.a)

The IT Department has developed "Security Policy Recommendations" for campus sites which include suggestions for physical security of equipment and software used by students, oversight by instructors, software installation, access to keys, and virus protection. Campus Backup and Disaster Recovery includes virus protection, UPS, and Redundancy.

The IT Department has developed the following standards:

- PC Guidelines (for desktop and notebook computers including academic standards and standard operating systems)
- Network Infrastructure Guidelines
- Wireless Access Guidelines

The technology structure for online program is provided by eCollege (Pearson eCollege) in Denver and is administered by DeVry Online Services. Contracts and support for many of the technology applications are managed by DeVry Online Services with CCC academic staff. End user security and privacy is addressed through appropriate IT protocols and system requirements. Training and courses in the use of technology and software, new student, faculty and employee orientation programs, and a 24/7 Help Desk provide assistance with the technology and the systems in place at the College. These procedures apply to students and faculty in traditional classroom programs, as well as DE/CE program. (III.C.1.a)

On the campus visits, the team found a high level of satisfaction with technology and technology support. Students verified an appreciation for the many student services, particularly 24/7 Help Desk and Tutoring programs, which are offered online. These were cited by students as essential for their success. (III.C.1.a)

Technology training which is used by a specific program and is specific to the practice of the profession is the responsibility of the Dean of Academic Affairs, program directors, and faculty. These individuals are responsible for ensuring that training will assist the students in meeting identified learning outcomes. At the campus level, Executive Directors, Deans, Program Directors, and faculty assess the need, the schedule, and the delivery of student and faculty training. The Student Success Center provides orientation for first semester students, as well as application software training for student success. (III.C.1.b)

A student portal provides students with online access to important information about the College, individual students records, account information, etc. Training in the use of this portal is through a user's manual and implementation began recently in 2013. Online students are required to pass and complete a New Student Orientation online course to familiarize them with the online platform and environment and with completing an assignment online. This module focuses on student success and retention and is a recent addition to the training for students. (III.C.1.b)

All online students are required to take COL 105 (Critical Thinking) which focuses on problem solving and research. Online students must also complete CLT 100 (Computer Literacy) which introduces productivity tools used in online learning. Online faculty are required to successfully complete the Faculty Development Training Course which provides information about the standards and expectations of online learning and how to develop content through the use of the technology. This course also provides experience in the navigation and use of the online classroom, and use of classroom tools such as a posting, Gradebook, Doc Sharing, etc. (III.C.1.b)

Staff and administration receive technology training required to fulfill position expectations. Human Resource provides access to required organizational training. New student, faculty, and employee orientation programs, along with a 24/7 Help Desk provide assistance with the technology and systems in place at the College. (III.C.1.b; III.C.1.d)

End of term or course evaluations are provided to all students. The feedback is used to improve and modify instruction. In addition to this, the IT Department is involved in providing technical assistance and technical support for the introduction of several technology initiatives as announced in the March 2012 EdCom Newsletter:

- HUB 2.0
- Citrix Lab
- Sim Lab for RN students
- Student Vue Portal
- CEE Center for Excellent in Education (Max Knowledge)
- ETA (Excellence in Teaching Academy) for new faculty, conducted by mentors at each campus location.
- e-Lumen upgrade which provides capacity for more reports regarding student learning outcomes
- Online Student Mentoring
- Online Tutoring

These new initiatives are in the beginning phases of implementation and evaluations are ongoing. (III.C.1.b)

The training provided to DE/CE students, aside from those training courses which explain how to use the online classroom platform, is virtually the same. Much of the support services and the support training for traditional students are offered online so there is a significant

blend of the two formats and modalities. The IT Help Desk can be accessed via phone or online by all students, faculty, and staff regardless of teaching modality. (III.C.1.b)

Faculty and administration incorporate CampusVue data as well as e-Lumen data and carefully track student progress and success. A great deal of personal attention is provided to individual students and their progress and this is one of the goals of these systems – to track and evaluate and intervene as appropriate. Information is analyzed, along with the student end of term and end of course evaluations.

Campus visits by team members, confirmed that the technology is appreciated and helpful to staff and students. Faculty at campus visits also expressed appreciation for the prompt service and attention faculty received for discipline specific technology used in instruction and the support received when it is needed. (III.C.1.b)

Technology training and information provided for students and faculty is determined primarily by each campus site and is heavily influenced by the campus class schedules. Technology training and information is also timed for the introduction of new technology, programs, or upgrades. This provides an appropriate and timely check and balance since the campus is so heavily dependent upon technology for the delivery of actual instruction as well as the modality and communication of instruction offered. (III.C.1.b)

Training and communication is provided in a variety of formats. In person via campus and staff meetings, specialized training sessions, online announcements through Carrington system, emails, and written information distributed to all. The IT Department consists of one manager and five technicians who provide technical on-site support, on a rotating basis. Calls on campus for technical assistance in the classroom are prioritized and addressed immediately since this impacts the delivery of instruction. Delivery of instruction is always a top priority. (III.C.1.c)

Data is gathered for the Help Desk function and is then analyzed by the Manager. Reports are provided to campus management at regular meetings. Individual campus concerns are addressed directly with the Campus Executive Director. The Information Technology Committee is a standing committee and is a part of the college strategic planning process. Technology is a critical component of the program review process. (III.C.1.c; III.C.1.d)

The *Technology Plan* was developed and approved by the Executive Committee in December 2012, and contains specifications for consistent standards across the organization for technology equipment, infrastructure, retirement and replacement of technology, and equipment and software. Additionally, the plan outlines processes, expectations, and outcomes for IT and academic collaboration in the implementation of technology to support student and organizational needs. The plan has been reviewed and approved by the Executive Council and is in the process of implementation. A systematic evaluation has not yet been completed. (III.C.1.c; III.C.1.d)

Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning, through the program review process, the Information Technology Committee, and the College strategic planning process.

There are processes and procedures in place for a systematic assessment of the use of technology resources and using the results of the evaluation for continuous improvement processes. (III.C.2)

The Information Technology Committee meets quarterly and is comprised of members from across the organization. Updates on status of IT projects are provided, and members are encouraged to discuss concerns and suggestions for improvement. The IT Manager presents these ideas to the open session of the Executive Council in an effort to ensure an opportunity for input. (III.C.2)

Because the use of and need for technology is driven by the class schedules at the campus level, and because the program offerings are heavily dependent upon technology for implementation – there is an effective check and balance. The needs of DE/CE programs, students and faculty are integrated into all of these processes and are considered. Prioritization is based on program needs, the College Strategic Plan, and feasibility. In addition, projections for campus enrollment, analysis of labor market, and budget considerations play a role. Final prioritization is done by the Executive Committee. (III.C.2)

### **Conclusion**

The College meets this Standard by providing quality technology and technology support for all students, staff and faculty. Planning and resource allocation for technology are integrated into College planning overall.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

None.

## **Standard III D – Financial Resources**

### **General Observations**

The major changes that have occurred since the previous comprehensive visit revolve around financial issues related to an actual versus budget shortfall for 2011-12 with a net loss of approximately \$21.5 million. The main reasons for the shortfall in planned gross revenue and profit was that new student enrollments were less than expected in FY12 by approximately 40 percent due to changing market conditions, and continued challenges with brand awareness. The College has worked diligently and collegially to close the gap through budget reductions of variable expenses to meet the declining student population levels. However most fixed expenses could not be reduced and some advertising costs were increased to address declining population and awareness of the College's new name. Expenses for FY2011-12 could not be reduced to a level that kept pace with declining revenue leading to a significant loss for the year. The College management implemented plans to reduce certain fixed expenses but most of these actions would not take effect until FY13 and FY14. Furthermore the College provided a financial analysis as of January 31, 2013 that listed some favorable outcomes to the budget results, and evidence of very strong fiscal management at the college level.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The budget planning for the 2012-13 fiscal year included an increase in student population from the period ending June 30, 2012. The College's effort to improve awareness of the new college name and enhancement in recruitment practices have resulted in an increase in student enrollment. A review of the College's financial documents indicate increases in revenues, but fall slightly less than budgeted due to lower than planned actual enrollments. The College provided financial information as of January 31, 2013 indicating that revenue is coming in at \$43.4 million versus the budgeted amount of \$43.5 million. The College expects revenue to continue to increase, but fall slightly behind the budget due to less than planned new student enrollments. The College has managed its year-to-date 2013 budgeted expenses in a fiscally responsible manner, and it is meeting budgeted expectations in most areas. The improvement efforts launched in FY12 have resulted in continued better than expected results in bad debt. After assessing the initial financial literacy actions, the College has adjusted these efforts some for FY13. Moreover, the ongoing activity in this area appears to be supporting a continued decline in bad debt.

The capital budget for FY13 is \$2.5 million of which only \$196,000 has been spent to date. However, several key projects are currently being launched which will increase the Capex Investment significantly in Quarter 3 & Quarter 4 of 2013. These projects include a significant number of computer upgrades and new security systems at two campus locations. A few other projects such as a campus branding makeover, and planned simulation project that has been reassessed are currently on hold. The College's operating loss through January 2013 is favorable to budget by \$1.2 million. The College expects to continue to exceed budgeted operating income and to achieve the breakeven point by year end.

Carrington College and Ownership (DeVry Inc.) have sufficient financial resources and assets in the form of cash and retained earnings to ensure the College's current and future financial solvency and future education improvements. The balance sheet provided for Carrington Colleges of California for the period ending January 31, 2013 indicates a total of retained earnings of \$95.6 million and stockholders' equity of \$91.5 million. Retained earnings is being defined as the percentage of net earnings not paid out as dividends, but retained by the company to be reinvested in its core business or to pay debt. It is recorded under shareholders equity on the balance sheet.

The College seems to have complied in all material respects and has shown significant improvement as there has been a decrease of audit findings in the areas of federal student aid programs. It should be noted that the decrease of findings of federal programs was from eight for the period ending June 30, 2011 to three for the period ending June 30, 2012.

Sufficient evidence does exist to conclude that the College has the committed resources to "teach out" the online programs. This includes a commitment by the College to support the students through to graduation within some very reasonable parameters. The College has the financial resources to support this "teach out" plan. (III.D)

The institution's mission and goals are the foundation of financial planning and involves the allocation of resources to support the achievement of the College's mission and goals according to the strategic plan. The strategic plan does a good job with goals pointing to the mission. (III.D.1)

Governing Board Agendas and Minutes show that the review of mission and goals is being done on annual basis.

The Strategic Plan has goals for each campus and the institution overall. The Master Plan shows additional activities and processes for planning and decision making.

Details in meeting Minutes on such discussions or analysis of decisions and allocations are described and an unfunded priorities list was provided. Program and service review reports are one page summaries that connect planning to budget decisions. There are facility, technology, and equipment plans. The annual Strategic Plan update, goals, and development planning supports new budget allocations.

The Governing Board Agenda indicates fiscal planning occurs and the president makes a presentation of the proposed budget and new strategic plan each spring, where staff can provide additional input and comments before the final Strategic Plan and Budget are approved by the Executive Committee and Governing Board. (III.D.1.a)

Sufficient evidence does exist and is readily available supporting institutional planning. DeVry Inc. is a publicly traded company required to post its financial results on line on a quarterly basis. (III.D.1.b; III.D.1.d)



The team found evidence that long term financial resources are sufficient to support student learning and to improve institutional effectiveness. According to DeVry's audited consolidated balance sheet as of January 30, 2012, there are limited long term liabilities and enough cash and current retained earnings to support normal business operation.

The College has no OPEB (Obligations for Post-Employment Benefits). Significant accruals have been noted in the balance sheet that provides sufficient evidence that the College enforces the PTO (paid time off) policy and recognizes the PTO liability on a monthly basis. (III.D.3.d)

The College has the committed resources to support technology needs. There is an ongoing contract with Kinect to support the DE information structure. (III.D.1.c)

Processes for financial planning and budget development are recorded in the governing board Minutes. The budget and strategic plan are presented by the president at each campus. This is an opportunity for additional discussion and input. Staff has access to the Board Agendas and Minutes through the college intranet. Also, campus directors provide feedback to campus staff on Board discussions and decisions.

The College is using a monthly and fiscal year-to-date operating package to provide actual, budgeted, and prior year comparisons. The College also uses DeVry's Internal Audit (SOX Assessment) department to provide additional audited internal information for financial decision-making. The internal audit report for period ending December 31, 2012, and dated January 7, 2013, has indicated that the overall controls for the College appear to be operating effectively. The area of Accounts Payable/Purchasing has produced satisfactory results for both FY13 and FY12. Finally the Governing Board uses the financial operating package to provide insightful comments and guidance. (III.D.2)

Financial documents, including the independent audit, have a high degree of accuracy and reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and student services. Management seems to have a good understanding of the institutional budget and spending and can quickly take action to reduce and adjust expenses as necessary. The five year key financial matrix provides evidence of the College's commitment.

The team found evidence that the College has complied in all material respects and has shown significant improvement as apparent in the decrease of outside auditors' findings in the areas of CCC of Title IV programs. DeVry is a publicly traded corporation and the audit results are readily available to the public. Audit findings are communicated and seem to be resolved in a timely manner by the various departments responsible for the corrective action plans. There were no material findings discovered by the auditors; any issues which were uncovered were rectified quickly. (III.D.2.a; III.D.2.b)

DeVry's financial reports, as audited by Price Waterhouse Coopers, seem to indicate that there are enough reserves in the form of cash and retained earnings that the company and the

College can use in the case of an emergency. All of DeVry's borrowings and letters of credit under its \$400 million revolving credit facility are through DeVry Inc.

The majority of the revenues are through Title IV programs. Cal Grant eligibility was lost April 20, 2011. This is a \$1.5 million loss annually. There was evidence that the institution monitors and complies with the 90/10 rule for the years according to the audit report package. The Carrington Colleges of California 90/10 revenue percentage as of 6/30/12 was 80.63%, for 2011 was 85.28%, and for 2010 was 85.85%.

The institution has sufficient insurance to cover its needs. (III.D.2.c)

Regarding special funds, the College noted that it does not engage in auxiliary activities or fund raising efforts to support its programs and services; rather it relies on gross tuition revenue, enrollment fees, and tuition income to fund its operations.

Evidence exists regarding fiscal management and external audits including financial reviews. According to DeVry's Internal Audit Services report overall controls appear to be operating effectively. There was one medium and one low-ranked SOX Internal Audit observation that were included in the results.

The cohort default rates (CDR) for the College are currently below the rate that would subject the College to sanctions for having two-year default rates of 25 percent or more for three consecutive years. The College does not have a three-year CDR of 30 percent or more. If it did, it would be required to establish a default prevention task force and submit a default management plan to the Department of Education. The 2-YR CDR for 2007 was 10.2%, 2008 was 13.6%, 2009 was 16.7%, 2010 was 16.7%, 3-YR CDR for 2009 was 25.60%.

The institution has received audit findings over the last three years. There is evidence that the College has complied in all material respects and has shown significant improvement on the decrease of outside auditors' findings in the areas of Title IV programs. (III.D.2.d)

DeVry and CCC do not incur any bond expenditures. (III.D; III.D.2.e)

The institution has policies and procedures and monitors financial reports regularly. The College performs monthly/quarterly meetings to ensure assessments and effective use of resources. Examples are: campus operations reviews, monthly campus financial call, monthly call financial review and quarterly Board meetings. (III.D.3)

DeVry's audited financial statements for FY 6/30/12 indicates a total of retained earnings of \$1.49 billion and stockholders' equity of \$1.36 billion. Ownership (DeVry Inc.) has a solid cash position to maintain financial stability and to meet any financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences. (III.D.3.a)

The College assesses financial resources with surveys and program reviews, monthly/quarterly campus meetings, governing board meetings, and campus budget presentations. Sufficient evidence exists to support planning. The College conducts an annual

review of the Strategic Plan, program reviews, and the master plan during budget development. Annual surveys are used to develop improvement plans. (III.D.3.b)  
DeVry Inc. and the CCC have a Success Sharing Retirement plan. On a monthly basis the institution allocates appropriate resources for the payment of liabilities related to the profit sharing plan (401K company match) and payment of liabilities to compensate absences. (III.D.3.c)

Carrington College, a wholly owned subsidiary of DeVry Inc., has no outstanding locally incurred debt that will affect the financial condition of the institution. (III.D.3.e; III.D.2.d; III.D.3.f)

The Governing Board, with the assistance of DeVry Inc., contract legal review and real estate services to manage all contracts in a coordinated effort. (III.D.3.g)

The institution has both an annual internal and external audit. External auditors are reviewing compliance in the areas of accounting practices, Title IV compliance, and cash management procedures on campus. Internal Audit performs a complete test of the control activities documented and performed by the College in accordance to DeVry's FY13 Sarbanes-Oxley 404 Compliance plan. Results of the above mentioned audits are evaluated by the respective owner of each department, and a corrective action plan was put in place to ensure that the College complies in all material respects, with all the compliance requirements contained in the audit guide under which they are being audited.

The campus senior leadership and the Executive Council regularly review the systems and thereby recommend and implement improvements. (III.D.3.h)

The institution ensures that financial decisions are developed from program review results, institutional needs, planning processes, and planning documents. (III.D.4)

### **Conclusion**

Carrington College California demonstrated that it fully meets this Standard. The College provided ample evidence to review and conclude that financial resources are sufficient to support student learning and to improve institutional effectiveness. Based on the review of the financial reports, and the financial analysis that the college management provided, the College is experiencing overall favorable financial results for the current fiscal year. The College is in a strong financial position and uses its resources effectively and according to regulatory guidelines.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

None.

## **STANDARD IV – LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Standard IVA – Decision-Making Roles and Processes**

#### **General Observations**

As with the earlier parts of the Self Evaluation Report, CCC's Institutional Self Evaluation Report addressed Standard IV in a somewhat atypical way. Each 'substandard' (e.g., IV.A.2.a, IV.A.2.b) is addressed in a narrative which appears to be (but is not entitled) a "descriptive summary." No self-evaluation appears until the end of Standard IV.A, and then it is quite short (185 words), followed by an even shorter set of bullet points outlining Actionable Improvement Plans (totaling 180 words).

Discussion by team members at each of the College's campus locations as well as extensive conversations with administrators, faculty, and staff at the College's Home Office indicate that the Self Evaluation Report provides a very partial and incomplete picture of the College, and that its commitment to student learning is much more robust than would otherwise be apparent.

#### **Findings and Evidence**

From among the six themes included in the Accreditation Standards, Carrington College California has emphasized Organization, Dialogue, Institutional Commitments, and Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement with regard this Standard. The College emphasizes its clearly described committee structures as evidence of its commitment to organizational excellence. The College's leadership and governance structure are founded on dialogue and the College uses both quantitative and qualitative data to guide decision-making. Since the College received a prior recommendation about the role of faculty and students in institutional governance, the College reports, "...the current governance structure was developed collaboratively." Among the evidence initially provided to the team, examples of Minutes from the Governing Board, Executive Council, and Student Advisory Council were provided. The College also provided one example of Faculty Council Minutes as part of its response to previous recommendations; these and several additional examples of each variety of Minutes were made available via the College's intranet site and were reviewed by the team. (IV.A)

Because the College's academic programs are focused on entry-level employment preparation, the College's decision-making structure is highly focused on the effectiveness of its academic programs both in the classroom and in regard to students' success in achieving licensure (where appropriate) and employment subsequent to completion of their academic programs. The college stated in their report that it aims to meet "...the current needs of students and employers." The College's Mission/Philosophy is clearly stated on page 3 of the College's catalog. That statement describes the kinds of programs it offers, and the requirement that degree-seeking students will take to broaden their program-specific training with general education courses, all of which contribute to the College's five core competencies. The College's values and goals should be well understood by anyone who has reviewed the College catalog.

While the Self Evaluation Report was less informative than might have been the case, the team established beyond any doubt that the College has done an exemplary job of establishing an environment where all members of the community—administrators, faculty, staff, and students—feel a keen sense of ownership of the College and its programs and work to improve the College in order to support the learning and achievement of its students. Policies and processes were difficult to discern in the Self Evaluation Report, and in a few cases even during the team's visit, but this is the result of the small size of the college and its ability to function well despite a lack of clearly documented processes. (IV.A.1)

Perhaps because the College received a recommendation regarding the participation of faculty and students in governance processes, the Self Evaluation Report is especially clear in describing the structures through which faculty and students participate. Less is said in the Self Evaluation Report about the participation of classified staff. The College describes several of its governance committees in a document entitled, "Carrington College California, The Executive Council, Committees, Subcommittees, and the College Planning Process." This document was created in January 2008, and most recently revised in January 2011. Flow charts included in the Self Evaluation Report clearly indicate how different constituencies relate to one another in the institutional hierarchy, and the charge of the various committees is reasonably clear. (IV.A.2)

The administrative structure in place for Carrington College California is very clear, and is substantiated in the flow charts included in the Self Evaluation Report. Conversations with administrators on the campuses indicate that these charts accurately depict the hierarchy and flow of decision making at the college, but the charts do not adequately capture the degree to which all constituents have confidence in the potential for all members of the institution to contribute to the College's decision-making processes. The primary decision-making body at the College is the Executive Council, which is able to arrive at decisions on the basis of consensus to a very high degree. Members reported that the Council is more likely to undertake additional research when consensus cannot be attained rather than to make decisions via majority vote.

The College has a very robust administrative structure, with multiple campuses listing almost as many administrators in the College catalog as faculty. One reason for the relatively high number of administrators is the fact that faculty with responsibility as Program Directors are listed as administrators. Discussions with College leaders, both administrators and faculty, indicate that most Program Directors are better understood as teaching faculty with additional responsibilities. Adding to confusion, the Self Evaluation Report indicates, "The campus's Dean of Academic Affairs and the Executive Director represent all faculty and staff." In fact, it appeared to the team that the Dean of Academic Affairs acts as an *advocate* for faculty and for instruction throughout the College, but does not usurp the separate ability of faculty to advocate for improvement through their own governance structure. (IV.A.2.a)

Since the last comprehensive visit, the College has established the Faculty Council and Student Advisory Council, and evidence of the work of those bodies in the form of meeting Minutes was reviewed by the team. The Faculty Council was created partly in response to the

2007 recommendation regarding faculty roles in governance. Although the Faculty Council has been established, faculty input into policy, planning, and budgetary decisions is still developing. It was apparent to the team that the Executive Committee (which includes the chair of the Faculty Council) welcomes this input, but that faculty has only gradually becoming aware of its own potential influence. This authority is evident in the College's shared governance policy, which indicates that the Faculty Council:

“...ensures that the campus faculty voice is represented through the Faculty Council Chair as liaison to and voting member of the Executive Council. The Faculty Council is responsible for ensuring that educational quality is maintained throughout the college system and its various programs. This committee is responsible for conveying the mission, goals, and college philosophy to the college faculty members, and will ensure that input from college faculty members is provided to the Executive Council and all of its committees and subcommittees. The faculty members on each campus elect two faculty members (including Program Directors) to serve two year terms on the Faculty Council. These two campus representatives are elected on an alternating basis every other year. By vote of its membership, the Faculty Council appoints one member to serve as its Chairperson and as a voting member of the Executive Council. The Chairperson will serve for a period that lasts the duration of their current and a second automatically renewing term as member of the Faculty Council (3-4 years).”

The Faculty Council was also slow to become widely known among faculty. The February 16, 2011 Minutes for the group indicate, “...the FC discussed the goals of the FC during this non-strategic planning year.” The Minutes also included, “...discussed with the FC that at the budget training in Sacramento, many program directors were unaware of unfamiliar with the Faculty Council.” Minutes of the November, 4, 2011 Faculty Council meeting (a lengthy in-person meeting scheduled from 9:30 to 2:30 at Pleasant Hill) noted “Group stated they would like to have more input and understanding of the budgeting process and available funds for programs as well as professional development.” Regarding the role of the Faculty Council, as part of a welcome to new members, the then-chair indicated, “The faculty council has been instrumental in ensuring faculty members have a ‘voice’ and a direct line of communication to the college President and the Executive Council (EC). The Faculty Council is responsible for soliciting feedback from faculty members at their campus in regards to the College’s Strategic Plan, the College budgeting process, College improvements, faculty development, and much more.” By the time of the team’s visit, however, faculty on every campus were well aware of the Faculty Council and described it as a crucial resource for faculty input into governance decision making.

Faculty in the College indicate that the Faculty Council became much more effective when the College President began meeting regularly with the body, as he was able to immediately answer questions about policy and process and to help the body to better understand its role and ability to influence policy and procedure. The College President meets regularly with the Faculty Council and is clear in his comments on the importance of Faculty input on a number of matters. He is summarized at the January 11, 2012 meeting as having addressed the following:

"FC input process and Strategic Plan (SP) (the President):

- (the President) reviewed the last strategic plan with the FC members and explained their role in the process as "ensuring the faculty is involved in the creation of the strategic plan through solicitation of feedback and recommendations."
- (the President) also reviewed the EC committees and subcommittees.
- (the President) reviewed the budgeting process and how the FC members will play an active role in the SP and that will directly reflect the overall budget.

(The President) reviewed the FY11-FY15 Strategic Plan and asked FC members to use this plan as a conversation point to start requesting feedback from faculty on additional strategic plan items or recommendations. The main emphasis in the SP, for faculty, will be section 1 (Student Success), Section 2 (Teaching and Learning Excellence), Section 3 (Organizational and Professional Development), and section 5 (Institutional Assessment and Planning)."

While the President now participates regularly, faculty indicate that meetings remains their own and the President's presence does not diminish the quality of discussion.

The Minutes of the February 15, 2012 meeting of the Faculty Council are especially important, as they describe the Faculty Council's review and recommendations regarding strategic planning, "(the Chair) handed out 2 spreadsheets including all recommendations submitted by each Faculty Council (FC) representative. One spreadsheet is specific to the FY11 Strategic Plan (SP) and follows the numbering format. The second spreadsheet included all additional recommendations that were not specific to the current SP but were requested by faculty to be considered as a new strategic planning initiative. The FC will review each recommendation and vote on whether or not it should be considered as an SP item." The meeting was well attended (15 of 18 members), lengthy (scheduled 9 to 3:30) and substantive in the matters under discussion.

The Student Advisory Council has also been established since the previous team visit. The method for selection of the Council is ambiguous in the Self Evaluation Report. The section of the Self Evaluation Report that summarizes the College's response to prior recommendations indicates, "Two student Advisory Committee members are appointed by the Dean of Academic Affairs and faculty on each campus to serve on the Committee." The "Shared Governance" document indicates, "The student body at each campus selects two students to serve in one-year terms on the College's Student Advisory Committee." Conversations with both administrators and students indicate that faculty and campus administrators identify students with high potential to represent their fellow students effectively. Because many of the College's programs are of short duration (some as short as seven months), it is challenging to identify student representatives who have enough experience of the College to be effective, but not so much seniority that they are about to complete their program and leave the College. Thus both descriptions of the selection of committee members are apparently true, with some variation in selection from campus to campus.

Minutes of the Student Advisory Council do not indicate the students who are members, citing them only by campus location. The Council meets quarterly. Student Advisory Council

Minutes indicate that students frequently came up with ideas for institutional improvement, and the Dean convening those meetings is recorded as pledging to take those suggestions forward. Evidence in the Minutes was mixed as to focus on the potential for ideas to improve student learning, and often address matters of a more operational nature, but it is clear that these were issues important to the students and their concerns were regarded with respect.

The Student Advisory Council is convened by an administrator, who appears in "Shared Governance" as the Dean of Program Compliance and appears in the 2013 Self-Evaluation Addendum as the Director of Accreditation and Compliance. Conversations at the College's several campuses indicates that students do participate significantly in the Advisory Council, and student members to whom the team spoke indicate that they regard their participation as robust and meaningful.

Some student members of the Student Advisory Committee have wondered if they meet often enough to be effective. The December 8, 2011 Minutes indicate, "The point was raised once again that this Committee does not meet enough times per year to give those in the shorter program more of an opportunity to participate. It was suggested that the Committee meet every six weeks. All Committee members agreed that the proposal to increase meetings to every six weeks should be sent to the EC for approval." Minutes of the subsequent meeting (January 5, 2012) indicate that the Executive Council supported the students' request: "The EC supports the Committee meeting every six weeks but wanted the Purpose Statement to read 'at least quarterly.'" The January 5, 2012 Minutes refer to Executive Council response to a number of other student initiatives.

The February 23, 2012 Minutes of the Student Advisory Committee indicate "(the Dean) shared that this meeting would primarily be to provide recommendations to the Executive Council (EC) from the Student Advisory Committee for the Strategic Plan." Interestingly, this meeting took place at approximately the same time that the Faculty Advisory Council was considering Strategic Plan recommendations, but where faculty were asked for input on crucial matters like completion rates (1.1), employment rates, (1.2), licensure/certification pass rates, and student satisfaction (1.4), students were asked for input on recycling and the cost of background checks. It does not appear that students were afforded input on crucial measures regarding their own success within the institution. While opportunity is provided to both faculty and students to provide input to the Executive Council, the topics addressed by the two groups are not always the same. Affording students input into matters of increasing consequence could make the Council an even more effective body in promoting the participation of students in governance.

No evidence could be identified in the Self Evaluation Report of a formal process for staff input. When the College was queried on this point, it provided an undated document that indicates, "The classified staff members at Carrington College California are made up of administrative personnel who report to a department manager or director. Using our Committee Structure, each administrative team member has the opportunity to share input, recommendations, feedback, ideas and concerns to their direct supervisor who represents them on a formal committee. For example, the majority of the front desk personnel report directly to the manager of the Records department. Records managers, or CCC Registrars,



are active members on the Records Committee. The Chair of the Records Committee submits recommendations directly to the Executive Council for consideration.” It would appear that the College has no formal process for staff to participate as a group, but only via suggestions conveyed to their managers. However, discussions with staff members at the several campuses indicate that staff feel that they are in fact very effectively represented by their managers, and that their suggestions for improvement are taken seriously and implemented as appropriate. (IV.A.2.a)

Carrington College California includes neither a faculty academic senate nor faculty curriculum committee, as these organizations are cited in the standard as examples of the faculty’s corporate role in a college’s governance. The Faculty Council, which did not exist until after the 2007 visit, is the sole formal body representing the faculty at large. Minutes of the Faculty Council indicate that processes are known, as the July 8, 2010 Minutes indicate, “Only faculty members are able to vote in the faculty council representative (PDs, instructors, librarians). Deans, other management, admissions reps or administrative staff will not be able to vote in the faculty council elections.”

Understanding the nature of the faculty’s collective authority in the area of curriculum was perhaps the most difficult aspect of this Standard. Much of the curriculum of the College is determined by the needs of programmatic accreditation, and faculty in the College’s various disciplines have designated the general education courses would be most beneficial to the College’s students. Faculty indicate that the development of a new course would in most cases be turned over to a discipline expert. The College’s program review process includes a comprehensive review of all curriculum, and all faculty have the opportunity to propose improvements to curriculum documents and processes. Thus it appears that all faculty as individuals have access to the development and revision of curriculum, and that when all curriculum processes are considered as a whole, the faculty do have collective authority over curriculum. (IV.A.2.b)

The Minutes of both the Faculty and Student Advisory Councils indicate the challenge of communication among the groups’ constituents. The College does publish an occasional newsletter with some information about the existence of these bodies, but the document is not extensive enough to provide information on the actual topics under discussion. The Student Advisory Council includes participation only by on-ground campuses, though the Faculty Advisory Council includes representatives for faculty in online programs.

A significant amount of data is maintained on a secure intranet site by the College (to which team members were provided access). Conversations indicated that faculty and staff have increasing access to data with the potential to improve student learning, and that it is used to guide institutional decision-making, though this is still in part a work in progress. Many reports and a great deal of data are potentially available to members of the college community, though Minutes of the January 30, 2012 Leadership and Governance meeting indicate, “The committee reviewed the results of the faculty and staff survey that it had commissioned. The survey confirmed the committee’s suspicion that communication of the college’s planning process, and its link to the budgeting process, needed improvement. The results confirmed that faculty and staff members need a stronger understanding of how the

strategic planning and budgeting process works, and how they are involved in this process.” The team has no doubt that the college is working to improve communication and attention to data with the potential to improve student learning. (IV.A.3)

Minutes of the Faculty Council indicate that the College works hard to apprise this body of both accreditation and regulatory concerns. Regarding the College’s compliance with Federal Regulations, the June 23, 2011 Minutes of the Faculty Advisory Committee indicate that the College President provided a very thorough presentation of new Federal regulations resulting from changes in the Higher Education Act. The Faculty Council in FY 2011 held no discussion of accreditation issues, but lengthy conversations began in January 2012 and continued at subsequent meetings during the year. Faculty were encouraged to participate in the process and one committee member spoke about his participation in Standard II.C. The Student Advisory Council does not appear to have participated in accreditation processes.

The College’s Self Evaluation Report includes extensive data regarding student profile and completion metrics. Some of this data is made available on the College’s website via a homepage tab link for “Student Consumer Info.” The College provides the graduation rates for the cohorts of first-time, full-time students entering between 9/1/08 and 8/31/09 on this page, showing completion rates between 52% (Emeryville) and 69% (Pleasant Hill). Links on that same webpage provide completion rates for fifteen different programs offered.

Some policies seem to be inconsistent or inconsistently understood. Thus the Minutes of the November 4, 2011 Faculty Council meeting indicate, “(a faculty member) brought up a concern regarding an email she received (and many other FC members) regarding program faculty are not able to call or text message students using their personal cell phones. The Valley campuses did not receive such an email but all bay area campuses did. (the President and the Dean) were aware of such policy at this time.” (IV.A.4)

The Self Evaluation Report describes the work of the Operations and Outcomes Committee, but that committee does not appear to engage of evaluation of governance processes. The Self Evaluation Report cites templates calling for comment on each of the four Standards, and the team reviewed written comments from several of the campuses which indicate that members of the institution were conscious of the ways that the self-evaluation process should be used to promote institutional improvement. More importantly, discussion with many members of the institution throughout the visit underscores the way in which the very culture of the College is focused on ongoing improvement. The College appears to be constantly surveying one body or another in the college, and not only in anticipation of a site visit; ongoing surveying is one of the primary methods by which the College is constantly evaluating itself and making changes in light of survey responses. The Self Evaluation Report does not do an effective job of capturing the College’s dynamism, but there was no doubt in the mind of the visiting team that the College is committed to ongoing self-assessment and improvement. (IV.A.5)

## **Conclusion**

Carrington College California meets all aspects of this Standard. The College's mission is the clear foundation of priorities within the college. The input of all members of the institution are genuinely valued and evaluated without regard for their source. The primary locus for decision making is the Executive Council, which includes a voting faculty member and regular input from the Student Advisory Council. When recommendations are not accepted, members of the institution are provided with reasons. Administrators work diligently to provide leadership; faculty are deeply engaged with their programs and seek to promote student success; staff and students are empowered to propose changes for improvement that are respected. The Faculty Council and Student Advisory Council, established since the previous comprehensive evaluation, have been established and grown to be important aspects of institutional decision making, and continue to evolve to best support student learning. The College has known and accepted processes for decision-making, though these could be better documented. The College's program review process has become a foundation of institutional self-evaluation and improvement.

The College meets this Standard.

## **Recommendations**

Recommendation 2: In order to further improve the programs and services, the College should continue to formalize and document processes relating to college wide communication and participation around institutional effectiveness. This includes providing additional information to the general student body on the roles, capacity, and accomplishments of the Student Advisory Committee. (I.B.4; I.B.5; I.B.7; II.B.3.b; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.3)

Recommendation 4: In order to further improve, the College should consolidate the integrated program review and assessment processes in a single document, the program review document. Additionally formalizing and clearly delineating processes and functional responsibilities, including the role of faculty and staff in making decisions, will further improve operations, including the process through which curriculum is developed, proposed, reviewed, and revised. (II.A.2.f; III.A.5; IV.A.2; IV.A.2.a; IV.A.2.b)

## **Standard IVB – Board and Administrative Organization**

### **General Observations**

The Governing Board of Carrington College operates under the name of Western Career College. Although the Self Evaluation Report points out that the College underwent a name change, the Governing Board never changed the official bylaws to reflect the new name of the institution. It was the team's understanding that the name change on the by-laws is an agenda item for the upcoming Governing Board meeting.

The Board operates with ultimate responsibility related to matters of educational quality, legal issues, and financial integrity. Appropriate delegations of operational authority and accountability exist. The Board adheres to its by-law role and hires and evaluates its chief executive officer, the President. The college president has delegated authority and responsibility to lead and operate the institutions within the parameters of Board by-law. The Board acts as an independent body with ultimate authority to govern the College. Board by-laws and procedures are published online and are available to employees and the general public. The Board has a program of orientation for new members and a by-law on ethics for its membership. Further, it engages in a self-assessment process to measure Board performance. The Board seems well informed and involved in the College's accreditation process. The Board effectively communicates expectations of program service excellence and supports the College in meeting its mission. The Board effectively constructs its system budget and controls expenditures.

The Team was presented with evidence that the Board systematically assessed their decisions, governance planning, communications structures, and processes for effectiveness. The team verified that the College community was informed of the decision making process. Faculty, staff, and management were aware of how decisions were made.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The Board is comprised of five members elected to three-year staggered terms by the Board members. The Board can have between five and seven members. The Board is ultimately responsible for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. A comprehensive Board code of ethics, which details expected behaviors and the consequences if a member violates the code, was also identified. Evidence indicates the Board has developed a regular review cycle for its bylaws. (IV.B.1.a)

The Board approves all College curricula. In addition to curricula, the Board provides resources necessary to support programs. Board Minutes indicate the Board monitors finances by approving the College's annual budget, budget transfers, and major expenditures. Evidence supports Board final authority in all matters related to instructional quality, legal issues, and finances. (IV.B.1.b, IV.B.1.c)

Published by-laws specify the Board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. Board by-laws are comprehensive and complete. (IV.B.1.d)

Board Minutes confirm the Board acts in a manner consistent with its by-laws and procedures. In addition, Board Minutes and the website where by-laws and procedures are made public reveal evidence of routine updating of by-laws and procedures to streamline activities. (IV.B.1.e)

The Self Evaluation states that orientation materials are available to new Board members on request and further states orientations may include meetings with key personnel and a review of the budget. Interviews with Board members revealed that Board members have taken advantage of such materials and meetings to learn more about College operations. There is evidence that there is a systematic orientation program or that measures are taken to ensure all members receive consistent information at the start of their term of service. (IV.B.1.f.)

The Board self-evaluates. It appears that Board members and the President are satisfied with the process. There is evidence regarding the Board's self-evaluation. The team noted that the Board has adopted a comprehensive code of ethics that details expected behaviors and the consequences if a member violates the code. These by-laws and procedures are available on the District public website. (IV.B.1.g; IV.B.1.h)

The Board was informed about and involved in the latest accreditation process. Board members read draft Institutional Self Evaluation Report documents, provided input to the College during the process, and approved the final report prior to its submission to the Commission. Board members demonstrated familiarity with the content of the self-study. (IV.B.1.i)

There is evidence indicating a delegation of authority to the President to manage the College. The President and College employees reveal widespread agreement that the College president is able to act within his authority in leading the College. (IV.B.1.j)

The College President has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution that he leads. Examples of evidence to support that the president has primary responsibility include written by-laws regarding the College governance processes, Board by-laws, Minutes of governance bodies such as the Executive Council and a College function mapping document.

The College President works with institutional constituencies through the Executive Council. The President serves as chair of this Council. Council members have the opportunity to present various agenda items from their areas and address these items to the Council. The College President also regularly meets with his leadership staff and constituency groups. The College President has established a high level of collegiality on campus. The President has also reached out to the community by being involved with the business chambers and other civic organizations. (IV.B.2.a)

The President and his administrators are using institutional data to make decisions and to start dialogue on campus improvement. The College gathers data related to the success of their students and programs. The President is engaged and active in institutional improvement. (IV.B.2.b)

The Self Evaluation states that the president supervises College operations, guides the campus in following College by-laws, and ensures decisions are in keeping with the mission. Interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators revealed general agreement with this statement. Decisions made by the College President, the Executive Council, and the Board are well understood and communicated to the campuses by the campus directors and other constituent representatives. Those decisions are also available on the College website. (IV.B.2.b)

The Self Evaluation states the President has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution and that he exercises leadership in all areas, including planning, budgeting, personnel, and operations. Executive Council Minutes and the President's communications reveal the President is engaged in discussions about the College's operations, including planning, operations, and financial affairs and that he uses a participatory process for decision-making about goals and values. Council Minutes show the group meets on a regular basis and discusses issues of substance. (IV.B.2.c)

There is evidence that the President provides oversight of the budget through the President's senior leadership and Executive Council. Discussions with multiple constituents reveal the president appears to be functioning effectively in this area. (IV.B.2.d)

Team findings and evidence through interviews with various employee groups indicate the president works with the local community through routine communication with civic leaders and groups and by inviting community members to campus. The president also hosts advisory groups to solicit advice and support from the community for the various programs. (IV.B.2.e)

This is a stand-alone college with nine campuses and therefore Standard IV.B.3 does not apply.

### **Conclusion**

The team concluded that Carrington College Board and Administrative Organization is consonant with the Standards set by the Commission. The College community, the leadership team, and the Board of Governors recognize their designated responsibilities and operate within the established guidelines. The College President is the chief administrator and operates under the authority vested in him by the Board.

The College meets this Standard.

### **Recommendation**

None.

The first of these is the fact that the  
the second is the fact that the  
the third is the fact that the  
the fourth is the fact that the  
the fifth is the fact that the

the sixth is the fact that the  
the seventh is the fact that the  
the eighth is the fact that the  
the ninth is the fact that the  
the tenth is the fact that the

the eleventh is the fact that the  
the twelfth is the fact that the  
the thirteenth is the fact that the

the fourteenth is the fact that the  
the fifteenth is the fact that the  
the sixteenth is the fact that the  
the seventeenth is the fact that the  
the eighteenth is the fact that the

the nineteenth is the fact that the  
the twentieth is the fact that the  
the twenty-first is the fact that the

the twenty-second is the fact that the  
the twenty-third is the fact that the  
the twenty-fourth is the fact that the  
the twenty-fifth is the fact that the  
the twenty-sixth is the fact that the

the twenty-seventh is the fact that the

the twenty-eighth is the fact that the

the twenty-ninth is the fact that the

the thirtieth is the fact that the

the thirty-first is the fact that the

the thirty-second is the fact that the

the thirty-third is the fact that the

the thirty-fourth is the fact that the

the thirty-fifth is the fact that the