

PEER REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Cuesta College
San Luis County Community College District
P.O. Box 8106
San Luis Obispo CA, 93403-8106

This report represents the findings of the Peer Review Team that conducted a virtual visit to Cuesta College from September 28 to October 1, 2020. The Commission acted on the accredited status of the institution during its January 2021 meeting and this team report must be reviewed in conjunction with the Commission's Action letter.

Dr. Erika Endrijonas
Team Chair

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**Cuesta College
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Summary of Peer Review Team Report

INSTITUTION: Cuesta Community College

DATES OF VISIT: Virtual Visit September 28, 2020 – October 1, 2020

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Erika Endrijonas

A ten-person peer review team, including a team assistant, conducted a virtual visit to Cuesta College from September 28 to October 1, 2020. The purpose of the visit was to confirm that the College continues to meet the ACCJC Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations.

The team chair attended an ACCJC virtual team chair training on August 4, 2020, and the entire peer review team attended virtual training on September 3, 2020. The team chair and team assistant conducted a virtual pre-visit meeting with the College President and the College's accreditation liaison officer on August 12, 2020. The peer review team received the College's Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) approximately two months before the visit.

During the team training, the team discussed its overall impressions of the ISER and found it to be a concisely written document that clearly addressed the Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and regulations. The ISER narrative and evidence demonstrated that it had been developed with broad participation across the institution including faculty, classified staff, students, and administrators. The College also included two Quality Focused Essay projects in the ISER. Team members thoroughly reviewed the ISER and accompanying evidence and submitted two assignments to the team chair in advance of the visit, in addition to requests for meetings with various College faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees during the visit. Every effort was made to combine team member meetings with college personnel to reduce Zoom and meeting fatigue. Team members also requested additional evidence as part of their review of each standard.

The day before the visit officially began, the team met to discuss initial observations and assignments and to prepare for the virtual visit. The visit officially began with a virtual reception, where the team members and ACCJC team liaison were introduced to the college community, and where members of the college community were introduced to the team by the College President. Two public forums were held during the visit, with 43 college community members in attendance, including faculty, classified staff, managers, and a member of the Cuesta Foundation. During the visit, team members met with 48 Cuesta College community members, including two trustees.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the Peer Review Team Report

The team found no major findings or need for recommendations to meet a standard or for improvement.

Introduction

Cuesta College is the original campus of the San Luis Obispo County Community College District, located in San Luis Obispo County. It was approved by voters on April 16, 1963 to be a countywide junior college district that serves the seven area public high schools. In 1970, the College's first permanent buildings on the current 150-acre site were constructed. The passage of Measure L, a \$275 million dollar general obligation bond in 2014, has provided Cuesta College the opportunity to address longstanding facilities, infrastructure, and technology needs.

In fall 1998, the District opened the North County Campus on a 105-acre site in Paso Robles, thanks in large part to private giving which provided the funds to construct permanent buildings on the campus. The campus student population has tripled in size over the last two decades and includes health sciences and general education academic programs, in addition to comprehensive student services.

The South County Center is an off-campus evening instructional site at Arroyo Grande High School. The Center not only serves traditional-aged students in degree programs, it also hosts the free Emeritus College that provides free lifelong learning opportunities for adults.

Cuesta College is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution based on its student and local population and has been recognized for its excellence in service to active-duty military personnel and veterans.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

The Team confirmed that Cuesta College is authorized to operate as a post-secondary, degree-granting institution based on the statutory authority in the State of California, with an appointed Board of Governors that serve under the mandate of the California Government Code and Education Code for the California Community College system. Additionally, Cuesta College maintains continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). ACCJC is a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

2. Operational Status

The team confirmed that Cuesta College is operational and provides educational services to approximately 13,000 students each fall with annual Full-Time Equivalent Students totaling approximately 8,000. Cuesta College students are actively engaged in transfer, certificate, noncredit, and career technical education degree and certificate programs. Cuesta College provides primary semesters in Fall and Spring and a Summer intersession.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement

3. Degrees

The Team confirmed that a substantial portion of the instructional offerings at Cuesta College lead to degrees and certificates. Additionally, the team confirmed that a substantial portion of the students enrolled at Cuesta College are in courses and programs that lead to degrees and certificates.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement

4. Chief Executive Officer

The Team confirmed that Cuesta College has a chief executive officer (CEO), Superintendent/President Jill Stearns, Ph.D., who was appointed by the College's Governing Board and whose full-time responsibility is the institution. The CEO has the necessary qualifications and has been granted the requisite authority to implement Board policies and the leadership of the College. The Superintendent/President does not serve as the president/chair of the Governing Board for the College.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement

5. Financial Accountability

Cuesta College undergoes annual audits, conducted by an external independent certified public accounting agency, of all financial records. Audit summaries are certified and all explanation of findings are documented and addressed by the College as appropriate. The audit is presented annually to the Governing Board and made available to the public.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement

Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies

The evaluation items detailed in this Checklist are those which fall specifically under federal regulations and related Commission policies, beyond what is articulated in the Accreditation Standards; other evaluation items under ACCJC standards may address the same or similar subject matter. The peer review team evaluated the institution’s compliance with Standards as well as the specific Checklist elements from federal regulations and related Commission policies noted here.

Public Notification of an Peer Review Team Visit and Third Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third party comment.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions</i> as to third party comment.

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The Team confirmed that Cuesta College made timely and appropriate efforts to solicit third party comments in advance of the visit. Faculty, staff, and administrators at Cuesta College were cooperative with the evaluation team and the College has demonstrated full compliance with Commission Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution’s mission. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements. (Standard I.B.3, Standard I.B.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level. (Standard I.B.4)

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The institution has defined elements of student achievement and has developed minimal and stretch institution-set standards for seven elements of student achievement including those required. These are assessed and the results are communicated through a collaborative process involving the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the Institutional Research Office, and the

program stakeholders. The College’s integrated planning model ensures that resource allocation is tied to assessment of student learning outcomes and student achievement and aligns with priorities established in the planning documents.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure). (Standard II.A.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution, and is reliable and accurate across classroom based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution). (Standard II.A.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). (Standard I.C.2)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education’s conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice. (Standard II.A.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits</i> .

[Regulation citations: 600.2 (definition of credit hour); 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

Awarding of credit is based on credit hour calculations and are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in state and/or federal regulations. The College does not have curriculum that necessitates clock hour to credit hour conversion. Tuition is consistent across degree programs.

Transfer Policies

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public. (Standard II.A.10)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer. (Standard II.A.10)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the Commission <i>Policy on Transfer of Credit</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.17(a)(3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a)(ii).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The narrative in Standard II.A.10 addresses this issue. The College meets this policy.

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Evaluation Items:

For Distance Education:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for distance education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution verifies that the student who registers in a distance education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
For Correspondence Education:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for correspondence education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution verifies that the student who registers in a correspondence education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
Overall:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings. (Standard III.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the Institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The college does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education.

Narrative:

The distance education courses reviewed demonstrate regular and substantive instructor interaction with students. The College verifies the student who registers in a distance education course is the same person who participates in the course, completes the course or program, and

receives the academic credit. Distance education students receive comparable learning and student support services. When necessary to utilize correspondence education, the California Men's Colony Department of Education provides necessary learning support services and authenticates student registration. The technology infrastructure provided by the College and its cloud service providers is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings.

Student Complaints

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the college catalog and online.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student complaint files for the previous seven years (since the last comprehensive evaluation) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities. (Standard I.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> and the <i>Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(ix); 668.43.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The policies and procedures regarding student complaints are thoroughly enumerated in the College catalog and are accessible online. Links are provided to the homepages of all separate accrediting agencies; all links are fully active for specific contact information and other pertinent information.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Evaluation Items:

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

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The institution provides timely, accurate, and detailed information about its locations, programs, and policies on its website and on social media. The catalog is reviewed on an annual basis. The institution provides the required information on its accredited status on its website, and complies with Commission policies as required.

Title IV Compliance

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the USDE. (Standard III.D.15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, the institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements. (Standard III.D.15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, the institution’s student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range. (Standard III.D.15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required. (Standard III.D.16)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations</i> and the <i>Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

Conclusion Check-Off:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The College has met the Title IV compliance requirements. The Title IV federal financial aid program is extensively audited through the annual audit process. There was a deficiency noted in the 2017/18 audit for failure to return funds timely; however, the College developed and implemented a correction plan and the following annual audit found no ongoing deficiencies. The College’s loan default rates are within the USDE acceptable range. The College has no contractual relationships to offer or receive educational, library, and support services and demonstrates compliance with Commission Policies.

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

I.A. Mission

General Observations:

Cuesta College's mission expresses a commitment to providing high-quality learning and achievement and to providing programs and services to a diverse student population. The mission forms the basis for institutional priorities and objectives which are central to the College's decision-making, planning, and resource allocation processes and the institution's goals for student learning and achievement. The College uses data to assess achievement of its mission. The Board-approved mission is widely published and is periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

Findings and Evidence:

Collectively, the Cuesta College mission, vision, and values statements describe the College's broad educational purposes and the types of degrees and other credentials it offers. In particular, the team found these statements to communicate the College's commitment to high-quality learning and achievement and to serving a diverse student population. (I.A.1)

The College uses student success data at the institutional level to assess how well it is achieving its mission. Additionally, through the 2017 Integrated Planning Manual, 2016-2026 Comprehensive Master Plan, and 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, the mission is used to direct the College's priorities in meeting the educational needs of students. Further, to assure that the educational and programming offerings meet the needs of its service area, the College utilized the San Luis Obispo County Community College District (SLOCCCD) Board of Trustees Countywide Programming Survey, analyzing and publishing the resulting data. (I.A.2)

The team found that Cuesta College's curriculum and program approval processes assure alignment of programs with the mission and that the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program uses the mission as a guide for the provision of support services. The College's Educational Master Plan connects institutional processes, including long-term and short-term planning, resource allocation, and yearly program reviews to the College mission. Further, mission-based institutional goals and objectives are used in the resource allocation and planning processes and the use of a rubric ensures expenditure requests support institutional objectives and, therefore, achievement of the College mission. As such, the team found that the mission guides decision-making, planning, and resource allocation and informs institutional goals for student learning and achievement. (I.A.3)

The Cuesta College mission is widely published on the college website and in manuals and planning documents. As guided by the College's Integrated Planning Manual, the mission is reviewed every three years, the most recent being approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2019. (I.A.4)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard

I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:

Cuesta College has produced an Integrated Planning Manual that provides the rationale and methodology for both long range planning and the development of activities that meet more immediate needs. The College has developed institution-set standards and institutional goals and makes use of disaggregated data to assess progress toward meeting those goals. Student learning outcomes and student service outcomes have been developed for all courses and programs, and the timelines for assessment are maintained in the Institutional Research Office and in the departments. The program review process is clearly defined and reports of all kinds are readily accessible through publication on the college website and in presentations on campus and to the Board of Trustees.

Findings and Evidence:

Extensive and sustained dialog on student achievement, equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement is highly organized at the College, as evidenced by its Integrated Planning Manual and Participatory Governance handbook. The College has implemented a committee system that is intentionally designed to reduce silos, foster inter-committee communication, and produce clearly defined actions, with the unifying effort of supporting the College mission. Dialog Days and professional development events are held throughout the year to foster dialog. Meeting minutes also demonstrate emphasis on student equity, also suggesting specific actions. Program review is introduced as a formal reflection and evaluation on program performance, conducted at least annually, the evaluation of which involves wide participation. The interconnectivity of data acquisition and analysis, program review, resource allocation, and sustained dialog is impressive. (1.B.1)

Student learning outcomes and assessment criteria are housed in the CurricUNET and eLumen platforms. Program-level outcomes (PLOs), are published in the college catalog, and student learning outcomes (SLOs) are included on all syllabi. A master timeline is maintained in the Institutional Research Office and in individual departments. SLOs are mapped to PLOs and Institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) and evaluated based on SLO assessment data from

courses mapped to them. Students and learning support services have student service outcomes (SSOs) that are assessed regularly through program review. (I.B.2, ER 11)

Cuesta College has established minimal and stretch institution-set standards for successful course completion, student persistence, degree completion, certificate rates, transfer rates, state licensing scores, and job placement rates. As with much assessment at the College, assessment is conducted in collaboration between the Institutional Research Office, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, and program adherents. The results are published by the Institutional Research Office. The College focuses its planning and resources on achievement of its aspirational goals. The intention to exceed these standards is implicit in the institutional goals outlined in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. (I.B.3, ER 11)

Data analysis processes and scopes are delineated in the Integrated Planning Manual, including annual assessment of program and plan effectiveness. The findings are used to identify challenges and to provide the foundation for planning and setting institutional goals. Goals clearly support student learning and achievement. According to the Integrated Planning Model, data analysis is subsequently used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and to support adjustments to resource allocation. The Strategic Plans are designed to serve as checkpoints of progress in executing the Educational Master Plan. Reporting includes SLO assessment and mapping to ILOs and analysis of assessment data at institutional and departmental levels (I.B.4)

The Integrated Planning Manual makes clear that the purpose of the planning, data analysis, and resource allocation activities is to support achievement of the College's mission. Program review is directly tied to achievement of the mission and institutional goals, student learning, and student achievement. Disaggregated program data are available on the College's Institutional Research and Assessment website, and explicit direction is given to update analysis from previous reports and make suggestions for improvement based on that analysis. Data can be disaggregated by program type and mode of delivery. Through the efforts of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, data are provided to program in Tableau arrays for ease of manipulation, including disaggregation. (I.B.5)

The College asserts commitment to student equity and achievement. The program review process calls for macro analysis of programs as well as course success analysis for disaggregated subgroups of students. The Student Equity and Achievement Plan is the major vehicle for analysis of the needs of particular groups of students. Findings from these reports are used to design and implement actions and to allocate resources to close achievement gaps. (I.B.6)

The program review process itself is evaluated, as is the planning and decision-making process and the work of the central committees. Planning and decision-making processes are assessed, and central committees evaluate the efficacy of their initiatives through end-of-year assessments. The College not only uses its data analysis to develop initiatives for improvement, but it seeks feedback about their effectiveness through surveys. The responsible committees develop or modify their initiatives based on dialog about survey results, including ways to improve their

surveys. Committees, such as the Institutional Program Planning and Review Committee, are directly responsible for evaluating review instruments and adjusting for improvement. (I.B.7)

The Institutional Research website is the repository for program review and all the assessment of student learning and student achievement that it comprises. Higher-level Institutional Effectiveness Outcome Reports, Strategic Plan Outcome reports, and other similar progress reports are also published on this site. Responsible parties make presentations and hold workshops, town hall events, and Opening Day presentations for the college community and the Board. (I.B.8)

The Integrated Planning Manual has been developed to provide a framework for continuous, systematic analysis and planning with broad participation. Goals described in the long-range Educational Master Plan are translated into initiatives described in the Strategic Master Plan, with clear timelines and responsible parties outlined for each. Requirements for completion of program review - annual and comprehensive - are clearly defined and the required data are readily available in a user-friendly format. The committee system developed by the College models impressive integration of data acquisition and analysis, program review, resource allocation and monitoring of progress, and continuous assessment of the processes themselves. (I.B.9, ER 19)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard

I.C. Institutional Integrity

General Observations:

The College demonstrates institutional integrity to provide students, prospective students, staff, and the community with publications that accurately and comprehensively describe degrees, certificates, programs, and courses offered. Evidence includes the college catalog, the college website, and program review and other internal procedures performed within the College.

Findings and Evidence:

Cuesta College relies primarily on its website and catalog to disseminate information to students, employees, and to the general public. Recently, the college has started to use social media to provide timely updates where needed. The mission statement, learning outcomes, educational programs, student support services, and accreditation are placed prominently on the website. (I.C.1, ER 20)

Cuesta College produces a catalog, in both print and online form, that provides precise, accurate, and current information about all facts, requirements, policies, and procedures listed in the

Catalog Requirements, as evidenced by extracts from the table of contents. Annual catalog review involves a detailed process with timelines and wide participation. (I.C.2, ER 20)

Assessment of student learning and evaluation of student achievement are conducted primarily through program review. Comprehensive reviews include analysis of trends over time. These reviews, and any other reports regarding student and institutional performance, are housed on the Institutional Research web page and are readily accessible to the public. (I.C.3, ER 19)

Cuesta College describes the intended purpose, requirements, and learning outcomes of all its programs in CurricUNET, on its website, and in the printed and online catalog and addenda. This information is all readily available to the public. (I.C.4)

In accordance with the participatory governance process at the College, the College Council plays a central role in systematic review of procedures, plans, and priorities. These arise through initiatives and proposals devised by participatory governance committees. The Council ultimately makes recommendations to the Superintendent/President for changes and improvements. College publications such as the college catalog are regularly reviewed through a well-established process with wide participation. Web content, social media posts, and outreach materials are regularly reviewed for accuracy and currency by the entities that generate the content, such as the individual departments and Student Services. (I.C.5)

Information about the cost of attendance, enrollment and other fees is readily available on webpages in Student Services. Materials fees for specific classes are included in the Class Finder (schedule), and textbook costs are found on the bookstore web page. (I.C.6)

Board Policy (BP) 4030 supports and defines academic freedom for employees and, specifically, for faculty and students. The collective bargaining agreement between the District and the faculty union (CCFT/AFT Local #4909) memorializes academic freedom and intellectual property rights for faculty with respect to instruction. These and other college policies, rules and procedures are published in the College catalog. (I.C.7, ER 13)

Administrative Procedure (AP) 3050 describes an Institutional Code of Ethics for faculty, staff and students, referring not only to law but guiding principles of ethical behavior. Standards of conduct for students are explained in BP 5500, and BP 5500.2 addresses standards applicable to the clinical setting for students in the Associate Degree Nursing program. BP 2715 establishes a code of ethics and standards of practice for the Board of Trustees. Academic dishonesty is defined, and the consequences enumerated, in the College catalog. A code of conduct regarding financial transactions is published on the Financial Aid webpage. (I.C.8)

Both Article 3 of the collective bargaining agreement and BP 4030 protect the rights and responsibilities of faculty to examine controversial ideas in a way that ensures objectivity and academic integrity. Peer and student evaluations provide a process to verify fairness and objectivity and respect for differing viewpoints in the presentation of course content. (I.C.9)

As a public institution, Cuesta College does not seek to instill specific beliefs or world views other than those that support its mission and does not operate in foreign locations. The College does maintain Board Policies and Administrative Procedures defining codes of conduct for

trustees, faculty, staff, and students while on campus or engaged in any college-sponsored activity. These are published in the college catalog and in the repository of BPs and APs. Conduct that could result in disciplinary action is defined, as well as the disciplinary actions themselves, in collective bargaining agreements with faculty and classified employees. (I.C.10; I.C.11 does not apply to the College.)

Cuesta College agrees to comply with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies and guidelines established by the ACCJC. In accordance with BP 3200, Cuesta College displays transparency in its dealings with the accrediting agency. Reports are submitted in a timely manner and all communication with and documents requested by the ACCJC are published on the Accreditation website. (I.C.12, ER 21)

The College extends this transparency to other entities that accredit specific programs at Cuesta College: Licensed Vocational Nursing; the A.S. degree in Registered Nursing; Psychiatric Technician, Paramedic Training, and Automotive Technology. Links to the websites of each accrediting body are provided in the catalog and on the Accreditation website. (I.C.13, ER 21)

As a public, two-year, open access institution, Cuesta College does not generate returns for investors, parent organizations, or external interests. (I.C.14)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Support Services

II.A. Instructional Programs

General Observations:

Cuesta College has implemented processes that guarantee instructional programs are aligned with its mission and that the means of delivery are of the highest quality. The College's ongoing commitment to equity-centered professional development helps ensure that the methods of instruction meet academic and professional standards and expectations. The College is a member of the California Virtual Campus – Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI) consortium and uses the CVC-OEI rubric to create and deliver high-quality distance education courses.

The curriculum review process ensures all courses and programs have appropriate learning outcomes for awarding credit. Learning outcomes are collectively developed and evaluated by discipline faculty, the Curriculum Committee, and the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Coordinators. Associate degrees require completion of a cohesive General Education pattern with identified General Education Outcomes. The College's Faculty Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment (SLOA) Coordinators ensures that all Student Learning Outcomes (SLO), Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) are being regularly assessed and that assessment analysis is being documented and discussed.

Data is used to inform the College's scheduling and discontinuance processes as well as their Career Technical Education programs. The College scheduling process allows students to complete their academic program in a timely manner. The College has a clear process for discontinuing programs and students can complete their education with minimum disruption. Career Technical Education certificates and degrees are responsive to the technical and professional competencies necessary for employment opportunities in San Luis Obispo and the state of California.

Findings and Evidence:

The College's clearly defined curriculum process allows the College to offer instructional programs which lead to student achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer. Specifically, the team found that the evidence associated with this standard provides guidance on criteria for curriculum development, creation of new courses/programs, modification of existing courses/programs, and the curriculum approval process. The new course and program approval form ensures the proposed curriculum is aligned with the College's mission. Communication of new courses/programs is evident in Curriculum Committee and College Council meeting minutes.

As a member of the CVC-OEI consortium, the College has access to resources that allows them to develop and deliver high-quality distance education courses and programs. The faculty use the Distance Education Rubric to develop and review these courses.

As a result of COVID-19, the college is offering Correspondence Education (CE) at the California Men's Colony. Each CE course has an approved DE Addendum and transportation of course documents are handled by the prison staff.

The team found that the program descriptions are clearly stated in the college catalog and that student learning outcomes (SLO) are listed on each course outline of record (COR). Effectiveness of courses and programs are measured through SLOs, Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO). Assessment analysis is recorded in Comprehensive Program and Planning Reports (CPPR). (II.A.1)

The College regularly engages in ensuring that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations as well as improves the learning experience via the Program Review process. This data-driven process provides the opportunity to assess and analyze SLOs to determine the need to modify existing courses/programs. It also includes data related to enrollment, course demand, efficiency, and student success disaggregated by course modality, degrees and certificates awarded and course completion.

Through the faculty evaluation process, faculty are provided feedback on teaching and student learning. The College provides a range of teaching and learning professional development opportunities through flex activities, institutes, and training.

Curriculum is reviewed on a continuous cycle and curriculum deadlines are clearly outlined in the annual Curriculum Committee handbook. The Office of Academic Affairs sends annual notices to programs scheduled for review. (II.A.2)

The team found that the college regularly assesses outcomes and that SLOs are included on each instructional syllabus. Assessment analysis is documented in both the CPPR as well as the eLumen SLO module.

Clear communication regarding outcomes is evident. The Assessment Calendar provides information on when courses are due for assessment and annual ILO Assessment Reports are presented to College Council and Academic Senate. SLOA co-coordinators present results and recommendations through the participatory governance process.

Professional Syllabus Standards for both Distance Education and Face-to-Face classes, approved by the Academic Senate, help to ensure compliance with national and regional articulation agreements. Identified syllabi components help faculty develop syllabi that comply with professional standards. (II.A.3)

The team found that the College modified its existing Math and English curriculum to comply with AB 705 and that the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) plan contributed to the implementation of AB 705 strategies. Activities which provide support for pre-collegiate level students include counseling, embedded tutoring, academic success coaching, student success resource presentations, early alert, prep courses, first year experience, and utilization of Canvas to track student grades. (II.A.4)

The team found that the College's Board Policies and Administrative Procedures set standards for degree and program length and rigor. The College has an established process for the development and review of all curricular offerings and the process is housed in the College's Curriculum Management system, CurricUNET.

The College has established a General Education Sub-Committee to review courses requesting inclusion in the GE Pattern. The committee ensures that the approved general education courses reflect the quality and rigor consistent with the academic standards appropriate to higher education. (II.A.5)

The team found that the College has a clearly defined scheduling process and timeline. The use of data assists in identifying student demand, and weekly enrollment updates allow the College to determine if schedule modifications are needed.

The College has implemented Program Mapper, which streamlines the students' educational pathways and allows students to see a semester-by-semester path from program entry to completion. Students can select a two, three or four-year completion pathway. Currently, the mapper includes pathways for local degrees and certificates as well as Associate Degrees for Transfer.

The College also makes DegreeWorks available to students to assist them in navigating their educational pathway. It identifies courses required for each student's program and then links the student to the Class Finder. (II.A.6)

The team reviewed the evidence and found that, through an equity lens, the college offers a variety of instructional and student support delivery modes to meet the needs of its diverse student population. Distance Education (DE) courses undergo a Curriculum Committee certification process, and all DE Courses follow the Distance Education Syllabus Standards adopted by the Cuesta College Academic Senate.

Equity-focused training assists faculty in implementing best practices in teaching modalities to help increase success rates of traditionally under-served populations. Additionally, with the implementation of AB 705, which requires that students be placed into college-level English and Math courses through multiple measures and without relying on assessment tools, innovative strategies that address the challenges of disproportionately impacted students have been developed.

The College offers a variety of learning support services such as embedded tutoring, a writing lab, a math lab, a stats lab as well as NetTutor for DE Students. The Equity and Student Success Committee makes recommendations and disseminates information that helps to coordinate learning support services in efforts to achieve equity for all students. (II.A.7)

The team found that the College performs regular assessment of learning outcomes and documents assessment analysis in eLumen. Learning outcomes are published on the CORs, the Catalog, the website, and in course syllabi. Awarding of credit is based on credit hour calculations and are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in state and/or federal regulations. (II.A.9)

The Catalog clearly outlines transfer-of-credit policies. The College offers transfer guarantees to the CSU and UC systems and maintains articulation agreements appropriate to its mission. All

agreements are available at the Articulation System Stimulating Inter-Institutional Student Transfer (ASSIST.org) website. Articulation is aligned with the statewide Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) and the College's course numbering system clearly identifies courses approved for transfer to the CSU and UC systems.

Administrative Procedure AP 5010 outlines the process by which an Admissions and Records Evaluations Analyst evaluates non-native college transcripts to determine learning outcome alignment. Discipline faculty are consulted in this process when necessary. The College has clear guidelines for accepting upper division coursework completed at another college or university for the purpose of fulfilling associate degree and certificate requirements. The Transfer Center provides students with information about university transfer requirements, the university application process, articulation agreements, and transfer admission guarantee programs. (II.A.10)

The College has student learning outcomes in all programs that include communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, and the ability to engage diverse perspectives. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are mapped to the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), which cover the six ILO areas. PLOs are part of the regular curriculum review process to ensure they are appropriate to the program.

Electronic assessment of student attainment of ILOs was implemented in 2012. Minor changes were made to the assessment instrument in 2017. ILO assessment results are shared annually in a report, via the participatory governance process, by the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment (SLOA) Coordinators. College Council minutes document the presentation and discussion of the ILO report. (II.A.11)

The College's associate degrees require completion of a cohesive General Education pattern. General Education Outcomes are provided in the Catalog and include a student's preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning, and a broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences.

The Catalog outlines a cohesive pattern of general education (GE) courses for students. The College's Curriculum Committee, relying on faculty expertise, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum, based upon student learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to the degree level. A General Education Rubric is used as a means of setting clear evaluation standards. Courses included in the GE pattern are reviewed by the GE subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee and approved by the Curriculum Committee and Board of Trustees. (II.A.12)

The College's Associate Degrees for Transfer, Associate Degrees, Certificates of Achievement, and Certificates of Specialization include study in at least one area of study or interdisciplinary emphasis. The Catalog and "Degrees and Certificates" page of the College website outline prescribed major coursework in at least one area of study or interdisciplinary core.

The curriculum review process ensures all courses and programs have appropriate learning outcomes for awarding credit. Learning outcomes are collectively developed and evaluated by

discipline faculty, the Curriculum Committee, and the SLOA Coordinators. All learning outcomes are regularly assessed on a cycle.

The Course Outline of Record (COR) includes SLOs and are regularly reviewed by discipline faculty, the Curriculum Committee, and the SLOA Coordinators to ensure all courses and programs meet appropriate requirements. SLOs are mapped to PLOs and ILOs. They are regularly assessed to ensure students achieve mastery of key theories and practices in their area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core. (II.A.13)

The College's career-technical certificates and degrees are responsive to the technical and professional competencies necessary for employment opportunities in San Luis Obispo and the state of California. SLOs and CORs are aligned with licensing or certification exams or requirements where appropriate. Advisory committees are composed of local industry representatives who support the College's Career Technical Education (CTE) programs by providing input from practitioners currently working in these fields. CTE advisory committees meet at least once per year to assess industry needs relevant to CTE programs.

Faculty in CTE programs complete Comprehensive Program Planning and Reviews (CPPRs). Employment and completion data are analyzed during the CPPRs process to assess program impact. CTE programs complete a supplemental review every year to be in compliance with California Education Code Section 78016.

The College tracks and reports annual pass rates and course success rates for CTE programs that require external licensure or certification for employment and provides data on median wages and employment for CTE graduates on their website. (II.A.14)

There is a clear process for discontinuing programs and students can complete their education with minimum disruption. If necessary, the College's review process allows students to substitute courses in a degree program in cases where courses from that program no longer exist. The College adheres to Administrative Procedure AP 4022 on Academic Program Discontinuance. (II.A.15)

All instructional programs and courses, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and/or community-based, regardless of delivery mode or location, are comprehensively reviewed on a five-year cycle. CTE programs complete a comprehensive review every four years with a two-year CTE review. Annual Program Planning Worksheets (APPW) are completed yearly between comprehensive reviews. Student Services and administrative areas are also reviewed.

The College's SLOs are tracked and documented in eLumen. Course, program, and institutional learning outcome assessment results are discussed during small department groups, division meetings, outcome dialogue days, and the governance process.

Board Policy 4020 and Administrative Procedure 4020 on Program, Curriculum and Course Development establishes procedures for the development and review of all curricular offerings. (II.A.16)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:

Cuesta College's Library and Learning Support Services provide support for student learning and achievement with sufficient services and materials for students, faculty, and staff. Personnel with the appropriate expertise select and maintain the educational equipment and materials that support student learning. Program reviews use statistical and survey data to evaluate and assess how library and learning support services contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes and the College's mission. These evaluations inform decisions to improve services. The library documents its contractual agreements with service providers such as the library service platform it uses and database subscriptions. All services sufficiently support the college community regardless of location or means of delivery.

Findings and Evidence:

The College has one library, seven distinct support programs and services, a computer lab, and media services available to the college community. Services provided include print and electronic resources, traditional and embedded tutoring, success workshops, a writing center, academic success coaching, 24/7 online tutoring, extended study hours, and technology services in the form of computers and other technology. The college's programs and services support student learning and achievement and are sufficient to meet the community's needs.

The services vary and provide support for courses offered on campus, online, and off campus at the California Men's Colony. Many services at the California Men's Colony are provided in-house by the prison's own Department of Education.

A library collection development policy supports curricula and identifies faculty as necessary in suggesting library materials for acquisition and for weeding the collection. The Library provides a clear definition of Information Literacy and the SLO's to be assessed through its instruction. The current collection has over 65,000 print titles, 24,000 e-books, 790 AV titles, and 25 database subscriptions with access to full-text journals, news, and magazines online. The entire collection is searchable and accessible online through the OCLC WorldShare Management System (WMS). The library meets Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards by having a librarian available during all open hours. The librarians provide remote reference help and respond to online chat and e-mail in addition to providing traditional reference service. Sufficient support is available for distance education and correspondence courses. The library provides class and discipline specific library guides, a one-unit Research Skills class (LIBT 212), a Library Information Literacy Assignment (LILA) as a component of English Composition classes, and one-on-one instruction to support learning across programs.

Student Support Services, such as tutoring and success coaching, are also available to all students regardless of the campus they attend, both in person and online. This also includes computer labs

and the ability to check-out Chromebooks for use at home. (II.B.1)

The College relies upon annual Program Review, the Library Collection Development Policy, and circulation statistics to select and maintain appropriate educational equipment and materials. To ensure appropriate expertise, the Library enlists the help of discipline faculty and examines professional journals before purchasing materials. New faculty are encouraged to collaborate with the library in selecting materials that meet their instructional needs. College curricula, course assignments, and qualitative student data help guide the selection process as well.

The Library Collection Development Policy prioritizes the acquisition of materials that directly support curriculum, instructional programs, and the needs of students, faculty, and staff. A library faculty member sits on the college's Curriculum Committee to ensure the library is aware of new programs and courses that may need support materials. The Program Review documentation shows the library's prioritization of resource requests. (II.B.2)

The College uses a library satisfaction survey, student success center tutor survey, STUDYTHON survey, and SARS TRAK to collect data and examine statistical trends for the evaluation of library and learning support services. Data is collected in collaboration with the Department of Institutional Research. The college demonstrates how it considers student need to make improvements. For example, responses from student surveys showed a need for expanding library hours of operation, and the college made this change to improve services.

Library orientations, instruction, and other activities are provided to improve student information literacy skills. Surveys are completed after these activities to determine if students are meeting the library's student learning outcomes. The library also offers a Library Information Literacy Assignment (LILA) that is used by all English Composition classes. This assignment consists of 50 questions that are reviewed along with responses to determine if students are meeting the learning outcomes. The collaboration in this area is particularly noteworthy.

Data from SARS TRAK and circulation statistics are used along with survey data to determine if services are adequate and inform the college of possible changes they might consider for improving services. The college's program review documents demonstrate evaluation of the library and learning support services and that the adequacy of these services has been assessed. (II.B.3)

The College provided documentation of its formal collaboration with the Community College League of California (CCLC) Library Consortium and with OCLC for its Integrated Library System. There are no other formal agreements that apply to the standard. (II.B.4)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

II.C. Student Support Services

General Observations:

Cuesta College offers an extensive range of student support services including: admissions and records; academic counseling and advising; self-guided assessment services; associated student government; student activities; student clubs and organizations; athletics; California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs); Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE); Learning Opportunity Program; Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS); Disability Services Program and Services(DSPS); Financial Aid Office; Health Center; Orientation; Transfer and Career Center; Cougar Food Pantry, Monarch Center (Dreamer Center) and a Veterans Resources Center.

Findings and Evidence:

The team found that the College regularly evaluates the quality of student support services, and that the College provides services that support student learning, regardless of location, and that reflect the mission of the College. For example, the Student Technology Survey and Cougar Pantry Survey findings indicate that the student support services provide quality services to students. (II.C.1)

The College identifies and assesses learning support outcomes annually and analyzes data to inform program improvement. Based on the data analysis from the assessments, student support services and programs modify practices and policies to continuously improve. (II.C.2)

The College assures equitable comprehensive and reliable access to all students regardless of location. The College has online, face-to-face, phone, and digital services at the SLO campus and the North Campus. North Campus offers Learning Resource Center, drop-in tutoring, Student Success Workshops, Health Services, Monarch Center for Dreamers, Cougar Welcome Days, and Veterans' services. (II.C.3)

Co-curricular programs and athletics programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the social and cultural dimensions of the educational experience of its students. The co-curricular and athletic programs are conducted with sound educational policy and standards of integrity. The College has responsibility for the control of these programs, including their finances and are aligned with California Community College Chancellor's Office and California Community College Athletic Association guidelines for student participation. Through programming provided in partnership by the Associated Students Organization and Cultural Center, students can explore equity and diversity as well as cultural awareness. (II.C.4)

The College provides counseling programs to support student development and success, as well as prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function. Counseling and advising programs orient students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies. (II.C.5)

Cuesta's Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 5010 clearly outlines the guidelines for admission, stating the College shall be fully open to enrollment and participation by any person, which also aligns with the College's mission statement of inclusivity. The information on admissions and enrollment policies, degree, certificates, and transfer partnerships can be found on the College's website and catalog.

Students also have access to DegreeWorks, which is an automated system where students can check their progress towards degree/certificate completion. Supported by the College's agenda items, the College disseminates information during Student Services trainings and counseling faculty and staff meetings. The College has worked to develop Areas of Study meta majors through Guided Pathway to streamline completion. (II. C.6)

The College implemented AB 705 and multiple measures to assist students in self-guided placement in 2019 by placing students directly into college-level English and Math courses without the use of assessment tools. This demonstrates the College's commitment to implementing practices that will eliminate achievement gaps of underrepresented groups. (II.C.7)

The College maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially, including secure backup of all files, which is codified in Board Policy 5040 and the records backup plan. The College publishes and follows policies for the release of student records. Procedures for student review of student records is clearly stated on the website and in the catalog. (II.C.8)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

Standard III

Resources

III.A. Human Resources

General Observations:

Cuesta College uses policies, procedures, collective bargaining agreements, and other guiding documents to govern the effective deployment of human resources in support of its mission. The evidence confirms appropriate hiring and supervisory practices, along with regular professional development and evaluation processes, for appropriately qualified faculty, classified, and administrative employees.

Findings and Evidence:

Following its review of the evidence related to hiring and evaluation processes, the team determined that the College employs administrators, faculty, and staff who are appropriately qualified to provide programs and services of high quality and integrity. (III.A.1.)

The College uses hiring and evaluation processes to ascertain that faculty are knowledgeable about their subject matter and appropriately qualified to teach at the postsecondary level. The CCFT Collective Bargaining Agreement includes references to curriculum development and program review, which includes curriculum review. (III.A.2.)

The College has established and follows processes to hire appropriately qualified administrators and other employees responsible for educational programs and services. (III.A.3.)

The College ensures that required degrees held by faculty, administrators and other employees are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies or are appropriately evaluated by a U.S. credential evaluation service. (III.A.4.)

The College systematically evaluates all personnel based on processes codified in board policy, collective bargaining agreements, and documented institutional procedures. (III.A.5.)

The team found processes, including the Full-time Tenure-track Faculty Prioritization Process, which allow the College to maintain a sufficient number of qualified full and part time faculty. (III.A.7.)

The College provides several required and optional activities for the orientation, oversight, evaluation, professional development, and integration into the institution of all faculty. (III.A.8.) The team further found that the College employs a sufficient number of qualified staff to support the effective educational, technological, physical, and administrative operations of the institution (III.A.9.), as well as a sufficient number of appropriately prepared and qualified administrators to provide continuity and effective administrative leadership. (III.A.10.)

The College adheres to, and fairly and consistently administers written personnel policies and procedures which are established and published by the district. (III.A.11.)

The College supports its diverse personnel by developing, regularly updating, and adhering to the San Luis Obispo County Community College District Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and by regularly assessing its record in employment equity and diversity. (III.A.12.)

The College maintains a written code of professional ethics and related discipline processes III.A.13.)

The team further found that the College provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development and that it systematically evaluates its professional development programs. (III.A.14.)

The team verified via a videoconference that the district keeps employee personnel files in locked cabinets inside a room which is only accessible by key code entry. (III.A.15.)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

III.B. Physical Resources

General Observations:

Cuesta College provides instruction and services at three sites; North County and San Luis Obispo, which are owned and maintained by the college, and South County, which is leased. The College has an integrated planning process, ensuring long term strategic and capital planning and goals are aligned to each other and to the mission, vision, and values of the College. The Facilities Master Plan is within the purview of the Planning and Budget Committee, ensuring resource allocation and planning are directly aligned. The Facilities Master Plan includes overarching guiding themes of maintaining facilities at a level conducive to learning, ensuring sufficient funding, creating outdoor spaces and sustainability for their facilities planning process.

These themes are tied to institutional goals and drive the capital planning process.

Findings and Evidence:

The College's Facilities Services and District Police departments are responsible for ensuring safe physical resources at its owned sites. The College has contracts with other law enforcement agencies for support at other sites and after hours, as well as investigations into major crimes. The College belongs to a Joint Powers Authority that provides risk assessment support and has had safety reviews included in major construction projects. The Clery Report outlines completed and anticipated updates and sufficient security and safety resources and outlines a robust safety plan and the various resources used in ensuring the safety of the campus community. Those resources are clearly communicated to the college community. There are internal reporting options to report safety concerns through the shared governance Campus Safety & Environmental Committee or either directly to Facilities Services or submitting a work order through their system. The Facilities Services staff regularly assess maintenance and safety needs and those evaluations are used for project planning. Facilities and major renovations are designed and constructed to the required standards of the California Division of State Architect, ensuring safety and access for future occupants. Additionally, the College uses the facilities master plan and the capital planning process to ensure sufficient physical resources that create a safe, secure, and healthful environment. (III.B.1)

The team found that the College is ensuring that assets are utilized effectively by analyzing the best use of physical resources. The College's Facilities Master Plan and program review processes are used to ensure programmatic and support needs are considered. Facilities planning is aligned with the mission through the Educational Master Plan and Facilities Master Plan and evidences direct alignment of goals. Results of utilization assessment and long range planning are used to ensure programmatic needs are considered and long range planning aligns with institutional needs. Equipment replacement is tied to programmatic and support needs through the program review process. The College also performs quality assessment through facility condition assessments and utilizes those results in the planning process. The College successfully passed a bond in 2014, ensuring available funding for critical upgrades and expansion. The Facilities Master Plan and Facilities Condition Assessments were used to frame the projects in the 2014 Bond Voter Information Guide, which is the framework for the approved bond projects. Prior to the bond passage, the College had done remarkable work maintaining an aging campus and being strategic about resource accumulation and utilization. (III.B.2)

The team further found that the College regularly evaluates its facilities and uses those results to improve capital assets and assure effective use of its physical resources. It has regular assessment processes through the capital outlay plan, capacity load ratio assessment, space inventory and condition assessment reporting and the results of those assessments have been used for capital planning, including the capital outlay, scheduled maintenance and master planning processes. (III.B.3)

The College has defined total cost of ownership (TCO) as including an assessment of personnel needs, ongoing maintenance, depreciation and replacement. It uses that definition when making decisions about facilities and equipment by the realignment of resources through the resource allocation process. The team found that the College has considered TCO in their capital planning processes. Maintenance for owned sites is overseen by a unified capital projects and facilities services team, which assures the project design process encompasses TCO for ongoing and long term maintenance needs. In addition, the team found that the College reassigns resources where needed, has designed lower maintenance buildings and landscaping to keep future maintenance costs lower and assesses future personnel time in the planning process to reduce workloads and more effectively utilize human resources. The Facilities Master Plan assures that College goals are supported by capital project planning processes. The College assesses the effectiveness of long range capital planning on the advancement of the college wide goals through the direct alignment of the goals of the Facilities Master Plan to the goals of the Educational Master Plan. (III.B.4)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

III.C. Technology Resources

General Observations:

The College maintains appropriate instructional and administrative technology resources to accomplish its mission and uses a well-integrated planning and budgeting process to effectively allocate those resources. The College makes technology accessible via appropriate support mechanisms while integrating appropriate safety and security practices.

Findings and Evidence:

Based on its review of the ISER and related evidence, including the number of technology staff and supervisors, recent Resource Allocation Scoresheets, a virtual visit of the facilities, and the student, staff, and faculty technology survey results, the team found that the College's technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software adequately support the institution's management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services. (III.C.1.)

To determine technology resource needs and project-related expenses in light of the availability of both ongoing funds and bond funds, the College used a consulting firm in 2016 to help it develop a Technology Implementation Plan that would guide its technology expansion and maintenance until 2026. The team was impressed that the College has also tripled the number of wireless access points to provide ubiquitous Wi-Fi at the North County and San Luis Obispo Campuses. (III.C.2.)

The College uses two separate routers in the CENIC data network to provide access between the San Luis Obispo and North County campuses and to the Internet. The district contracts annually with the Lucia Mar high school to use its facilities as its South County Center. The College's IT staff regularly applies updates to its client and server computers with minimal impact to its users. The College maintains similar server and infrastructure arrays at the San Luis Obispo and North County campuses to provide backup and disaster recovery options. (III.C.3.)

Based on the results from the student, staff, and faculty technology surveys, the College provides appropriate instruction and support in the effective use of technology and technology systems, including those used for online instruction. (III.C.4.)

The College implements administrative procedures which govern the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning processes, and it has users agree to abide by the Cuesta Network Use Policies when authenticating to the myCuesta portal. (III.C.5.)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

III.D. Financial Resources

General Observations:

Cuesta College effectively uses its financial resources to achieve its mission and to improve academic quality and institutional effectiveness. It is in good financial condition and has sufficient resources to support and sustain their educational mission. The College's financial planning is directly tied to its mission, vision, and values and integrated into institutional planning. It has developed a prudent level of reserves and has taken an appropriately conservative approach to short range and long-term financial planning to ensure long term fiscal stability and that future unanticipated changes will not have adverse impacts on the College.

Findings and Evidence:

The team found the integration between the College's planning and budgeting and the resource allocation process ensures resources sustain student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. While enrollment levels have been declining, the College has done a good job pivoting and investing in areas that can offset those losses, including the Emeritus program, online learning and dual enrollment, as well as building reserves to ensure long term financial stability. The College has tied its resource allocation process to its institutional and strategic planning to ensure funds are allocated in a manner that will realistically achieve its stated goals for student learning. The College's resource allocation process also sets institutional improvement priorities for new resources. Despite having had minor audit findings, the College has received unmodified opinions year over year, confirming the integrity and quality of financial information and internal controls. (III.D.1)

The College's budget planning process is centered on its mission, vision, and values and goals through the Institutional Planning Manual (IPM), budget assumptions and multiyear projections. Its program review and resource allocation processes create priorities among competing needs so that it can allocate future funding in ways that achieve its stated goals. New resource allocations are tied to planning through the program review process. It has strong institutional plans that are linked to each other as well as short-term and long-range financial planning processes. The financial planning process relies primarily on institutional plans for content and timelines. The team found the College has sufficient policies, procedures, guidelines and processes in place to ensure sound financial practices and stability. The College has adopted a policy requiring a 6% reserve plus a 6% contingency to ensure it can weather the peaks and valleys of the state's economic cycle. The Board of Trustees and Planning and Budget Committee (PBC) receive timely and appropriate information about fiscal planning, and it is linked to institutional planning. Financial information is regularly presented to the Board of Trustees and college community. (III.D.2)

The College has clearly defined and followed its processes for financial planning and budget development, which are widely available as part of the IPM. All constituent groups have an opportunity to participate in budget development and planning processes through the PBC. (III.D.3)

The College's budget assumptions are overall realistic, include known current and future budget impacts and expenditure requirements, and are foundational elements of the institution's plans and goals. The members of the PBC receive accurate information about available funds, including the annual budget showing ongoing and anticipated fiscal commitments. The College has strong Foundation support and assesses partnerships and other opportunities to increase revenues and decrease expenditures. The information shared with the Board of Trustees and PBC includes the institution's fiscal condition and is sufficient to support realistic institutional and financial planning. The College includes the actual expenses from the past year as part of the planning for current and future fiscal needs. (III.D.4)

The team found the College has adequate internal control mechanisms in place to assure financial integrity. The IPM outlines the budget development and resource allocation timelines and processes. Information about budget, fiscal conditions, financial planning and audit results are produced timely and accurately and reported to the Board of Trustees and PBC as well as provided to the College community. The PBC and Board of Trustees review and approve reports as outlined in their plans. Through interviews, the team confirmed that the College evaluates its financial management practices and uses those evaluations for continuous improvement. (III.D.5)

The College's budget assumptions and guidelines include all significant anticipated changes and are tied to institutional goals and other required constraints. The PBC recommends and approves resource allocations and changes. The resource allocation rubric confirms that resource allocation considers learning outcomes and institutional standards and plans. The College audit and rating agency reports affirm the accuracy of financial documents and integrity of financial management practices. The College exceeds its compliance number, even after the 2018

separation agreement, and has met the required 50% Law calculation, demonstrating that financial resources are utilized to support student learning programs and support services. Through interviews, the team confirmed that there is a high level of creditability in the financial documents. (III.D.6)

The College has had two audit findings since the 2015/16 fiscal year; however, both audits resulted in appropriate corrective actions being drafted and implemented immediately. Audits conducted the following year found no ongoing or additional deficiencies. (III.D.7)

The College completes the fiscal health assessment checklist annually to identify potential risks, issues, weaknesses or areas to improve and uses the results of the assessment for improvement. The evaluation of the effectiveness of financial and internal controls and the integrity of financial management practices is part of the annual audit process and the audit report shows no material deficiencies in oversight or controls. As part of the program review process, the College shows an assessment of previous plans and revisions to adjust for current and future needs. (III.D.8)

As expected for a College that relies heavily on property tax revenue, there are the usual cash flow shortages prior to December and April tax allocations. The College has done Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes in the past and currently relies on dry financing through the county to ensure cash flow is sufficient to maintain stability. The College has intentionally grown their reserves to a level that is sufficient to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences, which has had a positive fiscal impact on College. There are sufficient reserves to cover any financial emergencies and the College is developing a contingency fund to ensure financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences do not have a negative impact. (III.D.9)

The team found that the College practices effective oversight of its finances. The College and Foundation audit reports shows no compliance issues with audited areas such as grants, contracts, auxiliaries, or any institutional assets. In addition, there have been no material weakness or significant deficiencies identified with the oversight process of Federal Title IV regulations and requirements for managing federal financial aid other than in the 2017/18 fiscal year, which was implemented correctly and timely. There is sufficient College administrative and fiscal oversight and support for grants and a Fiscal Services and Procedure Manual to ensure compliance with cash, standards, procurement, and oversight requirements. (III.D.10)

The team found the College has ensured both short-term and long-term financial solvency for debt obligations by setting aside funds for future pension increases, retiring old Certificate of Participations debt, offering a separation incentive program, reorganizing positions which resulted in lowering their filled unrestricted general fund classified positions by 6.9% in four years, and revising policy to increase required reserve levels to 6%, in addition to working towards creating a 6% level of contingencies to offset future economic instability. Its stated commitment to long term fiscal stability is well evidenced by its actions and the College has positioned itself well for future unforeseen conditions. The College utilizes multiyear planning based on reasonable assumptions that should be sufficient to cover any uncontrollable cost increases and other known future factors. This information is shared with PBC and incorporated into the budgeting process. There are no significant debt or Other Post-Employment Benefits

(OPEB) obligations. Long term obligation budget implications are outlined in the adopted budget document and shared with the PBC. (III.D.11)

The College has the actuarially determined OPEB report as required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and obligations are incorporated into its budget. There is only a net obligation liability of \$453 thousand as of 2018, so the College has declined to create an irrevocable trust. There is a significant increase in the valuation dated 6/30/19 due to an early separation agreement; however, the College has accounted for repayment in multiyear projections. The College also created a \$3 million pension rate stabilization account in 2017 to help offset future pension increases. (III.D.12)

As part of its budget process, the College assesses all long-term obligations and incorporates the results into multiyear projections and the annual budget. It has retired all debt instruments other than General Obligation bonds, which is not the responsibility of the College to repay. (III.D.13)

The team further found the College's financial resources are used with integrity and in an appropriate manner. The restricted funds are reviewed as part of its annual audit to ensure they are used consistent with their intended purpose. The annual audits include the required financial and performance audits of Measure L bond funds and show these funds are used consistent with what was promised to the voters and regulatory and legal restrictions. The Citizens Bond Oversight Committee receives quarterly reports and is kept updated on audits and projects, as well as creates and disseminates the Bond Annual Reports. Grant managers and appropriate vice presidents ensure expenditures from restricted funds are made in a manner consistent with the intent and requirements of the funding source. The annual grant report presented to the Board of Trustees aligns restricted funds with College planning. The College has a Fiscal Services and Procedure Manual to ensure compliance with federal cash, standards, procurement and oversight requirements. The College ensures that the financial operations of its Foundation are appropriately monitored through the annual audit which reports that information was found to be materially fairly represented. (III.D.14)

The College's three-year default rate is well below the federal guidelines. The College uses Borrower Connect to contact borrowers that are entering repayment to explain resources. Title IV revenues, and related matters, are part of the annual auditing process. The audit reports show that no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies have been found in the years presented; however, fiscal year 2017/18 shows a (corrected) deficiency in returning Title IV funds timely. The College's Fiscal Services and Procedure Manual ensure compliance with federal standards and requirements. (III.D.15)

The team found the institutional contractual agreements to be consistent with institutional mission and goals. There are sufficient procedures in place to ensure the contract process is governed by policy and appropriate provisions are referenced in the policies and procedures. The College has appropriate control over these contracts. External contracts are managed in a manner that ensures federal guidelines are addressed as outlined in the Fiscal Services and Procedures Guidelines Manual. (III.D.16)

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

IV.A. Decision-Making Roles & Processes

General Observations:

Cuesta College's established participatory governance policies and procedures allow the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students to improve institutional effectiveness through collective decision making. Governance roles are defined in policies and participative processes are used to make to institution-wide improvements.

Findings and Evidence:

Institutional leaders create a culture of innovation and excellence. All employees regularly participate in professional development. Institutional innovation is achieved through implementation of different ideas and resources that faculty, administrators, and staff bring back from various conferences, workshops, institutes, and trainings. Participative processes are used to make to institution-wide improvements and assure effective planning and implementation. The Participatory Governance: Decision Making and Committee Handbook outlines the steps and flow of Cuesta College's decision-making process. Effective planning and implementation are used to improve student learning and achievement and documented in committee minutes. (IV.A.1)

Cuesta College has appropriate policies and procedures in place to authorize the role of administrators, faculty, staff, and students in decision making processes. Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2510 outlines minimum standards to participate in local decision-making processes. The Participatory Governance: Decision Making and Committee Handbook provides an overview of how participatory governance occurs at the College, describes the role of each constituent group, and specifies the way individuals bring forward ideas and work together on policy and planning. Students are represented on all collegewide decision-making committees and the Associated Students of Cuesta College is valued as a key stakeholder. The implementation of a smoke and tobacco-free campus policy implemented in spring 2019 is an example of the significant role the student body plays in decision-making. The student trustee is granted maximum privilege on the Board of Trustees and has an advisory vote. (IV.A.2)

Faculty and administrators have ample opportunities to provide input in institutional policies, planning, and budget through participatory governance committees. Processes and roles are described in the Participatory Governance: Decision Making and Committee Handbook.

Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2510 delineate areas requiring consultation with the Academic Senate. Each participatory governance committee has a clearly defined role, charge, and membership responsibilities. (IV.A.3)

The team determined that Cuesta College has well-defined structures and procedures for making recommendations about curriculum and student learning programs and services. The Curriculum Committee provides recommendations regarding courses and instructional programs through Academic Senate to the Board of Trustees. Board Policy 4020 and Administrative Procedure 4020 describe the responsibilities and authority of faculty and administrators in curricular and other educational matters. The Curriculum Committee provides recommendations regarding courses and instructional programs through Academic Senate to the Board of Trustees. In spring 2019, Cuesta College began using the New Course Dean Pre-Approval form to keep administration abreast of new course proposals from faculty to streamline the process. (IV.A.4)

Cuesta College ensures appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives; it also ensures that decision-making is aligned with expertise and responsibility; and, that timely action is taken on institutional plans, policies, curricular change, and other key considerations through its college and district policies on governance. The Participatory Governance: Decision Making and Committee Handbook describes formal decision-making processes. The Integrated Planning Manual provides a timeline for assessing decision-making processes and outlines responsible parties to confirm completion. College committee agendas and minutes document appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives. College committees report to College Council and/or the Planning and Budget committee to ensure timely action on institutional plans. Key administrators and the Academic Senate President and Vice President meet monthly to promote ongoing communication. (IV.A.5)

The Participatory Governance: Decision Making and Committee Handbook outlines the formal decision-making process for the College. Decision-making processes and resulting decisions are widely documented and made available across the institution in committee meeting minutes, supporting documents posted in SharePoint, college-wide emails, reports back to constituent groups, and College webpages. (IV.A.6)

Cuesta College regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its governance structure and decision-making policies. The Integrated Planning Manual provides timelines and processes for assessing governance structures. Last updated in fall 2019, the Participatory Governance: Decision Making and Committee Handbook and Integrated Planning Manual are regularly reviewed to assure integrity. Participatory governance committees annually review their charge during the committee orientation at the start of the academic year. The College continually evaluates strengths and areas of improvement using data from annual program review, regular surveys, and monitoring of its Strategic Plan goals and objectives. The progress of the College toward the institutional goals set forth in the Strategic Plan are reported to the Board of Trustees twice a year. (IV.A.7)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

IV.B. Chief Executive Officer

General Observations:

The Superintendent/President is the College's 7th Superintendent/President and has served just over two years at the College. The College recognizes and uses the contributions of the Superintendent/President throughout the organization for promoting student success, sustaining academic quality, integrity, fiscal stability, and continuous improvement of the institution.

Findings and Evidence:

The Superintendent/President's job description, Board Policy, and Participatory Governance: Decision-Making Handbook and Committee Handbook, and the Planning and Budget Committee recognizes the Superintendent/President's primary responsibility for the quality of the institution. The team found ample evidence that the Superintendent/President provides effective planning, organization budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness. (IV.B.1)

The College's policies clearly state that the Superintendent/President plans, oversees, evaluates administrative organization structures, and delegates authority to ensure that the College is organized and staffed to fit the College's purpose, size, and complexity. The Superintendent/President collaborates with the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, Student Services and College Center, Human Resources, Administrative Services to serve the needs of the College. (IV.B.2)

The Superintendent/President guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment, which is delineated in policies and procedures. This is achieved by an established collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities, institutional performance standards for student achievement, and evaluation and planning that rely on high quality research and analysis of external and internal conditions. The Superintendent/President ensures that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and allocation to support student achievement and learning, ensuring that the allocation of resources supports and improves learning and achievement, and establishes procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts to achieve the mission of the institution. (IV.B.3)

The Superintendent/President ensures the College meets or exceeds the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies as defined in the job description and demonstrated in practice. The team confirmed that the faculty, staff, and administrative leaders also have responsibility for assuring compliance with accreditation requirements. (IV.B.4)

The College's Board of Trustees delegates authority to the Superintendent/President to assure the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies. In addition, the Superintendent/President assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies, including effective control of budget and expenditures. (IV.B.5)

The Superintendent/President works and communicates effectively with a broad range of communities served by the institution. This includes the Superintendent/President's work with the Chambers of Commerce of San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Atascadero, Pismo Beach, and South County. The Superintendent/President meets monthly with the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education Superintendent's Council that includes the County Superintendent of Schools and the local K- 12 school district superintendents. (IV.B.6)

Conclusion:

The College meets the standard.

IV.C. Governing Board

General Observations:

Cuesta College is governed by the San Luis Obispo County Community College District (SLOCCCD) Board of Trustees. The Board has established and published a comprehensive set of policies and accompanying administrative procedures that assure the academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. Further, the Trustees act in manner consistent with its policies which support the mission and are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Additionally, Trustees adhere to a code of ethics, engage in ongoing training, advocate for and defend the institution, conduct an annual self-evaluation, and delegate authority to the Superintendent/President.

Findings and Evidence:

The College is governed by the SLOCCCD Board of Trustees, which consists of five publicly elected Trustees and one student Trustee. The Board's Board Policy Manual, which aligns with the Community College League of California legal recommendations, clearly delineates authority and responsibility for academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services, and the financial stability of the institution. The team confirmed that Board meeting calendars, agendas, minutes, and reports directly relate to the Board of Trustees' authority and responsibility on these matters. (IV.C.1, ER 7)

Board policy, in particular the code of ethics, reinforces the need for Trustees to see themselves as part of a single entity. Through 2018-19 Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation Survey and interviews with two Trustees, the team confirmed that the board operates and supports decisions in a unified manner and with one voice, even when disagreements have occurred during deliberations. (IV.C.2)

Board Policy 2431 clearly defines the process for selection of the CEO. This was most recently utilized in the spring 2018 selection of the current Superintendent/President. The team further confirmed that, per Board policy, the CEO is evaluated on a monthly and annual basis. These evaluations are based on mutually agreed upon goals and objectives. (IV.C.3)

The team found that Board policy, regular interaction and communication with the community, and Trustee districting ensure that the Board is independent and reflects public interest. Further, the Board has established a code of ethics and standards of conduct that address the Board's responsibility to reflect the public's interest, advocate for, and protect the College from undue influence or political pressure. (ER 7) (IV.C.4)

The Board of Trustees has established policies and procedures that are consistent with the mission and ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them. Further, the team found evidence of the Board's commitment to supporting high quality educational programs and exceptional support services. By virtue of the relevant and applicable California codes and statutes, the governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity and stability. (IV.C.5)

Board policies are published and easily accessible on the College's website and specify the Board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. (IV.C.6)

The Board of Trustees acts in a manner consistent with policies and bylaws. This includes scheduling, meeting procedures and documentation, and conducting meetings in an appropriate manner and with appropriate decorum. On the 2018-19 Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation Survey, 100% either agreed or completely agreed that "Board meetings are conducted in an orderly, efficient manner that allows for sufficient discussion." The team further found that the Board has established and follows a regular cycle of policy review and revisions to ensure effectiveness in fulfilling the College mission. (IV.C.7)

Through a review of meeting agendas and minutes, the team confirmed that the Board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement. These include the Student Success Scorecard and reports on achievement of the College's Institutional Effectiveness Outcomes. The Trustees also regularly review institutional plans for improving academic quality such as the Educational Master Plan, Strategic Plan, and Student Equity and Achievement Plan. Additionally, the Superintendent/President provides a monthly update highlighting the work of academic affairs, student affairs, and administrative services to improve academic quality. (IV.C.8)

The Board has, and adheres to, policies regarding board development and new member orientation. Further, Board policies guide continuity of board membership and ensure staggered terms of office. (IV.C.9)

Board policy 2745 and the associated administrative procedure clearly establish the Board's process for self-evaluation, including use of resulting data to improve board performance, academic quality, and institutional effectiveness. The team confirmed that a survey instrument is used on an annual basis to evaluate the Board's practices and performance. The survey results are reviewed during an annual special meeting of the Board, are used to make improvements, and inform development of annual Board goals. (IV.C.10)

The Board has comprehensive policies and administrative procedures that establish a code of ethics and delineate conflict of interest. These clearly define the policy and process for dealing with behavior that violates the established policies. The team further confirmed that Trustees, on an annual basis and in writing, reaffirm their commitment to the Board code of ethics and file a Statement of Interest Form 700 from the California Fair Political Practices Commission. Additionally, the College provided evidence that when a Trustee has determined the potential for conflict of interest, he or she recuses themselves from all related discussions and votes. As such, Board member interests are disclosed and do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. (ER 7) (IV.C.11)

Through Board policy and the employment contract, responsibility and authority are delegated to the Superintendent/President of the College, who is held accountable through regular and ongoing evaluation review of achievement of mutually agreed upon goals and objectives. (IV.C.12)

The Board of Trustees is regularly updated on the Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, accreditation processes, and the College's accredited status. This is evidenced by responses on the 2018-19 Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation Survey, in which 100% either agreed or completely agreed that "The board appropriately understands and supports the accreditation process." Further, Trustees completed the online ACCJC accreditation training, engaged in a training session on accreditation given by a representative from the ACCJC and the College's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), and were involved on an ongoing basis in the development, review, and approval of the College's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report. (IV.C.13)

Conclusion:

The College meets the Standard.

Quality Focus Essay

The team was impressed with the College's focus on the full implementation of both Guided Pathways and California Assembly Bill 705 (AB 705) which is designed to eliminate remedial coursework in California Community Colleges and maximizes the probability that a student will complete transfer-level coursework in English and math within a one-year timeframe as their Quality Focus Essay projects. Both statewide initiatives require significant changes to how California Community Colleges have served students, not only in terms of how the College onboards students, but also how effectively they help them progress through their academic programs.

One of the biggest challenges to implementing Guided Pathways is the need for institution-wide cultural change. In order to be successful, the organization of the college and the academic advising focus must pivot from unstructured exploration of what a student might want to choose for a major to very structured pathways of meta majors and related general education curriculum. Rather than providing students with many options, the goal of Guided Pathways is to provide a clear roadmap to success, whether that is completing a degree in order to transfer or to go into the workforce. The team found the cultural shift towards Guided Pathways to be palpable among the faculty, staff, and administrators. There was a shared language and articulated support for implementing Guided Pathways, and specifically for completely implementing the Program Mapper Tool. With the statewide Vision for Success goals of reducing the total number of credits accumulated and the average time it takes to complete a degree as the "North Star," it was apparent to the team that Cuesta College is poised for a successful implementation and clearly outlined this in their QFE.

Similarly, with the implementation of AB 705, a culture shift is required, but it is more technical in nature because it is focused on student completion of transfer-level English and Math in the first year at the College. As the College notes, this shift requires a significant amount of professional development because it requires English and Math faculty to rethink what skills students will enter their classes with, and it requires development of mechanisms to help students be successful in the form of curriculum redesign that includes support courses, dedicated tutoring, academic coaches, and other ways to support students. The goal is not only to have students complete their English and Math in the first year, especially since the Student-Centered Funding Formula includes a financial incentive to do so, it also contributes to the same goals associated with the College's Guided Pathways efforts to reduce the total number of credits taken and time to degree completion.

In sum, Cuesta College's Quality Focus Essay projects are laser-focused on increasing the success of all students, and the College should be commended for both projects that further the College's mission.