

PEER REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Grossmont College
8800 Grossmont College Drive
El Cajon, CA 92020

This report represents the findings of the peer review team that visited
Grossmont College from September 30, 2019 to October 3, 2019

Dr. Loretta Adrian
Team Chair

Contents

- Summary of Evaluation Report4
- Team Commendations6
- Team Recommendations6
- Introduction8
- Eligibility Requirements.....9
- Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies..... 10
 - Public Notification of a Peer Review Team Visit and Third Party Comment 10
 - Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement..... 11
 - Credits, Program Length, and Tuition 12
 - Student Complaints..... 15
 - Title IV Compliance 17
- Standard I..... 19
 - I.A. Mission 19
 - I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness..... 21
 - I.C. Institutional Integrity 24
- Standard II 26
 - II.A. Instructional Programs 26
 - II.B. Library and Learning Support Services 29
 - II.C. Student Support Services 30
- Standard III..... 33
 - III.A. Human Resources 33
 - III.B. Physical Resources..... 36
 - III.C. Technology Resources 38
 - III.D. Financial Resources 41
- Standard IV 45
 - IV.A. Decision-Making Roles & Processes 45
 - IV.B. Chief Executive Officer 47
 - IV.C. Governing Board 48
 - IV.D. Multi-College Districts or Systems 51
- Quality Focus Essay (QFE) 54

**Grossmont College
Comprehensive Evaluation Visit**

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Summary of Evaluation Report

INSTITUTION: Grossmont College

DATES OF VISIT: September 30, 2019 to October 3, 2019

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Loretta Adrian

A peer review team comprised of ten members visited Grossmont College on September 30-October 3, 2019 for the purpose of determining whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. The Grossmont College team evaluated how well the college is achieving its stated purposes, appreciated the college's strengths and accomplishments, and identified recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair received team chair training and conducted a pre-visit to the College on August 8, 2019 along with the team assistant. During this visit, the chair met with college leadership and key personnel involved in the preparation of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and the peer review visit. The entire peer review team received a one-day training on September 4, 2019 provided by Commission staff.

The peer evaluation team received the College's self-evaluation document (ISER) approximately two months prior to the visit. Team members found the ISER to be comprehensive and well-written, describing the process followed by the College to critically evaluate itself against the Commission Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission Policies. The team confirmed that the ISER was developed with broad participation from faculty, staff, administrators, and students. The Chancellor and her staff, and the District Board of Trustees were also engaged and/or informed of the process. The team found that the College provided a thoughtful ISER, which contained several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement. The College also prepared a Quality Focus Essay (QFE).

In preparation for the visit, team members reviewed the ISER, examined numerous pieces of evidence, and completed several team assignments. Team members also perused the college and district websites for additional information. They reflected, listed additional questions or evidence to examine and identified students, college and district staff to interview. Student voices were purposefully solicited.

Prior to the visit, the team met to discuss initial observations and assignments. During the visit, the team met daily to discuss additional team observations and findings, and to finalize any recommendations. The team conducted two open forums during the visit, on Tuesday October 1, and on Wednesday, October 2, 2019. Both open forums were very well-attended. During the open forums, the team heard from multiple individuals about innovative programs and services focused on equity and student success. As well, some articulated positive feedback on the new governance process, specifically with regard to classified staff and student participation.

The team also attended a team introduction/reception on Monday, September 29, 2019 to meet members of the Accreditation Steering Committee and the college community. A brief exit report was delivered on Thursday afternoon, October 3, 2019, at 1:00 pm. Team members conducted approximately 36 group interviews from Monday-Thursday, involving multiple individuals and several one-on-one interviews.

During the visit, six members of the Grossmont team visited the Grossmont Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD) office to meet with the Chancellor, three members of the Board of Trustees, and district administrative staff.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the Peer Review Team Report

Team Commendations

College Commendation 1:

The College is commended for its equity-focused mission statement, and for ensuring that college programs, services, and practices are aligned with the college mission. The College's deep commitment to equity is manifested in their efforts to infuse equity in everything they do, and a part of everyone's responsibility. The College's mission guides institutional planning, decision-making, and resource allocation as well as informs institutional goals for student learning and achievement (I.A.3).

Team Recommendations

Recommendations to for Compliance:

College Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the Commission *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*, the team recommends the College ensure that all distance education courses demonstrate regular and substantive interaction as defined by the College (II.A.2).

District Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District ensure that all classified and management employees are systematically evaluated at stated intervals (III.A.5).

Recommendations to Improve Quality:

College Recommendation 2:

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the college standardize and strengthen the assessment, collection, and use of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, and units (I.B.2., II.A.3, II.A.16).

College Recommendation 3:

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College ensure that, in every class section, students receive a syllabus that includes SLOs consistent with the officially approved course outline of record (II.A.3).

College Recommendation 4:

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College update its long-range capital plans to include comprehensive total cost of ownership projections for new facilities and equipment (III.B.4).

Introduction

Grossmont College is one of the two colleges in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD). It was founded nearly 60 years ago with the intent of becoming recognized as one of the country's leading higher education institutions. It opened with an enrollment of 1,158 students in September 1961. During peak enrollment in 2010, the College exceeded 20,000 students. The College enrolled 18,151 students in 2018-19.

The College has undergone significant transformation from its early days and continues to undertake institutional improvements. It remains focused on serving the educational and workforce needs of the communities in East San Diego County. The college's mission, which was recently updated, is focused in providing "an exceptional higher education learning environment through comprehensive and innovative instructional programs and student support services." The college community is also committed to advancing equity and inclusion in all aspects of their work in preparing students as leaders and engaged local and global citizens.

Today, the College offers more than 150 degree and certificate programs, including associate degrees in transfer and workforce training. The College's fall 2018 course schedule included a robust selection of courses to help students progress and succeed in their academic goals. In 2017-18, 1,796 students earned a total of 4,258 degrees and certificates. This total was the highest number of degrees and certificates awarded by a community college in the San Diego region. This achievement is a source of tremendous pride for the college-- a key measure of institutional outcomes that exemplifies the successful work of the college community in its pursuit of increased student success.

With strong support from the community, the modernization of the Grossmont College campus continues through major facilities construction and renovation. New construction and renovation of facilities positively impact the experience of students and enhance the environment for teaching and learning. As of fall 2018, construction is underway for an iconic Performing and Visual Arts Center and renovation has begun for part of the Science, Math, and Career Complex.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the College has undertaken a number of initiatives, including the implementation of critical changes to its planning and governance processes. It contracted with *Achieving the Dream* for guidance and feedback in reinventing its planning processes to better align its understanding of students through data, and to promote the development of institutional goals more intentionally and clearly. With the help of the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI) grant, the college has enhanced its governance and decision-making processes.

Grossmont's strategic plan, which has evolved from the college's Achieving the Dream goals, is focused on outreach, engagement, retention, and institutional capacity. The fourth goal, institutional capacity, was added to recognize and prioritize the institution's pursuit of key student success and equity goals. Based on its mission and strategic goals, the College is intent on advancing equity and inclusion using a three-pronged approach focused on Culture, Practice, and Structure.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Grossmont College is a comprehensive two-year community college in a multi-college district authorized to operate as a postsecondary degree-granting educational institution by the State of California, the Board of Governors of the California Community College System, and the Board of Trustees of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. The College has maintained continuous accreditation by ACCJC since its inception in 1961.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

2. Operational Status

The team confirmed that the College is operational and provides educational services to over 18,000 students each fall who are enrolled in degree applicable credit courses. In addition, 13% of students are enrolled only in online classes and 30% are enrolled in a combination of online and on-campus classes.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

3. Degrees

A substantial portion of the College's educational offerings are programs that lead to degrees. A significant proportion of the students at Grossmont College are enrolled in such programs.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

4. Chief Executive Officer

Grossmont College has a CEO who has been appointed by the Board of Trustees, who has the authority to administer Board policies, and whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. This CEO does not serve as the chair of the Governing Board.

The College meets the Eligibility Requirement.

5. Financial Accountability

The District engages with an independent certified public accounting firm to perform an annual audit of the district. The final audit is presented to the Board of Trustees in January each year. The District's audits have consistently been identified by the external auditors as "unmodified" audits. In addition, over the past ten annual audits, through fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, the district has had no financial findings noted in any of its five audits performed by the external independent auditors.

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 a Peer Review Team Visit and Third-Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

x	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit.
x	The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third-party comment.
x	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):

x	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.

The team verified that the College provided multiple opportunities for third party comments prior to the visit. The College meets the regulation.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

Evaluation Items:

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

X	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.

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

The institution has defined Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that are aligned with the College mission and include course completion as a measure of student achievement. The institution set standards are reflective of the strategic plan and mission of the College. The alignment with system metrics of student achievement ensure their appropriateness to higher education. The College demonstrates that it is engaging in a process for evaluating institutional performance against the KPI and taking steps to improve institutional effectiveness through targeted actions. The results are widely disseminated through the annual planning forums and resulting discussion within the participatory governance committees involved in planning. Each program has a defined set of outcomes that is assessed in an ongoing basis. Where licensure is required, examination passage rates are included in the program review analysis and posted on the program webpage under the program outcomes.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Evaluation Items:

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

See II.A.7

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.

See II.A.10

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Evaluation Items:

For Distance Education:	
<input 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 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 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 type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input 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 checked="" 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.

The College has established policy that clearly defines and requires regular and substantive contact between students and instructor, and it reviews distance education courses during the faculty evaluation process. However, the team found that the courses reviewed do not consistently demonstrate regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor, as articulated in the College's distance education policy. The team confirmed that for distance education courses, the College demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services to those enrolled in face-to-face courses. The team confirmed that the College verifies the student who registers in a distance education program is the same person who participates every time, completes the course or program, and receives the academic credit. The College does not offer correspondence education.

Recommendation:

In order to meet the Commission *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*, the team recommends the College ensure that all distance education courses demonstrate regular and substantive interaction as defined by the College.

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.

x	The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities. (Standard I.C.1)
x	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <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):

x	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.

The College has clear procedures for student complaints and posts on its website the names of accrediting agencies or licensing bodies.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials Evaluation Items:

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

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<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.

Grossmont provides accurate and current information about its programs, policies and procedures. Also please see I.C.2 and I.C.12.

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.

The team verified that Grossmont monitors and manages compliance with Title IV.

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

I.A. Mission

General Observations:

Grossmont College has an established mission statement that describes who their students are, what types of degrees and certificates they offer, and the institution's broad educational outcomes. The mission was initially adopted in 2001, updated in 2016, and recently reviewed, and updated in 2019. Grossmont's mission statement articulates a deep commitment to "advancing equity and inclusion by preparing a diverse student population to lead and engage with local and global communities." The strategic plan is used as the vehicle to drive and monitor success towards achieving the college mission. Under the framework of *Achieving the Dream*, the college used data analysis and coaching to develop the 2016-2022 strategic plan. The annual review process is tied to the mission statement, and department and institutional data are provided for planning purposes.

Findings and Evidence:

The college mission, vision, and value statements are broad enough to encompass the institution's overall educational purposes of providing exceptional learning opportunities and to "prepare our diverse student population to lead and engage with local and global communities." As an open access institution, Grossmont provides its intended student population - the people of East San Diego County, with the opportunities to obtain associate degrees, transfer degrees, certificates, career education and workforce development, and preparation for college level coursework. Grossmont's commitment to student learning and success is evident through their commitment to provide "exploration for academic and career options" and "lifelong learning opportunities." (I.A.1).

The College's mission statement reflects a strong commitment to advance equity and inclusion. This focus on equity is emulated in equity-centered programs and practices throughout the College. Specifically, the "We're All In" campaign has created a culture of equity as a part of everyone's responsibility. In addition, work being done on student equity is tied to the examination of institutional set standards and aligned with the strategic plan, which has provided for innovation in the way the College is taking actions to improve student achievement. One of the innovations that came out of this department, in collaboration with faculty, is the use of students and the research methods class to do both quantitative and qualitative analysis of student achievement data and present the findings at campus-wide forums. Out of the dialogue in the forums, the focus on improving student retention and engagement in the 12 gateway courses was initiated. Students used quantitative data derived from the Key performance indicators. The presentation of the student voices gathered from this study of emerging themes is an exemplary practice that demonstrates the College's deep commitment to students and the college mission (I.A.1, I.B.1).

Grossmont College has established four strategic priorities in their 2016-2022 strategic plan and will use these to measure progress towards how well the college is meeting their mission statement and meeting the needs of students. The College uses several types of data to engage in continuous reflection on how well they are serving their students such as performance indicators that are made available to staff via a dashboard maintained by the Office of College Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. The College Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are monitored and discussed on an annual basis through the Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee (PIEC) and the planning forums (I.A.2).

Comprehensive reviews for programs ensure that all programs and services operate in alignment with the institutional mission. The mission guides decision-making, planning, and resource allocation, which is outlined in the *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*. The Dean of Student Success and Equity is under the office of the President and oversees professional development. In this role, she has been able to target professional development activities that promote equity in the classroom, in order to improve student achievement and equity gaps as identified in the four strategic priorities of the 2016-2022 strategic plan. The College Council is the coordinating body that engages seven different committees, including the PIEC and budget committee, and all constituency groups to regularly evaluate the overall planning process for the college (I.A.3).

The current mission statement was last reviewed by College Council in May 2019. The Governing Board approved and adopted the updated mission and vision statements in June 2019. The newly revised mission statement is published on the website, in the catalog, and displayed throughout the campus. The mission statement is regularly reviewed and updated as needed (I.A.4).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements.

Commendation

The College is commended for its equity-focused mission statement, and for ensuring that college programs, services, and practices are aligned with the college mission. The College's deep commitment to equity is manifested in their efforts to infuse equity in everything they do, and a part of everyone's responsibility. The College's mission guides institutional planning, decision-making, and resource allocation as well as informs institutional goals for student learning and achievement (I.A.3).

I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:

The College provides some student achievement data and program reviews on its public website. The program review process has recently been revised, and the College has developed a template for annual planning that will be conducted in-between the six-year cycle of program reviews. Program review data is currently produced by a faculty with reassigned time to support institutional research. The College has a plan to build institutional capacity for campus-based research that will transition the research and data-generation from the current faculty member with reassigned time to the research office. Limited course student learning outcomes (SLO) improvement plans are discussed within the program review, and some SLO assessments are captured in TracDat. However, there is a lack of consistency in how SLOs are assessed, evaluated, and stored. The Strategic Plan and documentation of planning processes are available on the college website and in board agendas. Board policies and procedures regarding planning are available on the college website. The College assesses its progress on planning agendas that are established to improve student achievement as identified through the Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The yearly planning forums provide the space for dialogue about progress on the goals. Ongoing conversations about progress toward planning goals take place in committees such as Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee (PIEC) and College Council. The planning work takes place yearly in an ongoing cycle of improvement and has led to a variety of actions to improve student achievement through strategic initiatives (e.g. outreach, retention, and engagement; revised participatory governance structure; “We’re All In” equity campaign; the focus on 12 high impact courses; participating in *Achieving the Dream*.) The College has recently revised the processes for how resources are allocated based on program review evaluation and planning. Since this is a new process, the team was not able to assess the effectiveness of the revised process. Despite being in the middle of developing and implementing new processes, the College has demonstrated it is committed to an ongoing cycle of evaluation, planning, and implementation.

Findings and Evidence:

Academic Quality

The College has dialogue about institution-set standards for student achievement with action plans to improve student achievement at the institutional level and at the program and course level through the assessment of learning outcomes. Cycles of assessment and improvement are being used to improve student learning (I.B.1).

The College assesses instructional programs using a six-year program review cycle. The SLO improvement interventions for courses within the program are reflected within the program review process for some programs but gaps exist in the pervasiveness of this practice. Highlights for instructional program reviews are presented at the Academic Senate meetings, which was observed during the site visit. In instruction and student services, the departments submitting program reviews get feedback from their respective program review committees on areas of improvement. Program review data, including disaggregated data, is currently produced by a

faculty member with reassigned time to support institutional research, as well as available via District data dashboards. Faculty are provided training and coaching on the program review process through a canvas container. The College has a plan to build institutional capacity for campus-based research that will transition the research and data-generation from the current faculty member with reassigned time to the research office. The Annual Unit Plan (AUP) has been developed to support closing the loop on this process as follow up is needed to ensure that the improvement plans are carried out or modified from year to year in the six-year cycle.

The lack of consistency in the storage of SLO data provides barriers to mapping course assessment to program assessment to provide the direct assessment as part of the program evaluation. The six-year cycle for program review does not provide feedback on course assessment in a timely manner. The College recognizes these gaps and has a plan to address them through the new AUP process, which will be launched this fall 2019 term. The team recommends that the College continue to work on standardizing the process for assessing all SLOs, collecting results, documenting dialogue about the results, and using the results to guide planning and resource allocation (I.B.2).

The College has institutional-set standards and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for measuring student achievement and for assessing progress in pursuit of continuous improvement. Dialogue about the KPIs and institutional set-standards takes place in the PIEC and the annual planning forums (I.B.3).

The KPI student achievement data is monitored and disaggregated to identify gaps in student achievement that the institution can target for improvement. Once a strategy for improvement is identified, PIEC monitors progress on the actions plans. The annual planning forums are one of the venues where input is gathered, and dialogue occurs regarding the KPI and student achievement for the improvement of institutional effectiveness (I.B.4).

Institutional Effectiveness

The College has a six-year cycle for program reviews for both instructional and non-instructional programs. All information is posted to the college website, and summary reports from program review are shared with the Academic Senate and College Council. Strategic priorities are embedded in the integrated plan, program review process, annual planning process (including the revised AUP template) for better alignment and increased efficiency. The College assesses its progress toward improving student achievement and takes action where there is room for improvement (I.B.5).

The College has established institution-set standards and KPIs. Dialogue about KPIs takes place in PIEC and the annual planning forums. The alignment of the institution-set standards with the mission occurs through PIEC where targets are set and reviewed on an annual cycle. The institution-set standards are discussed in PIEC and updates on progress are monitored. Once strategies for improvement are identified, PIEC monitors progress on the actions plans. The annual planning forums are one of the venues where input is gathered, and dialogue occurs regarding the KPIs and student achievement for the improvement of institutional effectiveness. Data on student equity and achievement gaps has been used to support initiatives led by the Dean

of Student Success and Equity in alignment with the integrated planning goals of outreach, engagement, and retention. The Student Services Program review in some areas (e.g., Transfer Center) indicates the cycle assessment has just begun, improvements based on assessment have not been documented yet.

Program reviews indicate that evaluation of programs and services is occurring. The form for program reviews, the annual unit plan (AUP) - while relatively new - is supporting the integration of evaluation that occurs with the program review process, with planning and resource allocation. Prioritization of resource requests from the annual plans occurs in participatory governance committees where recommendations are made regarding resource allocation that align with the mission as well as the improvement of institutional effectiveness and academic quality (I.B.5).

The College provides data dashboards through the district research office, Research Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (RPIE), that allow for disaggregation of data across a variety of student performance indicators. As a result of student achievement data analysis and disproportionate impact information, the College has implemented strategies for identifying areas of improvement and taking steps to improve outcomes. Their focus on outreach, engagement, and retention is an example of this, as well as the reclassification of the Associate Dean, Student Success and Equity position to monitor and organize progress on this work. The work on the strategic plan has been used to guide initiatives such as the work being led by the Dean of Student Success and Equity in alignment with the goals of outreach, engagement, and retention that are derived from the strategic plan in support of the mission of the college (I.B.6).

The College follows a regular process of review for board policies consistent with Administrative Procedure (AP) 2410. The regular updating of Board policies (BP) and Administrative Procedures (AP) can be seen in the minutes of the District Executive Council and in the agendas and minutes of the Board (I.B.7).

The College communicates the results of the institutional evaluation through the program review processes, college forums, governance committees, posting of KPI data, and reports to the Governing Board. Participatory governance committees were developed to improve communication about planning and budget development, such as the new Budget Committee. Each participatory governance committee outlined their purpose, functions, and membership. Norms for committee interaction and decision-making were developed and vetted with constituent groups. The College Council is responsible of ensuring participatory governance committees and processes are evaluated regularly to ensure effectiveness in supporting the college mission and safeguarding the academic quality of the institution (I.B.8).

Program Review is the means utilized by the college to evaluate instructional programs, student learning and support services, and resource management. The *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* indicates that the college is engaging in continuous evaluation. The planning forums indicate that the college is using the KPI to make plans for improvement based on evaluation (I.B.9).

The *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* describes how the college conducts systematic broad-based evaluation at the institutional level, which incorporates program review to inform resource allocation and planning. The mission and strategic planning are tied at all levels as evidenced by the program review and planning documentation. It is apparent that the college is engaging in thoughtful self-reflection of its integrated planning process, making changes where appropriate, and communicating these changes with the broader college community. The changes made to the new *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* have clarified the college decision-making process and should be evaluated going forward as planned.

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements.

Recommendations to Improve Quality

College Recommendation 2

In order to improve academic institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the college standardize and strengthen the assessment, collection, documentation of dialogue, and use of student learning outcomes for courses, programs, and units (I.B.2., II.A.3, II.A.16).

I.C. Institutional Integrity

General Observations:

Grossmont College demonstrates that it provides clear and accurate information to students, the community, and other interested parties in both online and print publications. The ISER describes the review of the available information and methods of dissemination (catalog, schedule, website, social media presence). The College addresses the availability of policies and procedures to the public, describes how an ethics statement was adopted that encompasses all college constituents (faculty, staff, and students) with a commitment to academic freedom, and satisfactorily addresses the approaches taken to ensure institutional integrity.

Findings and Evidence:

The College provides accurate and updated information about its programs, degrees, services, facilities and other aspects of its operation on the website and through printed resources. The Office of College and Community Relations provides oversight and structure for internal and external publications in order to ensure the accuracy and integrity of information being communicated to the students and the public (I.C.1).

The College publishes an annual catalog and makes it available in print and online. The catalog included facts, requirements, policies, procedures and catalog requirements (I.C.2).

Student learning outcomes (SLO) statements are in the course syllabus and college catalog. However, the team noted some inconsistencies between the SLOs in the course syllabi and the course outline of record (COR). Outcomes and assessment data are stored in TracDat, an online

repository system, and work is underway to standardize the assessment and collection of SLO data. Institutional level outcomes can be found on the Outcomes Assessment website (I.C.3).

The College describes its certificates and degrees in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected learning outcomes in the College catalog (I.C.4).

The College regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure that representations of its mission, programs, and services are accurate and consistent across publications (I.C.5).

The College systematically provides current and prospective students with accurate information about the cost of attendance and other requirements through the efforts of several offices (e.g., financial aid, admissions and records, bookstore) and during student orientation. Detailed information is provided for specific student groups, such as high school students and international students (I.C.6).

The District's Board Policy (BP) 4030 demonstrate its commitment to academic freedom, and codifies the faculty code of ethics which states that faculty responsibilities include "to seek and to tell the truth as they see it," "to encourage the free pursuit of learning their students," and to "further public understanding of academic freedom" while also distinguishing between personal opinions and factual information presented as a part of a course curriculum (I.C.7, I.C.9).

The College has policies that promote honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity through BP 3060, *Institutional Code of Conduct*, a policy that applies to board members, employees, students, visitors, vendors, and the public. The consequences for violating the policy are also outlined. Student conduct is further codified in Administrative Policy BP/AP 5500, *Student Code of Conduct*. This policy specifically lists academic dishonesty as one of several unacceptable forms of conduct (I.C.8).

Standards I.C.10 and I.C.11 do not apply to Grossmont College (I.C.10, I.C.11).

The College has complied with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, guidelines, and requirements for public disclosure. The accreditation status of the college is posted on the website so that students, staff, and the public can view the College's accreditation status and related documents (I.C.12).

The College has demonstrated that it has acted and performed with honesty and integrity with external agencies, including the Accreditation Commission (I.C.13).

The college mission and vision statements, the strategic priorities, the manner in which the college engages with its students, staff, and community demonstrate that student achievement and student learning are paramount to other objectives (I.C.14).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements.

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Support Services

II.A. Instructional Programs

General Observations:

In accordance with its mission, Grossmont College provides a diversity of instructional programs and learning support services to the populations and community it serves. These programs are developed through a collaborative, faculty-driven process to meet standards of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education, regardless of the mode of delivery. The College has a process for the regular review of its academic programs, and for the assessment of program and course learning outcomes, and the results are used to improve educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The College's commitment to general education is defined in its board policy, and it incorporates sufficient elements of general education within all of its degree programs to expose students to a breadth of knowledge, promote intellectual inquiry, and cultivate sensitivity to diverse perspectives. The College has recognized areas for improvement in its program review and student learning outcomes assessment, and it has begun the important work of transforming, strengthening, and better integrating these processes.

Findings and Evidence:

The College's instructional programs, regardless of means of delivery, are aligned with its mission and appropriate to higher education. They culminate in student attainment of identified learning outcomes that are published in the catalog, and in the achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer (II.A.1).

The faculty ensure the content and methods of instruction, including distance education, meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Through established processes for review and evaluation, supported by resources like the SLO Faculty Handbook and National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) workshops, and reinforced by innovative initiatives like the "We're All In" campaign, faculty act to continuously improve courses, programs, and directly related services (II.A.2).

The College's faculty develop and approve student learning outcomes (SLOs) for every course, which are included in both the official course outline and each course syllabus. However, the team found that some of the SLOs from randomly selected courses did not match those in the official course outlines, so the College would benefit from strengthening its processes for ensuring alignment between the two. While the College generally follows its established processes for regular assessment of learning outcomes for courses and programs, these processes lack consistency across departments and programs, and assessment data is not collected at an institutional level. The College has recognized these areas for improvement and, as detailed in the improvement plan and Quality Focus Essay, is working to clarify, strengthen, and better integrate its assessment processes. The team recognizes the value of the College's recent efforts

in these areas, including its work with Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI), NILOA, and Grossmont Outcomes Assessment Team (GOAT) (II.A.3).

The College's pre-collegiate curriculum, distinguished in the catalog from college-level curriculum by course number, supports students in learning the knowledge and skills necessary to advance to and succeed in college-level coursework. It offers additional direct support for such students that includes embedded tutoring, instructor-led workshops, study sessions, learning communities, and ESL and accelerated courses (II.A.4).

The College's board policies and the work of its discipline faculty and Curriculum Committee, with input from external stakeholders and regional labor market data for CTE curriculum, ensure its degrees and programs follow common practices in American higher education with regard to appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. Initially approved against these standards by the Curriculum Committee, courses and programs are regularly reassessed through program review. The College's board policies ensure all associate degrees are at least 60 semester credits (II.A.5).

The College, through the collaboration of faculty and administrators, schedules courses to allow students to complete program requirements within a period of time consistent with established expectations in higher education, ensuring that time frame is two years for associate degrees and two years or less for certificates (II.A.6).

Directed by ongoing faculty evaluation, outcomes assessment, program review, and analysis of its key performance indicators, the College effectively supports equity in student success by offering a diversity of delivery modes, teaching methodologies, term lengths, and support services to meet the diverse and changing needs of its students (II.A.7).

The College's course and program examinations and placement practices are normed and validated against state and national standards to ensure reliability and minimize test bias (II.A.8).

The College awards course credit, degrees, and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes, as measured by achievement of learning outcomes and a passing grade. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education (II.A.9).

The College's transfer-of-credit policies are clearly stated in the catalog and on its website. Discipline faculty work with the articulation officer to evaluate external credits and certify that the content and expected learning outcomes are comparable to those of the College's courses. Articulation agreements are maintained with a variety of institutions (II.A.10).

In addition to program-specific learning outcomes, the College has developed institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) for all instructional programs, which are published in the college catalog. These include competencies in communication, information, quantitative literacy, analytic inquiry, ethical reasoning, and the ability to engage diverse perspectives (II.A.11).

The College's general education philosophy is codified in Board Policy 1300 and published in the college catalog and website. It outlines an educational environment dedicated to a student's preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning, and broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences. Through processes established by the Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee, faculty determine the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum (II.A.12).

Each of the College's degree programs focuses on at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. Program learning outcomes and required competencies for each program reflect established skills and practices within the field of study at the level of mastery appropriate to two-year degrees (II.A.13).

Graduates of the College's career-technical certificate and degree programs demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards, as measured by the results of external licensure examinations and certifications, as well as employer feedback. These programs are reviewed regularly in consultation with local and regional employers and licensing and accreditation agencies to ensure alignment with current standards (II.A.14).

The College has established a process for programs that have been eliminated or significantly changed to ensure enrolled students can complete their education with minimal disruption (II.A.15).

The College regularly evaluates and improves all of its instructional programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students. As part of its six-year review cycle, courses are reviewed and updated to ensure currency, and summaries of program evaluation findings, including recommendations for improvement, are presented to the department, president, and vice president. While regular review takes place, the processes for collecting and evaluating course and program student learning outcomes lack consistency across departments and programs and resulting assessment data is not collected at an institutional level. The College has recognized these areas for improvement and, as described in the improvement plan and Quality Focus Essay, is working to clarify, strengthen, and better integrate its assessment processes (II.A.16).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements.

Recommendation for Compliance

College Recommendation 1

In order to meet the Commission *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*, the team recommends the College ensure that all distance education courses demonstrate regular and substantive interaction as defined by the College (II.A.2).

Recommendations to Improve Quality

College Recommendation 3:

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College ensure that, in every class section, students receive a syllabus that includes SLOs consistent with the officially approved course outline of record (II.A.3).

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:

Grossmont College support services are adequate as a combination of the library, tutoring centers and Tech Mall, referred to as the Learning, Technology and Resource Center (LTRC). The LTRC is aligned well with the College's mission and provides services supporting students and faculty on campus and online. Evaluation of services provided by the LTRC occurs in various forms to assure the current needs of students are met.

Findings and Evidence:

The College supports student learning and achievement by providing library and other learning support services within its Learning, Technology, and Resource Center (LTRC). In addition to the library, the LTRC contains an open computer laboratory (the Tech Mall), a general tutoring center, the Math Study Center, English Writing Center, English as a Second Language Lab, Business Office Technology Lab, and Assistive Technology Lab. These services are of sufficient quantity, currency, depth, and variety to support the college's educational programs, including distance education courses, which are served by the library services' online platform and NetTutor's online tutoring services (II.B.1).

The College relies on the expertise of faculty, including librarians, and other learning support services professionals to select and maintain educational equipment and materials in support of student learning and the achievement of the mission. In addition, librarians liaise with academic departments to ensure equitable acquisitions for all disciplines (II.B.2).

Although procedures for assessing learning support services within the library and LTRC are not streamlined nor consistent, the library and LTRC do acquire information via surveys, usage data, SLOs, and program reviews in order to gauge adequacy and effectiveness and guide improvements in services and instruction for students and faculty. After input from students, faculty, and staff in spring 2019 the library and LTRC began the process of establishing a Learning Commons within the current facility to better integrate their services. The working group plans to use information gathered from additional focus group activities to develop and redesign the Library and LTRC for their Learning Commons to facilitate more collaboration among students and faculty, and integration of services (II.B.3).

The College has formal agreements with the following services to enhance the services the library and LTRC provide to students and faculty: Yankee Book Peddler/GOBI, Online

Computer Library Center (OCLC), Community Colleges Library Consortium (CCLC), San Diego/Imperial Counties Community Colleges Learning Resources Cooperative, Ebsco Discovery Service, Ebsco, and NetTutor. These agreements are suitably documented and are regularly reviewed and evaluated during contract renewal periods (II.B.4).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements.

II.C. Student Support Services

General Observations:

Grossmont College demonstrates a commitment to quality student support services that contribute to student learning, student retention, and the successful completion of a program of study. The team witnessed a high level of professionalism, integration, and passion toward student success among classified staff, faculty, and administrators. Various student services programs work collaboratively to serve the needs of students. There is a sense of going “above and beyond” to serve students with empathy, student-centered leadership, and resiliency. Equity is embedded in all the initiatives and support services to close achievement gaps. Counseling provides “holistic” services for students, including disabled students, veterans, undocumented students, first-year students, student athletes, and others.

There is a recognition within the Student Service Division that students cannot be successful without first addressing their basic needs. Grossmont College provides an environment that fosters awareness and support for the basic needs of students through a food pantry, a service that provides free fresh produce sponsored by Gizmo’s Kitchen, CalFresh application workshops, community resource workshops, and robust mental health counseling. The Financial Aid Office is highly integrated in all the support services to ensure students are aware of FAFSA, Dream Act application, and other support for foster youth and AB 540 students.

The Associated Students of Grossmont College (ASGC) is integrated into the fabric of student services and campus life. Student Service leaders provide ASGC training on participatory governance, leadership development and encourage their participation in various campus events. ASGC is highly active in participatory governance committees. ASGC has taken a leadership role in developing comprehensive campus events to celebrate equity and student engagement. The events are purposeful in addressing the wide diversity of the college and the local community.

Findings and Evidence:

The Student Service Division at Grossmont College regularly evaluates the quality of student support services through a three-year program review cycle and an annual update report. The program review is aligned with the College’s Mission and Strategic Plan, including student learning outcomes and student services outcomes. As part of the evaluation, the program review

incorporates student satisfaction survey results and analysis. Student Services programs use these results to implement changes to improve student success (II.C.1).

The Student Service Division at Grossmont College uses assessment data to continually improve support services through regular evaluation of identified learning support outcomes, with the assistance of the Student Services Program Review Committee. The Student Service Council plays a key role in evaluating and improving the quality of support services through student survey assessment results from various activities such as probation and advising workshops (II.C.2).

The College offers extensive support services, regardless of service location or delivery method. Students are able to complete an informed self-placement in English and mathematics using Web Advisor through the college website and receive an automatic placement recommendation in English and mathematics, with next steps to schedule an advising appointment. In recent years, the College developed an Outreach Office to increase collaboration with the local schools and local community. The Outreach Office helps facilitate the recruitment of new and re-entry students, helps dual enrollment students register for classes, provides expanded on-boarding activities, and implements comprehensive orientation programs. Trained Student Ambassadors help lead workshops and activities to assist students in the transition from high school to college. New students are encouraged to participate in a First Year Experience Program. Counseling and other critical services, such as financial aid, are communicated to students via email, the college website, Grad Guru, text messages, Scheduling and Reporting System (SARS) appointment reminders, social media, outreach events, and direct referrals. The College's Welcome Center provides new and continuing students with a connection to campus resources and assistance with the registration process. Marketing materials have been translated into various languages to create greater inclusivity and access (II.C.3).

The College has a robust and highly active Associated Students of Grossmont College (ASGC). ASGC provides training to its executive board members in participatory governance and leadership development and requires them to serve on various participatory governance committees. The ASGC implements activities to create student advocacy, student integration to the campus community, social activities, and holiday events. ASGC has an inter-club council to coordinate programs, increase collaborations among clubs and students, and review finances.

With 17 athletic teams comprised of approximately 350 student athletes, the College ensures students meet athletic requirements while focusing on their academic goals. The Athletics Department has a staff member who reviews eligibility criteria and an athletic advisor to ensure students are on track to complete programs of study. Student athletes are encouraged to register for classes early as part of priority registration. The program has a dedicated Associate Dean of Athletics who oversees compliance reporting, eligibility criteria, and coordination and evaluation of athletics coaches. All budgets are appropriately reviewed by the College (II.C.4).

The College provides "holistic" and integrated counseling services to support student development and success. There are far-reaching services in counseling, including UMOJA, Puente, foster youth, and veterans. Moreover, the College provides academic probation services, including workshops, success coaches, and intrusive counseling. In recent years, the college enhanced its mental health services by funding an additional full-time counselor position through

general funds to serve the growing need for mental wellness on campus. The College was among the first regional institutions to open a Dream Center for undocumented students which includes access to financial aid and counseling (II.C.5).

The College adopted and adheres to admissions policies consistent with its mission. The institution defines and advises students on a clear pathway to complete degrees, certificates, and transfer goals (II.C.6).

The Office of Admissions and Records evaluates its admissions process and procedures through the Program Review process. Faculty are responsible for selecting college placement assessments instruments, such as informed self-placement for English, mathematics, and ESL. All assessment instruments are evaluated for their validity, reliability, and potential bias by the College (II.C.7).

The College maintains student record permanently, securely, and confidentially, while adhering to district, state, and federal regulations. It has established procedures for secure backup of all files (II.C.8).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard and related Eligibility Requirements.

Standard III

Resources

III.A. Human Resources

General Observations:

Grossmont College has in place, and follows, policies and procedures for all Human Resources (HR) activities. The College hires faculty, staff, and administrators who meet defined minimum qualifications. Hiring practices are aligned to meet the College's mission and strategic goals. The faculty, classified, and administrative job announcements include the following statement: "District is committed to eliminating achievement gaps among different student groups by promoting a culture of appreciation for diversity, equity, inclusivity, and social justice, and continuously examining our processes and practices through an equity lens." Hiring procedures are in writing and consistently applied across hiring categories. The District Human Resources (HR) Office verifies the qualifications of applicants through an established process in accordance with California Community College minimum qualifications for faculty and administrators and district policies and procedures. Positions are advertised in diverse locations to increase the potential for attracting diverse candidates. Official transcripts and employment verifications for educational administrators and other personnel are on file in Human Resources. District Human Resources provides a training process for hiring committees called HIRE (Hiring Innovative Recruits Effectively) to help with the selection of qualified and diverse candidates. The HIRE training includes examination of diversity data, information related to the impact of diversity on student achievement, and implicit bias that may impact the hiring of diverse candidates. This training is mandatory for hiring committee members and must be completed once every three years. The District Human Resources Office is in the process of implementing a module of Talent Performance that will improve support for tracking classified and manager evaluations. Currently, Human Resources tracks evaluations on a spreadsheet, and recognizes the need to improve the timely completion of evaluations during stated intervals.

Findings and Evidence:

Grossmont College and the Grossmont – Cuyamaca Community College District (District) recruit and employ faculty, staff, and administrators that meet or exceed minimum qualifications. The College consistently follows hiring criteria maintained at the district level. There are administrative procedures in place to ensure that qualified personnel are employed and appropriately assigned. Job announcements for all fulltime employees incorporate language to emphasize that all employees are expected to contribute to the college mission and share the college vision (e.g., in the faculty hiring "Who We're Seeking" section). The College implements on-boarding activities to orient new employees to the District and colleges (III.A.1).

Grossmont College has clear policies and procedures in place to ensure faculty are well-qualified to contribute to the strategic goals and mission of the institution. During the faculty selection

process, applicants are evaluated for subject-area knowledge, appropriate degrees, professional experience, teaching ability, related scholarly activities, and a commitment to student success. Faculty job descriptions also include an expectation for development and review of curriculum as well as the assessment of learning (III.A.2).

Administrators and other employees at Grossmont College possess qualifications necessary to perform the duties required to sustain quality programs and services. Administrators, faculty, and classified employees undergo an annual evaluation process as specified in their labor contracts and/or employee handbook (III.A.3).

District Human Resources has a process to verify required degrees are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies and an equivalency process for degrees obtained from non-U.S. institutions. The District HR Office verifies the qualifications of applicants through an established process in accordance with the California Community Colleges minimum qualifications for faculty and administrators and district policies and procedures (III.A.4).

District evaluation criteria are successfully utilized to measure effectiveness of personnel in performing their duties. Grossmont College relies on these processes to ensure that evaluations occur on time and that the results are utilized to improve job performance. The evaluation team was informed by HR that colleges were at the 30-percentile completion in classified and management evaluations, and the College confirmed that they have completed more than 30 percent of their classified evaluations. Grossmont College relies on these processes to ensure that evaluations occur on time and that the results are utilized to improve job performance. The evaluation processes and timelines for full-time and part-time faculty are conducted systematically at stated intervals. The District and College needs to ensure that evaluations for classified and management personnel are systematically completed, and that the District HR Office improve its ability to track classified and management evaluations and better support the process to assure timely completion (III.A.5).

Standard III.A.6 is no longer applicable.

Grossmont College has processes in place to maintain a sufficient number of qualified full-time and part-time faculty in order to ensure the fulfillment of faculty responsibilities. College data on enrollment trends and information from Program Review and other sources is used to assess and justify the need for additional faculty (III.A.7).

The College's Office of Professional Development provides a comprehensive array of impressive professional development opportunities to faculty, staff, and administrators that directly support the college's strategic priorities and mission. There has been a focus in providing teaching and learning opportunities to increase cultural competence, equity-minded practices, and strengthening campus collaboration. The College has made a concerted effort to involve and engage adjunct faculty into the college culture. Adjunct Orientation is robust and ongoing, and the college supports adjunct faculty participation in participatory governance committees. The College collects evaluations in all professional development activities and uses the results to make improvements for future workshops (III.A.8).

Program review data, goal setting, and connections to institutional planning serve as the foundation for prioritizing classified staffing. Any necessary qualification needed to support the effective operation of the institution are examined as part of the hiring process. A process called “Strategic Staffing” ensures transparency and clear justification in the allocation of classified positions (III.A.9).

Grossmont College indicates administrative positions are sufficient to provide leadership and support for its programs and services. However, the College reports a high degree of turnover among its administrative personnel. The team verified a high administrative turnover as reported in an “Administrative Churn” document which showed that, over the past 4 years, the percentage of middle and upper management positions either vacant or filled by interim appointments ranged from a low of 19% in fall 2015 to a high of 44% in fall 2018. The College has filled vacancies with internal interim positions to maintain continuity, however the College has recognized this as a challenge to stability and progress. This high administrative turnover impacts areas such as staff evaluations and planning. The president and his Cabinet members discuss progress on open hiring processes for all positions (administrative, faculty, and classified) as a standing item at weekly President’s Cabinet meetings. Twice per month, the Director of HR visits President’s Cabinet meetings to provide additional updates and context for these discussions. The College president developed an *Administrative Leadership Roundtable* to provide support and collaboration among administrators. The president and the executive team acknowledged that more needs to be done in this area to create increased stability and longevity among administrative personnel (III.A.10).

The Human Resources Department regularly develops and reviews policies, which are then discussed and evaluated by the District Governance Council and Chancellor’s Cabinet. Policies and documents are made available to district and college employees on the district and college websites (III.A.11).

Grossmont College works diligently to foster an understanding of equity and diversity. This is especially highlighted in the College’s hiring practices, beginning with the application and interview process and continuing throughout employees’ tenure with the college (III.A.12).

The College and District uphold a written code of professional ethics for all employees. The Governing Board and administration consistently enforce established codes of conduct as well as consequences for any violations, which are clearly stated in board policies and administrative procedures (III.A.13).

In 2015 and 2017, the Grossmont College Office of Professional Development conducted a collegewide needs assessments with a culture/climate survey to help frame the development of a comprehensive professional development activities. Professional development activities were developed based on the survey results including Campus Connect, Get DEFT, Five Day Experiential Learning Institute, S3 (sessions to increase awareness of campus resources), and the “We’re All In” campaign, which assists employees in contributing to the collective success of students. These activities promote an orientation to the college, increased collaboration among all employees, and awareness of resources and new initiatives (III.A.14).

The District maintains, secures, and keeps confidential personnel records. Employees have access to their personnel records consistent with CA Ed Code and CA Labor Code. The District has board policies in place to assure the security and confidentiality of personnel records (III.A.15).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard except for Standard III.A.5.

Recommendation for Compliance

District Recommendation

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District ensure all classified and management employees are systematically evaluated at stated intervals (III.A.5).

III.B. Physical Resources

General Observations:

Planning, management, and maintenance of Grossmont College facilities and other physical assets is a shared responsibility between the College and the District. The functional responsibilities of the college and district are clearly articulated and are supported by applicable policies and administrative procedures. As part of this shared responsibility for facility planning, the GCCCD Facilities Master Plan and Five-Year Construction Plan ensure that the College's short- and long-term facility needs are identified and support the College's mission, strategic plan, programs, and services. Through collaborative and robust participatory governance efforts and processes at the college and district levels via various committees and councils, Grossmont College facilities are used efficiently and provide for a safe and healthy learning and working environment. Data-informed processes ensure the adequacy and effectiveness of facilities.

An example of the coalescing of facility planning, modernization and infrastructure upgrades, and sustainability in performance and design is the completion of the College's chiller plant building and cooling tower structure. Completed in 2017, this facility will enable the college to reduce air conditioning energy costs by nearly 70 percent and was funded as part of the GCCCD Proposition V initiative with additional financial support provided by Proposition 39 funds. Integration of the facility's design with adjacent buildings, drought-tolerant landscaping, and a plant screening wall enables this facility to naturally blend into the heart of the campus environment and surroundings.

Findings and Evidence:

Grossmont College's physical resources planning is incorporated in the GCCCD 2013 Facilities Master Plan which was, subsequently, updated in the 2016 Facilities Master Plan Refresh document. GCCCD and the College are currently in the process of updating the facilities master plan with the 2019 Facilities Master Plan Update. These facility master planning documents provide for the College's long-term facility planning and are linked programmatically to the

GCCCD Education Master Plan. For programs and services offered at off-campus locations, formal agreements are in place that identify facility needs and requirements. Grossmont's Facilities, Operations, and Maintenance department has oversight over facility maintenance and utilizes a work order system to manage and prioritize facility maintenance requests. Students and employees are able to submit facility-related concerns via email and website links. Safety-related issues are the responsibility of the District's Public Safety Department and the Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Council. Safety and security services are provided to Grossmont College by a San Diego County Sheriff's Department station with additional support provided by Campus and Parking Services (CAPS) department and the college-wide building marshal program (III.B.1).

Grossmont College is guided in the planning, use, maintenance, and upgrades of its physical facilities by the GCCCD 2013 Facilities Master Plan, and the 2016 Facilities Master Plan Refresh. The GCCCD and the College are in the process of updating the facilities master plan with the 2019 Facilities Master Plan Update. Among the primary strategic areas of focus for the district and college in their master planning efforts were student access, student learning, and student success while emphasizing the need to maximize functional space and improve efficiency and utilization of facilities and land resources. The GCCCD, in accordance with the State Chancellor's Office requirements, submits an annual 5-Year Construction Plan that aligns the College's facility needs with mission and programmatic priorities.

College-level facilities planning is facilitated by the Facilities Committee in collaboration and alignment with district-wide facilities planning. The Facilities Committee includes members appointed by the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Administrator's Association, and ASGC. Multiple departments and disciplines are represented in this mix. The Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC), which was formed as a result of passage of Proposition V in 2012 for capital construction projects for the GCCCD, provides oversight for the implementation of the district's Proposition R and V construction bonds. The CBOC reviews and reports on expenditures and compliance with legal requirements but does not oversee planning. The \$398 million bond issue includes major facility projects for Grossmont College including a Veterans Support Center, Performing and Visual Arts Center, a Liberal Arts/Business and Technology Complex, a Science, Math, and Career Tech Complex, technology upgrades, and disability access improvements (III.B.2).

Data gathered through various means, such as facility and space inventories, program reviews, facility inspection reports, and facility project requests are among the qualitative and quantitative means used to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of the College's physical resources. Unit/department level input informs the facility planning process through the academic program review process. For example, Section 4 of the academic program review template is dedicated solely to Facilities and Scheduling. Through this mechanism, units/departments describe types of facilities used, whether or not facilities are adequate to meet their educational objectives, an assessment of technological and equipment needs, and facilities impact on student learning. Additionally, Facility Project Requests (FPRs) may be used by units/departments for facility maintenance or renovation purposes. FPRs are reviewed by the Director of Facilities, Operations, and Maintenance and the Vice President for Administrative

Services prior to submitting to the Facilities Committee for review and prioritization as part the of the participatory governance process. The College’s facility and equipment planning, and maintenance efforts are further supported by the GCCCD’s scheduled facility maintenance plans (III.B.3).

Grossmont College maintains a Five-Year Construction Plan, which is submitted to the State Chancellor’s Office. This plan includes program and facility needs, costs, schedules, and temporary relocation plans of faculty and staff with building secondary effect facilities during construction. Long-range capital projects are linked to various district and institutional planning documents including the GCCCD Strategic Plan, the Grossmont College Strategic Plan, the Five-Year Construction Plan, the 2016 Facilities Master Plan Refresh, the 2013 Facilities Master Plan, the GCCCD 2012 Educational Master Plan, and the College’s Technology Plan. Although the team conducted interviews with key campus and district individuals as well as reviewed these plans, processes, and documents that contained various elements of a total cost of ownership, the College is unable to provide a comprehensive total cost of ownership plan which includes identifying the staffing, technological, and operational costs associated with maintaining all facilities at the college (III.B.4).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standards.

Recommendation to Improve Quality

College Recommendation 4

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College update its long-range capital plans to include comprehensive total cost of ownership projections for new facilities and equipment (III.B.4).

III.C. Technology Resources

General Observations:

Working collaboratively, the District and College ensure that effective technology resources are provided to support the mission of the college. In partnership with the district’s Information Technology (IT) department, the College ensures that technology infrastructure is adequate to support teaching, learning, and institutional operations. The District and College make sufficient provisions for the reliability, safety, and security of technology resources and information. Faculty, staff, students and administrators have access to technology support and ongoing professional development that promotes effective use of technology. Technology planning is robust and supports the mission of the College as outlined in the Technology Master Plan, with a new iteration of the plan through 2022 now being utilized. The College has developed clear guidelines on the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning process. In spring 2020, the College will be undergoing a review of the effectiveness of technology planning after the first year of its new governance system.

Findings and Evidence:

The majority of the technology resources and oversight for technology are housed at the district level under an Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, Planning and Technology and three technical teams along with five technology groups drawn from various constituencies from the two Colleges and District. The responsibilities of the three technology teams (Technical Service, Computer Services, and Enterprise Resource Planning) in supporting the College's and District mission are clearly delineated, and each technology team has director with direct oversight for each area. Overall planning for technology, while a district function, incorporates processes that ensure support of the college mission and that the needs of the campus are being met. District IT is responsible for the development and oversight of the five-year District Technology Plan. The 2017-2022 plan is being finalized now after some delays to ensure consistency with other district plans, most noticeably an Educational Master Plan. However, the team found that the college is using this newest plan in decision making. The Technology Plan is designed to ensure that resources support facilities, software and hardware to a level adequate to meet the needs of instruction, student services and College operations. The District Technology Coordinating Council (TCC) ensures that technology needs meet not only college but also district-wide priorities. Specific technology projects are reviewed, approved and monitored by the TCC to ensure adherence to the college mission and that these projects appropriately support instruction and student services. An infusion of bond monies has allowed the district and the college to move forward on major updates of the district network, hardware and software as well as the infrastructure necessary to support learning management and operations, and support services. Building upgrades also benefited from Proposition V local bond funding, including the Learning Technology and Resource Center, the main hub for technology resources on campus. Instructional Computing Services is responsible for the operation of labs, installation and support of software, and Help Desk services. Technology needs are filtered through the new participatory governance system. An Online Teaching and Learning Committee provides oversight to address concerns of student success and equity for those students in online courses. Online education itself is also monitored to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements (III.C.1).

The newly developed Technology Plan ensures that all technology is student-centered, secure, reliable, integrated, sustainable, and supported by a robust infrastructure. A clear plan for refreshing college technology resources has been developed allowing various sites on campus to know exactly when upgrades to software and hardware will take place, with District support for technology replacement written into Board Policy. Criteria and decision-making processes for all technology purchases and support mechanisms are designed to reinforce integration with district and college-level strategic planning, as well as college-level program review. The five technology workgroups oversee implementation of all technology planning. There have been major upgrades in network infrastructure, security, data storage; as well as new systems brought on to manage finance, payroll and human resource functions. Technology decisions within the District are based on college-level needs, as documented in college strategic plans and program review, and through other planning processes. At the district level, the TCC is charged with providing vision, strategy, prioritization and direction for the adoption and implementation of new and emerging technologies. At the college level, the Technology Committee has been tasked with identifying and prioritizing college technology needs based on district and college technology plans. The Technology Committee is also responsible for prioritizing technology

requests that emerge from program review and annual unit plans. In spring 2020, the College will undergo a review of the effectiveness of technology planning after the first year under its new governance system (III.C.2).

In order to support the technology needs of the campus and district services, budgetary allocations are made each year utilizing both general funds and funds generated from the 2012 bond. Minutes of the TCC show that detailed discussion and coordination take place in technology planning. As technology needs have changed over the past six years, the district IT department has undergone two reorganizations to provide more support of systems and processes. A major upgrade to the network in 2017 increased storage capacity, and enhanced access, security and safety. Standards for all aspects of technology in the district are clearly defined and incorporated into purchasing and other decision making. These standards are part of broader Construction Standards that include cost of ownership and replacement planning. Help desk protocols are in place to handle any day-to-day technology issues from faculty, staff and students. The District has robust safety and security protocols in place to ensure reliability in accessing technology. In addition, there are three data centers across the two campuses with protocols for how data is backed up at each site and between sites. Necessary upgrades to hardware, software and infrastructure, are prioritized through campus and district channels (III.C.3).

Technology training at all levels is provided for all employee groups. At the district level, a recent augmentation to the IT budget provided the opportunity for a more robust and systematic training of IT personnel. Any required initial training on technology is incorporated into the onboarding process for new employees. Professional development opportunities are provided in numerous formats to provide flexibility to meet faculty and staff needs. Instructional and student service department-specific trainings are clear and adhere to guidelines on the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning process. Training is coordinated by IT at the district level and by campus committees such as the College's Distance Education Committee. Canvas is the platform used to support both online and on-campus instruction, and training and support in this area appears adequate. In addition to ongoing workshops and trainings, the College offers "just-in-time" desktop support for more pressing needs. A Tech Mall is the primary location on campus providing students access to computers, resources and assistance. The Tech Mall is an expansive space offering over 150 workstations, wireless internet access, printers and other technology for students to use. Adaptive technology is provided for those students who need it, and personnel in the Assistive Technology Center support universal access (III.C.4).

Board Policies and Administrative Procedures guide all aspects of the district and college technology planning, implementation, and evaluation. Such policies ensure integrated planning, quality of distance education offerings, security and reliability of data, and accessibility of technology to students and staff with disabilities. Technology replacement is governed by board policy, and there are policies to ensure distance education course offerings adhere to state and federal guidelines. These policies and procedures guide the appropriate and effective use of technology resources through the district and campuses (III.C.5).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standards.

III.D. Financial Resources

General Observations:

Grossmont College and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD), through their shared roles in the management of financial resource planning, fiscal responsibility and stability, internal controls, contractual agreements, and the management of short- and long-term debt instruments and liabilities, ensure that financial resources are adequate, effectively utilized, and support student learning and success. The GCCCD Educational Master Plan and the Grossmont College Strategic Plan, mission, and vision support and inform resource allocation priorities and decisions.

“Unmodified” results from external financial and compliance audits over the past several years provide evidence that the College’s financial resources are well managed, are in compliance with federal, state, and local requirements, and that sufficient internal control mechanisms are in place that demonstrate a commitment to financial integrity and stability.

The College’s plans of improving the effectiveness of its budget, planning, and resource allocation process is demonstrated through changes made to strengthen the participatory governance structure through the establishment and expanded roles of various standing committees, including the Budget Committee, and the College Council. The Annual Unit Planning process, recently implemented, provides additional evidence of the college’s intent to improve and streamline the resource allocation process and to provide stronger ties to strategic plan goals and objectives and program reviews, all in the spirit of providing greater transparency in financial resource decision-making.

Findings and Evidence:

Financial resource planning is a shared responsibility between GCCCD and Grossmont College. The GCCCD Educational Master Plan and the Grossmont Strategic Plan guide resource allocation priorities. The Income Allocation Model (IAM) is the mechanism by which the GCCCD allocates unrestricted general funds to the college. Budget documents, financial statements, and external audit reports provide evidence that financial resources are stable and effectively managed. Through their participatory governance structure via the Budget Committee and previously with the Planning and Resources Council, the College has effectively managed their financial resources consistent with the mission and vision of the institution (III.D.1).

The College’s fiscal resources have been allocated to priorities identified through the program review and institutional planning processes and are consistent with the mission and strategic planning goals and objectives. The College provided several examples whereby financial resource decisions supported priorities identified through the planning process. Financial resources are effectively managed in accordance with guidance provided by applicable policies and administrative procedures and budget and financial information is widely disseminated to the campus community and the general public (III.D.2).

Policies, procedures, and guidelines clearly articulate and document the financial planning, budget development, and approval process for the College and GCCCD. These processes ensure that representative committees or councils and constituent groups are involved or consulted through the deliberative formation stages of each budget cycle. The Budget Preparation Calendar highlights key dates in these processes. Tentative and approved budgets are posted online (III.D.3).

Through reviews and recommendations by various councils and committees, including the GCCCD Strategic Planning Committee, the College Budget Committee, and College Council, there is integration between institutional planning efforts and the financial resources and expenditure requirements of the College (III.D.4).

Board policies and administrative procedures ensure that internal control mechanisms are appropriate and comply with state and federal requirements. External audits of financial statements and other compliance requirements are conducted on an annual basis. There have been no compliance audit findings over the past five years. The GCCCD has an internal audit function that further supports internal controls and improvements. Notices and other relevant information regarding audits and other financial documents are posted on the GCCCD website (III.D.5).

Budget and other financial-related documents adhere to established Board policies and applicable administrative procedures. Credibility and accuracy of these financial resource documents are validated through annual external audit mandates and ensure compliance with state, federal, and local requirements. Resource allocation decisions align with the institution's mission and strategic planning goals and are consistent with supporting student programs and services (III.D.6).

Annual financial audits, consistent with board policy and state mandates, have consistently reported no material weaknesses or deficiencies. The Board of Trustees, District and College leadership, and the District Strategic Planning and Budget Council all review the annual audit. Processes are in place to ensure that audit findings are responded to in a comprehensive and timely manner. An additional financial and performance audit is conducted for Proposition V and results are presented to the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee through the Audit Sub-Committee. Via the annual audits conducted by independent certified public accounting firms and through audits performed by the GCCCD internal auditor, financial and internal control systems are regularly evaluated and assessed. The GCCCD's audits have received "unmodified" opinions and no financial findings have been noted for the last seven years, through June 30, 2018. (III.D.7, III.D.8).

The GCCCD and College have cash reserves that exceed minimum board policy mandates of 5% of unrestricted general fund expenditures. The Board has modified their policy, upon the recommendation of the District Strategic Planning and Budget Council, to have a goal of increasing the reserve levels by half of one percent per year. The 2018-19 Adoption Budget demonstrates the commitment to increasing the reserve levels, as the reserve has increased to 6.5% of the budgeted unrestricted general fund expenditures. The College has a contingency

reserve for unanticipated emergencies. Each year, the GCCCD fully funds CalPERS and CalSTRS rate increases (III.D.9).

Several board policies and administrative procedures ensure that the GCCCD and the College have processes in place to ensure effective oversight of finances, assets, purchases, and contracts. External audits for financial, state, and federal compliance are conducted by independent accounting firms on an annual basis (III.D.10).

Short- and long-term financial obligations are clearly itemized and accounted for in the budget and financial plans of the GCCCD and the College. Reserve levels are increasing per Board policy, the college maintains a sufficient contingency reserve, and liabilities for compensated absences, load banking, debt service, pensions, and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) are included in financial statements (III.D.11).

GCCCD and the College identify and account for liability payments and future obligations, including compensated absences, load banking, debt service, pensions, and OPEB. The most recent OPEB actuarial study for the GCCCD was last produced in October 2018. The actuarial study is updated every two years and is prepared in accordance with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) guidelines. The GCCCD budgets \$1 million on an annual basis for OPEB liabilities for current employees and sets aside 10% of the uncommitted ending balances from the unrestricted general fund and applies that to prior unfunded OPEB liabilities (III.D.12).

Debt service requirements are included in GCCCD budget and financial allocation plans. The annual financial and compliance audit report includes statements that itemize various general obligation bonds and lease revenue bonds. Bond debts and fee collections from taxpayers for the GCCCD are administered by the County of San Diego Auditor and Controller's office (III.D.13).

To ensure that financial resources are used for their intended purposes, various board policies and administrative procedures have been established and are adhered to. In addition, internal control measures, such as the annual external audit, ensure that resources are spent appropriately. Proposition V, passed by voters in 2012 to fund various facility projects, includes a Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee to ensure integrity of the use of the bond proceeds for specific purposes. A financial and performance audit is conducted annually for Proposition V. In addition to the annual audits conducted for Restricted and Foundation funds, various internal controls mechanisms at the GCCCD and College level ensure appropriate use and expenditure of funds (III.D.14).

The College's student loan Cohort Default Rate for the latest three-year reporting cycles is within federal standards and guidelines. Procedures are in place for students seeking loans to meet with a financial aid advisor and all students have access to an online financial literacy tool (CashCourse). These practices assist in helping the college reduce or maintain student loan default rates, well below federal requirements. Compliance with Title IV is part of the scope of the annual audit of the GCCCD. As mentioned previously, no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies have been noted in these audits for the past several years (III.D.15).

Several board policies and administrative procedures have been established that govern the processes by which contractual agreements, amendments, and procurement-related actions are approved and executed. Policies and procedures regarding the delegation of signing authority for contractual agreements, by contract dollar value, and by contractual purpose are in place. Contractual activity that uses federal or other grant funding sources follows applicable processes cited in the grant or contract award (III.D.16).

Conclusions

The College meets the Standards.

Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

IV.A. Decision-Making Roles & Processes

General Observations:

Grossmont College's participatory governance policies and procedures ensure that each campus constituency is responsible for its role in decision-making. In 2017, the College undertook a complete reorganization of its participatory governance structure to more fully align with accreditation standards and to improve transparency, inclusivity, and accountability. The College also created a *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* with detailed information describing the roles and responsibilities of committee members and outlines the flow of information between committees. Evidence shows campus wide participation in creating the new governance process and procedures.

The decision-making flow chart in the *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* provides an overview of how decisions are vetted through governance committees and forwarded to the President.

Findings and Evidence:

In 2017, the College reorganized its participatory governance structure with the assistance of IEPI. The new participatory governance system includes seven governance committees representing different constituency groups in the college. Ideas and/or innovations are brought to these committees for discussion and then forwarded to College Council for further discussion and recommendations. Those recommendations are then forwarded to the President for a final decision. Examples of how an idea is moved through the process were illustrated in the ISER and during interviews with committee members during the visit. Constituency groups are represented in each committee which are regularly attended (IV.A.1).

The College has established policies and procedures for broad participation in college decision-making. Student representatives serve on and attend participatory governance committee meetings on a regular basis. The Associated Students of Grossmont College (ASGC) clearly state in their Bylaws that executive officers and board members must serve on at least one standing participatory governance committee of the college. During the reorganization of its governance structure, ASGC was involved in the review and adoption of the college *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*. The handbook clearly describes the college's participatory governance process and the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and decision-making (IV.A.2).

Faculty and administrators have many opportunities for providing input in institutional policies, planning, and budget through participation on college-level participatory governance committees. Processes and roles are described in the *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook*. The handbook was updated in 2018. Faculty were actively involved in creating the

new participatory governance structure as evidenced in senate minutes and interviews conducted during the visit (IV.A.3).

The College and District have well-defined rules and procedures in making recommendations about curriculum and student learning programs and services. Board policies and governance handbooks describe the responsibilities and authority of faculty and administrators in curricular and other educational matters. Based on curriculum minutes, faculty and academic administrators participate in recommendations concerning curriculum (IV.A.4).

The district administration and Board of Trustees have clear policies and procedures that specifies the roles and responsibilities of administrators, faculty and staff in the participatory governance structure. The College has established several participatory governance committees for inclusion of relative perspectives in the governance of the college. There are well-defined processes for communication before administrative and board decisions are made that impact faculty, staff, and students. Input and recommendations from participatory governance committees are solicited to inform decision-making (IV.A.5).

Processes for college decision-making are documented in the *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* and on the college and district websites. The College has provided training for conveners and note takers of governance committees. Discussions and decisions made in participatory governance committees are communicated to the campus community in a variety of ways including emails, minutes posted on the governance committee websites, recordings of Zoom meetings, and regular reports to the classified and academic senates (IV.A.6).

In 2017, the College recognized the need to evaluate its governance structure. The system was described as overly complicated with no clear path for communication. The College invited outside consultants to participate in the reorganization and conducted interviews with personnel at other colleges, asking a series of questions on what they liked about their current governance system and best practices. Included in this assessment was a college survey asking recipients to provide feedback on leadership roles and the institution's governance and decision-making policies, procedures, and processes. Representatives from all constituency groups were invited and participated in the reorganization of the process. The result of this evaluation process was a new participatory governance structure launched in the spring of 2019 that reflected a more equitable composition of participatory governance committees, increased transparency and a more streamlined process for decision-making.

During the visit, interviews and open forums with faculty, classified professional and administrators, revealed a high level of satisfaction with the new governance structure. The *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* was updated in 2017 and approved by the President through the governance process in November 2018. The update was communicated across the campus. The handbook is accessible on the college website (IV.A.7).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

IV.B. Chief Executive Officer

General Observations:

The President was appointed by the Governing Board of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District and began service on July 1, 2015. The Chancellor delegates to the College President the executive authority and responsibility to lead, direct, and supervise the college and administer programs and operations in compliance with legal requirements and policies. The President reports to the Chancellor.

The President has provided leadership in budgeting, planning and assessing institutional effectiveness. Under the President's guidance, the college participatory governance structure was evaluated and streamlined to improve transparency, inclusivity, and accountability. Under his leadership, the College also saw a remarkable increase in the number of students receiving certificates and associate degrees, and in spring 2018, the College celebrated having awarded the most academic degrees and certificates of any community college in San Diego and Imperial counties.

During the visit, the team learned from interviews with faculty, classified professionals and administrators that the president has created an environment that values equity, supports professional development, values all constituency groups' input and feedback, and leads the college in institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment. It is evident from interviews that the president has wide support for his inclusiveness, equity focused leadership and work on improving student success.

Findings and Evidence:

Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District BP 7113 outlines the authority given to the College President to oversee the operations of the College. As outlined in the *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* and minutes from committee meetings, the President has overseen the development and restructuring of the participatory governance process and the planning process. Recommendations from committees are forwarded to the President for consideration of approval.

The President regularly communicates relevant information to internal and external stakeholders through the welcome page of the college catalog, President's webpage on the college website, convocation presentations, semi-annual forums, emails and meeting minutes (IV.B.1).

The college president oversees the overall planning and operations of the college and evaluates the college's administrative structure in relation to its perspective size and complexity. He delegates authority to the vice presidents and other administrators as appropriate. The College is organized into four broad functional units: Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Student Services, and the President's Office. As noted in previous sections of this report (III.C.10), the president has reorganized specific management positions to provide stronger support for planning and equity. The president has also demonstrated a keen awareness about the college's administrative "churn" as described in the ISER and is taking actions to address this issue (I.B.2).

The college president leads the efforts for creating a collegial process in the governance system. During the redesign of the participatory governance process in 2017, the President worked with the Administrators Association, the Academic Senate, Classified Senate and Associated Students of Grossmont College. One of the outcomes of that redesign was an updated *Governance and Decision-Making Handbook* with a section titled “Rules, Tools and Roles.” This section describes how committee members follow a collegial process during meetings and decision-making. Collegial reminders are also listed on governance meeting agendas.

The Senior Dean of College Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, who reports directly to the President, leads the college’s planning efforts, relying on high quality research and integrated with resource planning and allocation (IV.B.3).

The college president is engaged in the accreditation process and a member of the Accreditation Steering Committee. The President delegates responsibility for coordinating ongoing accreditation compliance, institutional self-evaluation, and preparation for evaluation team visits to an Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). The ALO also serves as the Senior Dean over College Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and reports directly to the President (IV.B.4).

The President oversees the implementation of board policies and procedures at the college and, serves on three District committees (Chancellor’s Extended Cabinet, the District Executive Council and District Strategic Planning and Budget Committee) for facilitating clear understanding and appropriate implementation of board policies and administrative procedures (IV.B.5).

The President represents the College in several community venues, committees, boards and forums to share information about college services and to receive feedback from the community. The President also uses a wide range of social media platforms to engage with the community served by the college (IV.B.6).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

IV.C. Governing Board

General Observations:

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD) is governed by a five-member elected board that oversees Grossmont College, an independently accredited college within the district. Through their involvement at the local, regional and state level, the Governing Board stays informed and updated about issues relevant to the college. Through establishing board policies that are aligned to the college’s mission and values, the Governing Board has authority over and responsibility for policies that assure academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and the financial stability of the institution.

The Governing Board acts as a collective entity. Once it reaches a decision, all members act in support of the decision. The Governing Board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting

and evaluating the CEO of the district and the college. It reflects the public's interest in the institution's educational quality and protects the college from undue influence or political pressure. It establishes policies consistent with the college's mission to ensure the educational quality, legal matters and financial integrity and stability. The Governing Board publishes its bylaws, acts consistent with its policies and bylaws and regularly assesses them and revises as necessary.

The Governing Board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement and completes ongoing Board development, including new member orientation. It establishes a clear process for evaluation of its efficacy and regularly uses the results of those evaluations to make improvements. It upholds a code of ethics and conflict of interest policy. The Board is informed about Accreditation Standards and supports the College's efforts to improve and excel.

Findings and Evidence:

The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District's (GCCCD) governing board is responsible for assuring academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning programs as well as the College's financial stability. The board's duties are outlined in BP 2005 and BP 2200 policies and the chief CEO (chancellor) issues administrative procedures to guide the implementation of board policies. Board policies and procedures are reviewed on a six-year cycle as indicated in AP 2410 (IV.C.1).

BP 2715 establishes that the board will act as a unit and not as individuals when making decisions and that once the majority has made a decision, all members will act in support of the decision and speak with one voice. Board members provided an example of this in practice during interviews with team members (IV.C.2).

The GCCCD Governing Board has a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the Chancellor (IV.C.3).

The GCCCD Governing Board is an elected body with responsibilities for supporting the colleges and representing community constituents by their service area or trustee areas. BP 2100 establishes the parameters for trustee area representation. The District's BP/AP outline conflict of interest for board members and employees. All board members are required to annually file a Statement of Economic Interests report (IV.C.4).

BP 2710 and AP 2710 outline the governing board's responsibilities, which address leadership on student success, equity, and access and monitoring progress, differences in student success and achievement, and high-quality curricula. Board policies also address the board's role in strategic planning, goal setting, and assurance of sound fiscal management. The board receives regular reports throughout the year on progress made towards strategic goals and improvement of instructional and student support programs (IV.C.5).

Board policies and administrative procedures are published on the GCCCD Policies and Procedures website and are available to the public. BP 2010 includes the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures (IV.C.6).

Board members engage in discussions, act on items, and review information consistent with the GCCCD board policies and bylaws, as reflected in board meeting minutes. The board reviews its policies on a six-year cycle, which is tracked in the Chancellor's Office (IV.C.7).

In addition to reviewing indicators of student learning at regular board meetings, the GCCCD Governance Board holds an annual evaluation and goal-setting workshop to discuss the college's student learning and achievement metrics, key performance indicators, institution-set standards, and aspirational targets. The college presents updates on the implementation of the strategic plan including action steps and priorities for improving academic quality in the subsequent year (IV.C.8).

GCCCD's AP 2740 on board education outlines the Board's commitment to its development, improvement, and continuity of membership. New trustees are oriented by the Chancellor and all board members attend study sessions and conferences including the National Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the Community College League of California (CCLC). The Chancellor maintains records of participation in these activities and the information is reviewed in the Board's annual evaluation and goal-setting retreat. BP 2100 provides for the continuity of board membership including staggered terms of office (IV.C.9).

BP 2745 and AP 2745 outline the Board's requirement to conduct a comprehensive evaluation a minimum of every other year. The evaluation includes a self-assessment, feedback from college and community stakeholders, and analysis of board goal achievement. Governing Board Quality and Effectiveness Goals are updated annually as a result of the evaluation process. Minutes from the evaluation are public via the Governing Board webpage (IV.C.10).

The GCCCD Governing Board establishes ethical practices including specific violations in areas of financial interest, fair and open decision-making, use of public funds, and illegal or unethical behavior during board meetings. BP 2710 indicates that board members may not have a financial interest in contracts made in their capacity as board members, and specific parameters require the disclosure of financial interest in a decision. If there appears to be a conflict of interest, or there is a conflict of interest, trustees abstain from voting during board meetings (IV.C.11).

Board Policy 2430 delegates full authority to the Chancellor and holds the Chancellor accountable for the operation of the District. Through interviews with members of the Board, the team was able to verify that the Governing Board sets clear expectations and holds the Chancellor accountable for the operations of the District. The team noted a few inconsistencies related to the delegation of authority to the Chancellor without board interference. There may be opportunities for further clarification and board professional development in this area (IV.C.12).

As evidenced in meeting minutes and in interviews, the GCCCD Governing Board is informed about Eligibility Requirements, the Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, accreditation processes, and the College's accreditation status. A special workshop on accreditation was conducted in 2018 to help inform the board of their role in the accreditation process, and board members receive accreditation training at annual conferences. The Governing Board holds an annual evaluation and goal-setting workshop. District wide goals and strategic priorities include

a reference to the advancement of accreditation standards that guide quality, ethics, and prudence with student success as an important goal. Accreditation issues, including ACCJC reports, are presented at Governing Board meetings (IV.C.13).

Conclusions:

The College meets the Standard.

IV.D. Multi-College Districts or Systems

General Observations:

The GCCCD Chancellor provides leadership in setting and communicating expectations for educational excellence and establishes clearly defined roles, authority and responsibility between the Colleges to the District. The Chancellor ensures that the Colleges receive effective and adequate District services. The District has a policy for the allocation of resources to support effective operations and the Chancellor delegates full responsibility to the College Presidents to implement district policies without interference and holds them responsible for the operation of the Colleges. Where the District has responsibility for the resources, it evaluates itself against ACCJC standards.

The District has a model for the allocation of resources and that model provides adequate resources to effectively support the Colleges. Effective control of expenditures is being exercised by the District Chancellor.

Communication between the Colleges and District is effective and timely.

The Chancellor regularly evaluates the District and College role in ensuring educational goals for student achievement and communicates the results of this to use as a basis for improvement.

Findings and Evidence:

The *GCCCD Governance Structure Handbook* details the District and College reporting structure and outlines operational responsibilities. It details roles and how the operations of the District and College work together toward achieving educational excellence. The District and Colleges have worked hard to revise their governance structure and completed a comprehensive re-vamp of the process which includes all employee groups in the governance process. Interviews with constituency groups indicate positivity about the process and enthusiasm about the new model. The Chancellor works with the Governing Board to set priorities which are communicated to the Colleges and Board Policy 2200 outlines the Governing Board's roles. Organizational charts provided via Workday, a software tool, indicate the distribution of responsibilities (IV.D.1).

The Chancellor communicates with the College Presidents through regular meetings including the Chancellor's Cabinet, Chancellor's Extended Cabinet, District Executive Council, District Coordinating Educational Council, Student Equity and Success Council, and the District Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council. The minutes of the District Executive Council

provide evidence that the process is evaluated for efficacy and updated accordingly. As lead of the District Coordinating Educational Council, the Chancellor reviews and evaluates educational initiatives to drive student success. The District Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council advises the Chancellor on budget priorities which are then communicated to the College Presidents. Survey instruments and minutes were reviewed that showed the evaluation of the efficacy of services. Biennial surveys reviewed evaluate the efficacy of services provided and improvements are made as needed (IV.D.2).

The GCCCD Chancellor provides procedures and a budget calendar that outline how the budget is to be developed and she, as well as the Vice Chancellors and Governing Board review expenditures against budget over the course of the year through Quarterly 311 financial reports and annual budget documents. Annual audits are reviewed and have been consistent and stable. Board Policy 6250 delineates how the District handles its budget and reserve management and an Income Allocation Model (IAM) outlines how the District's revenues will be allocated to the Colleges. Considerations for Full Time Equivalent Student (FTES) targets for the Colleges are considered in this model. Colleges use the dollars allocated to fund their respective priorities (IV.D.3).

The two College Presidents are responsible for policy implementation and are fully responsible for the operations of the colleges. Board Policy 7113 cites the methodology for delegation of authority.

The GCCCD Chancellor holds the college presidents accountable for the operations of the colleges, a process which is outlined in Board Policy 7112 on performance evaluation. As evidenced in both policy and interviews, the Chancellor evaluates the Presidents annually (IV.D.4).

District planning is integrated with college planning and is set on six-year strategies to achieve priorities established in the Educational Master Plan. The GCCCD Educational Master Plan outlines how Human Resources, Facilities, Technology and Diversity/Equity/Inclusion plans guide college-level plans. Research data provides information that is used to measure academic achievement and financial resources against key performance indicators. The Governing Board regularly reviews key performance indicators and how the colleges are performing against them (IV.D.5).

Communication between the district and the colleges is timely and accurate such that the Colleges may make decisions effectively. Regular communication from the chancellor to the district was reviewed, which contained information about personnel hires, state and college budgets, construction updates and student achievement. Bi-monthly Chancellor's Cabinet meetings are held, and a variety of participatory governance councils work to communicate information District-wide. The District Executive Council, District Coordinating Education Council, Student Equity and Success Council, and District Strategic Planning and Budget Council communicate information effectively through the posting of agendas and minutes which were examined. An electronic newsletter called *The Courier* highlights district and college business and is circulated district-wide (IV.D.6).

The District, under the chancellor's leadership, evaluates role delineations on a triennial basis. Documentation of the review, last performed in May of 2016, was reviewed and the District Executive Council discussed the results and provided recommendations for improvement, which are reflected in the new *GCCCD Governance Structure Handbook*. The recommendations were presented to and supported by the Board (IV.D.7).

Conclusions:

The College meets Standard IV.D.

Quality Focus Essay (QFE)

Based on a critical evaluation of the college during the preparation of the ISER, Grossmont identified a number of plans for improvement that are focused on improving institutional planning, increasing student success, and achieving more equitable outcomes for its diverse student populations. The two topics chosen by Grossmont for its quality focus essay are aligned with their identified plans for improvement as well as their strategic plans.

Quality Focus Essay #1: 12 Gateway Courses

In pursuit of the College's goal to achieve equitable outcomes for all students, Grossmont College is focusing on increasing success in 12 gateway courses. The quality focus essay does not identify which gateway courses will be involved in the initiative. The ISER describes the genesis of this project, which included data analysis conducted by students in a research class and subsequent forums to present the results as well as to solicit input. The QFE indicates that institutional data revealed "nearly 25% of the college's total semester enrollment and 29% of all "non-success" occurred in 12 courses." These courses were subsequently referred to as the "12 Gateway Courses." This data was shared with the Academic Senate and Department Chairs of the 12 gateway courses. The department chairs were invited, and they accepted, to participate in extended professional efforts designed to explore equity practices for their courses, plan interventions, reflect, and develop evaluation plans for ongoing improvement.

The QFE indicates, but does not show, disproportionate impact among multiple groups in all of the 12 gateway courses. The goals of the 12 Gateway Courses initiative appears to be three-fold: (1) to "significantly decrease the disproportionate impact" in the 12 courses; (2) to positively impact the students' experience; and (3) improve student success, retention, and completion.

The team found the QFE Project 1 appropriate and in line with the College's commitment to equity and student success. The plan outlines activities, anticipated outcomes, responsible party, resources, and timeline. Based on the plan, activities in pursuit of this project have just begun. Going forward, the team recommends that the College further clarifies their anticipated outcomes and to state those outcomes in measurable terms.

QFE #2: Alignment of Outcomes Assessment with Guided Pathways

The goals of this project is to "integrate Learning Outcomes more fully into the culture, practice, and structure of the institution in order to effectively respond to the student learning needs and to inform college decision-making." The QFE outlines a three-pronged approach as follows:

1. Culture: Increase awareness and use of "transparent assignment design protocol" through a series of workshops, in order to strengthen student's demonstration of specified learning outcomes.

2. Practice: The college will pilot the use of Canvas for developing, implementing, and assessing SLOs and PSLOs. The college will also develop and implement other methods of assessing PSLOs directly and indirectly.
3. Structure: Through a pilot, specific departments will revisit the development and assessment of PSLOs to reflect a more intentional dual focus on career and academics, which are embedded in the college's Guided Pathways model.

The goals of this quality focus essay are notable, timely, and also largescale. The college, as well as the peer review team, have identified needed improvements in learning outcomes storage, assessment, and mapping from the course level to program level. Since the use of TracDat does not appear to be working college-wide, the piloting of the use of CANVAS as an alternative may be appropriate and timely.

The team recommends that the college, led by the Senior Dean for Institutional Effectiveness, further refine the plan in terms of the activities and to identify measurable outcomes.