

## ***Standard Two: Institutional Integrity***

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

### **Standard 2.1**

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

### **Description**

Through its publications, College of San Mateo presents itself accurately, clearly, and consistently in both written and electronic formats.

The most important publications are the *Catalog* (Ref. 2.1) and *Schedule of Classes* (Ref. 2.2). The *Catalog*, which is published yearly, contains detailed information regarding the college's mission, degrees and certificates (both academic and vocational), curricular offerings, educational policies and resources, student services and activities, admission requirements, degree/certificate requirements, and transfer recommendations. It contains information on student fees, financial aid, and refund policies. The *Catalog* also contains the academic calendar and a list of faculty, administrators, and the San Mateo County Community College District board of trustees.

The *Schedule of Classes*, published for each semester and summer session, contains accurate, updated material regarding admission, registration procedures and timelines, fees, course offerings, and student support services. It lists specific course offerings, times, locations, and faculty, and includes course titles and detailed

course descriptions. The *Schedule of Classes* also includes information regarding policies on student rights and responsibilities, the privacy of student records, and nondiscrimination.

The College of San Mateo Web site, <http://gocsm.net>, provides information about college programs, services, course offerings, and developments on campus. Television, Internet, newspaper, radio, and cinema advertisements are also used to publicize the college and are evaluated yearly to judge their effectiveness. In general, advertisements run for three months prior to the start of fall and spring semesters. Internet advertisements include information and links to the college Web site and a form by which users can request additional information about the college. Press releases are reviewed by appropriate faculty and staff to ensure accuracy.

### **Appraisal**

Surveys conducted in 1999 especially for the purpose of providing data for this accreditation self-study indicated that students, staff, faculty, and administrators believe that the information in college publications is accurate, clear, and consistent. More than 86 percent of faculty and administrators who responded to the *Faculty/Administration Survey* (Ref. 2.3) concurred with this belief. Of the respondents to the *Classified Staff Survey* (Ref. 2.4), 75.7 percent felt that they have access to the information about college policies and practices needed to do their jobs. According to the *Student Satisfaction Survey* (Ref. 2.5), 90.4 percent of respondents were satisfied that program requirements are clear; 88.2 percent reported that the college accurately portrays itself in its publications; and 92.7 percent said that the descriptions of registration and course selection procedures are clear and accurate.

However, information on the Web site is updated but not regularly, and the Web site is not user friendly, it is not clear, and it is not easy to navigate.

### **Plan**

Hire a Webmaster, or equivalent, to redesign and maintain the Web site.

### **Standard 2.2**

*The institution has a readily available governing board-adopted policy protecting academic freedom and responsibility which states the institutional commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge and fosters the integrity of the teaching-learning process.*

## **Description**

College of San Mateo's board-adopted Statement on Academic Freedom (Ref. 2.6), in which the board of trustees declares its determination to support the exercise of academic freedom and responsibility, is referred to in the *Schedule of Classes* and appears in the College of San Mateo *Catalog* and in the *Faculty Handbook* (Ref. 2.7). District and college administrators make every effort to ensure academic freedom and responsibility of faculty through the district's administrative procedures. The Student Grievances and Appeals section of the *Catalog* apprises students of the appropriate channels by which they may seek redress if they believe their rights have been violated.

## **Appraisal**

Given that since the last accreditation self-study no cases that raised significant issues of academic freedom have occurred, it appears that the board-approved policy is effective in protecting academic freedom and responsibility. The faculty bargaining agent has filed no grievances or requests for hearings based on a violation of academic freedom. Moreover, in the *Faculty/Administration Survey*, slightly more than 80 percent of respondents agreed that the college protects faculty members' right to present "unpopular or controversial ideas in the classroom," and 78 percent of respondents agreed that the college is effective in maintaining "a climate in which differences in opinion can be aired openly and amicably."

## **Plan**

None

## **Standard 2.3**

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

## **Description**

The Conduct of Classes section in the *Faculty Handbook* and the appendices containing the Statement on Professional Ethics and the Statement on Academic Freedom indicate the intention of the college to maintain a distinction between personal conviction and proven conclusions in the portrayal of information to students. In addition, the *Evaluation Process Implementation Guidelines for Regular Classroom Faculty* (Ref. 2.8) and the *Evaluation Policy and Procedures*

*for Adjunct Faculty* (Ref. 2.9) ensure that faculty present relevant data fairly and objectively.

### **Appraisal**

In the absence of any student or faculty grievances, it is assumed that college faculty and staff adequately meet this standard.

### **Plan**

None

### **Standard 2.4**

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

### **Description**

Because College of San Mateo is a public institution, it does not promote specific sets of beliefs or world views. It does, however, have codes of conduct for faculty and students. The code of conduct for faculty is set forth in the Statement on Professional Ethics published in the *Faculty Handbook*, and for students in the *Catalog* and *Schedule of Classes* under Student Conduct.

### **Appraisal**

The fact that the college has not experienced problems resulting from claims that rules of conduct were imposed after the fact suggests that the codes of conduct for faculty, staff, and students clear.

### **Plan**

None

## Standard 2.5

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

### Description

College of San Mateo provides faculty with guidelines for dealing with cheating and plagiarism in the *Faculty Handbook*, describing faculty responsibilities in cases of plagiarism and listing possible academic sanctions as well as potential disciplinary actions by the vice president for student services. Students are informed about academic honesty and general disciplinary actions in the Student Handbook section of the *Catalog*.

### Appraisal

While the college's published codes of conduct are clear, the section on Student Conduct in the *Schedule of Classes* does not mention plagiarism or cheating, and the Student Conduct section in the Student Handbook, published in the *Catalog*, simply states that "dishonesty such as cheating [and] plagiarism" "are prohibited and may lead to appropriate disciplinary action"; this statement regarding plagiarism is too brief, and the term is mentioned without adequate definition. The experience of many faculty with incidents of plagiarism suggests that many College of San Mateo students are unaware of the college policy on plagiarism and cheating, and that although the policy is printed in the *Catalog*, many students do not read and/or understand it.

According to the *Faculty/Administration Survey*, 85.6 percent of respondents said that they are familiar with the college policies on plagiarism and academic honesty. While most faculty members are aware of the policy, a sampling of course syllabi prepared by faculty revealed that a statement on academic honesty and plagiarism is rarely included. Moreover, the current policy, Guidelines for Dealing with Cheating and Plagiarism, published in Appendix I of the *Faculty Handbook*, dates back to 1986 and should be reviewed, with the possibility of revision.

### Plan

Strengthen the college's commitment to academic honesty in the following ways:

- Define "plagiarism" in the Student Handbook section of the *Catalog* and give examples of it so that students clearly understand what it is;
- Include the words "Cheating" and "Plagiarism" in the index of the *Catalog* for easy reference to the appropriate pages in the Student Handbook section;

- Review, and possibly revise, the Guidelines for Dealing with Cheating and Plagiarism in the *Faculty Handbook*;
- Provide faculty with staff development workshops offering help in ways to establish “beyond a reasonable doubt” that cheating or plagiarism has occurred, as well as ways to deal with academic dishonesty in a positive and professional manner.

## **Standard 2.6**

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

### **Description**

College of San Mateo demonstrates its understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity in its nondiscrimination policy, which is stated in four languages (Spanish, Tagalog, and Chinese, as well as English), in its *Catalog* and *Schedule of Classes*.

The college recognizes the positive contributions a diverse student body brings to social and academic exploration and to the overall life of the college and community. In turn, the college understands that it has an obligation to ensure that every reasonable step is taken to invite, encourage, and support all students in their social and academic educational experiences so that they may be successful as students and as members of the community. To increase opportunities for student access and success, the college has expanded outreach efforts in recent years to reach under-represented students. This is being achieved through community awareness activities, multilingual literature, and media efforts, both in English and in other languages. The college has also arranged for presentations to parents and students of local high schools in languages other than English, using multilingual staff and multilingual materials.

In addition to its policy statement and outreach efforts, College of San Mateo shows its commitment to the issues of equity and diversity with regard to its students—who enter College of San Mateo with diverse goals, backgrounds, abilities, commitments, financial resources, family support, and levels of academic preparation—with a variety of student support programs and services that provide specific resources for students who need specialized assistance to achieve academic success. Such programs and services include Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS), CalWORKs, Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE), Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Transition to College (for students with psychological disabilities), the Multicultural Center, tutoring programs, the Puente project, the STEM mentoring project, and the Mary

Meta Lazarus Child Development Center. In addition, there are ongoing efforts to make every location on campus accessible to students with restricted mobility.

Through the implementation of the college's *Student Equity Plan* (Ref. 2.10), under the oversight of the Student Development Committee, a committee of the Academic Senate, College of San Mateo maintains an ongoing institutional commitment to access, retention, and success for all students, while actively addressing issues regarding equity and diversity.

Although it does not have a specific multiculturalism or diversity course requirement for graduation, the college has academic course offerings and programs that reflect issues of diversity, teach ways of achieving academic success, and engage a diverse student body in issues that are relevant and meaningful. The college provides a wide variety of course offerings that encourage, expand, and support a greater understanding of issues regarding equity and diversity.

Moreover, in order to foster an inclusive campus climate, a variety of cultural events sponsored by departments and student organizations take place on campus each year, among them Dia de las Americas, African Dance, French Week, Chinese Culture Day, African American History Month, Women's History Month, Spring Cultural Festival Week, and Cinco de Mayo. The Café International, the student run coffee house, also sponsors a variety of cultural events and musical performances on a regular basis throughout the year. These activities serve to strengthen and broaden the student experience, foster a greater understanding of and appreciation for the contributions of different cultures, and retain students who see that their culture's contributions and their cultural heritage are respected and celebrated within the college setting.

Finally, hiring practices for college staff emphasize equal opportunity for applicants and encourage those from varying backgrounds to apply. The college always seeks to recruit qualified faculty and staff who have an appreciation of and sensitivity for working with students of varying backgrounds and who can relate well with all students.

## **Appraisal**

College of San Mateo—which successfully serves students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds: approximately 3 percent are African American, 6.3 percent Filipino, 6.5 percent Other/Unknown 15.6 percent Hispanic, 22.1 percent Asian, and 46.5 percent White—is generally effective in demonstrating through policies and practices its understanding of and concern for equity and diversity. In part, this is evidenced by 80 percent agreement among respondents to the *Faculty/Administration Survey* that the college is effective or very effective in recruiting “students who in the past have been denied, or have not been successful in formal education.”

Further evidence of the college's demonstration of an understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity is that in the *Student Satisfaction Survey* more than 80 percent of respondents stated that they were satisfied with the accuracy of the following statements: "Most students feel a sense of belonging here"; "People on this campus respect and are supportive of each other"; "Faculty is understanding of student's unique life circumstance"; and "Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students." Beyond that, to the survey item asking how satisfied they were that College of San Mateo demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of part-time students, evening students, older returning students, under-represented populations, and students with disabilities, from 92 to 96 percent of respondents selected "Satisfied/Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied" as their response for each of these categories of students.

Significant evidence of the college's effort to maintain the diversity of its student body has come directly from the students. A variety of ethnic and cultural student clubs and organizations play an important role in annual outreach and retention efforts. Through funding and support from the Associated Students and student organizations, various campus clubs sponsor annual outreach events where under-represented students are brought to the college for day-long educational programs. These annual events bring to the campus between 1,500 to 2,000 at-risk middle and high school students who might not otherwise have been aware of College of San Mateo's offerings and the opportunities of a college education.

Due to the rapidly changing demographics of the county the college serves, the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of faculty and staff, most of whom are long-time employees, do not always closely reflect the increasing diversity of the student population College of San Mateo serves. As staff members retire and new hires are made, the college anticipates achieving a staff composition that more closely reflects the diversity of the student body.

## **Plan**

Pursue more aggressive recruiting of members of historically under-represented groups in the hiring of faculty, staff, and administrators, with the goal of their more closely reflecting the student population the college serves.

Provide regular training opportunities for all staff to ensure that they will become more sensitive to and continually aware of issues of diversity and will be better able to serve students of varying backgrounds and perspectives.

## **Standard 2.7**

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

### **Description**

The athletic program at College of San Mateo provides an extensive array of athletic opportunities for local student athletes, with the college's athletic teams made up primarily of San Mateo County high school graduates.

College of San Mateo follows all provisions of the constitution of the California Commission on Athletics. The selection process for new coaches includes in-depth discussion and explanation of all provisions of the California Commission on Athletics, including emphasis on the college's commitment to recruiting local student athletes. Each year all members of the athletic staff participate in an in-service training on the commission's constitution, and all coaches are provided information about recruiting, eligibility rules, and other important topics covered by the constitution.

### **Appraisal**

As no challenges to the honesty and integrity of the college's athletic program have arisen, it is assumed that the college demonstrates honesty and integrity in its athletic programs. College of San Mateo has a reputation of adhering to the highest standards in the conduct of its athletic program.

### **Plan**

None

## **Standard 2.8**

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

### **Description**

College of San Mateo makes every effort to be honest and forthright in all communications with the Commission, and scrupulously complies with Commission standards, policies, guidelines, public disclosure, and self-study requirements. The extensive two-year process of preparing for the Commission site

visit, a process in which more than one hundred faculty, staff, students, and administrators have actively participated, is evidence of the serious commitment of College of San Mateo to meet the requirements and expectations of the Commission.

### **Appraisal**

Over the many years of its accreditation by the Commission, College of San Mateo has consistently demonstrated its commitment to complying with the standards, policies, and requirements of the Commission by timely completion of its self-study and by following up thoroughly on recommendations made by the Commission following accreditation team visits.

### **Plan**

None

### **Standard 2.9**

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

### **Description**

College of San Mateo regularly updates its publications, policies, and practices in order to ensure their integrity. The Office of Public Relations and Marketing Communications has primary responsibility for several publications, including the *Catalog* and the *Schedule of Classes*, along with a variety of newsletters and brochures. The vice presidents, deans, faculty, classified staff, and student organizations are involved as appropriate, participating in a comprehensive, ongoing process of evaluating and revising content to ensure that statements of the college's mission, programs, and services are accurate and current.

Regular review and revision, if appropriate, of college policies are undertaken by College Council, the college's shared governance body, with representation from students, classified staff, faculty, and administration.

Finally, the Academic Senate's Committee on Instruction ensures the integrity of the college's instructional programs. In its attempt to ensure their accuracy and completeness, that committee recently instituted new practices for the submission of course outlines.

## **Appraisal**

Significant, ongoing efforts are made at departmental, divisional, and institutional levels to ensure the integrity of College of San Mateo's policies, practices, and publications. In the absence of challenges to the college's integrity, it is assumed that this standard is met.

## **Plan**

None

## **Standard Two Document References**

- 2.1 College of San Mateo (CSM) Catalog 2000-2001
- 2.2 CSM Schedule of Classes, Summer 2000, Fall 2000, Spring 2001
- 2.3 CSM Faculty/Administration Survey, Summer 1999
- 2.4 CSM Classified Staff Survey, Summer 1999
- 2.5 CSM Student Satisfaction Survey, Summer 1999
- 2.6 Statement on Academic Freedom
- 2.7 CSM Faculty Handbook, 2000-2001
- 2.8 Evaluation Process, Implementation Guidelines for Regular Classroom Faculty
- 2.9 Evaluation Policy and Procedures for Adjunct Faculty
- 2.10 Student Equity Plan, December 31, 1993; Student Equity Plan – Development and Progress to Date, September 30, 1996