



## **Organization of the Los Angeles Community College District's Self Evaluation Process**

The District Planning and Accreditation Committee (DPAC) is the designated committee responsible for the overall planning and supervision of the District's self evaluation process and preparation of the District-led accreditation standards for the Self Evaluation Report. DPAC is an existing district-level governance committee that oversees and facilitates districtwide planning and accreditation activities. It is co-chaired by the Associate Vice Chancellor of Institutional Effectiveness and a District Academic Senate Vice President (faculty). The committee includes each of the college's chief instructional officers (CIO) and Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALO). These representatives provide expertise on educational planning and accreditation. Other members include the Deputy Chancellor, college faculty accreditation chairs, and college researchers. The breadth of the committee allows for robust dialog on key planning and accreditation issues and provides an adequate representation to form recommendations that can be implemented district-wide. This committee reports directly to the Chancellor's Cabinet and is integrated throughout the District shared governance and consultation groups. The Vice Chancellor for Educational Programs and Institutional Effectiveness (EPIE) makes regular accreditation and institutional effectiveness reports to the Board of Trustees.

### **Accreditation**

In November 2013, the ACCJC informed the District that it had synchronized the comprehensive visits for all nine colleges based on the updated Standards. Since then, DPAC has organized its activities around facilitating a self-reflective process in considering the District's strengths, weaknesses, and achievements. The District's EPIE division provided analysis of institutional data regarding the District's mission and objectives to facilitate discussion around the areas needing strengthening. The committee developed an integrated District-level accreditation preparation calendar that included the accreditation-related tasks, reports, and products for the colleges, Board of Trustees, DPAC, and the Educational Services Center (District office).

DPAC continued to work on accreditation through the 2013-2014 academic year. This work included coordinating the completion of four colleges' follow up accreditation reports (for Los Angeles Mission College, Los Angeles Pierce College, Los Angeles Southwest College, and Los Angeles Valley College in March 2014) and accompanying site visits. The group continued to communicate on accreditation topics through DPAC and accreditation listservs that were utilized to increase communication. In June 2014, the IESS committee and the Board approved funds for each of the colleges and the ESC for accreditation activities related to the Spring 2016 visit. This funding allowed the District and the colleges to put in place key personnel that would be responsible for leading the self evaluation efforts.

In August 2014, DPAC held a focused meeting on organizing the self-evaluation process. To help ensure that appropriate progress was made on the self evaluation reports, DPAC identified college and District evidence for each of the Standards and distinguished between District-led

and college-led standards. These drafts of evidence sources and the division of functions were disseminated broadly for review including all DPAC members, the Chancellor's cabinet, and District senior staff. DPAC members ensured that appropriate consultation occurred at the college level.

In the 2014-2015 academic year, the committee continued to support ongoing accreditation efforts at the colleges. This included working with three colleges (Los Angeles Harbor College, Los Angeles Southwest College, and West Los Angeles College) to complete midterm reports and two colleges (Los Angeles Mission College and Los Angeles Valley College) to complete follow-up reports in March 2015. During this time, DPAC also finalized the self evaluation evidence and assignment grid and assigned the District to take lead on writing and providing evidence for 29 of the Standards, with the colleges writing the rest the Standards independently. This final delineation of roles was approved through DPAC with each constituent ensuring consultation at the college level.

In spring 2015, DPAC sponsored three accreditation training workshops led by the RP Group Assessment Chair to help ensure that all of the colleges' staff, faculty and administrators understood the new requirements for the 2016 self evaluation report and had an effective infrastructure and process for preparing their self evaluation reports. In May and June, the District's accreditation team visited and met with each of the nine colleges' accreditation teams separately to review and discuss the District's preliminary draft responses and evidence. The District's EPIE division facilitated consultation hours for each college for assistance with their Quality Focus Essays and editing of their reports. These efforts were part of DPAC's role in assisting colleges with the completion of the self evaluations and in ensuring a common understanding of the new Standards and self evaluation process.

During summer 2015, the District's EPIE division completed the draft responses and evidence collection for its 29 Standards along with updated District functional maps and distributed them for review to the Chancellor's Cabinet, District senior staff, Chief Instructional Officers, Chief Student Services and Vice Presidents of Administration Councils, as well as to the District Academic Senate, and DPAC.

In September 2015, DPAC held a half-day meeting to conduct a complete a thorough review of the District written Standards, accreditation evidence, and the updated functional maps. District senior staff also attended this meeting to clarify any responses and answer any questions. Through DPAC, consensus was reached amongst all nine colleges to approve the District written responses and for all colleges to use the District written responses and evidence. In November 2015, the IESS committee conducted meetings at all nine colleges where they received presentations on each college's self evaluation report and subsequently approved them. The Board of Trustees approved all nine colleges' self evaluation reports in December 2015.

## **Improvement efforts as a result of self evaluation**

**DPAC:** Through the self evaluation process the DPAC identified areas in need of improvement and worked to enhance processes related to planning and institutional effectiveness. In the past two years, the District has worked on the revisions to the planning process, the governance structures and functional maps and enhancing consistency in effectiveness reporting. A governance task force was initiated by DPAC consisting of members from DPAC, the District Budget Committee (DBC) and Technology Planning and Policy Committee (TPPC) to conduct an in-depth review of committee charters, membership, update of the DSP, and planning linkages between the district-level governance committees. In January 2014, this task force centered its focus on the revision of the District's Governance and Planning Handbook and the District Strategic Plan. By the end of the fall 2015 semester, DPAC approved the functional maps detailing District-college responsibilities. The Board's Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Committee (IESS) also received presentations on the functional maps and updates to the District Governance and Planning Handbook.

**ESC:** During this time, the EPIE division was instrumental for gathering and finalizing the ESC divisions' Program Review reports during this same period. The ESC is now in its third cycle of Program Review with annual evaluations occurring to improve the process and further integrate District planning with District program review. This has assisted in building a structured process for identifying ESC unit outcomes and determining ways in which the units can more effectively serve the colleges.

**BOT:** Additional work focused on increasing the involvement of the Board of Trustees (BOT) in accreditation and institutional effectiveness efforts. The Board's IESS committee established accreditation as a standing agenda item in October 2014 so its members could be updated on the colleges' and District's progress on accreditation. In August 2015, DPAC set its work plan for the 2015-16 year and EPIE finalized the calendar for the Board's IESS committee to conduct its meetings at the college campuses for the review of each college's 2016 self evaluation plans. The IESS committee also conducted accreditation-related site visits to three colleges and approved four colleges' updated Strategic Plans during this time frame. The District's Institutional Effectiveness team provided colleges with a student achievement data template to use in their self evaluation report so they would provide a consistent set of data. Additional templates are provided annually to assist colleges in presenting annual institutional effectiveness reports to the Board's IESS committee.

As a result of this reflective district-wide process, several themes have emerged for continued improvement efforts: 1) greater and improved communication on a district wide basis, 2) a better understanding of the delineation of roles and responsibilities between college and District functional areas, and 3) development of a clear statement on the District level consultation process with unions, the District Academic Senate, and operational Councils and Committees.

One way to address this concern is to provide additional professional development for all levels of employees that includes discussion on the delineation of roles. In 2014, the District initiated a year-long training program for supervisors in an effort to provide them with the management tools they needed to be effective supervisors and to inform them of the support services available through the ESC. In Fall 2015, LACCD launched the Deans' Academy, a professional development program focused on ensuring all deans have the same level or orientation to District procedures and operations. In Spring 2016, over 60 of the District's deans attended a day-long activity in which members of the Chancellor's Senior Staff presented the core functions of their respective areas of responsibility and allowed for interactive questions. Most recently, the Chancellor has invited applications for participation in the Presidents' Academy to provide a similar process and grounding for those at higher levels of administration.

Additional efforts are also underway with the recruitment and selection process coming to conclusion to fill the position of Director of Communications and External Relations, a district level position which has been vacant for eight years. Also, through the consultation processes, the District is re-evaluating its operational and shared governance structures with a focus on improving the process to produce a more transparent, consistent and timely process. Lastly, the District is furthering the work commenced by DPAC by engaging in a district wide dialogue/validation of the Governance Handbook and Functional Map as well as the district's planning process. We believe these efforts will improve communications and decision-making and add clarity on the delineation of roles and responsibilities.

### **Use of District Responses**

The process for approving the District responses to elements of Standard III.B, III.D, IV.C and IV.D represents a district-wide collaborative effort. The approval of the response by the District Planning and Accreditation Committee indicates an acknowledgement that the information and evidence in the responses is an accurate reflection of District policies, procedures and processes. Furthermore, the approval indicates that responses demonstrate the manner in which the associated standards are met District-wide. While all colleges concur with the information provided, each college was granted the autonomy to modify the response to reflect the operations at the college level. Some colleges chose to amend the response to match the style of the self-evaluation or focus more exclusively on the manner in which the standard is met through college processes and operations. These responses do not diverge from the District response, but rather supplement the response with those actions occurring at the college level inclusive of District policy and procedure.

A prime example of this process is Los Angeles Valley College. Over the past two years, the college has made extensive efforts to balance the college budget and support ongoing enrollment growth. As such, the college details the college actions that have been implemented to assure financial integrity and internal control (Standard III.D.5). Los Angeles Valley College indicates that "the College employs a variety of control and review mechanisms to ensure responsible use of financial resources, following Board Rules and Admin Regulations." The response then further details the use of monthly reporting occurring through the college

Vice President of Administrative Services and the college Budget Committee. This response concurs with the District response and demonstrates the manner in which college-specific policies are superimposed on the District rules and regulations.

### **Van de Kamp Innovation Center**

With the support of the community, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) acquired the Van De Kamp Bakery in the vicinities of Atwater Village and Glassell Park. Falling within the service area of Los Angeles City College, the property was included in that college's initial facilities master plan as the Northeast Campus.

Through several bond measures, LACCD dedicated \$92 million for new construction as well as renovation of the original Van de Kamp Bakery. Committed to saving the Dutch Renaissance Revival historic façade of the bakery, Los Angeles City College's original facilities master plan included the adaptive reuse of 30,000 square feet of the original bakery and added three buildings arranged around a central courtyard. Actual construction included:

- New Education Building
- A Central Plant
- Old Bakery Building (renovation)

The latter included the restoration and adaptive reuse of the former bakery building, which in 1992 had been declared a Los Angeles Historical Cultural monument. Construction maintained the structure's original three outer walls and its interior adhered to the building's historic industrial design.

As construction was nearing completion, Los Angeles City College, like other colleges across the state, was in the midst of a severe budget crisis and was facing more than a million dollar deficit. Through its governance structure, the college appealed to then LACCD Chancellor Mark Drummond for relief of its obligation to initiate a comprehensive instructional program at the Northeast Campus. With concurrence from the Board of Trustees, administrative oversight of the Northeast Campus was transferred to the District.

Today, the Vice Chancellor for Economic and Workforce Development maintains oversight for academic and training programs offered at the Center. The Deputy Chancellor maintains operational oversight of the facilities, grounds and lease agreements.

In an effort to fulfill the District's commitment to the community in the vicinity of the historic bakery, administrators developed agreements with the City of Los Angeles, the Catholic Archdiocese and a non-profit charter school to initiate programs at the campus and with permission from family descendants, renamed it the LACCD Van de Kamp Innovation Center. Programs housed at the Center at the time of its opening included: the Worker Education & Resource Center, the Archdiocesan Youth Employment Services and a high school operated by the Alliance Charter Schools.

Continuing decreasing funding from the State led to the decline in the ability to offer services on the part of both the Worker Education & Resource Center and the Archdiocese Youth Employment Services. However, Los Angeles City College continues to maintain a grant-funded entrepreneurship training program (10,000 Small Businesses) at the Center and the District's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (EWD) continues to offer training programs there as well.

The EWD Office schedules district wide services, such as workshops on Career and Technical Education and industry focused meetings; serves as a hub for sharing information on new resource development initiatives; and convenes short-term training sessions specific to workforce sectors. Additionally, Los Angeles City College has offered dual enrollment credit classes for students of the Alliance Leichtman-Levine Family Foundation Environmental Science High School. The Old Bakery Building has also housed community services classes as part of the Los Angeles City College offerings to the local communities.

The VdK Innovation Center today is a self-supporting educational and community focused site. Operations are maintained through lease agreements with the Alliance Charter Schools (Leichtman-Levine Family Foundation Environmental Science High School) and commercial properties (Denny's and El Pollo Loco). A third property has recently been vacated and plans to lease it to a new firm are underway.