

Peer Review Team Report  
on  
The Office of the Superintendent/President  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the first time that The Office of the Superintendent/President (The Office) has participated in Program Review. The Peer Review Team would like to applaud its employees for engaging in this process and showing a commitment to improvement through self analysis and peer review. Given the inaugural effort of this self review, with no model to work from, the Peer Review Team was impressed with the quality, thoughtfulness and honesty of its process. We hope that this clear commitment to leadership through example by the Superintendent/President's Office will make a positive impression on the rest of the Antelope Valley College community.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The Office has worked to keep up with significant growth within the district including growth in student population, faculty, and physical construction, while working with a reduction in the number of administrators. The office has assumed responsibility for management of a construction bond, review and revision of district policies and procedures, and support for the Accreditation Steering Committee. The advent of the Mutual Agreement Council in 2005 added additional responsibilities and, in that same year, some responsibilities traditionally handled by the Vice Presidents' offices were transferred to the Superintendent/President's Office including adjunct evaluations, trip request processing, scheduling and facilitation of meetings, and management of the independent study and study abroad programs. In addition, a key responsibility of The Office is working with the Board of Trustees. It is the only department on campus to work directly with them, which includes managing the Board of Trustees' budget in addition to its own. The Office also has a responsibility to provide leadership, management, and oversight for the college in addition to creating a collaborative environment for students, faculty, administrators, staff and the Board of Trustees. Outcomes for The Office have been developed which focus on creating a culture of encouragement, managing financial resources, establishing and maintaining community partnerships, and providing leadership in the provision of high-quality education, that attracts and supports a diverse student population.

The Office of the Superintendent/President has three full-time employees: Dr. Jackie L. Fisher, Sr. serves as the Superintendent/President, a position that he has held since October, 2003; Paula Norsell has served as the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/President since July, 2002; and Patricia Harris has served as the Senior Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent/President since June, 2005.

## **SELF EVALUATION**

The Office has created systems to encourage internal and external communication with an "open door" philosophy. These include regularly scheduled meetings with leaders of campus constituent groups, "Dialogue with the President" sessions that are open to all members of the campus even allowing faculty to receive Professional Development credit for attending, and informational sessions at the annual Welcome Back meeting.

PowerPoint files of these presentations are made available through myAVC. The Superintendent/President serves on a variety of boards and committees throughout the Antelope Valley community.

In 2004, The Office changed policy to better communicate its annual goals and accomplishments from a system that only shared them with the Board of Trustees to one that shares them with the campus. The new system also elicits feedback from the campus in developing future goals. In 2006, the annual goals were aligned with the mission, institutional learning outcomes, and strategic goals of the college and information about the goals and accomplishments are now provided through myAVC.

In the fall of 2008, The Office administered the AVC Office of the President Program Review Survey which collected over 400 responses from students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the community. Over 50% of respondents indicated an overall satisfaction with The Office selecting “good” or “very good” when asked. However, nearly a quarter of the respondents selected “don’t know” or “not applicable” indicating a lack of awareness about the performance of The Office. For most of the questions of the survey, the category of answer selected most was “unknown” or “don’t know”. For questions specific to The Office’s ability to carry out campus goals, over one-third of the respondents were unable to provide an assessment of success or failure. For these questions, however, the lowest selected categories were those indicating a lack of satisfaction. The survey shows that, while many respondents may not be fully aware of the work of The Office of the Superintendent/President, those that are report being satisfied to very satisfied with its performance. The Office’s program review self-study document does focus on the need to improve its communication and the Superintendent/President discussed the issue in two interviews. This indicates that the Superintendent/President and his staff are very aware of the problem and intend to address it.

Alternatively, some of the campus goals questions showed that respondents are both aware of The Office’s work and feel that it has performed well. For these questions the most selected category was “100%”, which indicates that the respondent felt that The Office has satisfied that goal 100%. For questions related to Lancaster and Palmdale enrollment growth, implementation of the bond program, review of the construction communication plan, and continued development of programs, courses, and services to meet the changing needs of the internal and external community, the most selected response was one-hundred percent.

## **PLANNING**

The Office underwent a complete review of its policies and procedures between 2004 and 2006 partly in response to a recommendation from the 2004 Accreditation visit. In addition, annual campus goals are now developed to be in line with the Educational Master Plan.

The Superintendent/President has announced his intent to retire in 2012. This could necessitate a large-scale recruitment process to identify a replacement which could be complicated if current budget conditions remain.

The college-wide organizational structure was changed to create career-ladder opportunities for classified and confidential employees, help provide leadership opportunities for faculty, stimulate instructional innovation, and reduce the number of administrative positions to reduce the college budget. These changes have taken place since the completion of the self study, although budget restrictions have limited their implementation.

## **SUMMARIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Office has the following operational outcomes and accomplishments:

*Outcome: Provide leadership that creates a culture that encourages administrators, faculty, staff, and students to participate in data driven decision-making processes.*

Board policy was revised to place an emphasis on using data to drive district planning and decision making.

*Outcome: Provide leadership that ensures that the district plans and manages its short- and long-term financial resources prudently and effectively in a manner that supports student learning.*

New procedures require that budget decisions work to accomplish the mission and goals of the district and that program review and evaluation of student learning and operational outcomes play a primary role in the allocation of resources.

*Outcome: Establish and maintain partnerships with local business, educational institutions, and government agencies that provide pathways to benefit students and strengthen the economic, social, and cultural life of the Antelope Valley community.*

The Office works with all such agencies as indicated earlier in this document.

*Outcome: Provide leadership in the delivery of high quality educational programs and services, including planning, development, and program review, and staffing.*

A complete blueprint for planning and ensuring that program review reports are regularly prepared and that data-driven analysis is incorporated was created after the 2004 Accreditation team visit.

*Outcome: Provide leadership that attracts and supports a diverse student population and workforce.*

Strategies to recruit and retain students and employees of varied backgrounds have been developed.

## **PEER REVIEW TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Peer Review Team reviewed the self-study report produced by The Office of the Superintendent/President and conducted interviews with all departmental staff. Data from the interviews were consistent with the content of the report and also confirmed that all department staff actively participated in the report's creation. From this review, the Peer-review Team has the following recommendations:

**Recommendation #1:** The Office should, for future review, collect and analyze qualitative data to introduce more detail and nuance into their performance measurement.

**Recommendation #2:** The Office should continue efforts to improve its communication with the AVC campus as well as external constituencies.

**Recommendation #3:** The Office should conduct a more meaningful analysis of its survey data and provide specificity in plans of action based on that analysis.

**Recommendation #4:** The Office should re-write its operational outcomes to increase their measurability and the global nature of their scope to better encompass the AVC campus and the greater AV community.

**Recommendation #5:** Future program review self-study reports should include more information about the Superintendent/President's partnerships with external agencies and organizations.