

**Bakersfield College  
Compiled FoE Dimension Reports**

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**Bakersfield College**

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**PHILOSOPHY DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions intentionally cultivate learning environments for new students that emerge from a philosophy of two-year colleges as gateways to higher education. The philosophy is explicit and easily understood. It is consistent with the institutional mission, reflects a consensus of internal and external constituencies, and is widely disseminated. The philosophy is also the basis for organizational policies, practices, structures, leadership, and resource allocation to support the new student experience.

**Committee Chair:**

Jason Stratton, Assist. Professor

**Committee Co-Chair:**

Suzanne Davis, Assist. Professor

**Committee Members:**

Rodolfo Correa, SGA

Maria Elizondo, EOPS

Diana Kelly, Supportive Services

Ed Knudson, Vice-President

Eddie Nelson, Assessment Center

**Current Situation:**

In the process of attempting to 'grow' FTE's, or at least develop good retention strategies, it appears colleges across the nation are not conceptualizing the plight of the 'first-year' student. Instead, too many of them are approaching the issue of student learning from a purely financial consideration of profit/cost analysis based on bodies present. Part of the problem is a change in the dynamics of college life, whether it is at the two-year or four-year institutions, which strive to meet the needs of our nation for well-educated citizens, employees, leaders, and neighbors. It is no longer constructive to use terms such as 'freshman' or 'sophomore' in much of the college environment. It is, in fact, almost an anachronism. As these concepts have evaporated, so have many schools' concern with the entry-students' individual needs, or the needs of the cohort of entry-students.

The problem we all face is that 'first-year' students DO have different needs from 'fourth-year' students. They are not familiar with how educational institutions function, from an academic point of view, a financial point of view, or a social point of view. Nor do they know how to fulfill the expectations in each of those situations. When educators treat them the same as they do traditional 'juniors', or 'third-year' students, we run the risk of alienating them and losing their contributions to society in the future if they cease to pursue their academic goals.

It is imperative that all educational institutions face this issue and begin to work on means to meet their needs. The logical starting point for this attitudinal shift is by developing and implementing an effective and coherent Philosophy Statement for our institution, in regards to 'first-year' students. This is especially true as a careful review of different departments and programs reveals elements of a philosophy in practice, but no coherent statement in writing to guide the faculty and staff of Bakersfield College.

**Areas of Concern:**

Predicated on the concept that a first-year students' needs ARE important to be concerned with, and not just 'all students', a philosophy of how to work with and meet the needs of this group is vital to possess. Bakersfield College is succeeding in many areas of meeting students' needs but we have a fundamental flaw regarding a written first-year philosophy statement: namely, we do not have one.

Bakersfield College generally does not distinguish between its attitude/philosophy toward 'first-year' students and its attitude/philosophy toward all students. This IS a common development at two-year institutions, but it is an outlook that needs to be evaluated and changed if we are going to succeed in assisting each group to the best of our abilities. Great things were noticed in many areas during this self-study. One of these areas worthy of commendation is the overall student-centered approach evidenced by faculty and staff of ALL levels. This is evident through diverse actions such as initiating assistance on campus [outside the office/classroom] or the professor caring enough to find someone else who can answer a student's question. It is reflected in the laborious actions of the many departments on campus that interact with ALL students [Financial Aid, Admissions, Supportive Students, Etc.] while trying to ensure that students are on a path to succeed.

However, this student-centered approach does not coherently distinguish between a 'first-year' and a 'second-year' student across the campus. There are programs that do make this type of distinction, but they are rare, and there generally is not a 'philosophy' statement associated with it. Examples of these programs are included later in the text. Their targeting of entry students sets them apart, but there does not appear to be a coherent written philosophy of what we are trying to accomplish ultimately for that year of students. Instead, these programs are focused upon the ultimate success of all students that can be improved through this method.

This situation does have two distinct advantages. We are tabula rasa, and thus we can build a written philosophy statement that fits the needs of our 'first-year' students. This situation also demonstrates that we try to treat all students with respect and consideration. We are working to help all students, but we have been so focused on increasing the level of support ALL student receive that we are not differentiating between new students and experienced students.

The biggest area of concern is not in the college's action or attitude toward the 'first-year' students. It is more about how to create and implement a written philosophy statement for this group that reflects our educational philosophy as well as the historical and current needs of our community. Yet this philosophy statement needs to be elastic enough to apply to the needs of our future students as well. Even though this is a very difficult proposition, it is within the realm of the possible. Further, it should be a dynamic philosophy statement that is periodically reevaluated to be reflective of these needs in 15 years. This task is significantly difficult on its own merits, but there is another concern about the Philosophy Statement that is developed. It should be developed in an inclusive fashion, or the result will not be accepted widely. We must involve all fields and all levels of Bakersfield College employees [Administration, Staff, and Faculty] in the development of this statement or it will be an exercise in futility. We should not be Woodrow Wilson and create another League of Nations. A philosophy statement constructed needs to have a significant chance of success, and it was believed that we would best achieve this convincing other faculty, staff and administrators that this is the correct path to take.

**Summary of Evidence:**

We have part of the elements in place to identify first year students for a targeted initiative aimed at improving their college experience. However, at this time these elements are only used for purposes of tracking the academic outcomes of cohorts of 'first-time' students when they enter as a full-time student. For the purposes of a better 'first-year' experience, we should

expand this methodology to include those who begin as a part-time student as well. However, we need to be careful about the administrative tools used to achieve this, as it possesses a host of exclusions, as reflected in the College Catalog, under the 'Student Right to Know' section. There are programs and departments that strive to meet all of the academic needs of these 'first-year' students, but most have not written anything that resembles a philosophy statement. One major exception to this is the pre-collegiate skills program at Bakersfield College, which has their Philosophy Statement printed under the Pre-collegiate Courses section of the College Catalog, on page 18 [2005-6 catalog]. However, this is a developmental philosophy that is aimed at development of skill sets, instead of a basic 'first-year' student philosophy. The focus of this philosophy statement is to be sure students have the academic skills to succeed in the college environment. This statement doesn't relate to the more open 'units based' definition of 'first-year' students, nor does it refer to the difficulties faced by many other groups in adjusting back to the academic environment. It is solely based on classroom learning strategies.

Academic Development courses are another example of this effort to help new students, but there is not an explicitly written 'first-year' student philosophy statement associated with the requirement. These courses are similar to those mentioned above and some are required for graduation, but there is no requirement to take them within the first year of attendance at Bakersfield College. It is just strongly recommended.

Many documents that Bakersfield College produces, on-line in the active folders or in print, have 'learning outcomes', as we strive to find a means to quantify success in academic achievements, but little to none of the documents identifies the 'first-year' student, and the same is generally true about any nonacademic development areas, such as efforts to include family into the process. In fact, the 'de-facto' attitude exhibited on the first mention of family is frequently the students' right to privacy. It takes a moment for some to think of the potential social support for these 'first-year' students to be gained by inclusion of their family into the college experience.

Another area of concern is the lack of effective dissemination of ideas and information that can positively affect all students. We have programs that target specific students for academic assistance, for social support, or other purposes, but most do not have a written 'first-year' student philosophy, and many are not widely known outside of the staff and administration offices. Two that come to mind are MESA [Math, Engineering and Science Achievement organization] with only 1% of the New Student Cohort participating [even though it would appear self-evident that many more could benefit from this program] and EOPS. EOPS is better known across campus, but it would behoove the college to find a way to expand funding for this program, as it provides many of the support services our 'first-year' students require if they are to succeed here. There are also clubs on campus that can be utilized to benefit the 'first-year' students [Phi Theta Kappa, the two-year college honor society on campus], but the common theme is campus awareness, especially among professors. Our Mission Statement is a perfect example of the strengths and weaknesses of our institution with regard to 'first-year' students. It begins with a goal 'To provide all [*Italics mine*] students with...'. Our College Strategic Initiatives, Mission Statement, Goals, Vision, and Beliefs [as listed on Page 7 of our 2006-2007 catalog] all are relevant and important to education. However, they are also all phrased in a way that applies to EVERY student, and does not identify any specific needs based on their level of experience with college education. However, some items stand out as indicative of the overall campus educational philosophy that is evident in both the text and in action on campus. Phrases like the belief that 'Students are the primary reason for our existence.', "Everyone deserves respect.", and "Education is life changing for generations." stand out from the college Beliefs section on Page 7. There is too much to list in this section without adding a page to this

report, but there is enough to develop a sense of the general philosophy of the college toward students and education as a whole. The challenge will be to add to this a philosophy of first year students' education.

Without a coherent, written, 'first-year' student Philosophy Statement, the final concern is that we will continue striving to meet all of the needs of all of our students, and fail many of them as they fall through the cracks of our diffused general benevolence.

**Recommended Grade: F**

**Recommended Action Items:**

1. Determine what our Educational Philosophy is across the campus. (High priority) This is a necessary pre-condition to drafting an effective 'first-year' student philosophy statement. We need to come to consensus on what our goals as educators are before we can develop a statement that reflects how we will help first-year students meet those goals. Are we to be a vocational school, with it's focus entirely on a paycheck earned in 2 months, or will we include some element of the value of personal growth and developed empathy and toleration? Or can we address vocational education and academic excellence simultaneously while considering the needs of the first year student.
2. Convene a Philosophy Statement drafting committee and finalize a written draft. (High priority) For this to be effective, we need to have the widest possible participation from the college. We should try to include members of Bakersfield College's Staff, Faculty and Administration in the drafting committee. We need to be sure that our Philosophy Statement reflects the core values in our mission statement as they pertain to 'first-year' students but is NOT simply a reiteration of our college's mission statement. Furthermore, it should be in line with the Educational Philosophy that is developed under the same participation rules as the Philosophy Statement. To make this truly a team project between the two institutions, it would be advisable for this committee to take the finished draft and meet with their counterparts at C.S.U.B. for a city-wide statement of philosophy toward the first-year student.
3. Communicate this Philosophy Statement across the campus effectively as it is implemented. (High priority) Emails are acceptable methods, but it would be better if each department chair was involved in communicating this idea to the members of their department. Institute a series of Flex-Day activities to raise the consciousness of all members of the college as to the benefits of this Philosophy Statement. This can also reach students through having it posting on halls [especially in admissions and financial aid] as well as requesting all faculty to reference it in their syllabus [which will work better if we create it in an inclusive manner]. More human interaction over this idea will increase the success we have as an institution in implementing it (the first year student philosophy).
4. Endeavor to familiarize students with this statement. (High priority) Students do not ask for help when they are not familiar with the availability of such assistance or the purpose of the assistance offered. We need to be sure that 'first year' students are familiar with our philosophy toward them, and that will be a gateway for their future success at Bakersfield College. Having this published in the student handbook would be a start in making them familiarized with it. However it could also be done in such a way that they have to read the statement before they register online. Inclusion in the syllabus would also aid in this endeavor.
5. Revisit this issue at least once every 5 years. (High priority) This dynamic process should continue for the length of Bakersfield College's history. This should NOT be a unique chapter of our college's history. We realize that a yearly review won't necessarily be the most productive in evaluating the success of our Philosophy Statement and the increased awareness of it. It will take time for all faculty, staff, and administrators to 'buy into' the ideas,

and begin to implement shifts in their pedagogies that reflect this acceptance. Thus, periodic monitoring is a must for the success of this program, but less than 3 years may not be enough time to truly see the shift, and more than 5 may allow complacency to breed to the point of systemic entropy, which will compound the difficulty of this undertaking. A 'reasonable' time-frame must be instituted for periodic evaluation if we are serious about the long-term success of this program.

6. Accept that our present grade is NOT an indictment of our institution. (Medium priority) If the standards for our Philosophy Dimension Grade are based on the concept that "The philosophy is explicit and easily understood. [etc.]" we need to face the reality that a lack of a written philosophy corresponds to an implicit philosophy, but not an explicit one. We have diverse elements that relate to our general concern for all students that guides practices, leadership, organizational policies, and other aspects of our education. However, there is NOT a written philosophy for the 'first-year' student. If a student does not turn in a research paper, but tells you some information about it orally, generally that is seen as failure to fulfill the requirements and they earn the grade we have assigned ourselves. This is a STARTING point for all future development. This is not a reflection of our concern [or lack thereof] for the first-year students. It is only a performance indicator to be concerned about if we reach a campus-wide consensus of the value of this idea and we haven't addressed this issue within the next 5 years. We HAVE a very high level of concern for all of our students and this grade is not meant to cast aspersions at any area of the college for their concern for our student body. We are all working hard to make Bakersfield College the type of place our College Mission Statement, Beliefs, Goals and Vision reflect. We just need to refocus some of that concern toward the 'first-year' students special needs.

## **ORGANIZATION DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions provide a comprehensive, coordinated, and flexible approach to the new student experience through effective organizational structures and policies. These structures and policies guide and align all aspects of the new student experience. Through effective partnerships, critical stakeholders such as instructional, administrative, and student services units provide a coherent experience for new students that is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements.

The Committee Co-leaders for the Organization Dimension are Andrea Garrison (Biology Faculty) and Kirk Russell (Library Faculty). Other Committee Members include Linda Cordoba (A&R), Mike Gutierrez (Counseling Faculty), Emily Hurlbert (Academic Development Faculty), and Kristin Rabe (Media Services).

Mission: Foundations Institutions provide a comprehensive, coordinated, and flexible approach to the new student experience through effective organizational structures and policies. These structures and policies guide and align all aspects of the new student experience. Through effective partnerships, critical stakeholders such as instructional, administrative, and student services units provide a coherent experience for new students that is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

The committee's assessment of the current situation at Bakersfield College is that very little is in place, in terms of college organization, that targets and assists new and first-term students. Faculty and staff indicate in survey questions Q022 and Q023 that BC has done less than a moderate job of organizing itself to develop an integrated first college year through support of

routine communications among discrete units/functions and collaborations between academic and student services. In survey question Q024, they indicate that personnel and fiscal resources are only slightly above moderately adequate for entry-level courses, although it has occurred to members of this committee that no definition of the term "entry-level" was given in the survey, and most of the courses at a community college could be considered "entry-level." The individuals surveyed indicated in question Q028 that their voice in decisions about new student issues was only half-way between slight and moderate, and in question Q029 they indicated that their department/unit has a slightly less than moderate voice in decisions about new student issues.

With the exception of personnel and departments devoted to admissions, registration, and counseling, the campus is not organized to differentiate between beginning and continuing students. Lacking this organization, this report will of necessity focus primarily on the pieces that are in place, Admissions & Records and Counseling.

### **First Term Students**

The first interaction most incoming students have with Bakersfield College is the college website. Through the website they are linked to the Counseling Department, which outlines the processes for admitting and registering. The campus website was recently re-designed and now offers an improved entry point for new students.

Additionally, the campus currently hosts an event called RegiFest once or twice per year in which students interested in attending Bakersfield College can come to campus and receive assistance in the admission and registration processes. These events are usually held just one or two weeks prior to the beginning of a semester. RegiFest has proven to be an effective marketing tool and has generated interest and registrations.

Assessment (pre-registration placement) has recently changed from mass assessments in BC's large forum rooms to 35 students at a time on computers in the Assessment Center. The campus hopes to soon begin having high school students do assessment on their individual campuses. The Assessment Center indicates that students can assess anytime a computer is available, and the center can process 100+ students per day. The center is open every day the campus is open. There were 4,496 students assessed between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006. Under the new system, approximately 400 students per week could assess and additional students may assess at high schools. Actual figures should be available once the new system has been operational for a while, perhaps by mid-2007.

Administrators, staff, and faculty make themselves available in hallways and walkways on campus the first few days of each semester to help students with questions and directions. This is not institutionalized and is done on an informal basis.

An informational billboard is broadcast on the Instructional Television Channel for student use providing them with necessary information, phone numbers and important dates. This is broadcast over KETN Monday-Friday mornings, 5:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. and again 5 p.m.-10 p.m. Monday through Thursday evenings.

### **Continuing Students**

The majority of continuing students are not currently monitored for progress towards their degree. They receive counseling when they enter BC and monitor themselves according to their educational plan. It is recommended that new students take an educational planning course to assist in planning for their educational success. According to campus statistics, during the 2005-06 academic year there were 3,753 first time freshmen on campus. There were 1,175 students (of unknown class standing) enrolled in an educational planning course. This

means that at least 2,578 first-time freshmen did not take an educational planning course during their first year of college.

BC counseling faculty and staff members look at and evaluate individual students' progress when they apply for graduation.

It should be noted that EOP&S students are monitored, as they must qualify for financial aid. These students must meet with a counselor every semester as a requirement for EOP&S federal funding.

Finding appropriate resources for campus-based assistance is generally easy if students know what the resources are. They usually learn about this during their first term through orientation and counseling sessions. Information regarding how to access such resources is listed on the educational planning sheet students get at their first counseling appointment and is also available on the BC website.

Students returning after a break in enrollment and students repeating courses receive no special attention, unless they are on academic probation. Teaching faculty could possibly offer special assistance to these students if they knew students were repeating the course, but faculty often aren't aware. Notifying faculty of repeating students on a routine basis would be a violation of FERPA.

Students with a GPA of less than 2.0 do receive special attention. Their records are flagged and they cannot register unless they see a counselor, who reviews with them their probation, how to get off probation, and strategies for success.

### **Partnerships**

The Counseling Department has department liaisons assigned to each instructional department. They serve as a resource for instructional faculty in helping them to learn how to better assist their students in a variety of areas, including educational planning, how to be a good student, financial assistance, career choices, and transfer choices.

The English, Math, and Academic Development departments meet periodically with the campus matriculation coordinator to revalidate placement scores. Also, English Department faculty work in conjunction with the Assessment Center to evaluate students' writing samples as part of English placement.

The Admissions and Records department has a routine, on-going interactive system with faculty to make them aware of enrollment procedures, waitlist procedures, census dates, and timelines for reporting grades and resolving problems associated with reporting grades.

The library works with all campus departments to provide library instruction workshops as well as customized orientations for individual instructors. These workshops and orientations serve both new and continuing students.

A recent meeting with the Organizational Dimension FOE team from California State University Bakersfield resulted in a suggestion that the two campuses collaborate to ensure that the Educational Planning courses taught at both campuses cover the same topics. Further, the CSUB team feels that the BC Ed Planning courses should place greater emphasis on preparation for transfer and success after transfer. Though this suggestion has some merit, counselors at BC feel that what is currently being taught in Ed Planning courses prepares students for transfer and beyond, regardless of the institution they transfer to. They also comment that due to the varied transfer requirements for the many schools that BC students transfer to, it's difficult to teach detailed and specific transfer requirements in the Ed Planning



courses.

### **Financial**

Admissions and Records, Assessment and the Financial Aid Office currently have adequate staffing, although A&R would like a full-time position to assist students at the lobby computers with on-line admission, updates and registration. The current status of these departments could quickly change, with a retirement, termination or employee transfer to another department. There is no guarantee of positions. A decrease in categorical funding from the state could devastate the Financial Aid office.

DSPS is definitely understaffed. Both staff and budget reductions over the last several years have had a lasting impact on DSPS operations. More staff are needed to help with testing for learning disabilities, as well as assessing how to meet the needs of students who have learning and physical disabilities. DSPS also needs more counselors and support staff, including a department assistant, sign language interpreter, and Delano teaching assistant.

The statewide Academic Senate recommends a counselor to student ratio of 1:800. Bakersfield College's current ratio is 1:1533. The college would need a total of 16 counselors, rather than the current 9, to meet the state recommended ratio. This ratio is 1:913 at College of the Canyons, 1:829 at Grossmont College, and 1:967 at San Joaquin Delta College.

According to our Learning disabilities specialist, statewide best practice meetings have discussed doubling the counselor to student ratios recommended for students without disabilities, in order to meet the varied and complex needs of students with disabilities. We are therefore recommending a counselor: student ratio of 1:400 for DSPS students. The two DSPS counselors served 1064 students at both the Main and Delano campuses during 2005/06. This is a ratio of 1:532.

### **AREAS OF CONCERN**

Signage on campus is poor and students cannot find the buildings they need. For many students finding the Counseling Center is difficult.

The enrollment process for first-term students is sometimes not well-communicated and could be made more user-friendly. First time students responding to campus advertising or those who have a last minute desire to take college classes receive little or no actual counseling because counselors are not generally available until classes begin, with perhaps the exception of the Counseling Department Chair who may be present in the center to see students. The redesigned BC website offers an improved entry point for new students over the last version of the website, but the process for admitting and registering can still be confusing as steps aren't clearly outlined. Once a student has completed the admission/update, it is not clear what the next step is. No mention is made of orientation or assessment. Students must go to the Counseling Department webpage -- one click too many -- to see the admission process/steps clearly outlined. This webpage is clearly laid out, but does not have same look and feel of the BC website. For the sake of comparison, the committee used the Taft College website to try to enroll and register and found their process to be much more clear and logical. From the front page of the Taft College website there is an "Apply and Register" link that takes students to a clear, numbered list of steps required for registration. Each numbered step is accompanied by hyperlinks to necessary forms, schedules, calendars, videos, etc.

The RegiFests are a good entry point for first-term students, but don't provide follow-through or enough information to really get students off on the right foot. These students have often made a last minute decision to come to college, and aren't prepared to enter college without a full-fledged counseling appointment. Many of the classes they really need are often closed by the time RegiFest takes place. Without good counseling, they end up in inappropriate classes.

If misplacement in classes results in these students ending up on probation, they will have problems enrolling for their second semester. Students who attend RegiFest or enroll at the last minute without a full counseling appointment may not receive the information on campus resources given students during the standard initial counseling appointment. Anecdotally, many of these students return to make counseling appointments within the first two weeks of school to clarify the registration/enrollment process as it wasn't clearly presented at RegiFest.

There are 35 on-line assessment stations available in the new Assessment Center. Students hoping to do walk-in assessment may find there are no stations available and may have to wait 1-1/2 hours or more to take the tests. This has the potential to result in unhappy students or students who won't return. Under the new assessment system, capacity may become an issue. Most high school seniors wait until February or March to do assessment, so during the spring crunch time, 35 assessment stations may not be adequate. The college needs to evaluate the new High School assessment process to determine if the new process is adequate.

Continuing students are not always aware of early registration dates or the fact that they are required to update their personal information in the district Banner system via the BC website to be eligible for early registration.

Though the college receives funding for all students who matriculate, not all students do so. The matriculation process involves assessment, counseling, registration and educational planning. The college could collect more revenue if more students were encouraged to matriculate.

As mentioned, BC doesn't have sufficient counseling faculty to offer enough sections of the Educational Planning class to meet the needs of incoming students, nor does the college have adequate staff to meet the needs of DSPS students.

### **SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE**

The committee extracted and reviewed data from the student survey from questions specific to the Organization dimension. These questions (Q029-Q034) dealt with student awareness of the organization of the college. Would a student know where to go if they had questions regarding administration, academic rules, college-sponsored organizations, coursework, and non-academic matters? The results showed that students feel generally confident about where to get help regarding administrative matters, academic rules, and coursework. They also have high confidence in the answers to questions they receive from staff and faculty. They aren't as confident in knowing where to get help regarding non-academic matters or how to be involved in college-sponsored organizations.

The most telling result of this section of the survey was that there was very little difference in responses between first semester students and students in semesters 2 through 4. This led the committee to believe that in a 2-year college setting equal attention should be given to both first semester and continuing students. The amount of time any community college student has to gain college experience is relatively short in comparison to students at 4-year institutions.

Information on staffing needs came from the counseling department program review and supportive services directors and faculty.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS**

Campus signage should be improved, and all maps should be easy to read. Maps should all be oriented from the directional perspective of the viewer, with "north" clearly indicated.

The BC Counseling Dept website should retain its easy-to-use format, but its look and feel

should be modified for improved integration to the main BC website. Additionally, there should be a separate page on the main BC website for new students which clearly walks them through the enrollment and registration process (as it is on the Counseling Department website).

All efforts should be made to ensure that RegiFest participants and other first-time BC students receive a full counseling appointment. This might be better facilitated by holding Regifest earlier in the semester, when counselors are not as busy serving current students in preparation for early registration.

Staff and faculty availability in hallways and walkways to offer assistance to students during the first few days of each semester should be institutionalized.

Require an educational planning course for every student (not just AA/AS candidates) during their first semester. Since this is the last step in the matriculation process, this would have the benefit of increasing student success as well as increasing matriculation funding to BC student services. To ensure that enough sections are available to accommodate this need, we must increase educational planning development courses by 36 sections (this information is based on Counseling Department numbers of 2,561 first-time high school seniors in 2005/06. At 35 students per section, there is a need for 73 educational planning sections. This represents a necessary increase of 36 sections).

Increase the number of counseling faculty and/or add days to their contracts to accommodate needs for counseling and educational planning. The ratio of counselors to students should approach the 1:800 recommended by the state Academic Senate. This requires replacing future retirees and hiring 7 additional full-time counselors.

Faculty/administrators should routinely remind students of early registration dates and requirements for early registration. This could be accomplished by educating faculty/administrators on early registration dates and the advantages to students of early registration. A Staff Development workshop should be presented on what's required to get priority registration and how to register for classes. This should include a training module on the BC website that faculty can use to walk through the process without worrying that they will actually sign themselves up for a class.

Both instructional departments and counseling departments should emphasize the importance of communication between their assigned counseling liaisons and department faculty. The Counseling Department will initiate this contact.

The Media Services Department is in the process of updating the Counseling Orientation Videotape and will have it available online to all incoming students by Fall 2007.

**Recommended Grade: C-**

## **LEARNING DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions deliver curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that engage new students in order to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the institutional mission, students' academic and career goals, and workplace expectations. Both in and out of the classroom, these learning experiences promote critical thinking, ethical decision making, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

**Committee Leader:**

Sue Granger-Dickson, Counseling Faculty

**Committee Members:**

Helen Acosta, Communication Faculty

Alan Crane, SGA

Chris Doyen, English Faculty

Maria Elizondo, EOPS

Sonia Jeffrey, Outreach

Marci Lingo, Librarian Faculty

Brenda Nyagwachi, Counseling Faculty

Kate Pluta, English Faculty

Klint Rigby, Industrial Technology Faculty

Sandy Sierra, Counseling Faculty

Ann Tatum, English Faculty

Kimberly Van Horne, Academic Development Faculty

Richard Wise, Physical Sciences Faculty

**Current Situation:**

PI 3.1:

Bakersfield College has a broad mission to support student success by providing quality instruction and services to the diverse student populations in our community as stated in the catalog and other college literature. While our mission statement, "Bakersfield College provides the quality instruction and services our diverse community needs in order to achieve personal, academic and occupational success", is under continual review and posted prominently all over campus it has little or no impact on the day to day activities of faculty and students. Students come to Bakersfield College for a variety of reasons, but the general trend tends to be that they are going through a major life transition. We need to provide more active and engaging opportunities to help students clarify why they are choosing to attend BC.

The college focuses its goals and initiatives on providing students with competencies necessary for career development and to provide effective learning and earning pathways. Overarching general education outcomes are currently being worked on in the general education Committee but have not yet been presented for approval at the Academic Senate. Faculty have developed Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at the course level, and work is underway to develop SLOs at the program level but there is a disconnect between what is going on in the actual classroom and what is reported on the program level. An audit of campus-wide SLOs is currently being conducted by our interim assessment coordinator and the results will be available May 15. One strategic initiative of the college is to improve student access, retention and success but we do not state specifically how that will be accomplished nor do we communicate our methods of meeting this goal directly to the students. We have not created a set of student learning outcomes which specifically address the retention and success of first year students.

PI 3.2:

BC's faculty evaluation process requires faculty to document their teaching philosophies, student learning outcomes and reflect on the methods the individual faculty members use to achieve the outcomes. Faculty have been engaged in dialog about teaching and assessment. In 2003 the faculty evaluation process was completely overhauled by faculty and administration in conjunction with the senate and the union with specified methods of recommending faculty leaders as "master teachers" in order to create a pipeline for dissemination of information regarding innovation and success. However, the administration has chosen not to utilize that

portion of the evaluation process. Thus, the dissemination of information on innovation and classroom success has hit a bottleneck. To date, while there are tools available within the faculty evaluation process to do so, the institution does not yet document or evaluate the effectiveness of instructional methods. Departmental units plans focus on program outcomes only.

However, our new program review channels have resulted in a more directive process that may lead to greater dissemination of innovations. An example of this occurred in the pilot for the process two years ago. The Communication Department participated in the pilot and, as part of their 6-year plan included, in the fourth year, the development of a rubric for assessing presentations across the curriculum. The Institutional Effectiveness committee, which is now in charge of program review, directed the department to expedite this goal for the good of the college. The department attempted to accomplish this goal on their own but, after the first year realized that they needed team members from multiple disciplines. This year they piloted a rubric in classrooms with faculty from nearly every discipline on campus. Preliminary survey and focus group results are both positive and directive. This group will continue its work this summer but needs funding for the development of a video for use across the curriculum. The short video for use in the classroom will explain what a scoring rubric is, why we use rubrics so frequently as an assessment instrument at Bakersfield College and how the presentation rubric works. The data collected as a result of this project will be included in the evidence library when it is complete.

PI 3.3:

We now have Student Learning Outcomes for courses across the curriculum. We are in the process of creating Program Level outcomes and we are currently building methods of evaluating student learning outcomes campus-wide. The interim assessment coordinator's campus wide SLO audit will be available May 15. Later in this report we will recommend the development of first-year Student Learning Outcomes.

PI 3.5:

BC does not have an honors program which is organized with a prescribed set of honors classes. Our President's Scholars Program welcomes and rewards students with outstanding high school records with priority registration and a small monetary stipend, and our Re-entry President's Scholars Program rewards outstanding re-entry students, but those students do not take a prescribed set of "honors" classes. Students take classes based on their majors and the advice they are given.

Due to a shortage of staff in counseling, many first year students, whether they are honors students, recently graduated high school seniors or older students depend on a combination of reading the catalog, advice from other students, and other "hit-or-miss" methods to enroll in their classes. And those who see counselors or advisors often ignore recommendations, either because the classes are full or they choose not to take the courses recommended based on their placement scores in math, reading and English. Possible solutions to these problems could be the development of peer advising and faculty advising programs as well as clearer distinctions between the roles of counseling faculty and paraprofessional advisors.

There is a profound need for better communication channels between counseling and placement and as the current dean of Learning Support Services oversees these two areas this may be accomplished. Students need to understand the necessity of taking courses linked to their levels in reading, writing and math to better ensure their eventual success in college level courses. Better communication channels with high school counselors and a more rigorous new student orientation explaining the differences between high school and college level work are

places to start. Many students choose not take assessment/placement exams, other students register right before the semester begins when there is no assessment available at that time, and others simply ignore their placement as they believe they are ready for college-level work. Because we do not have prerequisites for many Gen Ed courses, students are taking courses for which they have inadequate academic preparation. While there is a process available statewide to institute pre-requisites the methods are not widely discussed or encouraged as any change will effect student enrollments. This is a double-bind that is not peculiar to our institution. It is a difficulty that has been widely documented as problematic for most community colleges nationwide.

According to student feedback it is helpful to have standards for math and English because when they are placed in a level according to their placement scores that feel they have the skills and abilities to do well and succeed. Academic Development faculty have been conducting 2 studies this year on the methods of placement and while their data is not yet ready for publication (it will be completed as part of their CLIP report), a preliminary report of their findings connected to MATH 50 placements indicated profound problems with placement through multiple measures. These faculty would like to continue their work next year. We will add their data to our evidence library when it becomes available.

Currently, the orientation for entering students is a bare minimum kind of affair. Most students choose the online version, and while they must pass a test to be considered "oriented," it does not bring them into the campus community in any way, nor is it tailored to meet their specific needs, i.e. are they in the auto mechanics program or are they transferring to a University of California campus. We have 11 new student face-to-face orientations that last about an hour and a half. Nine more sessions were recently added, making the total of 20 face to face orientations taught by a paraprofessional advisor for the academic year. This one-stop meets all needs approach clearly isn't effective in welcoming, nurturing, or informing our new students in a relevant manner.

Currently, the college offers a few sections of StDv B3: Career Development and St Dev B6: Study Skills, but these are not heavily enrolled and do not always provide the broad orientation to college life that we envision. Approximately 150 students per semester enroll in these courses. We have not yet assessed the outcomes developed for these courses.

PI 3.6:

The following areas on campus document learning experiences that take place outside of the traditional classroom: Library workshops, Plato lab, math lab, tutoring center, and work experience. The library has tracked student enrollment of their research workshops for the past six years and can be considered an exemplary program (see evidence library). However, there is a lack of college-wide coordination in these efforts.

PI 3.4:

We don't address the causes of student drops. Faculty are provided with a handout at the beginning of each semester that provides methods to decrease drop-outs. We need to develop a best practices tool and/or staff development workshop that would complement and support the handout on tips to promote retention. Additionally, we need to assess why students drop. A short automated survey added as part of the on-line drop process would accomplish this goal.

### **Opportunities and Challenges:**

PI 3.1:

This committee envisions a "this is what you need to succeed in college" orientation guide and

course. An effective college orientation for new students would help establish an academic environment and communicate to students the tools, skills and attitudes they will need to be successful. If this orientation is then followed up by effective academic advising by counseling faculty, faculty advisors and/or trained student mentors new students would have more information and help on what they need to succeed. We would like to see this course be aligned with students' majors, if possible, and we hope to involve second-year students and faculty members from the major area in at least some of the sessions. These might be intensive courses offered before a semester begin, so they wouldn't conflict with other courses. Some small, close-knit departments and programs accomplish this already--music and engineering come to mind. We need to provide the same kind of atmosphere for all of our students.

We also believe students might profit from a realistic skills survey as a new component in the placement process as a way of getting student "buy-in." There are already instruments such as the LASSI that could be used for these purposes. To be accurate, students must gain some understanding of what college work is like. Clearly, BC suffers the stigma of being the "high school on the hill," so many first-year students need to be alerted to the significant differences between high school and college work.

Additionally, as the result of the assessment/placement process, students should have an individualized "prescription form" document that they can take away from a counseling session--so they understand the process of becoming prepared for college-level work.

It is especially important to establish and enforce pre-requisites so that students aren't destined to fail by enrolling in classes for which they are unprepared. In lieu of establishing prescribed prerequisites, an in person new student orientation could emphasize the importance of advisory prerequisites in choosing first semester courses.

Develop effective and easy-to-understand handouts for all majors and transfer courses of study that specifically list and detail the appropriate course plans. It is particularly important to provide information for different skill levels, so students can understand the pathways to college-level work. These documents would reflect institutional consensus on "pathways" for the first 30 units of study.

Our under prepared new students need to have more options other than Academic Development courses as many want to be enrolled in 12 units as full-time students. A new student orientation and introduction to college course would give these under prepared students more support and understanding of college; and, second, it would give them access to legitimate units as a means of qualifying for financial aid or to be considered a full-time student without enrolling in courses in which they are doomed to fail.

A similar student development course should be created for late-enrolling students who have not gone through the assessment process, so they get on-track early. Completing assessment would be a requirement of the course. Again, these courses should be offered in "off" hours, so they don't conflict with other classes that still may be open when they enroll.

All of these courses should be offered multiple times during the semester--early start, late start, etc.

These courses should also address--along with other courses--an Information Literacy requirement. Many students lack these essential skills; the library currently works with Academic Development classes and some English B1A and Communication B1 faculty to provide

information literacy skills, but the coverage is hit-or-miss. A consistent and broadly based information literacy program, coordinated with the librarians should reach all first-year students. Inclusion of information literacy skills, through library instruction and inclusion of research requirements, would be most logical in History B17A--History of the United States--and Communication B1--Public Speaking.

This year a group of our faculty met with academic advisors from Bakersfield Adult School and developed a tool for referring students between institutions. Additionally, we are now in discussions about providing adult school courses on our campus in the afternoons and evenings. Adult schools courses begin weekly and meet the needs of students with lower level skills than we can accommodate. The faculty involved in this work would like to continue their work next year.

Student leaders in a focus group highly recommended that they need access to more open labs. Perhaps, under-loaded faculty could be assigned; however this service is achieved, students need access to faculty who can address varying learning styles. Also, proofreading services currently fall to one faculty member--but students clearly need more help in this area. With a fairly high percentage of classes being taught by adjunct faculty who are not paid for office hours, it's imperative to provide expert help for students in core classes, such as English, Math and Communication. These learning labs should be the center of the campus--in a student union like atmosphere.

Students need more support in order to succeed, and that help needs to be implemented on an institutional basis rather than depending on the goodwill of already-busy faculty.

This year faculty in the Communication Department conducted research into developing a student lab, initially for use by Public Speaking students, and found that the lab would generate substantial new income for the college while providing high-quality opportunities for students proven to increase student retention and success across the curriculum. The best practices model is in operation at Ventura Community College. The lab is funded through the "plus unit" system. VCC has documented their success in building a lab that students use to prepare for all of their presentations across the curriculum. Faculty currently involved in these efforts on our campus now need funding to pilot the lab. They would like to do so in the summer when staffing needs are substantially smaller. The costs are included in our evidence library and faculty have requested more documentation from VCC to include as well.

PI 3.2:

We recommend that faculty engaged in teaching common first-year courses (within the top five) engage in a dialog and training regarding effective teaching methods. They should meet with paid faculty experts to build methodologies to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching methods used. This dialog and work will be the first steps in building first year student learning outcomes. We need to develop specific first year student learning outcomes and effectively communicate these expectations to new students. Those who are under prepared at entrance to college may take longer than a year to reach these competencies.

PI 3.3:

Monetary incentives should be provided for departments in which the majority of the faculty evaluate and document the effectiveness of SLOs for the top 5 course/s they teach. Adjuncts should be paid to be part of the process. Faculty experts should be paid to facilitate the meetings.



PI 3.5:

We need to develop specific pathways to help students plan their personal, academic and career development needs in specific areas to promote success in college level courses.

Students feel we need to have a pathway for students to challenge their assessment scores if they feel they have been placed too low in math or English.

We need to develop a more effective means of communicating multiple measures for assessment for all entering students.

We need to provide more counseling services in the weeks before the semester begins and the first week of the semester. More counseling/advising appointment slots are needed in the evenings and afternoons as well. Counselors need to develop a more caring and helpful attitude towards the students they counsel as recent surveys indicate they often are unhelpful, rude or rushed when working with students. More training of counselors, faculty advisors, advisors and student mentors is needed to ensure that students are provided with correct and consistent information on degrees, transfer and career information. Achieving these goals entails more training, hiring more counselors and advisors, and improving the morale of a department that has suffered through a revolving door of administrators and years of not having replacements hired.

PI 3.6:

There could be student focus groups about out of classroom learning experiences. There could be formal evaluations after activities and lectures. Paper trails could be available and documented to determine who is attending the out-of-class learning activities offered on our campus.

We need to systematize and prioritize documentation of out-of-class experiences. For example, we could use the student ID cards to track attendance. Add a swiper at every event, in every open lab, for every workshop and then we can build a database. Already some of these experiences are recorded on the students' academic transcript. For example, when students attend library workshops, their completion of these one-hour sessions is noted on their transcripts. The process, however, is cumbersome, requiring students to fill out an enrollment transaction form; then the Records Office must process each form individually. We might even, as some schools do, create a "co-curricular transcript" that documents all of a student's out-of-class learning experiences.

PI 3.4:

When students drop the course on-line, a SHORT multiple choice questionnaire should be included as a step in the automated process. This would allow us, as an institution, to assess reasons for drops and withdrawals. Our institutional researchers would need to shepard this process and build ethical guidelines for access to this information.

**Recommended Grade: C**

**Recommended Action Items:**

1. Build first year Student Learning Outcomes (High priority) Need common first year SLOs to build pathways within the first 30 units. Pathways for success connected to priority enrollment in and after the first 30 units. Last minute first semester students should be required to include an Academic Development course that includes Assessment Testing as part of the course.

2. Increase open labs (High priority) We need open labs especially in English and mathematics to provide students with greater support outside of classes. Our Math Lab is highly utilized, the faculty are overburdened--the hybrid on-line math courses have priority--we don't have the staff to serve the students in the face-to-face courses in the open lab environment. Additionally, we need to support the development of a Communication lab as the best practices model at Ventura Community College has been proven to increase student success across the curriculum.
3. Improve Student Placement process (High priority) Implement into the new student orientation the importance of Placement tests and results. Emphasize the gap between high school and college and the importance to student success of having the foundational skills in math, writing, reading, researching and study skills necessary to succeed in college. Develop placement study guides, encourage Instructors to do spot reassessments in the first week of classes (as the ESL faculty do). Require last minute first semester students to include a Student or Academic Development course that includes Assessment Testing as part of the course. Additionally, we need to support the work of Academic Development faculty who have already begun to assess needed changes in the student placement process.
4. Create teaching methods dialog and assessment (High priority) Recommend that faculty engaged in teaching common courses (within the top five) dialog on teaching methods and meet with paid faculty experts to build methodologies to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching methods used.
5. Evaluate SLO effectiveness (High priority) Monetary incentives should be provided for departments in which the majority of the faculty evaluate and document the effectiveness of SLOs for the top 5 course/s they teach. Adjuncts should be paid to be part of the process. Faculty experts should be paid to facilitate the meetings.
6. Create on-line Student Drop questionnaire (High priority) When students drop the course on-line they should be required to answer a SHORT multiple choice questionnaire that allows us to collect the reasons for student Drops and Withdrawals.
7. Counseling Availability (High priority) Counselors need more hours in the summer, particularly the month before the fall semester begins. We need well-trained adjunct counseling faculty at peak enrollment times. More evening, afternoon and Saturday slots are necessary to assure that students receive the advising services they need for proper placement.
8. Create Greater Connection with area High Schools and Bakersfield Adult School (High priority) We need to create a stronger communication pipeline with the HS counselors, math and English faculty to foster a better understanding and the importance of our Placement testing and the role it has in the future success of their students who come to us. We need to support the continued work of faculty to build stronger connections with Bakersfield Adult School and expedite the process of providing classroom space for adult school courses in order to de-stigmatize referrals to their high quality basic skills courses.
9. Pay English faculty to read Summer placement essays (High priority) Many first year students assess in the summer before their first semester and they cannot get their English placement until the end of their first semester. Earlier results may allow students to begin their English coursework in their first semester.
10. Track out-of-class experiences (High priority) Use the student ID cards to track out-of-class experiences. Add a swiper at every event (lectures, performances, concerts, etc...), in every open lab (math, computer, English, etc...), for every workshop (library, Phit) to enable us to build a database.
11. Creation of an academic Honors Program (High priority) Gather interested faculty in counseling, English, philosophy, communication, mathematics and the social and

behavioral sciences together to create a plan including assessment measurements to help us evaluate program success as the program grows. Additionally, we need to build a process through which a course may become part of the program.

## **CAMPUS CULTURE DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions make new students a high priority for faculty and staff. A culture of responsibility for the experiences of new students characterizes these institutions. This culture is realized through high-quality instruction, services, and support as well as substantial interaction with students both inside and outside the classroom. Campus leaders nurture this culture and support it by appropriate institutional recognition and rewards.

Committee Leader: Don Turney, Dean of Students

Committee Members: Shakib Ali, Student, Wayne Cooper, Faculty, Vera Diaz, Faculty, Nancy Guidry, Faculty, Taylor Jennings, Student, Osmond Param, Student, Diane Shaw, A&R

**Current situation:** Bakersfield College is a commuter campus. Most students simply come to the campus to go to class and then leave to attend to other responsibilities. Many of our students have full or part-time jobs, are single parents, re-entry students, and come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds; a majority of them qualify for financial aid. At present, the administration and faculty are just beginning to envision the needs of the first year college student and the unique situations they encounter at our campus. Faculty and Administration differ on the perceived solutions to this situation. Faculty want the resources to be directed towards the students, i.e. additional faculty, equipment, and programs that directly impact students. Administration appears to be focusing on the monetary return per student, that is FTES, positive attendance, and partnering with community donors. The direct student return on this is not always readily apparent. It is the consensus of the committee that opportunities to improve campus culture are abundant. Responses to many of the survey questions relating to our dimension indicate several areas which were rated by respondents as "slight" or "none at all."

For Performance Indicator 4.1 "Institution-Level Encouragement", we found the following supporting evidence: Pedagogies of engagement: Question 48: 45% rated "out-of-class learning experiences" as slight or not-at-all. Institution-wide learning goals: Question 11 of survey. 43.1% of faculty rated communication of "institutional philosophy for working with new students" as not at all or slight. For Q13: "Does this institution operate from a commonly held philosophy about the new student experience", 46.9% say slight or not at all. The mission and goals of the institution are printed in the college catalog and posted in various places on campus. For the most part these are very broad. Both the Vision and Mission refer to student success in very general terms, and only two of the Goals are student directed (i.e. "provide all students with the competencies necessary for learning and earning"; and, "to improve college climate and culture"). Bakersfield College needs to develop more specific institution-wide learning goals for new students. Understand the characteristics of new students: The attempt to eliminate the paper schedule of classes last year is evidence of the lack of understanding of new student needs on the part of academic leaders. Many of our students do not have home computers and/or Internet access. Competition for first year students continues to increase. A July 5, 2006 Bakersfield Californian (p. B1 and B5) article indicated that on average the enrollment of students from high schools in the city of Bakersfield has increased at Taft College on the average of 20 percent annually over the last five years. Many of the recent high school graduates interviewed mentioned how they appreciated the smaller class sizes at Taft College. Meanwhile, instructors at Bakersfield College are encouraged to maximize class size. This

practice does not seem in keeping with the expressed preferences of many first year students. In addition, the competition is growing locally due to private institutes, distance education, and technical colleges who also advertise smaller class sizes. Until this Foundations of Excellence study came along, there was little concern for first-year college students. None of the four faculty members on the committee remember first-year students being mentioned in the new faculty training program and this does not appear to be a priority of senior academic leaders. The committee feels that veteran faculty classified staff, as well as adjunct faculty and new hires, need training on the issues affect students. In addition, occasional refreshers or occasional updates regarding policies and matters that affect them would be useful. In general, the faculty survey seems to indicate the senior academic leaders do not acknowledge, recognize, or reward the importance of teaching new students. This is evidenced by the responses to Q60 in which 51.9% of faculty responded slight, or not at all. This seems to relate to institution-wide learning goals, characteristics of new students, and an understanding of broad trends and issues. Senior academic leaders need to focus more on how "bottom line" decisions directly impact students. The committee understands the FTES driven nature of community college funding, but have not encountered activities aimed at new students and their needs until this Foundations of Excellence study. The college would not have to be as concerned about FTES if students felt more significant and recognized. Favorable word-of-mouth reputation of Bakersfield College is important for student retention. According to the five year initiative (2001-2006), Transfer and Retention of Urban Community College Students (TRUCCS) which identifies "the patterns, aspirations, and behaviors of students", the opinions of student peers are the only reliable factor in their decision to re-enroll. Therefore, it is essential that Bakersfield College provides first-year students with programs and services that fulfill their needs and that forge a bond between the students and the college. This will in turn build the reputation of the institution. Understanding broad trends and issues: Trends and issues are often brought to the forefront by establishing a committee or ad hoc group.

We also identified several red-flags relating to Performance Indicator 4.2 "Unit-Level Encouragement". Understanding the discipline-specific trends: Question 50: 55.1% of faculty feel that they are not encouraged to attend conferences or workshops focusing on first-year students. This is reinforced again in Question 51: 65% of respondents feel that they are not supported in attending national/regional conferences. The degree of unit-level encouragement varies from medium to high from department to department. Our committee had four faculty members from four different departments with each perceiving a differing level of institutional support. It is more the front-line faculty/staff who offer encouragement to new students. Among unit-level administrators there is an expectation that this will be accomplished, and has been clearly communicated to front-line faculty/staff. However according to Question 12 of the Faculty Survey, 40.3% (23.7% not at all) rate the department or unit-level philosophy as "non-existent or not at all."

As to Performance 4.3 "Expectations", newly hired full-time and part-time adjunct position descriptions do not address faculty responsibilities related to new students with the exception that job announcements contain the following statement: "a demonstrated sensitivity to students with diverse academic, socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and students with disabilities." Question 69 and 70 address this issue: 48.2% of faculty says that "during the hiring process...the degree to which responsibility to new students is addressed was slight or not-at-all. 45% agree the issue of new students is not a factor during the candidate interview process (Question 70). Three committee members began their teaching experience as adjunct faculty. All had a similar experience. They received little guidance as to what the expectations were. They were essentially given the key to the room, the -text-book and told "teach." There was very little or non-existent support in areas such as printing, advising, supplies, etc. The candidate

interview process is essentially based on questions developed by the screening committee usually from an historical compilation as such the concept of new student retention is seldom addressed. This is reflected in the faculty response to Q70. 45% responded in the negative.

Although Bakersfield College has a new faculty orientation program, it does not substantially address the faculty responsibilities related to new students. Faculty response was mixed on this question. This could reflect the fact that many faculty members are not able to attend all sessions due to teaching/service responsibilities. Funding for workshops, conferences and continuing education seems to be unavailable or non-existent. (See Faculty Survey questions: 50 and 51)

The current situation on Performance Indicator 4.4 "Retention" shows significant variation among faculty. Some feel that their performance is gauged by retention and make every effort to keep all students; others take pride in reducing a class of 45 to 6 by the end of the semester. There are many who fall in-between these two extremes. They recognize that the effort the student puts in to the course, produces the grade earned. Among student services personnel, they have gotten the message that customer relations are essential. As for senior administrators it is important, but not a high priority. With other staff, it varies according to the individual, and their public service ethic.

**Opportunities and Challenges:** To put it in a positive light, we have a new student program to build and there is "no where to go but up". This provides us an opportunity to build a program that is uniquely tailored to our new students. The faculty survey results and other sources of evidence indicate that the campus culture can be improved by making it more student focused from the top down. This includes developing a better understanding of first-year student needs that can be used in decision-making and the improvement of programs through funding and staff training.

**Sources of Evidence:**

Bakersfield College Documents: Faculty Survey; Screening Process, forms and candidate interview questions; BC Vision, Goals, and Mission

<http://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/about/vision/>

Raisman, Neal. "Learn and Earn not Churn and Burn: Customer Service is the Key to Retention" [www.universitybusiness.com/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=461](http://www.universitybusiness.com/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=461)

Transfer and Retention of Urban Community College Students (TRUCCS) [www.eric.ed.gov/sitemap/html\\_0900000b80124eee.html](http://www.eric.ed.gov/sitemap/html_0900000b80124eee.html)

Schencker, Lisa. "Bakersfield Student Pick Taft over BC." *Bakersfield Californian*. 7 Jul. 2006: B1+.

**Recommended Grade: D+**

**Recommended Action Items:**

1. Survey of New Students (High priority) Survey students prior to updating admission information for their first and second term. This survey would include questions on availability of home computers, time commitments, work schedule, and other factors that help all college staff understand the characteristics of new students. This would help us obtain accurate data for informed decision-making on how to best allocate funds that directly affect students.
2. Faculty Orientation Guide (High priority) The Faculty Orientation Guide would include teaching pedagogies for new students and other pertinent information on the first-year

student that has been gleaned through the Foundations of Excellence process. This guide would be distributed to all faculty, adjunct faculty and staff. This would also include other essential information such as how to create an effective syllabus, campus-wide policies, etc.

3. New Faculty Seminar Improvements (High priority) Incorporate training regarding new students in the New Faculty Seminar. In addition, New Faculty Seminars should be video-taped for those who can not attend. Furthermore, adjunct faculty should be included in this process.
4. Fund Continuing Education Programs on New Students (High priority) Flex workshops and/or funding for training administrators, faculty and staff on the needs of the new student.
5. Learning Standards for New Students (High priority) These learning standards would focus on improving campus culture from Administration down to enrich the classroom experience for all students. This includes designating monies for items such as out-of-class learning experiences, as well as those that enhance the in-class learning experience. These might include faculty workshops, training, adequate supplies and equipment, etc. This may be accomplished through the above-mentioned surveys, focus groups, student government led information gathering. This issue may also overlap with action items recommended by other dimensions.

## **TRANSITIONS DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions facilitate appropriate student transitions beginning with outreach and recruitment and continuing throughout the period of enrollment. They communicate clear curricular/co-curricular expectations and possibilities, and they provide appropriate preparation and support for educational success. They are forthright about their responsibilities to students as well as students' responsibilities to themselves and the institution. These institutions create and maintain communication with secondary and other postsecondary institutions, families, employers, community agencies, and other sources of support for students.

**Committee Leaders:** Sue Vaughn, Enrollment Services Director, Leticia Garza Lentz, ESL Tutor/Instructor **Committee Members:** Mary Jo Anhalt, Faculty, Maria Elizondo, EOPS, Brenda Freaney, Faculty, Angela Guadian, Title V Grants, Sonia Jeffrey, Outreach, Leslie Reiman, Faculty Joan Wegner, FA Director Reggie Williams, Faculty

### **Current Situation:**

Bakersfield College has been expanding our outreach efforts to prospective students; enhancing our admissions, matriculation, and orientation processes; and refining our student support services over the past few years. Outreach has been conducted by an Outreach Program consisting of a program manager, assistant, and several student ambassadors. Their major responsibilities have included presentations to groups and schools and provision of campus tours. Our EOP&S Program has employed an assistant in the Delano Center to conduct similar activities for prospective students in the northern part of the county. As a Hispanic serving institution, the college became eligible for Federal Title 5 funding in 2004. In summer of 2006, the program began implementation of a team of four Student Advisors to assist students in sixteen Bakersfield area high schools in the admission, matriculation, and registration processes. One of the college's strategic goals for the current year is to, "Assess and refine the student application and registration process with the intent of achieving the most user-friendly and efficient system found in any community college." To that end, we have converted to a completely web based admissions form; implemented an automated waitlist system to ensure a first-come, first-served registration system; conducted four, one-stop, day long matriculation and

registration events called Regi-Fests; and increased the availability of computer banks with trained, student worker assistants for student registration use. Some of the refinements in student support services that have taken place over the past few years include:

1. Efforts by our district to translate our on-line admissions form into Spanish for the benefit of prospective students' parents are in progress.
2. An Early Alert Program is to be implemented for summer 2007. It will enable instructors to electronically notify students, counselors, and other support services when a student is having difficulty in class.
3. Our on-line "What If" degree audit program is available to assist students in program planning.
4. Title V created, funds, and supports the BC/CSUB Satellite Transfer Center for BC students, located in the student services building. From October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006, (excluding the summer months) the satellite center served 675 Bakersfield College students.
5. The College Web Site was redesigned in January and is much more user friendly and intuitive.

Many of the students' survey answers indicated:

1. A fairly high understanding of academic expectations but those understandings seemed to come from classroom activities rather than as a part of outreach or orientation.
2. That students have unrealistic expectations about study-time and quality of work required.
3. Students are not aware of college services early enough in their college careers.
4. Low performance in communication to families of new students.
5. Student dissatisfaction with academic advising (See Attachment A)
6. A need for improvement on the homepage. However, the survey was completed just prior to the implementation of the new web site in January 2007. With the new web site, telephone assistance staff in the Office Admissions and Records are finding it easier to explain how to locate specific items (ordering transcripts, completing admission forms, registering, etc) when students call or come in with questions.

#### **Areas of Concern:**

Our current optional orientation consists of a series of ten on-line questions that students find the answers to in other parts of our Web Site or in a 90 minute presentation by an academic advisor with a video presentation that describes a variety of college services. These are inadequate to address student survey responses that demonstrate lack of understanding of the time and effort required to succeed in college, lack of awareness of support services, and desire for more out-of-class contact with instructors and other students. We suggest that the college engage classroom instructors with incoming, first-time students in departmental based orientation sessions that also include discussions lead by academic development faculty and counselors on time management, student skills and other such subjects. These sessions might also include second year student leaders who could add their prospective to the information presented. Such a session could be presented as a .5 unit credit Student Development course. (See Attachments B and C) Although the college has a "what-if?" on-line degree evaluation program that offers an opportunity for reviewing academic progress to date, student comments indicate that many students are not aware of the program. Although the responses to academic advisement questions on the student survey were all above 3.0, the student comments reflected a preponderance of negative statements. Students and faculty will need to be well informed about the Early Alert Program that is to be implemented for summer 2007. It is an on-line system that allows faculty to notify students as well as appropriate college student support

services when a student is having difficulty in the first four weeks of class. Since it is voluntary on the part of faculty, activities to build faculty buy-in will be essential. There will need to be a plan for how the support services that are copied on the correspondence will respond. Other areas of possible concern, on which there is little campus wide discussion or agreement on include:

1. The importance of communication with families of new or prospective students to help families recognize the importance and value of higher education and make sure they realize that it can be affordable,
2. The value of out-of-class engagement opportunities given the nature of our students, many of whom already work long hours or are raising children.
3. Whether effort should be made to diversify the group of businesses involved with the college to attract more students to the opportunities that can be provided.

### **Sources of Evidence:**

The team collected evidence about the current situation from college publications (Registration Guidelines and College Catalog in Evidence Library) and our experience in student service areas. We found our most valuable evidence in student survey comments: Transitions Attachment A, Transitions Attachment B. and Transitions Attachment C (in Evidence Library). The student surveys ranked the degree to which the college helped: connect to other students. 2.91 connect with continuing students. 2.92 connect with faculty. 2.50 connect with support services. 2.91 your family feel a part of the process. 2.19 The surveys ranked Academic advisement as helping to understand: requirements for prerequisites. 3.28 how to select courses. 3.13 how college can help achieve life goals. 3.18 what it takes to be academically successful. 3.24 future enrollment plans. 3.04 I understand the organization of the college so I can find where to go if I need help with course selection. 3.44 with non-academic matters. 2.74 Overall evaluation: the college helped me make the transition into college. 3.23 Although the survey results were fairly positive, we found a more negative situation in the comments. Many comments suggested the need to understand what it means to succeed in college and the desire to have more interaction with instructors. (See attachment A and B in Evidence Library) There are also a substantial number of comments suggesting the need for orientation to the time and effort demanded of successful college students. (See Attachment C in Evidence Library)

### **Recommended Grade: C+**

### **Recommended Action Items:**

1. Pilot four department-based half-day orientation sessions to include: (High priority) Participation from department faculty, second year students, Academic Development faculty, and counselors, Discussions and presentations on course sequences for department majors, study skills, time management, academic expectations, college support services, and opportunities for involvement. Student mentoring pairings could be established.
2. Promote CAPP "What if?" Degree Audit Program (High priority) Advisors should be encouraged to demonstrate to students after 2 semesters. A marketing campaign to reach encourage more students to run their "What-If" Degree Audits and use them to evaluate their own academic progress should be developed to include articles in the Renegade Rip, posting on the web site, and announcements by instructors.
3. Promote Early Alert Program (High priority) The Early Alert Program will be implemented in summer 2007. Its success will be dependent on faculty willingness to use it. A series of activities to encourage faculty utilization of the program and to assure action by appropriate support services should be initiated. The activities should include: Discussions in faculty



departmental meetings, Information on the program to be presented at Opening Day Activities in August, Regular e-mail reminders to faculty about the program for the first three weeks of each semester, Encouragement of use of the program by Educational Administrators. Discussions among various support services and counseling concerning how referrals for follow-up will be handled.

4. Encourage college-wide discussions of issues affecting first year students. (Medium priority)  
The Administrative Council, Educational Administrators, Academic Senate, and College Council should take steps to encourage college-wide discussions and planning concerning:  
The importance of communication with and recognition of families to help them recognize the importance and value of higher education and to help them understand that it can be affordable. The value of out-of-class engagement opportunities, ways of engaging more businesses and employers with the college.

## **ALL STUDENTS DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions serve all new students according to their varied needs. These institutions anticipate, identify, and address the needs of traditional and non-traditional students in response to their individual abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. These efforts are subject to assessment and adjustment as needed. Institutions also ensure campus environments that are inclusive and safe for all students.

Committee Leader: Jeannie Parent, Faculty

Committee Members: Denise Canning, Adjunct Faculty, Della Navarro, EOPS, Hillary Neumeister, Faculty, Brenda Nyagwachi, Faculty

### **Current Situation:**

When enrolling in Bakersfield College all students go through placement assessment in both Math and English/Reading. They are then placed in Math classes accordingly, and in Academic Development, English, or ESL classes accordingly. However, students self-identify as ESL and many students who see ESL as a stigma, do not identify themselves as ESL even though they are second language speakers. They are then given the native speaker English assessment, and placed in English or Academic Development courses, which do not address their needs adequately. There is currently no way of identifying and assessing ESL students who do not self-identify except for during the essay placement reading.

Another area of the All Student Dimension is social well-being. Students can and do meet with counselors to enroll in classes, but they don't necessarily discuss personal or social issues. This may not be the domain of the academic counselor, but there are also no personal counseling services for students who are not on Medi-Cal. This is a huge void. In fact, it was mentioned by the Student Government Association in conjunction with the new PHIT Center; according to the SGA, students would have preferred the money to be spent on a Mental Health Counselor rather than on the PHIT Center.

Currently BC has Learning Disabled assessment services through DSPS. However, in our ESL classes, we are seeing a large number of Spanish speakers who are also Learning Disabled. When sent to DSPS, if the students have low English skills, they are not able to be served because there is no LD assessment in Spanish, nor is there a staff person to give the assessment. BC is a Hispanic Serving Institution, with a student population of 47% Hispanic, and thousands of students self-identified as ESL, yet no one to assess whether they have learning disabilities. They are usually just sent to ESL classes, but not given supplemental

instruction or accommodation as native speaker LD students are.

The Student Development class, which is designed for first year freshmen, to help them plan their courses and succeed in college, should be taken during the first 15 units, but it is often left until later on, sometimes even until the last semester, and is therefore not effective. There needs to be a way to ensure that students take the course early in their college career to maximize its effectiveness.

If our mission at BC is for all students to succeed, those who are under-prepared, as well as those who are honors students, small class size is optimal. However, in some subjects, such as Psychology, there are still sections with large lectures. Supplemental Instruction (the use of TAs) is not available for these large lecture classes, making it difficult for students to get outside help when needed. This is connected to the perception by faculty that office hours are under utilized. Students don't regularly go see instructors during office hours; therefore, many students do not get individualized attention.

Tutoring is available by student tutors in many subjects through the Learning Center. The Learning Center offers a course tutors take in which they are trained to tutor students in their respective subjects. Many students take advantage of these services at the Learning Center. Math A also has tutoring through the Math Lab, but other math courses don't have the same kind of tutoring. Tutoring is also offered ESL students at the ESL Tutoring Center, but there is a shortage of ESL tutors. There are now three ESL tutors; however, these are not student tutors, but classified tutors, and they are only part-time with flexible schedules, and often are hard to keep. In fact, although three were hired this semester, one will not continue in the fall, and one works very few hours, so we are back to two tutors working the maximum 19 hours/week.

The perception by faculty about campus involvement is that it could be encouraged more. There are occasional tables set up in the campus center, advertising clubs and activities, but other than that, not much is done to encourage students to become involved in campus activities. BC is a commuter campus with many students just coming to class, and then leaving to go to jobs, so becoming involved in campus activities may not be a priority. Faculty could include campus activities in their class assignments to help students feel more a part of BC. Registration at BC is now strictly online. It is not particularly inclusive or friendly, and many students can not navigate their way successfully through starting the semester. There are assumptions we, the faculty, may make about BC that students coming out of high school don't necessarily know. They have misconceptions about everything from the wait-list to whether there are fog delays (as there are in high school).

#### **Opportunities and Challenges:**

The Student Success Lab is already in place and effective as a supplementary means of instruction for students in Academic Development, ESL, and English classes. It is under-utilized, but mandating attendance at the lab several hours a semester could be a supplement to all Academic Development, ESL, and English 60 classes to help retention and student success. English 60 has one of the highest failure rates by first year students; let's do what we can to see students succeed.

In addition, smaller class size would help retention. However, that may be fiscally challenging; therefore, reinstating TAs in larger lecture classes would help provide individual attention to those students who would otherwise get lost. One option would be to collaborate with CSUB and use graduate students as TAs.

Mentoring is currently available to EOPS students. Research shows that Latinos succeed when they feel they belong, and BC has nearly 50% Latinos; make mentoring available to all students;

students could earn credits for mentoring. What helps Latinos will help other students as well. Not only will mentoring help students succeed, but fostering relationships with their instructors will also help. Monitor student development or create a Freshmen Success Experience class where small groups meet with an instructor once a week for the first year. Create cohorts that meet all year long in which students can support each other and create study groups. We could have year long classes for freshmen, such as learning communities, where students will feel like they belong and can take risks, which will help them succeed.

Even though there is a privacy issue involved, families of Latinos need to be involved for their children to be successful. With FERPA, this is a challenge, but the faculty, staff, and administrators at BC at least need to discuss how to bring students' parents into the education of their children, stressing the priority of education, helping them to understand the kind of commitment it takes for a student to get a college education. The more the parents understand, the more successful their first generation college student will be.

There is an opportunity now, with the Basic Skills Initiative to work with first year students in Academic Development and ESL classes.

**Summary of Evidence:**

According to Faculty/Staff Survey Questions 36-41, addressing Unique Student Needs, the needs of Honors students was ranked lowest, but still in the moderate range, at 3.36. A little higher were students with academic deficiencies and racial/ethnic minority students. Ranked high, at 4.11 and 4.18 respectively, were the categories of students with learning and physical disabilities.

According to New Student Survey Questions 35-39, 40, and 55, addressing Campus Environment, the responses showed that students in general feel safe (3.75), respected by others (3.69), and treated fairly by their instructors (4.37). Other factors reflecting campus environment were rated moderate to high (3.29-3.5) by students such as how BC is meeting their academic needs, their social needs, and whether they feel they belong.

Other evidence was collected by faculty and staff. Some was factual:

The Summer Readiness class was dropped.

College 101 was instituted but not continued.

There is an LD Assessment in English, but not in Spanish. There is no bilingual staff person to administer an LD assessment in Spanish.

TAs used to be used in Psychology classes, but have been discontinued.

Other evidence collected by faculty was anecdotal:

Counselors have reported students not taking Student Development class until the semester students are graduating (when it is supposed to be taken the first semester).

Both faculty and counselors have reported misconceptions students have about policies regarding waitlists, tuition, attendance, school-wide cancellations, and so on. Such faulty assumptions sometimes result in students unintentionally being dropped from classes and not being able to be re-instated because classes are too full.

**Recommended Grade: C**

**Recommended Action Items:**

1. Online T/F survey to be completed by students during admission. (High priority) Online survey will correct misconceptions first year students have about enrollment, waitlists and first semester issues. Questions are as follows: 1) You can be dropped if you don't show up on the first day of class, 2) You must be on one waitlist in each section of a class, 3) You can be on

more than one waitlist at a time, 4) You must attend the first class meeting if you are on any waitlist, 5) You must pay tuition within ten business days of registration or you will be dropped, 6) Professor "Staff" is a real person on campus, 7) Attendance is optional throughout the semester and, 8) You should check the BC website for two hour district fog delays.

2. There should be a Spanish LD Assessment for Hispanic students. (High priority) LD students who are non-native English speakers can not get LD assistance because they can not take the LD assessment in English.

3. Offer a study skills class in Academic Development. (High priority) Students don't have the necessary study skills to be successful; the class that was offered before has been discontinued.

4. Hire a mental health counselor. (High priority) There are no mental health counseling services for students not on Medi-Cal. Many students who do not have other resources could benefit from counseling services on campus.

5. Hire a full-time ESL tutor. (High priority) Due to conflicting schedules, hours cannot be covered by part-time tutors. A full-time ESL tutor is needed to cover morning and afternoon hours.

6. Start a Freshmen Success Experience class. (High priority) In Freshmen Success experience, small groups meet with instructors in an organized way to get individualized attention and support from faculty.

7. Offer Math tutoring for all Math classes. (High priority) Math A students are the only Math students who currently get tutoring; other students need it as well in order to succeed.

8. Offer Summer Readiness program (High priority) Freshmen are often not ready for college, and Summer Readiness would help prepare and retain them.

9. Reinstate TAs in large classes. (Medium priority) As would help retain freshmen in large lecture classes.

10. Require Student Development to be taken in first semester. (Medium priority) It is not effective if taken later in the student's college career.

## **DIVERSITY DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions ensure that new students experience ongoing exploration of diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and participation in pluralistic communities. Institutions cultivate an open and civil community in which students interact with people from varied backgrounds and cultures. These institutions guide students to reflect on ideas and values different from those they currently hold, and explore their own cultures and the cultures of others.

The mission of Bakersfield College is to provide quality instruction and service to our diverse campus/community needs in order to achieve personal, academic and occupational success. The Bakersfield College mission sets forth the guidelines of the "Diversity Dimension Committee" to help the Foundation Institute/Bakersfield College to ensure that the "new or first

year student's" experience is ongoing in diverse experiences. Bakersfield College standards of excellence strive to have the new student achieve diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultural means of enhancing their learning while at Bakersfield College, and thereafter.

Committee Leader:

Kathleen Rush, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

Debra B. Strong, College Nurse

Committee Members:

Ron Kean, Professor of Music

Michael McNellis, Assistant Professor, Philosophy & Religion

Patti Brommelsiek, Librarian

### **Current Situation:**

#### **Data**

Surveys were given to faculty (n=299) and students (n=1768) which included questions on how well diversity is established at Bakersfield College. 52.5% of faculty reported that we offer a curriculum which includes appropriate attention to diverse ideas and world views. Although there was no specific curriculum question to students, there were, on average, only 30% of students who reported that the school exposes the new student to different World cultures, religions, political perspectives, and differing social and economic classes. The diversity dimension of Foundations of Excellence student survey scored the lowest of all dimensions. In 2006, Bakersfield College hosted over 75 international students from 26 different countries. Thousands of other international students have graduated, improved their English, and transferred to a university throughout the past years.

#### **Bakersfield College Academic Courses**

Bakersfield College offers new students a variety of entry-level courses that ensures new students experience a wide-range of diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures in the classroom. The major disciplines which provide said experience include: Anthropology, History, Chicano Studies, English, Film, Music, Political Science, and Philosophy. The list includes:

Anth B2: Cultural Anthropology

Anth B5: North American Indians

Hist B7a: World History

ChSt B30: Early Chicano History

Eng B21: African American Literature

Film C211: Hispanic Culture Through Film

Musc B24: A Survey of World Music

Musc P110: Exploring the World through Music

Pols B2: Comparative Government

Phil 33 : Western Religion

Phil B32: Eastern Religion

In Communications B1: Public Speaking, students are required to complete two presentations that address diversity of lifestyle, cultures, and practices. In ASL B1: American Sign Language I and II, the faculty expose students to a unique minority American culture, the American Deaf Community. In each of our courses, in addition to students being introduced to the many tenets of American Deaf culture, they are required to spend 15 hours in conversational interaction with Deaf people here in Kern County. In Humanities B44 students look at folkloric variants from around the world and read a novel that deals with the Holocaust, which of course explores aspects of ethnicity, different cultures, and even different sexual preferences. Students also

explore Fairy tales, wonder tales, myths, and other magical stories are asked to look at the similarities and differences of variants of the same tale type from different cultures, including their own.

Courses with the highest concentration of new students include 3 ACDV courses, 3 MATH courses, HLED B1, HIST B17A and B17B, ENGL B60, B1, and B1A, PSYC B1A, COMM B1, STDV B1, SOCI B1, POLS B1, LIBR B55. Very few of these courses are correlated with our list of courses containing a significant amount of diversity content.

Student Development B6 "Tools for College Survival" is a requirement for students at Bakersfield College who want to graduate and can be taken at any time during their enrollment. This course is intended to introduce the new student to college life and the college campus. It is recommended that students be required to take this class in their first term.

In the music department one section of World Music is offered each semester in comparison with 5 sections (two of which are double sections) of History of American Pop Music. This is evidence that supply and demand of diverse course content is not supported by the student population.

### **Student Governance**

It is noted that 8 out of 15 student senators and 7 out of 10 student commissioners have ethnically diverse last names.

### **Student Services**

Student Services of Bakersfield College has an active outreach program for high school students who have special needs to introduce them to the services at Bakersfield College that they can take advantage of as new students to the college. BC's supportive services include accommodations for deaf, blind, and students with physical or learning disabilities. Making College Happen is another outreach program geared towards junior high school student.

The Bakersfield College CalWORKs office serves students who participate in Kern County's welfare to work CalWORKs program. Services available for qualified students include child care referrals, work-study or work experience, on the job training, advocacy, academic counseling, and referrals to other campus services.

EOPS is a state-funded program that serves students from low-income, educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Services include academic, career, and personal counseling, peer mentoring, financial aid advising, scholarship information, transfer assistance, grant checks and other support services. The CARE component offers additional grants and/or services to full-time students who are single parents, AFDC recipients, and have at least one child under the age of fourteen.

There is little outreach primarily for new students to BC

### **Student Clubs and Activities**

Four student clubs out of eighteen at Bakersfield College were noted as diverse clubs. They include: African American Student Union, H.O.P.E.S. (Hispanic Org. Promoting Engineering & Science), Intervarsity, and Maize. Of the 64 club activities or events for 2006, 20 were noted as events promoting diversity.

There is no gay and lesbian club at Bakersfield College.

The Chicano Cultural Center and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center no longer exist due to discontinuance of financial support by Bakersfield College.

Black History month and Women's History month are not well supported.

It is noted that the Fine Arts department holds annual world musical events which lack a significant student attendance. Since these events require a fee, we cannot require student attendance.

The choir travels every other year for a maximum of 1.5 weeks.

### **Faculty and Staff**

Currently there is no institutional program to support faculty re-education. New course materials and new course offerings are not given adequate financial or release time support other than faculty sabbaticals.

District Human Resources has annually provided EEO/Diversity training to screening committees at Porterville, Cerro Coso as well as recently collaborated with Bakersfield College's EODAC Committee. In addition, HR has provided Diversity training to managers and supervisors.

The mission of the Staff Development Coordinating Council is to provide and support activities and opportunities which will enhance job performance, personal growth, and social interaction among all Bakersfield College employees, thereby developing a sense of campus community.

Staff Development Workshops for 2006 & 2007 that were provided by Peggy DeStefano did not note diversity training (i.e.. Supervisory Training), except for the presentations and films during February, Black History Month 2007. There was a presentation by John Giertz, who portrayed Mr. Stephen A. Douglas as he discussed and shared Douglas's memories of Abraham Lincoln.

### **Library**

The BC Library materials selection policy encourages the acquisition of a wide variety of current resources applicable to diversity, whether it be gender, ethnicity, ability, or age-related. The periodical databases provide student access to numerous publications and periodicals of interest to different diversity groups. [Over 200 periodicals relating to various groups are available via the databases.] In October, the first Cerro lecture will be held and the speaker will be Luis Rodriguez, the author of *Always Running*. There will be opportunities for student and faculty interaction with Mr. Rodriguez as well. There is an ADA compliant station in the library and other assistive devices are available to students. The professional staff is not particularly diverse, except linguistically. Of the five librarians, two are fluent in Spanish and another is fluent in French. The classified staff is somewhat more ethnically diverse.

The librarians work with any faculty member who wants to change their course content to make sure that adequate research sources are available. Faculty members are encouraged to suggest specific titles or sources or to suggest subject areas that need enhancement. As far as the budget allows, these requests are included in the material selection process. For example, holdings in deaf culture, Chicano studies, and women's studies have been expanded due to faculty input.

### **Summary of Evidence**

Each member of the committee selected one of the following areas in which to research the 'new' student experience of diversity on the campus of Bakersfield College: Entry level courses, club and events on campus, Student Service Activities, student government, faculty training, and library facilities. In addition to the above areas, student and faculty survey questions were analyzed.

All Faculty members were asked to report on diversity in their curriculum which would show and prove that we as faculty provide opportunities for our students to reflect on ideas and values

different from those they may currently hold. Fifteen faculty members responded.

Carla Reyes, Department Assistant III and Tarina Blair, of Events Scheduling were contacted for a list of student activities offered at Bakersfield College.

Student Services were contacted as asked how the new student is introduced to special services that would meet the needs of learning or physically disabled students, and economically disadvantaged students.

Student and Faculty surveys were reviewed and analyzed.

Library services were reviewed.

Kenneth Robinson, Assistant Director of Human Resources was contacted on faculty training.

### **Opportunities and Challenges**

Student surveys reported diversity at Bakersfield College as primarily non-existent or slightly supported. The diversity dimension scored the lowest of all dimensions with a mean of 2.98 but with a standard deviation of 0.83. Curiously, the faculty response to the diversity dimension was more positive, averaging in the high and very high range of offerings to students. This shows a divergence of perspective between the college and its students. Yet this data contradicts the trend seen in the music department where student demand for less diversity is usurped for a broader curriculum of world music. Courses in American Popular Music fill at a rate of 7:1 to the World Music course each semester.

Informal interviews with Richard Marquez of the English department and Michael McNellis of the Philosophy department provide an example of how courses are being modified as a direct response to the diversity of students found in the classroom: Phil B33: Western Religions, Michael McNellis, Assistant Professor, Philosophy & Religion.

"Based on the demographics of the students who have taken my religion courses, I have increasingly experienced a larger number of Hispanic students over the years. Thus, I am working on implementing a MesoAmerican religion component in my course which usually only focuses on the three major monotheistic traditions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. With the expected change, the Chicano/Latino department has already agreed to include it in their degree program as an elective. Over time, I expect to teach a course devoted solely to the MesoAmerican religion and the Chicano/Latino experience of religion in America."

As important is our integrity to offer a well rounded diverse curriculum and balance that with supply and demand.

One weakness of this report is the lack of research in the science and mathematics departments. With a little more time, this could be accomplished, but I don't think it would drastically alter the results of this preliminary research.

**Recommended Grade:** D

**Recommended Action Items:** (in no particular order)

It is recommended that we bring back International Dinner and Talent Night

It is recommended that we re-instate The Chicano Cultural Center and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, both of which were cut for fiscal reasons.

It is recommended that we include a diversity module in the Student Success Class.



It is recommended that Faculty/Staff Development include diversity training and include a module similar to that in the nursing department which is entitled "Culture & Nursing Care: A Pocket Guide".

It is recommended that Faculty Development encourage the institute to support release time for instructors to 'upgrade' curriculum to include more diverse topics.

It is recommended that Black History month and Women's History month get more support institutional support.

It is recommended that the college create a travel abroad program for students.

It is recommended that students required to take Student Development B6 "Tools for College Survival" be required to take this class in their first term.

It is recommended that more attention be paid to sequencing of our courses. For example, students should be required to pass English 1A before registering for any other humanities course.

It is recommended that faculty training and our Flex program (professional development requirement) include training in diversity and encourage faculty to strengthen diversity components in their curriculum.

It is recommended that a focus group of new students be formed and interviewed throughout the year to have more first-hand feedback on their immediate experience of diversity on campus.

Kenneth Robinson, Assistant Director of Human Resources has recognized that the College/District is in need of a bona-fide "Diversity Program" which is not currently being utilized.

It is recommended that the mission of the Staff Development note a fifth goal: To ensure diverse workshops that provided the staff with diverse ideas, world views, and cultural activities that enhanced their learning to prepare them to become members of pluralistic communities. In providing such workshops, the staff would definitely create a richer experience for the first year student to experience the same, through their diverse experiences provided by Bakersfield College.

**Recommended Grade: D+**

## **ROLES AND PURPOSES DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education and those unique to two-year institutions, both for the individual and society. These roles and purposes include learning for personal growth, career enhancement, workplace preparation and retraining, transfer for additional education, engaged citizenship, and serving the public good. Institutions encourage new students to examine their motivation and goals with regard to higher education in general and to their own college. Students are exposed to the value of both a general education and focused study in an academic or career field.

### **Committee Leader:**

Amber Chiang, Director Marketing and Public Information

**Committee Members:**

Pam Boyles, Faculty  
Jason Dixon, Faculty  
Maria Elizondo, EOPS  
Kathy Goehring  
Rebecca Mooney, Faculty  
Kathy Rosellini, Faculty  
Jill Thompson, VPSS Administrative Assistant  
Rachel Vickrey, Faculty

**Current Situation:**

PI 8.1:

Bakersfield College has only about 500 grads each year in a school of 16,000 students. While some may be vocational or lifelong learners, it's hard to know how well we are communicating about the benefits of higher education. This communication is first made during Orientation, which is the first step of the registration and enrollment process, as part of matriculation. Once they've attended Orientation, they complete a Student Education plan which outlines their goals for their time at Bakersfield College. Communication about the benefits of higher education is also made during Student Development courses, which is one of the first courses incoming students are supposed to take. Bakersfield College currently communicates to students mostly via paper publications like the class schedule and catalog, as well as through the website. However, these isolated modes of communication may not be as effective as they could be.

PI 8.2:

Students are currently motivated by the Student Development course, where they work with career plans and the Student Educational Plan. Through the Student Development Course, all students in some way have to make some kind of planning effort, which ultimately helps them reveal their motivation and reminds them of their reasons for pursuing higher education. This contract of sorts helps a student make sense of their plans and set realistic goals.

PI 8.3:

Bakersfield College currently is not strong in communicating to students about the reasons for required courses and prerequisites. Students wonder why they must take X, Y and Z classes if their degree is in A area. They have received no formal conversation on the why, but only the "you must" take these courses to graduate. While this explanation is made on an informal basis in Student Development, which is encouraged during the first semester and through the assessment process. The Bakersfield College catalog does also contain information on prerequisites. However, we observe that students may not be understanding these explanations. Use of the course schedule and catalog is sporadic, and typically only for looking up information on a class or when it is held. Information on prerequisites can be easily overlooked by students. This information is contained in the Bakersfield College catalog, and is monitored through Counseling and Bakersfield College's Banner system, which stops students that do not display prescribed prerequisites. Currently, students receive extensive feedback on the value of required competencies in classes, especially those general education courses which a majority of students take. However, students may choose to ignore this communication or have too much confidence in their abilities based on their high school experience. Students receive extensive information through the matriculation process. Matriculation assists them in achieving their educational goals which consist of orientation, assessment, counseling and student educational plans.

Communication on requirements for entry into programs/majors is present, via the class

schedule, website, catalog and numerous brochures and pieces of information developed by departments and assistance programs. However, the onus is on the student to read and comprehend this information. Students may also harbor a misconception that college is a free-for-all as opposed to the structure of high school's progressive coursework structure. They may not understand or read information that explains prerequisites.

**Opportunities and Challenges:**

PI 8.1:

**Opportunities**

Continuing to move to modes of online communication will benefit the students. Communication of vital information (graduation requirements, registration dates, counseling information, etc) via registered email addresses might improve the lines of communication and promote a more continual stream of information. Improving the campus' visibility through events and speakers which are free to students to attend will increase school spirit and involvement. These could include special speakers or major events which draw the students in and provide for an opportunity to talk about education, job training and even chances to help in the community. Providing for potential volunteerism might also be considered. Students appear to be looking for ways to "help out" their school and community. Volunteerism opportunities include athletic event setup and maintenance, campus beautification, outreach.

**Challenges**

Current generation of students is more digitally-inclined than past generations, so communication of these purposes might not be as effective via the class schedule and catalog. Wide methods of communication are not as reliable as they can be (i.e. students not checking email). Reliance on alternative forms of communication is recommended (i.e. posters, emails to faculty to share in class, special events)

PI 8.2:

**Opportunities**

Communication to students via instructors is a strong opportunity to reach a majority of our students. Instructors can help with motivational factors and explain how basic school skills such as meeting deadlines, taking initiative, being a self-starter, being a good writer, etc are valuable job and life skills as well. These motivational factors are helpful in showing a student the value of education. There is also an opportunity to communicate to students that they do not need a degree to be happy or successful, that career and technical education, certificates or a new trade can help them achieve that success.

More counselors and educational advisors to provide a continual presence on campus throughout the year would be an excellent opportunity to reinforce motivational factors with students. Students who have just the initial consultation with Bakersfield College's counseling and educational advising staff could benefit from a stronger presence and easier availability of this area. Potential integration of the various departments with counseling and educational advising is a potential opportunity. With further integration, instructors and departments can reinforce the messages provided in the initial meeting between counselors/educational advisors and students.

**Challenges**

It can be difficult to reach out to a student who doesn't really want to be in school or learn. This student, no matter the style or frequency of communication, may still be untouched by efforts. Without an understanding of their motivation and goals, students may follow a prescribed path that they will ultimately fail under. A continual touch is needed, one that extends beyond the initial consultation with a counselor/ed advisor and the Student Development course. This touch

should extend through the college education. Students struggle under the changes between high school and college, and not having the continual reinforcement of their goals and how to achieve them can be detrimental.

PI 8.3:

### **Opportunities**

Bakersfield College successfully serves as a bridge between high school and college/career. Opportunities are there to continue to reinforce this bridge and provide the information students need to make educated, passionate decisions about their education and future. More outreach into the high schools, by those in departments, can prove helpful when informing students about the requirements for college. This early exposure will help students who might become overwhelmed when entering the world of responsibility that goes along with college. Improved communication on the CAPP system's "what if analysis" will help students understand how these requirements benefit them. CAPP is a tool to monitor a degree audit, certificate program and transfer requirements. CAPP stands for Curriculum Advising and Program Planning.

### **Challenges**

Challenges for Bakersfield College include the fact that information may not be being "properly" communicated in a fashion that is easy to obtain, in a familiar format and free of high-level educational jargon. Students are used to multiple exposures to a counselor. Increased staffing and hours of availability is a challenge for Bakersfield College as we work to make sure students are informed and prepared to pursue their education.

### **Sources of Evidence:**

PI 8.1:

The task force mentioned the various special programs, such as Preventative Healthcare Information and Training, the mission/vision posters around campus and the class schedule as examples of the ways Bakersfield College communicates about personal growth and employment options available. The task force also mentioned the college's marketing and communications efforts as consistently reminding students of the employment and growth opportunities available through Bakersfield College.

The task force believes that Bakersfield College provides exceptional communication on employment possibilities to students through the career and technical education available. Additional job preparation is also provided via basic courses, which reinforce such job skills as: meeting deadlines, responsibility, efficiency, self-starting. These skills make Bakersfield College students employable and more inclined to seek work.

Bakersfield College also has high standards for our transfer students and graduates, which helps to communicate the worth of a degree from Bakersfield College.

Bakersfield College's Student Government Association does an excellent job in keeping students informed of opportunities around campus and within the community. This continual communication about opportunities to improve the student experience is one of the college's best attributes. Information on the SGA's activities is communicated to instructors, who then relay it to students. The Puente partnership is another strong example of Bakersfield College's ability to communicate to students via a mentorship program, and provides an opportunity for civic engagement.

PI 8.2:

Sources of Evidence for providing opportunities for students to examine their personal motivation include the Student Development course, the Student Educational Plan, and the meetings with counselors and educational advisors.

PI 8.3:

Sources of evidence for rationale include the catalog, course schedule, website and flyers/information from various departments and programs.

**Recommended Grade: B-**

**Recommended Action Items:**

1. Student Volunteerism Opportunities (High priority)  
Partner with the Student Government Association to determine and promote potential student volunteerism opportunities at Bakersfield College events and activities. Explore potential union contract issues.
2. Promotion of Special Events (High priority)  
Create student contest to develop informational banners and posters on important deadlines and events. Display student-created banners and posters around campus.
3. Communication Improvement (High priority)  
Partner with faculty and counseling to develop a cohesive communication strategy for providing students with important information. Provide additional workshops on career and technical education as opposed to degree programs.
4. Communication Methods to Reach Students (Medium priority)  
Institute listservs of student email addresses to communicate important information  
Enlist the help of Student Ambassadors to assist with communication  
Partner with Counseling Department to develop student mentoring program
5. Special Events for Students (Medium priority)  
Partner with Student Government Association and faculty to provide access to special events, guest speakers and rallies for students. Work with faculty to provide extra credit or class absence opportunities for students who attend special events.

## **IMPROVEMENT DIMENSION REPORT**

Foundations Institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to effect improvement. Assessment provides feedback to new students to guide their learning, to faculty to guide their teaching, and to the institution to guide planning, resource allocation, decision making, and improvement of programs and policies. As a way to facilitate improvement, these institutions are knowledgeable about current practices at other institutions as well as relevant research and scholarship.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Dimension IX focused on Bakersfield College's commitment to the **assessment** of the current teaching, learning, and service practices affecting students attending the college for the first time. This is not to be confused with the assessment of student learning outcomes in individual courses or the assessment of student's basic skills proficiency as an indicator of college readiness. This is an assessment of the institutional practices that support the diverse student populations that have widely varying educational backgrounds and goals that appear at an "open door" institution like Bakersfield College. The Dimension IX team's charge was to search for evidence that BC conducts systematic assessments that provides feedback to:

1. new students to guide their learning;

2. faculty to guide their teaching; and
3. the college to guide planning, resource allocation, decision making, and improvement of programs and policies.

In addition, the Dimension IX team was asked to query the college's effort to maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to evaluate and improve not only the new student experience, but also the entire college experience. It is inferred that institutions that are knowledgeable about current practices at other institutions as well as relevant research and scholarship improve student retention and the quality of college experience.

In the Foundations of Excellence survey conducted at Bakersfield College, the following **current practices** were identified as the top five programs and/or interventions that have the potential to impact the largest number of new students and their success at the college:

1. Basic skills assessment
2. Admissions assistance
3. Registration assistance
4. Financial aid
5. Orientation

The Dimension IX team interviewed key instructional and administrative leaders most closely responsible for these current practices to evaluate the following **performance indicators** used to measure institutional commitment to improve processes for new students at Bakersfield College:

1. **Assessment** - To what degree does each of the current practices identified above include systematic assessment at Bakersfield College?
2. **Use of assessment** - To what degree have assessment results been used to improve current practices at Bakersfield College?
3. **Understanding** - To what degree have recent assessment activities improved institutional understanding of the following elements of student success at Bakersfield College?
  - ↓ Student allocation of their time
  - ↓ Student/faculty connections
  - ↓ Student use of campus services
  - ↓ Student class attendance patterns
4. **Strategies** - To what degree have the following strategies been used at Bakersfield College to improve experiences of new students?
  - ↓ Attendance at higher education meetings
  - ↓ Participation in multi-institutional initiatives focused on new students
  - ↓ Institution-wide exposure to external experts
  - ↓ Broad exposure to institution-based knowledge and expertise about new student

experience

## FINDINGS

The Dimension IX team took the liberty to "define" systematic assessment to mean that the college inventory of current practices to serve new students had to be intentional, focused, and funded in order to meet performance indicator measures. Armed with this understanding, the team found the following to be true:

1. There are many practices at Bakersfield College designed to improve student success, but none are formalized in a continuous quality improvement plan.
2. The college does have an Assessment Committee that focuses on the development of course, programmatic and institutional outcomes. This committee is tied to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee that has shaped and guides the program review process at Bakersfield College. These two venues could provide the training and infrastructure to assess the effectiveness of new processes to improve the success of first year students.
3. Program reviews and unit planning are conducted on a regular basis for various academic and student service components at the college but none focusing on new student experiences.
4. There are a few systematic assessments embedded in programs that have evolved on the campus to improve student success and institutional processes, but they are not targeted for new students. Examples are the Mathematics, Engineering and Science Academy (MESA), Communities for Learning, Inquiry, and Practice (CLIP's), the Banner Student Team, the Tutoring Center, and the Noel Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction.
5. The college is committed to the student-learning-outcome instructional and service model that includes a "re-engineering" of assessment strategies. Many faculty and staff have fully incorporated the SLO concept into course, program, and operational design to target improvement in the teaching, learning, and service environments.
6. Attempts to track student success as they transfer to CSUB are only in the embryonic phase that has not progressed past the dialogue phase.

Bakersfield College has frequently **used the results of assessment activities** to improve practices serving students, but again they have not been integrated into a systematic plan focusing on new students. The Dimension IX team found the following evidentiary examples of using assessments to improve the college experience:

1. The MESA Program completed a CLIP examining the success rates of students participating in study groups.
2. The Math Department and the Academic Development faculty and staff have created a CLIP to assess progress of students matriculating through the math course sequence.
3. The Banner Student Team implemented changes to admissions and registration processes that improved access and efficiency for students.
4. The Noel Levitz surveys resulted in improvements in student service components including Public Safety, Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, and Counseling.
5. The CSUB Transfer Center was established on the Bakersfield College campus to assist students in developing appropriate course selections.

Performance indicators to evaluate the college's **understanding of the elements of student success** (student allocation of their time, student/faculty connections, student use of campus services, and student class attendance patterns) imply that Bakersfield College's efforts have

not been aligned to produce maximum momentum. The Dimension IX team summarizes their findings with the following statements that suggest at least some of these elements are part of the student-learning-outcome model at the college:

1. Many of the elements identified to stimulate student's success are part of the college's orientation process, but far too few students take advantage of this resource.
2. Faculty and staff are sensitive to these elements of success but opportunities to serve students in this capacity are described as "incidental contact." (Example: A faculty member reminds students of the importance of regular class attendance.)
3. Some instructional programs have developed "student success" labs and/or courses but this practice has not been assessed for effectiveness or widely communicated across the campus. (Examples: Nursing, biology and math have adopted variations of this into curriculum support options.)
4. Many vocational programs and/or academic career tracks have "clubs" which sponsor activities that connect faculty and staff with students and these, at least anecdotally, improve student satisfaction, success, and retention rates. (Examples: Engineering, Pre-Med, and Agriculture)
5. Many faculty chairs and directors serve as program advisors that provide guidance and counseling for students entering their academic disciplines. This occurs after class, during club meetings, or at departmental social, recognition and outreach events.

The Dimension IX team identified several examples where the college has employed **strategies targeted to improve student's success**. However, they were not intentionally designed for new students and in many cases not sustained to induce long-term change. The following provide evidence that the college has made attempts to review and implement strategies to improve student success:

1. Attendance at higher education meetings - IUPUI Assessment Conference; League of Innovation Conference
2. Participation in multi-institutional initiatives focused on new students - Central Valley Consortium of College and Universities
3. Institution-wide exposure to external experts - Hunter Boylan (Developmental Education); Ruth Stiehl (Program Level Outcomes); Vincent Tinto (Learning Communities); John Levin (Diversity in Community Colleges); Patty Davis (CSUB, Active and Collaborative Learning Strategies); Norena Badway (Program level assessment tools); Kate Kinsella (Academic Language Development)
4. Broad exposure to institution-based knowledge and expertise about new student experience - Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

**Recommended Grade: D**

**Recommended Action Items:**

1. Building a culture of staff development (High priority) Establish appropriate revenue streams and the organizational structures to integrate a faculty and staff development effort that would conceptualize and develop an institution-wide continuous quality improvement model that would include focus on new-students, pedagogy, technology integration, and processes at all levels. Galvanize opportunities for key instructional and service components to meet to discuss, prioritize, and implement change through focused Unit Planning and Program Reviews conducted by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.
2. Championing a "Renegade" Student Culture (High priority) Create a CLIP or Senate



Committee to champion a true "Renegade" student culture that fosters, among other things, student engagement. This culture will value active participation of students in governance, attendance at intellectual, cultural, and athletic events, and an expectation that students accept more responsibility for their total development. The college should promote and recognize this behavior using video links at the college's web site, internal and external media releases, and at institutional and departmental ceremonies that celebrate student success. There is already an interested faculty task force in place as a result of the March 2007 BC Great Teachers Seminar.

3. Implementing the CCSSE survey on campus (Medium priority) The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) looks at student engagement. The college should alternate the CCSSE with the Noel Levitz survey every other year.
4. Continuing the Noel Levitz surveys (Medium priority) Continue the Noel Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction. This would alternate with the CCSSE activity.
5. Communicating with CSUB (Low priority) Expand communications with CSUB to streamline and strengthen transfer patterns and mechanisms to track student success.
6. Expanding Orientation (Low priority) Expand orientation to involve vocational programs and academic disciplines that deploy faculty and staff in broader advisory roles to support clearly defined student success strategies.