

“Your Success is Our Success”

CONCLUSION

Reflecting on the Self-Study Process

Estrella Mountain Community College’s faculty and staff have spent the last year and a half conducting an institutional self-study. The College has also provided an opportunity for the community to learn with us about our strengths and challenges. This institutional self-study report supports Estrella Mountain’s request for 10-year accreditation from The Higher Learning Commission: NCA. As the college fast approaches its 10-year anniversary as a campus, everyone at Estrella Mountain looks forward to re-accreditation and serving the West Valley for many years to come.

Purposes of the Institutional Self-Study

As evidenced by this report, Estrella Mountain has fulfilled the purposes of its institutional self-study. The College has:

- ◆ Provided documentation to assist the evaluation team and the NCA Commission in their evaluation of Estrella Mountain Community College.
- ◆ Demonstrated that Estrella Mountain Community College meets all criteria for continued accreditation and all the General Institutional Requirements.
- ◆ Analyzed and evaluated institutional strengths, concerns, opportunities and challenges in order to continually improve all aspects of Estrella Mountain Community College and effectively prepare for the future.
- ◆ Demonstrated how Estrella Mountain Community College addressed the concerns raised from our initial self-study.
- ◆ Developed and implemented a process for communication that will continue to support institutional improvement.

HIGHLIGHTS OF STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES



Included here are selected strengths and challenges that were among those identified by the criterion teams during the self-study process. Complete strengths, challenges, and recommendations for Criteria 1-5 are found within the text of each criterion chapter. To ensure that the self-study will aid in the continuous growth and progress of Estrella Mountain, all of the challenges and recommendations will be incorporated into the latest update of the Estrella Mountain Strategic Plan during the spring 2002 semester.

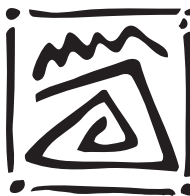
CRITERION I – Mission and Purposes

Strengths



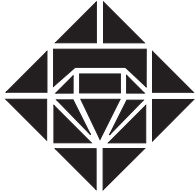
- ◆ Estrella Mountain's Mission and Mission Goals are the driving force of both the Strategic Plan and the Institutional Effectiveness Model. This impacts all aspects of the institution and drives the planning process and implementation of the plans.
- ◆ The Mission and Mission Goals statement reflects a commitment to excellence and student centered higher learning by: Emphasizing support for overall student success; Addressing multiple student needs which reflects the overall mission of being a comprehensive community college; and tailoring its programs to the unique needs of the Southwest Valley.
- ◆ Members of the Estrella Mountain community understand and value the College Mission and Mission Goal Statement.

Challenges



- ◆ Keeping the community informed of the College's Mission and Mission Goals as the population in the service area grows.

CRITERION II - Resources



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**SECTION A – GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES,
AND STUDENT POPULATION**

Strengths

- ◆ Estrella Mountain’s leadership council includes employees from all levels of the organization, which encourages participation in both strategic and operational areas.

Challenges

- ◆ Estrella Mountain will need to recruit and hire high quality, diverse employees while given limited resources and complex hiring practices.

SECTION B – PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Strengths

- ◆ The College facilities master planning process enables the institution to capitalize on emerging opportunities and respond to rapid growth.

Challenges

- ◆ The College needs to identify resources to maintain high quality facilities, technology and staffing support in the face of rapid growth.

SECTION C – FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Strengths

- ◆ Estrella Mountain actively manages enrollment growth to bring new dollars to the institution through the Tuition and Fee Rebate Program and other FTSE -based allocations.

Challenges

Chapter 9

- ◆ Estrella Mountain will need to continue to provide a high quality educational experience with or without bond funding.

CRITERION III – Educational and Other Purposes



Student Success and Retention Strengths

- ◆ The College developed a Student Success Plan supported by Student Success Coordinator and directly linked to a significant part of the Estrella Mountain's institutional effectiveness process.

Student Success and Retention Challenges

- ◆ There is room for improvement in the overall successful course completion rate for the College.

General Education Strengths

- ◆ The General Education program at Estrella Mountain helps students develop effective critical thinking and communication abilities.



General Education Challenges

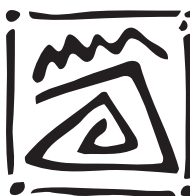
- ◆ Only two measures of academic assessment have been implemented for general education.

Transfer Education Strengths

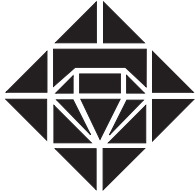
- ◆ Estrella Mountain students transferring to other institutions have GPA's that compare to the general population of the institution to which they transfer while the number of students that transfer to the ASU and UofA continue to increase.

Transfer Education Challenges

- ◆ While many students transfer, associate degree completion rates are lower than desired.



Developmental Education Strengths



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- ◆ Developmental students who complete the program sequence of courses and then take MAT121 complete at rates higher than those students who waive the developmental course sequence.

Developmental Education Challenges

- ◆ Completion rates in math are generally lower than District averages, and completion rates in math have been declining over time..

Workforce Development Strengths

- ◆ Estrella Mountain continues to expand its occupational certificate and degree programs. The college has increased its offering to 24 certificate and degree programs from 7 in 1996-1997, and the number of completers in certificates and occupational degrees has grown significantly in recent years.

Workforce Development Challenges

- ◆ The growth of occupational degrees and certificates conferred slowed in 2000-2001.

Student Support Services Strengths

- ◆ According to the results of the 2000 - 2001 Noel – Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey, Estrella Mountain student’s are more likely to have their expectations met, have higher satisfaction levels, and are more likely to re-enroll than students at other 2-year institutions across the nation.

Student Support Services Challenges

- ◆ As the student population grows and becomes more technologically proficient, the demand for remote access to resources increases.

Community Education Strengths

Chapter 9

- ◆ Participation rates for credit-based courses continue to improve.

Community Education Challenges

- ◆ Class format issues (length, timing, level) were identified by students as areas needing improvement.



CRITERION IV - Planning

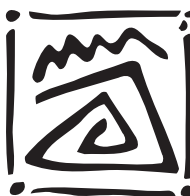
Strengths

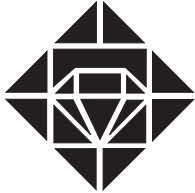
- ◆ The college has an excellent strategic planning model that integrates all time frames and types of planning.
- ◆ All divisions have participated in planning sessions that link division objectives to the larger Estrella Mountain Strategic Plan. And evaluations of the Divisional Planning sessions demonstrate that employees valued the process.
- ◆ The Student Academic Assessment Process is faculty owned and driven.



Challenges

- ◆ The anticipated 2004 General Bond must be integrated into all strategic and long-term planning efforts.
- ◆ Adjunct faculty awareness and number of adjunct faculty in the SAAC process is limited.
- ◆ With the growth of the campus, keeping the new players involved in the processes and/or encouraging them to be a part of the Estrella Culture will be increasingly difficult.





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CRITERION V - Integrity

Strengths

- ◆ Estrella Mountain’s five Core Values were developed *by employees – for employees* and these values guide employees in their daily life on campus
- ◆ Estrella Mountain and the MCCCDC demonstrate strong commitment to the building of a diverse education environment

Challenges

- ◆ The College needs to keep the institutional Core Values relevant and active in a rapidly expanding college staff

REQUEST FOR 10-YEAR ACCREDITATION

This institutional Self-Study serves as Estrella Mountain’s formal application for ten-year accreditation and continued affiliation with The Higher Learning Commission: NCA. The College has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to quality education and to the communities it serves.

Chapter 9