

# Journey of *Self* Discovery

## Reaffirmation of Accreditation: **Journey Report, November 2009**

Greetings to all; the co-chairs Roma Weaver and Ray Ramirez are pleased to report that we have made significant progress in fulfilling our self study timeline goals since the September report and are well on our way towards the completion of the first draft of chapter four as well as good progress on the entire document. A more detailed report on the self study progress is included below. The District Accreditation Committee has requested and received documents which answer the WASC teams' questions and concerns/recommendations from the last reaffirmation of accreditation visit to the district colleges and Continuing Education.

There were four district-wide recommendations for which we now have documented as evidence all the responses to the WASC teams, which can be included in the institutions' chapter three as a progress report. The recommendations were concentrated in the following areas of concern: the need to create a district-wide strategic plan; identify and eliminate barriers that limit the diversity of the District's workforce; the building of a "culture of evidence" in the District by developing an enhanced research function in the district office, colleges and Continuing Education; and finally, that the District create a clear delineation of function within its institutions towards a goal of achieving better communication among its constituents.

## **Focus Groups Progress Report, November, 2009**

Individual reports from the co-chairs of the focus groups A, B, C and D indicate that the research, analysis, and writing functions are progressing satisfactorily at this time and coincide with the established timelines for this task. Assisted by the data from the student and employee surveys, home group discussions and feedback, and other District data, focus groups submitted or were preparing preliminary drafts of their respective subchapters by November 20, 2009. Some of the drafts were still "under construction" but will be made available to the leadership team soon. These reports constitute the contents of chapter four, which coincidentally is entitled *Self Study Findings* in the WASC manual. Currently there are drafts prepared for chapters one, two and three and along with the soon to be available chapter four, will represent most of the writing to be completed. Chapter five, the 2010 action plan, is derived from the recommended growth areas in the guide questions responses of the four focus groups. The recommended number of items included in the action plan is three to five.

## **Self Study of Institutional Effectiveness Web Page**

Last year, we established a self study webpage accessible at <http://accreditation.sdce.edu> or from the SDCE website at “faculty resources”. Please access it for the latest in news and events and other important items concerning our self study efforts, including these periodic updates.

## **Classroom Observations Successfully Concluded**

The classroom observation project was successfully completed in November with final data available on November 30, 2009. Paid faculty volunteers participated in over 200 classroom observations recently to assist us in determining, for reaffirmation of accreditation purposes, whether we are validating that students are successful learners. (WASC Focus on Learning Manual, 2006). Selected faculty received training in classroom observation strategies and viewed classes beginning in mid- October. The final report is due in late November.

## **Student and Employee Survey Results are Available on the District Research and Planning Webpage**

As you may recall, the District Office of Institutional Research and Planning conducted randomly selected surveys concerning Institutional effectiveness for the purpose of informing the 2010 self study concerning important aspects of SDCE. These results may be viewed on the [IRP webpage](#). The reports are listed as briefings or as the full report, which includes all the questions presented in the survey instrument.

## **Progress on the Self Study Document**

Here, for your information, is the update of the status of the five chapters and the appendix of the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Self Study;

Preface --draft 2 is ready.

Chapter 1--Community and Student Profile—working draft up on Self Study Website; stakeholders reviewed a draft during the 2009 Convocation.

Chapter 2, Student Learning Outcomes—the first and second drafts have been submitted.

Chapter 3, Progress Report of the 2007 Action Plan items—the first draft of this chapter was ready as of end of August 2009. The second draft is completed.

Chapter 4, the self study—Focus groups met the timeline deadline for the submission of preliminary drafts by November 20, 2009. Some drafts are still “under construction” but all groups showed progress reports during the working session of the November meeting of the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team meeting earlier this month.

Chapter 5, the new action plan-- Work is planned on this chapter now that preliminary growth recommendations are coming in. This will be a project of the leadership team as outlined in the WASC Focus on Learning Accreditation Manual.

Appendix-- This is in progress as well as is the eEvidence box containing accreditation evidence. Please view at <http://accreditation.sdce.edu>

We are planning to have a working draft of most of the document by the late fall and a final draft of the entire document in the spring of 2010. Subsequently, the document will be submitted to the SDCCD Governing Board and to the WASC Schools Division,

### **Co-Chairs Attended the Third WASC Training in September 2009.**

The SDCE Reaffirmation of Accreditation Self Study team consisting of Marne Foster and Ray Ramirez attended the third WASC training for institutions conducting self studies in preparation for onsite visits in the fall and spring of 2010 on September 17, 2009 in San Diego. This all day workshop was the final meeting and is the third in the series. SDCE accreditation efforts were reviewed and found to be progressing satisfactorily. Emphasis was made on the importance of the action plan, or chapter five, to the self study process. The action plan is evidence of analysis of the instructional and student services in Continuing Education and is indicative of a measured, thoughtful process that culminates in selected areas of improvement after careful analysis of the data.