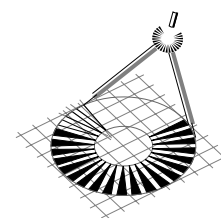


Chapter 10

Planning, Evaluation, and Decision-Making



INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters have described and thoroughly evaluated the extent to which Chandler-Gilbert Community College is accomplishing its mission and purposes. It has been demonstrated that the college has effectively organized, and is securing additional financial, physical, and human resources to face the future successfully. Evidence has been provided regarding the quality and quantity of instructional programs and student and administrative services, and the plans for those programs in the future. This chapter will address how the college planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes will enable us to continue effectively serving our students and our community. Thus, it addresses Criterion 4.

Criterion 4: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

PLANNING

CGCC has a comprehensive planning process which uses information from the college's past and present conditions to guide decisions on courses of future action. This planning process is based on the following principles:

- **Planning is an integral part of the existing organizational structure and cycles.** It is an on-going process, for which all employees are responsible. Strategic planning occurs in 10-year and 5-year cycles; operational planning occurs in 5-year and 1-year cycles. Refinements occur at the strategic and operational levels on a continuous basis.
- **Planning is based on data.** The college uses multiple sources of information, such as enrollment reports, program review data, revenue and expenditure analyses, demographic data, and findings from environmental scanning reports.

- **Planning is participative and all staff members are responsible for formulating and implementing the plans.** Our strength as an institution is our people; we value their dedication, their skills, their opinions, and their involvement in the planning process. In addition to employees, members of the community, by way of the President's Advisory Council, as well as students, by way of the elected student leadership, provide feedback and direction.
- **Planning is linked to budgeting;** resources are provided for the goals and objectives identified.
- **Planning processes as well as the products of the plan are continuously evaluated so that improvement can be achieved.** Planning and evaluation are inextricably linked.

The NCA Self-Study process came at an opportune time in the college planning cycles. The previous strategic plan expired in 1996. There were changes in community economic development and education needs. The district office had revised its mission statement in 1995, which prompted the college to revise its mission statement to align with the district's (see Chapter 3). In addition, new initiatives such as the building expansion program, the implementation of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment plan, and the Apollo technology project have been underway for at least one year. Therefore, we were able to use much of the evaluative data derived from the Self-Study to help drive the new 1996-2001 strategic plan.

The CGCC Strategic Plan

In the spring of 1996, all employees participated in a strategic planning process called, "Planning for the Next Century," that resulted in the CGCC Strategic Plan for 1996-2001. The newly revised mission had been approved by the Governing Board the previous semester, and the 10-year Curriculum Directions and the 5-Year Strategic Plan for Instruction served as the centerpiece for the college-wide process. These documents are available in the NCA Resource Room.

The goal of CGCC's planning process was, and will continue to be, to meet the needs of our students and our communities. Therefore, strategic planning was based upon demographic analysis and environmental scanning, coupled with a wide variety of institutional effectiveness data. In addition, ten goals or "key result areas" for the next five years were identified by the executive administration: enrollment management/marketing, outcomes assessment, instructional support, campus planning process, staff development, development of new programs, technology, diversity, community involvement, and integrated curriculum. These key result areas were derived directly from the mission strategic goals (see Chapter 3).

The Deans facilitated the planning process with their respective departments and divisions. Departments and divisions developed 5-year plans with goals and objectives that addressed the key result areas. Department managers and division chairs received feedback and communication about other related department's plans from their Deans and their colleagues throughout the planning process. In addition to departments, certain college committees and councils drafted 5-year plans in collaboration with their Dean. Then each Dean developed a comprehensive

unit-level plan, that incorporated the department/division and committee/council plans. The Deans' plans were then synthesized into the college-wide plan for 1996-2001.

A visual diagram of CGCC's strategic planning process is in Appendix 10-A, while all supplemental materials for strategic planning are available in the NCA Resource Room.

The Role of the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (SPBUD)

The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (SPBUD) provides the link between planning and resource allocation. This council has representatives from all the various institutional constituencies including the President, Deans, Faculty Association President and President-Elect, Chair of the Division Chairs, PSA President, MAT President and President of Associated Students. The Instructional Computing Coordinator, Computer Services Coordinator, Telecommunications/Media Director and Fiscal Agent serve as resources on this committee. SPBUD serves as a review board for all budget requests to ensure that the requests are in line with the established goals. The members of the council represent various viewpoints, provide important suggestions, and are key to the final allocation of annual capital and operational budgets for the college. This process provides the link between strategic planning, budgeting, and the allocation of resources while involving more staff in the decision-making process.

Because the planning processes are designed to incorporate input from internal and external constituencies on a regular basis, updates and revisions of the college's strategic plan reflect current needs while being sensitive to future concerns and opportunities. The college's current building construction program, the development of new centers at the former Williams Air Force Base and Sun Lakes, and the development of new community service programs, such as the Southeast Valley Neighborhood Leadership College, are all evidence of the ability of the college to remain flexible and responsive. The institution has used its strategic planning process to keep the college well-positioned to maintain its quality programs and to respond to future challenges.

EVALUATION

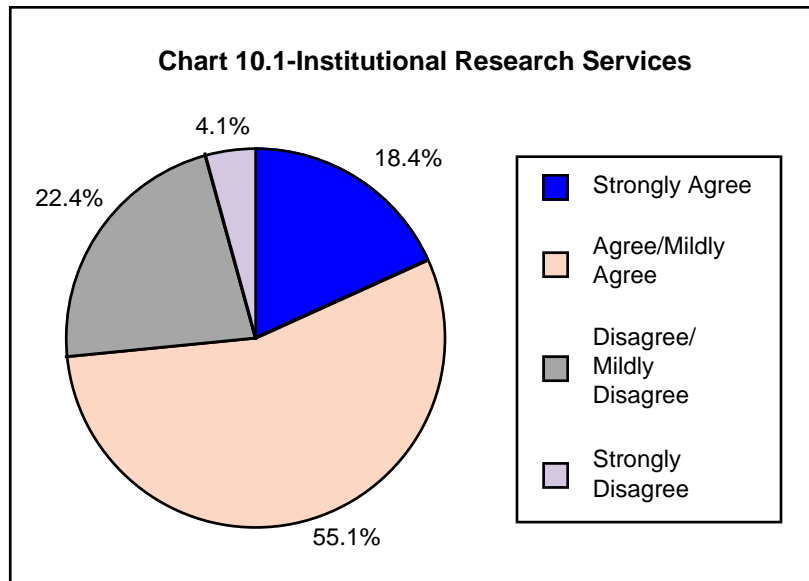
Like planning, evaluation occurs at all levels of the institution.

College-Wide Evaluation

College-wide evaluation is coordinated by two committees in collaboration with the Institutional Research Specialist. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee developed the student outcomes assessment plan for the college and has been overseeing implementation and data analysis. The Outcomes Committee has representatives from each academic division and a variety of support personnel, under the direction of the Dean of Instruction, with support from the Institutional Research Specialist. Student learning outcomes assessment is addressed in detail in Chapter 11. The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee provides additional input and support for the evaluation of college outcomes in regard to the strategic plan for the years 1996-2001. Membership on the IE Committee includes a cross-section of the college community, under the direction of the Dean of Administrative Services, with support from the Institutional Research Specialist.

A copy of CGCC's Institutional Effectiveness Process is in Appendix 10-B. The Institutional Effectiveness Plan for 1996-2001, along with supporting documentation is available in the NCA Resource Room. Institutional effectiveness data will be reported on a yearly basis to the President's Executive Council (PEC), the SPBUD Committee, the Academic Leadership Team (ALT), and the broader college community. This data will be used to evaluate how effective the planning and budgeting processes are in achieving specific goals and objectives. The resulting data can then be used to identify strengths and weaknesses and to address concerns and opportunities early enough to begin necessary action.

In addition to supporting the student assessment and institutional effectiveness college-wide programs, the Office of Institutional Research provides a variety of reports to the President, the Deans, Division Chairs, and Department Managers. Examples are survey results, student enrollment reports, transfer reports, retention reports, population projections, revenue and expenditure analyses, student demographic profiles, and environmental scans. Chart 10.1 indicates most employees are satisfied with the services of the Institutional Research Office.



Student and Administrative Services, Employee Survey
Question 3. Institutional Research (research projects, statistical analysis, etc.)
has an adequate range of services.

The addition of the Institutional Research Specialist position has helped the college improve evaluation functions since the time of the last Self-Study. However, one person cannot fulfill all research needs for a developing college, especially given the labor intensive needs of the student outcomes assessment program (described fully in Chapter 11), and the difficulty of providing planning data for such a rapidly expanding and changing community. Therefore, the college may need to consider finding additional support for this area in the future.

The district-wide Apollo technology project was initiated, in large part, to help the Maricopa Colleges use data more effectively. Apollo will develop and implement learner-centered, financial records, human resources, and electronic mail systems that will support effective teaching and learning within the Maricopa Community Colleges, both now and in the future. One goal of this project is to make it easier for employees to extract data for evaluation. Enrollment trends, comparisons to national norms, student tracking for retention and achievement, and other data gathering functions will be enhanced significantly by the new technologies.

Department and Divisions Evaluation

In addition to college-wide evaluation, there are evaluation processes at all levels of the institution that are used to review and evaluate instructional programs, support services, and administrative functions; to strengthen existing programs, services, and procedures; and to plan for new programs which impact students, faculty and staff. Previous chapters have described many of these evaluation procedures for resources, instructional programs, academic services, student services, administrative services, and college procedures. Employee evaluation processes have been described thoroughly in Chapter 5 on Human Resources.

Classroom Assessment and Evaluation

The faculty have embraced classroom research methodologies, using techniques from Pat Cross and Tom Angelo's book, *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, to evaluate and improve teaching and learning processes. Various faculty development activities have provided training in designing and implementing assessment tools, interpreting the data gathered, and acting on the results.

Continuous Improvement

An NCA Forum on Continuous Improvement was held in March of 1996 at which the Self-Study Committee on Instructional Programs and Services facilitated activities to help all faculty and staff understand the importance of ongoing assessment for the evaluation and continuous improvement of CGCC programs and services. Training was provided for all employees to be able to design assessment tools appropriate for their needs to gather the feedback necessary to improve and grow. Plans for continuing this training have been made for fall, 1996.

The institutional effectiveness process, program evaluations, department evaluations, faculty and staff evaluations, and assessment of student academic achievement process ensure that structured evaluation processes are continuous and provide meaningful and useful information to the college's planning processes.

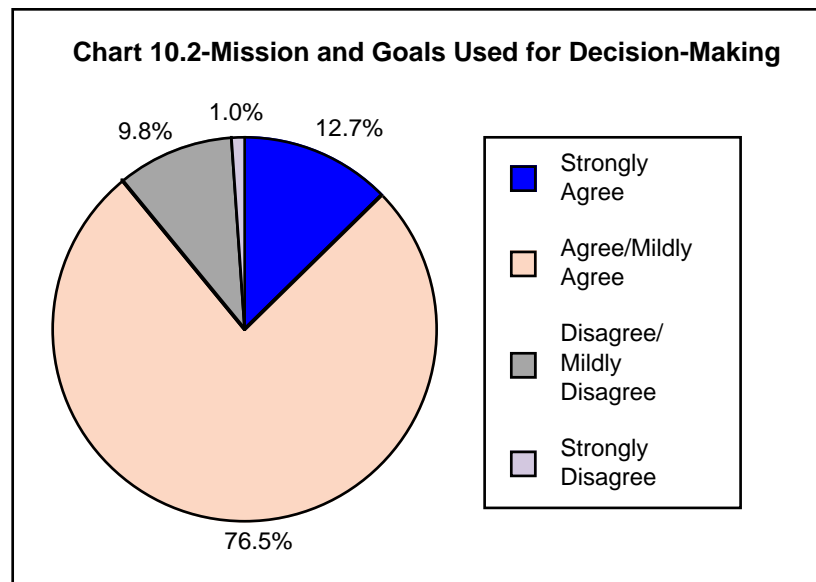
DECISION-MAKING

The college's decision-making processes are capable of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges in the future. For each internal decision, the process is varied and depends on the type of decision to be made. Some decisions are made within a department, when results do not impact other departments. Other decisions are made in a collaborative manner within existing organizational structures. For example, instructional program decisions often affect more than one division, and are therefore discussed at meetings of the Academic Leadership Team, with representation from all divisions and the Deans.

Changes in the registration process affects the Admissions and Records office, as well as advisement, fiscal, and other offices; therefore, discussions are held at SAAS meetings (Student and Administrative Services) before decisions are made. Formal decisions flow through a series of discussions and approvals that may include managers, administrators, the President's Executive Council, and/or other committees depending on the appropriate avenue.

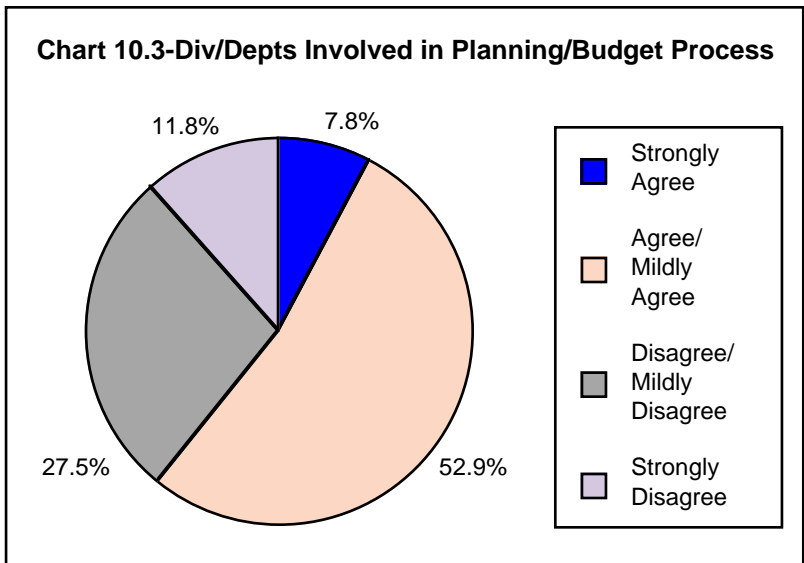
The Self-Study process included a review of the planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes. Also, employees were surveyed to determine the extent to which these processes are working within the college. Survey instruments, compiled results, and employee comments can be found in the NCA Resource Room.

One of the most striking results of the surveys, was that 89% of employees agreed that the mission and goals statements are used as a basis for institutional decision-making. Chart 10.2 displays employee feedback which indicates that the decisions made are well-aligned with the mission and goals of the college.



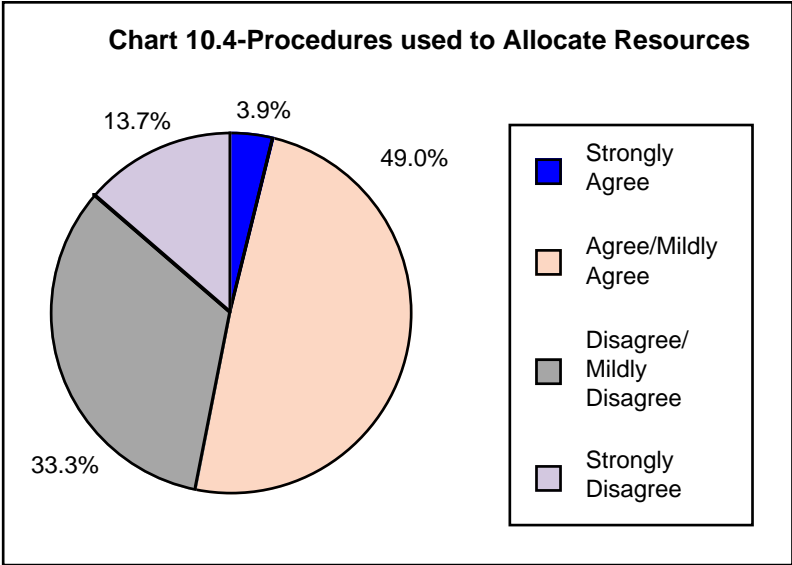
Mission and Goals, Employee Survey
Question 11. The mission and goals statements are used as a basis for institutional decision-making.

Approximately 60% of the employees indicate that divisions and departments are involved in the strategic planning and budgeting processes in a significant way.



Financial Resources Survey
 Question 21. The strategic planning/budget process involves divisions and departments in a significant way.

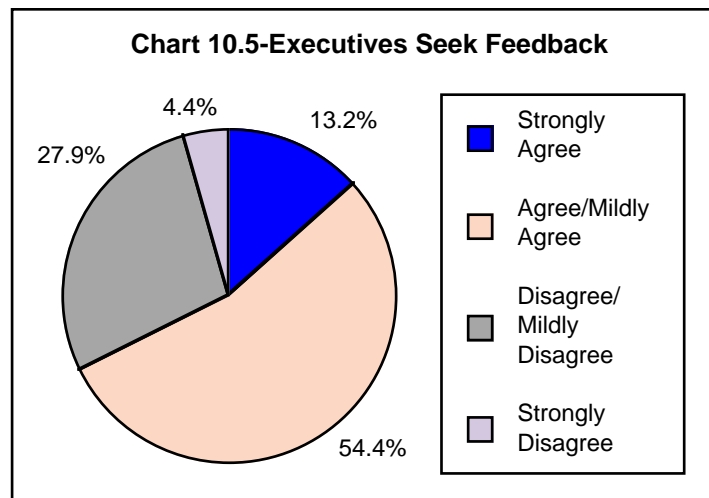
Chart 10.3 shows though that there is still improvement which could take place within the process. Survey comments show employees feel that the procedures used to allocate resources need improvement, as shown in Chart 10.4.



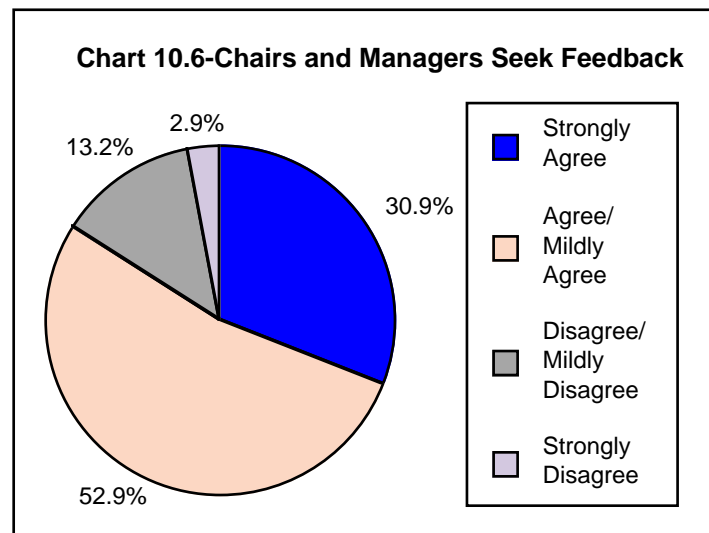
Financial Resources Survey
 Question 15. At CGCC, a planned, systematic set of procedures is used to allocate resources.

Communication may be part of the problem, as only 42% of survey respondents indicated that they receive adequate communication from their SPBUD representative. Survey comments also indicate that the link between planning, budgeting, and evaluation needs strengthening. Although, the components of the institutional effectiveness process are in place, progress needs to be accomplished on evaluation of results and linking findings into strategic planning and budgeting processes.

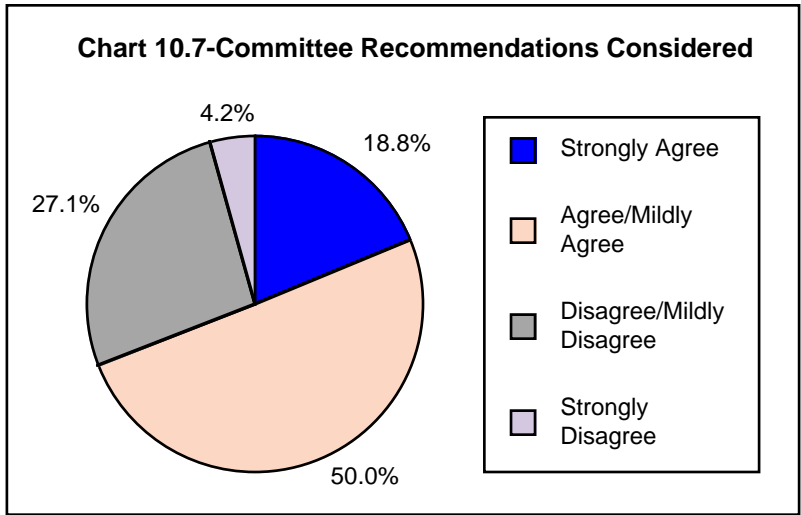
On Self-Study surveys about decision-making and communication, employees agreed that the executive team (the President and the Deans) seeks feedback from all levels within the college. Satisfaction with feedback from Division Chairs and managers was even stronger. Charts 10.5, 10.6, and 10.7 provide a visual illustration of the survey responses.



Governance and Organizational Structure Survey
 Question 3. CGCC executive team (President and Deans) seeks feedback from all levels within the college.



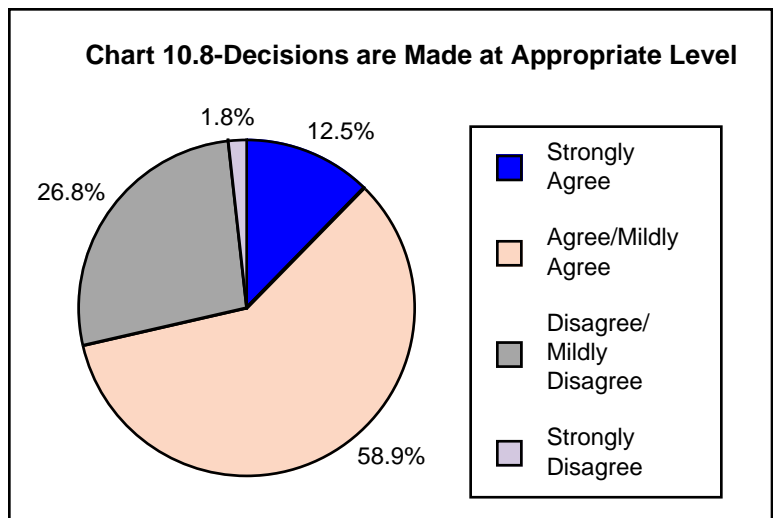
Governance and Organizational Structure Survey
 Question 6. Division chairs and department managers seek feedback from members of their division/department.



Governance and Organizational Structure Survey
 Question 8. Committee recommendations are taken into account as the executive team makes final decisions.

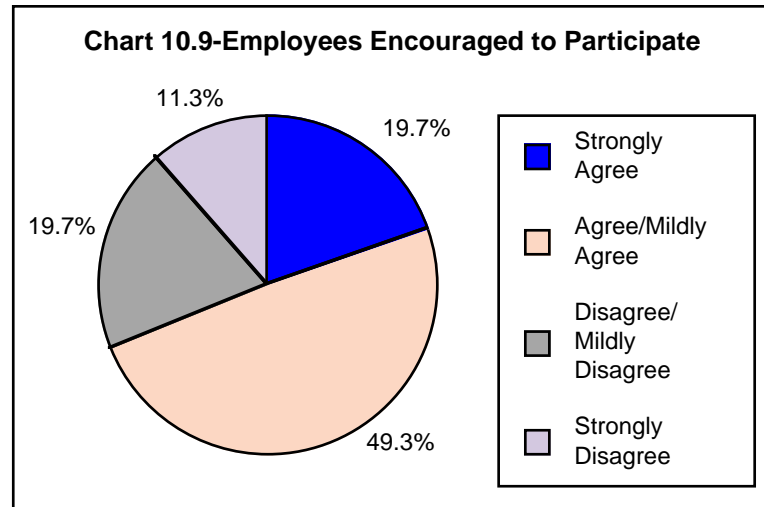
The previous charts indicate that the decision-making processes are very participatory, and feedback is sought from employees whenever possible.

Seventy percent of employees agreed that decisions are made at the appropriate level in the organization. It appeared from survey comments that those who were not satisfied had concerns regarding lack of control over decisions affecting their lives.



Governance and Organizational Structure Survey
 Question 9. Decisions are made at the appropriate level in the organization.

Sixty-nine percent of employees indicate satisfaction with the participatory decision-making processes as shown in Chart 10.9. Those who were not satisfied indicated that they have concerns about being encouraged to participate, but not feeling as though their opinions were adequately considered.



Human Resources Survey

Question 16. CGCC's executive administration (the President and the Deans) encourages employees to participate in decision-making.

Because planning, evaluation and decision making is an area that CGCC is constantly striving to improve, the administration gathered examples from other colleges that have award-winning strategic planning and budgeting models, such as College of Lake County in Illinois. In the College of Lake County 1995 Self-Study Report, they indicated that "three out of five survey respondents believe that the internal decision-making processes work well" (p. 93). Sixty percent of Lake County employees felt that their decision-making processes relative to strategic planning, budgeting, and evaluation worked well. At CGCC, 69% of the employees agreed that employees are encouraged to participate in decision-making, 72% of the employees believed that decisions were being made at the appropriate level in the organization, and 89% believe that mission and goals statements are used as a basis for institutional decision-making.

In general, evaluation results indicate that the current system for planning, evaluation, and decision making is adequate, and participation is encouraged throughout the college. CGCC has effectively used its planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes to keep the college well-positioned to maintain its quality programs and to respond to future challenges.

SUMMARY

The college's planning processes define and communicate the direction of the college. Resources are directed to priorities as expressed by the goals, objectives, and department/division plans. Finally, the process builds the consensus on the

future of the college and commitment to that future. The college encourages continuous improvement, and has the capacity to change and respond to anticipated and unanticipated challenges.

Strengths

- A strategic planning and budgeting process, an institutional effectiveness process, and a student learning outcomes assessment process are in place.
- MCCC'D's Apollo project, which is now in the initial implementation phase, should provide more efficient and effective ways to accomplish our planning, data gathering, and evaluation processes.
- The collection of a wide variety of institutional effectiveness data has been improved by the addition of an institutional research position within the last five years.
- Employees agree that mission and goals statements are used as a basis for institutional decision-making.
- The college has the capacity to change and respond to future needs, encourages continuous improvement, and is responsive to the changing needs of its constituencies.

Challenges

- It is a challenge to provide adequate planning data for communities that are changing so rapidly.
- Employees feel that the procedures used to allocate resources need improvement.
- The components of the institutional effectiveness process are in place, but further work needs to be accomplished on evaluation of results and linking findings into strategic planning processes.
- Despite the addition of an Institutional Research Specialist, there are many college agendas, such as the institutional effectiveness process, the student learning outcomes assessment process, and the planning for growth and building expansion that will require data collection and evaluation. There are limited financial resources to expand staff in the area of institutional research.
