

should be a systematic plan in place to implement the operational plans at the unit/department level, particularly the student support services, administrative and finance units. Second, the College needs to provide extensive training for the middle level management on how to develop a self-evaluation plan for their own units/departments.

Projection

Capital Community College is currently completing the first cycle of its planning process. The Planning Review Committee is preparing a final report that will be submitted to the College Senate for further actions and recommendations regarding the new cycle (second round) of the planning process. The President has informed the College Senate about the new cycle of the planning process to start in fall 2001. The Committee will use lessons learned from the previous cycle to modify planning procedures as needed. As the first cycle of the planning process (1997-2001) was heavily involved with the activities of strategic planning, the second round of the process (2001-2005) will focus on the implementation of the operational plans at the unit/department level.

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

Description

The College Governance system is designed to provide a viable channel of communication within the College among faculty, staff, students and administration. The primary purpose of this system is to enable the College to efficiently and effectively achieve and maintain excellence in its undertakings. It is also designed to foster participation in the decision-making process that enables the College to accomplish its mission. The governance system consists of a central body, the College Senate, and several standing committees: Curriculum and Academic Policies; Planning Review; Faculty, Staff and Student Development; College Affairs; Diversity; Information Resources and Management. Each of these committees reports to the College Senate on a regular basis. In the past two-years a system-wide governance structure has been established among the twelve community colleges in the State of Connecticut. Due to its perceived effectiveness and success, the governance system at Capital Community College was used as the model in designing and implementing the statewide structure.

Appraisal

In 1996, the NEASC visiting team cited the "lack of a clearly articulated unifying vision" to guide the College Senate and committees of the governance system. Since then, the Senate has attempted to establish a more cohesive interaction among governance committees by including standing committee reports on the agenda of all its meetings. Moreover, the College's mission statement is used as the standard to guide the governance committees. To eliminate confusion about the respective roles of the President and the Senate noted in the 1996 accreditation visit, the College now operates under the following policy: The President has the authority to establish ad hoc and other committees at his discretion, and the Senate requests that the President allow them to fall within the current governance structure. The Senate sends its recommendations to the President for approval, modification or rejection. The Senate has no authority to usurp the authority or decisions of the President.

In response to the 1996 visiting team's concerns about effective planning, implementation and follow-through on governance issues, the Planning Review Committee was created. In the past three years this Committee has been instrumental in assessing the strategic planning effort.

The College has also remedied a problem noted in 1996 that "The means whereby the College Senate and the standing committees address issues that develop between spring and fall semesters does not appear to be clear." Now College Senate policy allows for meetings in the summer for emergencies that might arise or should the administration seek guidance on an issue from faculty and staff. For example, in 2000 the Senate held a scheduled meeting in July to ensure continuity between the two academic years.

Projection

The College Senate projects that for the next several years it will be especially concerned with beginning work with the President's Executive Committee to examine the College budget in its details and to have a more practical part in the allocation/designation of funds. The Senate will continue to monitor the effects of the College's change of location to Main Street, Hartford, now set to take place by fall 2002. The Senate will lead in reassessing and reassigning the designated areas of responsibilities for all Standing Committees of the College governance system. The Senate will urge greater democratic staff participation in the decision-making processes in the areas of curriculum and academic standards; marketing and community relations; registration and graduation procedures; recruitment and retention activities; development and planning for the College.

Standard 4 Programs and Instruction

Description

This section addresses Capital Community College's efforts, since the last comprehensive accreditation visit, to enhance institutional effectiveness by strengthening its fulfillment of the Programs and Instruction Standard. The units with responsibility for delivering the College's programs are the Academic and Continuing Education Divisions. Courses, credit or developmental, that support degree and certificate programs are in the Academic Division and all other courses and programs are offered by the Continuing Education Division.

Academic planning and evaluation, program development and review, and assessment of instruction, student learning, and academic support services are pillars of the Division's efforts to continuously improve its effectiveness.

Structured academic planning with a feedback loop is now a College priority. Capital has established Academic Division Objectives in support of the College Strategic Goals. In turn, each academic department formulated Department/Unit Strategic Goals that are consistent with those of the Academic Division. Annually, attainment of department and division objectives is evaluated, objectives are revised, and future plans formulated.

A significant proportion of the institutional budget directly supports academic objectives. In 2000/2001, 68% of the College budget was allotted to faculty and academic support staff salaries, faculty released time for academic initiatives, academic equipment and supplies, and faculty professional development. Division plans to improve student retention formed the basis