In our April/May SACSLetter, we noted that the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is comprised of two entities: The first is the Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), which is concerned with public and private elementary, middle, and secondary schools and school districts throughout the United States. Institutions of higher education, however, are represented in SACS by:

The College Delegate Assembly

The Assembly is made up of one voting representative (usually the C.E.O. or designee) from each of the 800 institutions accredited by SACS in eleven southern and southwestern states and Latin America. One of the primary responsibilities of the CDA is electing the 77-member Commission on Colleges. The CDA also monitors and guides the Commission’s work and approves all changes in accreditation standards, as well as setting dues for member institutions.

The Commission on Colleges

Among other duties, the 77 members of the COC recommend to the CDA standards for candidacy and membership for good standing with SACS and, most important, take final action on the accreditation status of member institutions and candidates. The Commission also authorizes special visits to college campuses, as needed, and nominates to the CDA candidates to succeed outgoing members of the Commission.

The Executive Council

The Executive Council is made up of thirteen members elected by the COC to serve as the executive arm of the Commission and to operate on behalf of the COC and CDA between sessions. The Council carries out a significant portion of the COC’s work, including interpreting the Commission’s policies and procedures, approving goals and objectives, overseeing the budget, evaluating the work of its president, and developing new programs, projects, and policies.

These are the essential entities that award and monitor accreditation at Del Mar College and 800 other voluntary member institutions.
QEP Update

The development of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is required of every member of the Commission on Colleges when it undergoes reaffirmation of accreditation every ten years. Del Mar College’s QEP is focused on student success in mathematics.

The Research and Design Committee, a subset of the larger QEP Steering Committee, met on June 11 with the QEP committee from the Math Department for the purpose of reviewing the qualitative data gleaned from the faculty survey that was conducted during the spring. Faculty members who responded to the survey indicated that the following mathematical skills are required within their programs: logic, basic mathematics (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, fractions, decimals, percentages, and ratios), measurements, simple algebra, the creation and interpretation of graphs and charts, and simple statistics.

The team is working on a definition for student learning to guide the process of developing strategies to address the QEP objectives, which will be further refined at a meeting on July 9. The final version of the definitions and objectives will be unveiled during the Summer Academy. Participants in the Summer Academy will then begin to develop strategies to address the QEP objectives.

Dr. Patricia Walter
QEP Faculty Coordinator
Communications, Languages, and Reading

A New Writer On Board...

This month Steve Sellers began working part-time on the SACS project, primarily as a writer and editor on the certification compliance document. Steve is a former Del Mar student who is now working on a graduate degree in English at TAMU-CC in British literature with a significant composition and rhetoric component.

Steve has been nominated twice for the Haas English Writing Award, which is presented each year to outstanding writing students at TAMU-CC. And in 2009, he won the Haas Award in the graduate division. In addition Steve has carried out several writing projects for the university recently. In his spare time he tutors part-time for Del Mar’s Stone Writing Center.

Steve also has a minor in business administration, which may come in handy, since he’ll be working particularly on eight SACS standards that have to do with the College’s business and financial operations. In fact, if you work in one of these areas, you may be hearing from Steve soon.