

Del Mar College's

Self-Study 2000:

3, March 31, 1999

A newsletter devoted to the successful reaffirmation of Del Mar's accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in December of 2000.

From the Self-Study Director:

In early March, I spent several days as an observer on a SACS visiting team assigned to evaluate a small, out-of-state community college. Because so few Del Mar employees have had such an experience, it might be valuable for you to learn what this team did for four days. The more we understand about who these people are and what they do, the better we'll be able to prepare for them.

Nearly all of the eleven team members were senior administrators. Two were faculty. Their responsibilities began roughly a month before they left for the host college; the team chair directed them to draft their reports before they arrived, based on their analysis of the large stack of documents that the host institution sent to them.

***--James A. Pierce,
English***

The evaluation lasted two days. Early on the first morning, the team met briefly in a conference room on campus, then fanned out to interview administrators, staff, librarians, counselors, faculty, and students. There was little chit-chat; the interviewers asked questions rapidly and tended to cut off long responses. The best answers were those that came quickly and, when necessary, directly admitted the college's problems. Interviews the second day focused on new questions that were raised the day before or on evidence that had been promised from an earlier interview.

In general, I found the people on the visiting committee to be friendly and fair with the institution. There wasn't any attitude of being out to "get" the college nor any feeling of

Countdown:

The Reaffirmation Visiting Committee from SACS will arrive on Del Mar's campus in:

339 days

Are you ready?

a certain number of problems, a quota, that they felt obliged to write up. The strength of their role is their perspective. As outsiders, they can see weaknesses that we are too close to recognize. As outsiders they also learn from their experience. Indeed, we have handicapped ourselves in the last ten years by paying little attention to the advantages of regularly sending our own staff on peer evaluation teams, a shortsightedness which I hope we will correct well before the next self-study, in the year 2010.



For More Information
about SACS:

www.sacs.org

Open Forums

SACS intends for institutional self-studies to be open and public processes that include the perspectives of a wide range of campus personnel. In order to provide the opportunity for as much participation as possible, the Steering Committee and the principal committees are sponsoring a series of open forums, one for each section of the self-study.

The first six will be held in April, according to the schedule below; the other six will be held in June. Everyone connected with Del Mar College, as well as the general public, is invited to read the most recent draft of each principal committee report and to bring questions and other input to the open forum and present them to the principal committee.

Please note: The purpose of the open forums is to provide the opportunity for input from the Del Mar community into the self-study process and to provide answers to questions. They won't be used for debate and certainly not for argument.

Thursday, April 8:

- 3:30 Institutional Advancement
- 4:15 Financial Resources

Thursday, April 22

- 3:30 Student Development Services
- 4:15 Special Educational Activities

Thursday, April 29

- 3:30 Physical Resources
- 4:15 Institutional Purpose

A week before each forum, the most current draft of each report will be available on the self-study webpages, at the circulation desks in the libraries on both campuses, and in the S.G.A. office. Copies can be obtained from the principal committee chairs, as well. All forums will be held in Room 528 of the White Library. Refreshments will be served.

Please come and participate in the self-study process.

April's Self-Study 2000 Quiz

During the SACS visit, a member of the visiting committee asks you whether or not your unit or department reached its unit plan goals during the last semester. You...

- A. ...direct him to the administration building and tell him to ask for someone named "Terry."
- B. ...roll your eyes and mutter, "What am I, an information booth?"
- C. ...talk straightforwardly about the goals your unit or department met, the ones it didn't meet, and what changes are being made to the unit plans, all the while quietly congratulating yourself for having just recently reviewed them.

See next month's Newsletter for the correct answer.

To review the self-study calendar, meeting minutes, and drafts of the principal committee reports, please see the self-study webpages. Link through Del Mar's homepage, **www.delmar.edu**; then look under Instructional Programs or Administrative Resources.

If you are accessing the self-study webpages from off campus, call Jim Pierce, John M. Crisp, or any Steering Committee member for the *username* and *password*.
