

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## Palo Alto College earns positive 10-year report from accrediting agency

Palo Alto College received good news on Oct. 6 after an outstanding reaccreditation site visit from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Palo Alto, one of the Alamo Colleges, received a perfect score on the Core Requirements, which is very unusual, according to SACS' statistics from past years.

The Core Requirements address general education, student services, administration, governance, and financial and physical resources. Usually colleges receive some recommendations on the Core Requirements. The reaffirmation process has changed, but 10 years ago Palo Alto received 20 recommendations on those requirements.

Of the four recommendations received, only one involved the operation of the college, two involved the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), and one involved a District memorandum of understanding.

The one involving college operation said the college has an "excellent framework" to assess trends in student learning outcomes, but it needs to provide further evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results of the assessments.

The committee said the QEP, a plan to improve instruction, was "too ambitious" and the College needed to scale it back. The plan focuses on problem-based learning as opposed to constant lectures in class. The college was advised to create one overarching goal and align student learning outcomes with that goal.

Another recommendation was for the Alamo Colleges Foundation to have a formal agreement with the College, not just the Alamo Community College District.

The College will respond to the recommendations, and the SACS Trustees will make a final decision in June 2012 about reaffirming the college's accreditation for another 10 years.

College President Dr. Ana M. Guzmán praised the faculty and staff at Palo Alto for their service to complete the SACS report and achieve such a superb level of praise from the on-site committee. "It is most rewarding when a reaccreditation committee recognizes that Palo Alto College has a high performance team who has diligently worked to achieve excellence in education," she said.

Palo Alto College, one of the Alamo Colleges, is a fully accredited community college located on the Southside of San Antonio with 9,000 students. It awards associate degrees and short-term

certificates and offers non-credit continuing education classes. The campus is located at 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. at I-410 and Texas Hwy. 16 or online at alamo.edu/pac.