



**OAK VALLEY**  
COLLEGE

## **Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV) 2**

### **Institutional Report**

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## Section One: Institutional Context

Below is an update since the Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV) 1, including institutional type, size (enrollment, staff, administration and faculty), location(s), overview of degrees/levels/programs offered, and current accreditations.

1. Institutional type: private non-profit
2. Degree offered: Bachelor of Arts in Business
3. Administrators  
President - Eric Blum  
Dean/Chief Academic Officer - Afarah Board  
Vice President of Enrollment (NEW) - Vacant  
Vice President of Advancement (NEW) - Stacey Syrocki
4. Support Staff  
Manager of Student and Faculty Services (NEW) - Megan Herring  
Admissions Counselor/Recruiter - Sarahi Hidalgo  
Career Center Director - Professor Javier Blanco  
Writing Center Director - Professor Robyn Glessner
5. Board - 14 members
6. Faculty - 17 members
7. Enrollment (FTE)  
Fall 2019 - 44  
Fall 2020 - 56  
Fall 2021 - 47 (projected)
8. Location (NEW) - Rialto, California

Immediately following the SAV 1, Oak Valley leaders committed to reflect on and address the recommendations found in the SAV 1 Commission letter. This information proved invaluable to the board, administration, faculty, and staff and serves as a guiding document to help Oak Valley mature and continuously improve. ([1.01 WSCUC SAV 1 Commission Action Letter February 2020](#) and [1.02 SAV 1 Site Visit Team Report December 2019](#), and [1.03 Oak Valley's Response December 2019](#))

Despite the pandemic, Oak Valley has recognized significant gains in the following areas:

1. FINANCE - Year-over-year gross and net revenue are up, significantly. This is due, in large part, to the authorization of Pell and Cal Grants.
2. ENROLLMENT- New enrollment increased in Fall 2020 to 31 entering freshmen (a new high). It is projected to fall back to 20 entering freshman in Fall 2021.
3. PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS - Recommendations coming from SAV 1 helped the College improve academics, student success, faculty engagement, academic governance, leadership, board development and governance, and many other areas.
4. PROGRAM REVIEW - Oak Valley's second program review conducted in 2020-2021 identified significant areas of growth and improvement, including greater faculty leadership, improved quality control/assurance, and comprehensive revisions to the program learning outcomes (PLOs).

## Effects of the Pandemic

It will take years to recognize the long-term impacts of the pandemic, as many of those impacts are changing the demographic, socio-economic, and social fabric of the region. Anecdotally, many students and prospective students have made dramatic shifts in their plans for higher education, with many more being impacted by family illnesses (or deaths), changes in jobs/income, and moves to other regions or states. In particular, it appears that many high school graduates are pursuing immediate full-time employment, and deferring college education. This is likely due, primarily, to the high demand for workers and relatively high pay.

To date, Oak Valley has recognized and confronted the following impacts:

1. DELAYS - Like many businesses, general delays caused by the pandemic were noticeable. It took longer than originally anticipated to complete the program review process, board development suffered as board meetings became increasingly tactical and meetings were held remotely. Additionally, faculty development was delayed as more pressing concerns were being addressed with the shift to online learning and the availability of faculty development resources was either lacking or did not rise to the level of need in the short-term. While none of these items created any long-term crises, the delays caused some slowing of potential growth and maturity.
2. FRESHMEN RETENTION - Retention during the first semester for Fall 2020 freshmen was very poor with 50% of the students withdrawing or failing during the first two semesters. Only one student withdrew from the other two cohorts combined. Previously, Oak Valley retained around 70% of its students for past freshmen cohorts. Students who left cited several reasons: health concerns, losing motivation, requirement to work full time, moving to another region or state, daycare or family needs, and more. As noted, the poor retention only impacted freshmen.
3. ENROLLMENT GROWTH SLOWS - Pre-pandemic, Oak Valley projected aggressive enrollment growth (40-50 new students for Fall 2021). However, Oak Valley's primary avenues for student recruitment (visiting high schools and churches) were shut down in 2020-2021 leaving the College with a "lost year" of enrollment growth. New enrollment for Fall 2021 is projected around 20 students, comparable to Fall 2019 but below Fall 2020. With high schools returning to in-person learning in Fall 2021, it is anticipated that a return to normal recruitment practices will take place and Oak Valley projects 50 incoming freshmen for Fall 2022. A new Enrollment Plan is in place as in-person school and church visits are already scheduled for August-October. Given Oak Valley's small size and nimble ability to adjust to such crises, it is anticipated that enrollment growth will be back on track. The Enrollment Plan will be updated in early fall to ensure it aligns with early season realities. ([1.04 Enrollment Plan](#))

## Location

Oak Valley moved from Colton, California (approximately 1,200 sq ft facility) to a well-appointed new campus in Rialto, California (10,000+ sq ft). The new campus affords Oak Valley the opportunity to fulfill its mid-term (5-year) vision to increase to 150+ student FTE. More details are contained in Oak Valley's newly developed Master Plan. ([1.05 Master Plan](#))

## Additional Items

1. FISCAL DISCIPLINE - While Oak Valley has always maintained a conservative budget, the pandemic heightened that resolve. While new staff have been hired and faculty salaries increased, additional hiring is anticipated to remain frozen until enrollment begins to grow. Oak Valley maintains a significant reserve to ensure the College remains on a firm financial footing. ([1.06 2021-2026 Budget](#)).
2. ENDOWMENT - In order to ensure the College retains its long-term health, the board established a modest endowment fund. The fund's principal is to remain invested, and the interest and capital gains are intended to support operations and special programs. ([1.07 Endowment Fund](#))
3. STUDENT AND FACULTY SUPPORT - In January 2021, Megan Herring was hired to serve as Manager of Student and Faculty Services. In this role, Meg counsels students on a regular basis and provides administrative support to faculty. This is a critical support role that greatly enhances services.
4. PELL GRANT AUTHORIZATION - On June 30, 2020, Oak Valley received authorization to award Title IV Financial Aid - Pell Grants. Many Oak Valley students are Pell-eligible. ([1.08 Title IV Authorization Letter](#))
5. CAL GRANT AUTHORIZATION - In November 2020, Oak Valley received authorization to award Cal Grants. ([1.09 Cal Grant Institutional Participation Agreement Approval 2020](#))
6. ENROLLMENT: FTE enrollment grew from 37 students in 2018, to 44 students in 2019, to 56 students in 2020. In Fall 2021, enrollment is projected at 47.
7. ENROLLMENT PLAN - In March 2021, a new five-year strategic enrollment plan was authorized by the Board. ([1.10 Enrollment Plan](#))
8. BPPE COMPLIANCE - Oak Valley completed a site inspection in December 2019 from California's Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE).
9. WSCUC Candidacy - The WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) granted Candidacy for Accreditation on February 13, 2020.
10. CAREER CENTER - Professor Blanco created an internship program in May 2021. The internship program is projected to expand in Fall 2022 to provide coaching, counseling, and ongoing support throughout all phases of the degree program.
11. WRITING CENTER - In addition to tutoring students, Professor Glessner has expanded the Writing Center to coach faculty on information literacy as well and refining standards across the curriculum. In this role, she is also responsible for overseeing the Written Communication standards and competencies that are being rolled out to faculty.
12. PROGRAM REVIEW - Professors Morrow, Martis, and Glessner completed the 2020 Program Review. ([1.11 Program Review](#))
13. ADVANCEMENT PLAN - Oak Valley's Five-Year Advancement Plan was created pre-pandemic and is being revised based on post-pandemic realities. ([1.12 Advancement Plan](#))
14. MASTER PLAN - Oak Valley's Master Plan was created to align specific goals and targets for facilities, staffing, and financial requirements for the next five years.

### List of Attached Evidence:

- [1.01 WSCUC SAV 1 Commission Action Letter February 2020](#)
- [1.02 SAV 1 Site Visit Team Report December 2019](#)
- [1.03 Oak Valley's Response December 2019](#)
- [1.04 Enrollment Plan](#)

[1.05 Master Plan](#)

[1.06 2021-2026 Budget](#)

[1.07 Endowment Fund](#)

[1.08 Title IV Authorization Letter](#)

[1.09 Cal Grant Institutional Participation Agreement Approval](#)

[1.10 Enrollment Plan](#)

[1.11 Program Review](#)

[1.12 Advancement Plan](#)

## Section Two: Statement on Report Preparation

Describe the process of preparing the Institutional Report, naming the personnel who were involved. Widespread and comprehensive involvement of various constituencies is required, including faculty, administrative staff, students, and others as appropriate. The governing board should review the report before it is submitted to WSCUC.

After receiving the SAV 1 Team Report at the end of 2019, Oak Valley College administrators and senior faculty began preparing for SAV 2. This process involved developing a timeline for completing the SAV 2 Institutional Report, assigning specific tasks to individual leaders, which primarily included President Blum, Dean Board, Faculty Chair Morrow, and Accreditation Liaison Officer Meg Herring.

Broader faculty involvement was maintained throughout the two years of preparation, primarily through the Faculty Senate. Student involvement was encouraged throughout the process as students were engaged by President Blum and Dean Board to ensure active feedback and engagement. Finally, select Advisory Board and Board Committee members continued to serve vital roles in helping frame discussions and elicit important feedback.

Drafting the SAV 2 Institutional Report began in early 2020 and continued through 2021. The framework and approach from the SAV 1 document served as the primary tool to guide the preparation of the report.

The faculty-led program review process began in December 2019 and continued through 2021. This process served a number of purposes. First, it enabled Oak Valley to review and revise its curriculum for a second time. Second, the program review provided the foundation for framing large portions of this report, including academics, faculty leadership and governance, and student success.

Meg Herring, Accreditation Liaison Officer, reviewed and posted the final report.

## Section Three: Response to Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV) 1 Commission Action Letter

Please provide evidence of how the institution has responded to each recommendation found in the last Commission Action Letter. Refer to a preceding or subsequent section if a response appears in a different part of the report albeit provide a brief summary of that response here.

- 1. CFR 1.2: Strengthen and propagate throughout the institution knowledge and recognition of student learning outcomes, outcome assessment, and the program review framework so that the attainment of educational objectives can be demonstrated.**

Below is a detailed response to the specific recommendation. Additional information and evidence is provided later in the document under CFR 1.2.

“Learning by doing” best describes the 2020 Program Review process. Lead faculty (Board, Morrow, Glessner, and Martis) gained a comprehensive understanding of their roles and were able to conduct a thorough review process, which covered academic standards, learning outcomes, faculty development, and student engagement. Lead faculty members described attaining much greater personal knowledge of the program and developing a thorough ownership of the process throughout 2020 and 2021. ([3.1.1 Program Review 2020](#))

After completing the 2020 Review, lead faculty continue to meet with President Blum and Dean Board in an effort to continuously improve the program, clarify expectations, enforce standards, and propagate their collective knowledge and experience to other professors.

### **Program Review Process**

The team spent 2020 conducting research, drafting findings, seeking external feedback, and crafting recommendations. Some of those recommendations were immediately adopted, while others continue to be developed and fine-tuned.

Major outcomes of the review included updating and revising the program learning outcomes (PLOs) by adapting American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) rubrics. Then, in turn, those revised PLOs resulted in establishing new curriculum milestones and competency standards. This process culminated in a reintroduction of the revised PLOs in Spring 2021 with the expectation that a full rollout of the new standards would be fully operationalized by Fall 2021. ([3.1.2 Revised PLOs and PLO Rubrics](#))

Dean Board coached individual faculty members in the alignment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) to the PLOs, ensuring that syllabi articulated those linkages so faculty and students better understand how individual SLOs and student assignments relate to the PLOs.

Finally, faculty in-service training helped faculty align teaching and assessment practices across the curriculum. This training is ongoing and ensures that relevant topics are addressed and continuous improvement is reinforced. These practices were all new to Oak Valley and have become an integral part of the faculty development process.



## Faculty Development

“One who dares to teach must never cease to learn” (Dana): Professional development provides opportunities for faculty to learn about learning, teaching, student success, and how to continuously improve outcomes. Being an effective professor requires regular reflection and exposure to new ideas and information. Effective professional faculty development connects faculty across disciplines and career stages, serving to create a pedagogical community within the college (Facultyfocus.com).

Dean Board designed a series of faculty development offerings to support consistency across the program, teaching excellence, and adaptability required in a rapidly changing environment. Well trained faculty ensures:

1. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are effective and being met
2. Succession planning is in place by identifying and developing faculty leaders
3. Faculty maintain up-to-date knowledge within their discipline
4. Best practices in teaching methodology are being employed
5. Competency standards are set, measured, and reflected across various program learning outcomes (PLOs)

Through the Faculty Senate (formally) and one-on-one meetings with professors (formally and informally), discussions elicit feedback, establish baseline standards and expectations, and encourage ongoing improvement.

For purposes of reflection and improvement, faculty receive feedback through:

- Student evaluations
- Annual faculty performance reviews where expectations are set, quality standards are reinforced, and best practices are shared
- Signature assignment assessments (linkages between course SLOs and PLOs)
- Faculty self-evaluations
- Faculty development, including in-service training (scheduled each semester)

One of the questions coming out of SAV 1, the 2020 Program Review, and administration’s focus on Institutional Research was whether assessment standards were in line with expectations of college-level work. Related to that question was how assignments, grading rubrics, and other standards were being used to assess SLOs and how SLOs linked to PLOs.

These questions led to an in-service training offered by Oak Valley Board Member, Gary Miller. Dr. Miller served as Provost for Biola for 13 years and has served on dozens of WSCUC Site Visit Teams. He worked with Dean Board over several weeks preparing this training, which was designed, specifically, to focus on assessment standards and recommendations. The training was well attended (11 faculty). ([3.1.3 Dean’s Report July 2020](#)) Similar training is now planned annually to ensure these standards and expectations are renewed and refreshed.

In November 2020, an in-service training was held that featured guest speaker Dr. LaSharnda Beckwith, Oak Valley Board Member. Dr. Beckwith served as Dean of the School of Business at Hope International University and Provost at California Southern University. Her discussion focused on the importance of faculty development, scholarship in higher education, and the role and expectations of the professors in each. From this in-service training, faculty were

encouraged to explore specific goals related to scholarship and faculty development that would improve their teaching in the future.

A portion of the November 2020 in-service training also included discussions led by Professor Robyn Glessner, Director of Writing Center, and Carolyn Heine, Instructional Librarian, California Baptist University. Professor Glessner and Ms. Heine engaged the faculty in discussions to improve information literacy standards and expectations, introduction to the LIRN/Proquest database, and strategies for application of library research by faculty and students. That in-service training has led to additional training topics, which are being carried out by Dean Board and Faculty Chair Morrow in 2021. ([3.1.4 Dean's Report January 2021](#))

Cultural competency was the highlight of the March 2021 faculty in-service training. This session was facilitated by Grant Doster. Mr. Doster is a Chief Diversity Officer with more than 25 years of corporate experience at Disney, PepsiCo, Miller Brewing, Lee Hecht Harrison, et al. ([3.1.5 Grant Doster Biography](#)) Mr. Doster discussed the nature of belonging, inclusion, and diversity within organizations. He provided specific strategies to help faculty and staff promote an inclusive and welcoming campus culture focused on helping students, in particular, feel a sense of belonging. Staff were also invited to attend and a recording was made available, so those who missed could watch it at a later date. ([3.1.6 Dean's Report March 2021](#))

Attendance and participation at Faculty Senate and in-service training is reinforced through the faculty hiring, faculty orientation, and the annual performance review processes. Effective in 2021, attendance at meetings is included in teaching contracts and Dean Board is following up with those who miss a meeting to ensure they are aware of what was covered and get up to speed on the expectations being articulated across the program. This has proven so important that in one instance a faculty member was not invited back to teach because he refused to participate in meetings.

These processes have helped create a stronger bond among faculty members and provided increased connectivity among the faculty to the mission, vision, and values of the college. Furthermore, ongoing training and development of the faculty members has helped create more ownership among faculty members to their teaching, student success, and the curriculum.

### **Clarifying Educational Objectives**

The 2020 Program Review culminated with the detailed articulation of revised PLOs being defined, clarified, and refined, so milestones could be more effectively set, measured, and tracked at all levels of the program. Through this process, faculty have more clearly identified the objectives and standardized those objectives so they may be understood by students. Starting in late 2020 and early 2021, a concentrated effort has been made by Dean Board and Lead Faculty (Martis, Glessner, and Morrow) to ensure faculty emphasize the linkages between the course objectives, SLOs, and PLOs and to make students aware of those linkages.

A new Curriculum Map was adopted in early 2021 and is being implemented with the incoming cohort starting in Fall 2021. Changes to the Map were fairly modest. Lead faculty shuffled course sequences to better align with progression in learning and better prepare students through the progression of introductory concepts, to practice-level work, and finally, toward mastery.

Although the new map did not change dramatically, there were notable moves based on faculty experience. Also, the new Map highlights three associated PLOs for each course, so students and faculty are better able to align expectations and priorities. While other PLOs are covered in each course, the three PLOs listed represent the priority PLOs for the course and how alignment will be measured with the signature assignment. ([3.1.7 Curriculum Map](#))

### **Improving the Process**

Oak Valley made great strides to improve faculty engagement between the first program review, conducted in 2018, and the subsequent review in 2020. For 2022, Oak Valley has adopted a new process to further hone and refine the entire program review cycle. This process is reflected in the Program Review Handbook, which was adopted following the 2020 cycle. The 2022 Program Review will commence in early 2022 utilizing this handbook to guide the faculty and administration through the evaluation of the program standards, expectations, and outcomes. ([3.1.8 Program Review Handbook](#))

### **Final Reflections**

Oak Valley is committed to an aggressive program review process to ensure the above recommendation is met. Many institutions commit to a program review cycle that occurs once or twice a decade. Oak Valley's commitment to engage in a two-year review cycle is based on the realization that:

1. Program review is an effective way to ensure ongoing faculty engagement and ownership of the program curriculum, standards, and academic expectations.
  2. Oak Valley's program is still young and evolving, and this biennial process ensures that all facets of the program are continuously reviewed with an eye toward improving student outcomes and success.
  3. The program review process allows the College to look outward to identify best practices from peers and experts who can lend a hand in identifying opportunities for improvement.
  4. Program reviews provide a meaningful way to engage various stakeholders in the process and identify current and emerging trends in higher education and business.
- 2. CFR 2.1; 2.4; 2.5: Undertake a thorough review of external sources (for example, core competencies rubrics and senior projects from aspirational institutions) and clearly define standards for the quality of student work that are appropriately rigorous for the degree.**

During the 2020 Program Review, faculty used VALUE rubrics from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) to update and revise the PLOs. Each PLO now has a well defined standard rubric, developed by adapting the AACU standards to Oak Valley's unique program model and course offerings.

### **Improved Standards**

Faculty engaged in extensive discussions of the PLOs throughout 2020 and 2021, and Dean Board is highlighting these standards as part of the end of semester and annual performance review processes. From there, President Blum, Dean Board, and the Institutional Research team review student performance and discuss trends or issues they identify. These issues are then shared with Faculty Chair Morrow and the Faculty Senate in order to continuously improve student success.

In early 2021, the new PLO rubrics were implemented at the course level with the expectation that faculty would more closely align their SLOs and PLOs throughout the course. This would enable the Signature Assignment Assessment process to become more meaningful at the conclusion of the course as faculty identify how well students performed on the final project, paper, or exam. Incidentally, faculty self-evaluations and the Signature Assignment Assessment Form is now online, so access to the data is more readily available. ([3.2.1 Signature Assignment Assessment Form](#))

Lead faculty Glessner and Martis are articulating core competencies at each level of the program for written communication and quantitative literacy, respectively, so a continuum of learning is created to ensure progression at every academic level (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior).

In Spring and Summer 2021, Professors Glessner and Martis worked with faculty teaching the freshmen and sophomores to ensure competency standards were articulated and reinforced as a progression. This is being introduced in a systematic way for the cohort that begins in Fall 2021 to ensure the standards are articulated. Faculty development and training will continue as students progress through the curriculum in order to ensure the progression of learning is fully recognized from freshman through senior level. This should be fully developed by 2022 at all levels of the program.

For example,

1. First Semester Freshman - In Fall 2020, Professor Glessner established writing standards for entering students through the Freshman Writing Seminar, which was supported by the faculty development workshop that was hosted in July 2020 ([3.2.2 Freshman Writing Seminar Syllabus](#))
2. Second Semester Freshman - In Spring 2021, Professor Glessner (Early American History) developed and trained Professors Borden (Business Communication) and Morrow (Old Testament Survey) to ensure second semester freshman writing standards for students were uniform across the program. ([3.2.3 Freshman Writing Standard](#))
3. First Semester Sophomore - Professor Glessner introduced the next step in the written communication progression to Professors Soria (US Government) and Morrow (New Testament Survey) as they taught students during the first semester of sophomore level. For this purpose, Professor Glessner shared sample papers based on sophomore-level expectations and a model written communication rubric targeting sophomore-level writing standards. ([3.2.4 Sophomore Writing Standard](#))
4. As this progression continues, written communication standards will be fully articulated within the next year, and Professor Glessner will have trained and oriented faculty through all eight semesters.

A similar process has been undertaken by Professor Martis for the quantitative literacy competency standards. A similar process will get underway for oral communication and information literacy.

Regarding senior projects, the Launch Pad lead professors (Blanco and Leonard) reviewed, standardized, and articulated standards for the Launch Pad project. The Launch Pad enables students to create high-level projects which match examples from aspirational institutions.

Capstone projects from several universities were reviewed and analyzed by professors Blanco and Leonard as they articulated expectations to students.

Oak Valley's Launch Pad project process continues to evolve and improve. Starting in Summer 2021, Professor Blanco revamped the first course in the sequence and provided more hands-on experiences for students. This resulted in students completing the framework of their business plans in the first course. The process was further reinforced by Professor Board. She talked with students about how to employ the project management principles they learned in Project Management to support their Launch Pad project. ([3.2.5 Launch Pad Course #1 Objectives](#))

Professor Blanco and Leonard have also introduced milestones and a custom rubric for the students. This is to ensure students progress through the three course sequence in a timely manner with accountability across the courses. ([3.2.6 Launch Pad Milestones and Quality Assurance](#), [3.2.7 Launch Pad Rubric](#))

Advisory Board Member Darrell Passwater was also brought in to provide an outside perspective and advice regarding the Launch Pad. Dr. Passwater is an executive business coach, entrepreneur, and educator. Among his many positions, he previously served as the Dean of the School of Business at California Baptist University.

Finally, Oak Valley continues to utilize a [comprehensive final exam](#), administered by Peregrine Global Services, to ensure Oak Valley is able to peer review its student success and compare outcomes with other undergraduate business schools around the country. ACBSP accreditation is still an aspiration for Oak Valley, which is intended to be pursued as soon as is practicable.

To date, this comprehensive examination has been implemented with the Class of 2020 and 2021 (both pandemic years). The results of the exam are inconclusive. For the Class of 2020, only 1-2 students appear to have taken the exam seriously. The results for the Class of 2021 looked better with six students taking the exam, five of whom appear to have taken it seriously and scored in the mid-range of national students. In the future, it is anticipated that an analysis may be made of specific areas (e.g. marketing, accounting, strategy, operations, etc.), and recommendations may be made to faculty teaching those specific courses. That analysis is likely still 2-3 years away.

**3. CFR 2.6; 2.10: Build the capacity to implement best practices in institutional research and outcome assessment among faculty and staff. Include professional development in methods and practices that are specific to higher education and foster ongoing discussions among faculty on assessment methodology and results.**

Since receiving this recommendation from SAV 1, Dean Board and President Blum have worked on specific approaches to foster more professional development. In particular, the Faculty Senate serves as the primary venue where Dean Board and Faculty Chair Morrow facilitate ongoing discussions regarding assessment methodology and results. The Faculty Senate allows Dean Board and Faculty Chair Morrow to gain specific insights, share best practices, and identify opportunities for improvement in these areas.

In Summer 2020, faculty were trained on assessment standards and baseline expectations. A thorough review of past semester grading and expectations was discussed with an eye toward grade inflation. Dr. Gary Miller, former provost of Biola University and Oak Valley Board member

was the featured speaker and worked with faculty to articulate best practices in assessment standards and practices. Dean Board continues to support faculty in an effort to further reinforce these expectations across the program. She regularly reports the results of this work to the Academic Affairs Committee, which has the authority to guide the academic performance across the program.

Faculty training in Fall 2020 focused on information literacy and standards for faculty to adopt use of academic sources in their courses. Training in the use of ProQuest databases was provided to inform and reinforce the academic research expectations in courses. Dr. LaSharnda Beckwith, former Provost at California Southern University, and Professor Robyn Glessner were the featured speakers.

In Spring 2021, training focused on diversity and inclusion. Grant Doster was the featured speaker. Mr. Doster's experience and expertise spans more than 25 years, and he has also taught extensively at various universities around the region and globally. He addressed the themes and importance of creating an inclusive culture where students, faculty, and staff find lines of communication welcoming and fosters the opportunities for everyone to embrace diversity in new and positive ways. Mr. Doster was also the featured speaker at the 2021 Commencement.

For 2021-2022, a substantial budget increase was approved to support ongoing faculty development, which is primarily dedicated to conduct specialized in-service training. Each semester, Dean Board creates a customized in-service training tailored to Oak Valley's needs. Outside leaders in higher education are commonly featured as guest speakers to provide perspectives on higher education and address a variety of issues, including assessment practices, information literacy, diversity and inclusion, student success, and more.

Additional funding is available to allow lead faculty to attend conferences or training tailored to their specific professional development needs.

Since many of the Institutional Research (IR) inputs are student and faculty-related (e.g. student retention, student satisfaction, faculty performance, etc.) attention has focused on orienting and instilling in faculty the importance of reporting data and reinforcing common standards and expectations for performance. Over the past year, attention has been focused on:

- Reviewing student evaluations
- Creating and administering competency standards (starting with written communication and quantitative literacy)
- Updating and reinforcing program learning outcomes (PLOs) using Association of American Colleges and University (AACU) VALUE rubrics
- Training faculty to better align student learning outcomes (SLOs) with the program learning outcomes (PLOs)
- Building capacity among the faculty to understand the progression of courses (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) and how individual courses fit within the progression
- Developing faculty communication across the program to ensure alignment of expectations, common standards, best practices, and performance

At the conclusion of each semester, IR provides reporting, which is used to inform faculty and administration of student outcomes and satisfaction. Trends are identified to provide insights into student success and faculty performance. While graduation and demographic data sets

remain too small to determine any long-term trends, some actionable data provides the means to make informed decisions. For instance, student retention from first to second year tends to be viewed as an indicator of student satisfaction. As indicated by the difference of Fall 2020 freshmen retention (less than 50%) vs previous years where retention regularly exceeded 70% in previous years, it is clear that the online learning environment during the pandemic was a poor substitute for in-person teaching and learning. This reinforced the belief that Oak Valley's primary approach to learning, namely a strong cohort-based system using highly engaging faculty facilitation of student learning, is a superior model for Oak Valley's program.

In order to continue benchmarking standards and expectations, Dean Board meets regularly with Provost Andrea Scott, George Fox University, with an eye toward developing best practices for faculty development, assessment, and academic leadership. This augments the leadership provided by the Academic Affairs Committee, which is led by Drs. Wendy Little and LaSharnda Beckwith, along with retired Dean Gayle Linn.

Furthermore, Oak Valley continues to connect regularly with senior leaders from John Paul Catholic, Simpson, and William Jessup Universities, as well as New Saint Andrews and Providence Christian Colleges. Leaders at these schools provide wisdom, guidance, and best practices in admissions, registrar, advancement, institutional research, and other areas.

Oak Valley is committed to maturing its institutional research capacity and capabilities. Following the guidelines provided by the Association of Institutional Research, the College has worked to

1. Identify information needs focusing on the following four areas
  - a. Admissions/enrollment
  - b. Retention/student success
  - c. Student satisfaction
  - d. Graduation/alumni
2. Collect, analyze, interpret and report information
  - a. Data and reporting flows from Institutional Research to the President and Dean, to the Faculty Senate, and from the Faculty Senate to the Dean to the Academic Affairs Committee, to the Board, and then back to the President and Dean and back to the faculty. This creates a loop of transparency, communication, and dialog that provides for continuous improvement based on student and faculty data.
3. Plan and evaluate
  - a. Each spring, the Strategic Enrollment Plan provides detailed analysis (using relevant data - internal and external to project enrollment trends for the coming five years). This plan is then used to inform the Master Plan (using data and analysis to project faculty, staff, and facility needs), which then folds into the Strategic Plan (which ensures the priorities and planning are aligned with Oak Valley's mission, vision, and values).
  - b. Again, all the plans are run through the various Board Committees before being approved by the entire board in the Spring.
4. Serve as stewards of data and information
  - a. IR at Oak Valley is responsible for carrying out the data needs of each discrete area of the College and data integrity and accuracy are further analyzed and scrutinized by the board committees.



**4. CFR 3.1; 3.3: Develop a multi-year faculty staffing plan with the goal of increasing diversity that includes qualifications, well-articulated hiring processes and practices. Allocate funds for robust faculty development and include the enhancement of cultural competency.**

Oak Valley's multi-year faculty staffing and development plan is led by Dean Board and President Blum. The plan identifies several full-time faculty positions, which is articulated and approved in the Master Plan. ([3.4.1 Master Plan](#))

Dean Board has created a three-year Faculty Development Plan, which prioritizes faculty development needs and training opportunities with a long-term perspective on building a highly professionalized faculty team with lead faculty at the forefront and a collection of diverse support faculty who are well connected with the core mission, vision, and values of the College ([3.4.2 Faculty Development Plan](#)).

The College seeks a diverse faculty pool, and every effort is made to recruit well qualified candidates that reflect the culture and demographics of Oak Valley's diverse student population. College leaders recognize the best opportunity to mentor and lead students from underrepresented groups is through professors who represent underrepresented groups.

Oak Valley posts adjunct positions on popular job search sites (LinkedIn and Indeed) and networks with professionals throughout the region to recruit new faculty.

When recruiting, personal emails are also sent to departments at local graduate universities (e.g. California Baptist University, CSU San Bernardino, UC Riverside, Gateway Seminary, and other institutions) soliciting prospective adjunct professors. This is often the best way to find new faculty.

The formal review and interview process of candidates is completed by the President, Dean, and Faculty Chair. Additional faculty are considered and consulted in related discipline areas.

Currently, faculty begin in an adjunct role. Lead role positions are considered and offered to adjunct faculty as openings emerge. Lead faculty are distinguished from other faculty by nature of their responsibilities overseeing specific areas of the program, active participation and leadership in the Faculty Senate, and engagement with Dean Board and President Blum on specific initiatives at the College. Lead faculty currently include:

1. Professor Board (Business)
2. Professor Morrow (Theology)
3. Professor Martis (Business)
4. Professor Glessner (General Education, Writing Center)
5. Professor Blanco (Business, Launch Pad, Career Center)

The budget for faculty development for 2021-2022 is \$5,000 per year, which has increased from \$1,000 in previous years. This provides Dean Board with the opportunity to offer more robust faculty development activities and allocate funds to lead faculty to participate in conferences and other outside engagements. With most conferences continuing to be virtual this year, overall, this budget is more than sufficient to allow each lead faculty to participate in some form of meaningful faculty development.



Regarding cultural competency, Dean Board is taking action to facilitate ongoing training. In March, 2021, Grant Doster, a chief diversity officer, led an in-service training on cultural competency, diversity, and inclusion. Mr. Doster offers impressive credentials in the field, having served as Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion for Lee Hecht Harrison (a global HR consulting firm), trainer/facilitator for Pope and Associates (a diversity training firm), as well as senior leadership positions at Pepsi, Disney, and Miller Brewing. This program was available to faculty and staff. It was also recorded, so it could be viewed by new faculty members in the future.

More than 70% of Oak Valley students represent underserved populations and 65% are first generation. In addition, Oak Valley faculty are 44% female, Black, or Hispanic. This provides unique challenges and opportunities to teach and live with issues related to culture, diversity, and inclusion on a level that may be far more pronounced than students may typically encounter at large universities.

Dean Board has included talks on cultural diversity with students and faculty. She is also engaged in ongoing in-service training for faculty, including at least one faculty in-service training each year dedicated to the issue. Finally, faculty are encouraged to discuss these issues in class, so students know Oak Valley values a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Oak Valley challenges its faculty to continually improve teaching. Professional development focuses on “problem areas” as well as general continuous improvement. Topics addressed in training have included:

- Syllabus/course design
- Writing objectives
- Constructing assessments
- Rubric design and use
- Grading strategies
- Student motivation
- Learning disabilities
- Classroom management
- Scholarship research and teaching
- Educational leadership

Areas that are assessed by Dean Board include, teaching effectiveness, course evaluations, syllabus analysis, classroom observations, attention to administrative activities associated with teaching, student learning outcomes (SLOs) and alignment with program learning outcomes (PLOs) through the signature assignment, and annual performance reviews.

**5. CFR 3.4: Develop, in conjunction with the strategic plan, a three- to five-year advancement plan containing clearly defined financial goals and milestones.**

In April 2021, Oak Valley hired its first Vice President of Advancement, Stacey Syrocki. Stacey offers years of professional experience having most recently served as Vice President for Make-a-Wish Foundation, where she led a development team for Orange County and the Inland Empire.

In 2020, Oak Valley created a five-year advancement plan. Due to the pandemic, that plan is being reworked based on the challenges encountered over the past year and the new opportunities that are anticipated to come post-pandemic. ([3.5.1 Advancement Plan](#))

While the overall plan is realistic, the goals and milestones are being reformulated based on new realities of performing advancement work in a post-pandemic reality. Oak Valley put on hold many of its programmatic advancement goals for more than a year with all in-person public events canceled. At the same time, giving continues to grow year-over-year.

The Advancement Plan is prominently featured as one of the five elements included in the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan. ([3.5.2 Strategic Plan](#))

Oak Valley also participates in coaching/consulting provided by Mission Increase Foundation. Mission Increase provides a diverse range of general training in event planning, major and annual giving, as well as a variety of other technical resources. Typically, President Blum and, now, Vice President Syrocki, will meet with a consultant from Mission Increase on a quarterly basis to review strategies and tactics associated with campaigns and programs.

**6. CFR 3.2; 3.7; 3.10: Strengthen and demonstrate shared governance by refining and implementing the faculty governance manual to include defined decision-making mechanisms, roles in shared governance and academic leadership and procedures, job descriptions and qualifications, and the practice of academic freedom and performance review and hiring practices.**

In an effort to strengthen Oak Valley's shared governance commitment to faculty, several initiatives have taken place since the Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV) 1, including:

1. Faculty Senate meetings are now formally, and practically, led by Professor Morrow, Faculty Chair. President Blum is no longer directly involved and does not attend the meetings. His guidance is requested on an as-needed basis. The absence of President Blum has instilled a greater sense of independence, autonomy, academic freedom, and empowerment among the faculty.
2. Dean Board has provided increased oversight and accountability with faculty by instituting a standardized annual performance review process, semester-by-semester reporting regarding faculty performance and student success, increased engagement with the Academic Affairs Committee, and greater awareness among faculty of their independence, autonomy, and responsibilities, especially with Lead Faculty members (Board, Morrow, Martis, Glessner, and Blanco).
3. Many governance efforts have been introduced to help guide and direct faculty policies and procedures. These efforts include:
  - a. revised Faculty Senate Bylaws
  - b. expanded Faculty Orientation Manual
  - c. roles and responsibility matrix
  - d. structured decision-making model that indicates decisions made by faculty and those that should go up to and through the dean, president and board
  - e. faculty purchase request and reimbursement policies, procedures, and forms
  - f. biennial program review process indicating internal and external roles. Additional discussions and implementations as processes continue to evolve. ([3.6.1 Faculty Senate Bylaws](#), [3.6.2 Faculty Orientation Manual](#), [3.6.3 Roles and Responsibilities Matrix](#), [3.6.4 Faculty Reimbursement Form](#), [3.6.5 Program Review Manual](#))

4. A robust faculty-led program review process takes place every other year. The core review team is made up of the three faculty leads (Morrow, Martis and Glessner) who take the responsibility to review the program and develop strategies and improvements for implementation in the current cycle.
5. Increased training and faculty development in a wide range of areas, including: assessment practices (July 2020); information literacy, enhancing research and scholarship (November 2020), and cultural competency (March 2021). Faculty are also encouraged to identify areas of individual professional development on an ongoing basis. Training also takes place during monthly Faculty Senate meetings related to current academic issues. Over the past year, a wide range of topics have been covered including assessment practices and standards, information literacy and resources, diversity and inclusion, the program review process and outcomes. Specifically, these topics have been noted by faculty as incredibly useful to further understand expectations, standards, and best practices. In more global terms, both Professor Morrow and Dean Board have noted a much greater ownership of the curriculum by the faculty, an increased awareness of the mission, vision and values of the College, and greater connectivity across the faculty (peer support and engagement).
6. Improved faculty-orientation procedures and processes have been implemented to help new faculty understand their roles, responsibilities, and opportunities in governance and academic leadership. The training also includes the expectation to link Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), as well as general academic standards and expectations for student performance and outcomes assessment.

Job descriptions have been developed for lead faculty and the faculty chair ([3.6.6 Lead Faculty](#), [3.6.7 Faculty Chair](#)).

Within this context, faculty have the academic freedom in their respective courses to deliver the curriculum relying on their academic credentials, experience, and knowledge. This academic freedom is reinforced during their orientation and is regularly discussed in the Faculty Senate. There have been no concerns raised by faculty or students regarding academic freedom. If a concern should arise, faculty or students may bring these concerns to the Faculty Chair, Dean, or President.

Student Government created the role of ombudsman in 2020. Advisory Board member, Ron Burgess, has agreed to serve in the role and act as a liaison between students and administration. The position is currently on hold as Student Government was only recently reinstated after the return to campus. The Ombudsman role is designed to provide students with direct access to a neutral leader/support person and serve as a liaison between students and campus administration ([3.6.8 Ombudsman Description](#))

As mentioned above, annual faculty evaluations are performed by the Dean and reviewed by the Faculty Chair and President. During this process, faculty performance is examined and discussed based on student evaluations, signature assignments, faculty self-evaluations, classroom observations, and an open discussion regarding the faculty's performance, concerns or developmental opportunities.

Faculty recruitment and hiring begins with a listing on Indeed and LinkedIn, sharing the opening through Oak Valley's professional network, and posting candidate information at local Christian

universities. Candidates are initially screened by the Dean and President. Initial interviews may be held with as many as 3-4 candidates. The Dean and Faculty Chair interview finalists and come to an agreement on the selected candidate.

**7. CFR 3.9: Formalize and codify board governance practices including roles and responsibilities for board members and committees, the relationship of the board to the administration, presidential review and appointment processes, the process for review and approval of the executive roles and responsibilities, and regular review and development of the strategic plan.**

The board continues to follow best practices in board governance, including formalized processes for adopting all new policies and major initiatives, actively reviewing the financial and academic health of the College, and continuing to grow together as a body. A new board manual was adopted in early 2021. ([3.7.1 Board Manual](#))

The board carries out most due diligence through its distinct committees. In particular, the Executive, Academic Affairs, Finance, and Advancement Committees are active year round, meeting regularly to set vision and review performance in their respective areas. Each committee is staffed by a senior administrator to ensure the board and senior staff leaders are aligned. An Enrollment/Admissions Committee is under consideration for 2021-2022.

In addition to standing committees, the Audit and Nominations Committees meet on an ad hoc basis. Audit reviews and approves the contract with the auditor (the Board reviews and approves the draft audit). The Nominations Committee is responsible for vetting board nominations on an as-needed basis with the entire board approving new board members.

In May 2021, the Board approved a modest reorganization plan, which turns over some control to the Executive Committee to review and recommend approval of certain regular business and vet new policies. The entire board continues to approve all major policies and financial items and now meets quarterly, rather than six times per year.

The presidential review is performed annually, typically in July-August, by the Executive Committee and submitted to the entire board for approval. Executive-level positions and appointments are reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee. Appointment of senior positions, VPs and President, are approved by the Executive Committee, including compensation packages. In 2021-2022, the Executive Committee approved salary scales for all staffing levels (entry-level, mid-level professionals, executives, and professors). Those ranges provide guidance with minimum, mid-point, and maximum salaries ([3.7.2 2020-2021 President Review](#), [3.7.3 Salary Scales 2021-2022](#)).

The Strategic Plan is reviewed, in detail, each year by the Executive Committee, discussed by the entire board, and approved at the May meeting. Great attention is made to the Plan and how the various other plans feed into it (Enrollment, Master, and Advancement). The synergies and alignment of all four plans are clearly articulated.

**8. CFR 4.3; 4.4: Formally adopt, refine, publish, provide training for, and further implement the college's quality assurance processes, policies and procedures in order to foster a culture of evidence. Include learning outcome assessment and academic**

**and co-curricular program reviews with significant involvement and appropriate leadership from the faculty and other academic personnel.**

Oak Valley has greatly refined its program review process with substantial input and leadership from the faculty and Dean. This process exemplifies Oak Valley's ongoing commitment to a rigorous process and culture of evidence.

Throughout 2020-2021, a concerted effort was made to effectively train faculty and staff in the college's quality assurance processes, policies, and procedures. Faculty, especially, spent a great deal of time identifying and refining the way in which the program review process was conducted. This effort was codified in Oak Valley's Program Review Handbook, which will guide the 2022 Program Review. ([3.8.1 Program Review Handbook](#))

Institutional Research also continues to evolve and progress providing data for evidence-based decision-making to expand and focus on four priority areas listed below. These areas are supported by individual senior leaders who work to articulate, define, and track standards, expectations, and performance. ([3.8.2 Quality Assurance at Oak Valley](#))

1. Admissions and Enrollment - VP of Enrollment
2. Student Success - Dean
3. Student Satisfaction - Dean
4. Graduation and Alumni Success - President

Ongoing progress is also being made at the Board level as they continue to focus on development activities designed to raise board standards for engagement and continuous improvement. This is best exemplified this year in the Board's reorganization plan as well as board development exercises to ensure board members are engaged and trained on how best to ensure high standards are being met.

**List of Attached Evidence:**

- [3.1.1 Program Review 2020](#)
- [3.1.2 Revised PLOs and PLO Rubrics](#)
- [3.1.3 Dean's Report July 2020](#)
- [3.1.4 Dean's Report January 2021](#)
- [3.1.5 Grant Doster Biography](#)
- [3.1.6 Dean's Report March 2021](#)
- [3.1.7 Curriculum Map](#)
- [3.1.8 Program Review Handbook](#)
- [3.2.1 Signature Assignment Assessment Form](#)
- [3.2.2 Freshman Writing Seminar Syllabus](#)
- [3.2.3 Freshman Writing Standard](#)
- [3.2.4 Sophomore Writing Standard](#)
- [3.2.5 Launch Pad Course #1 Objectives](#)
- [3.2.6 Launch Pad Milestones and Quality Assurance](#)
- [3.2.7 Launch Pad Rubric](#)
- [3.4.1 Master Plan](#)
- [3.4.2 Faculty Development Plan](#)
- [3.5.1 Advancement Plan](#)
- [3.5.2 Strategic Plan](#)
- [3.6.1 Faculty Senate Bylaws](#)

[3.6.2 Faculty Orientation Manual](#)  
[3.6.3 Roles and Responsibilities Matrix](#)  
[3.6.4 Faculty Reimbursement Form](#)  
[3.6.5 Program Review Manual](#)  
[3.6.6 Lead Faculty](#)  
[3.6.7 Faculty Chair](#)  
[3.6.8 Ombudsman Description](#)  
[3.7.1 Board Manual](#)  
[3.7.2 2020-2021 President Review](#)  
[3.7.3 Salary Scales 2021-2022](#)  
[3.8.1 Program Review Handbook](#)  
[3.8.2 Quality Assurance at Oak Valley](#)

## Section Four: Evidence of Compliance with 2013 Standards and Criteria for Review

### Standard One. Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives.

*The institution defines its purposes and establishes educational objectives aligned with those purposes. The institution has a clear and explicit sense of its essential values and character, its distinctive elements, its place in both the higher education community and society, and its contribution to the public good. It functions with integrity, transparency, and autonomy.*

#### **CFR 1.2 Institutional Purposes**

*Educational objectives are widely recognized throughout the institution, are consistent with stated purposes, and are demonstrably achieved. The institution regularly generates, evaluates, and makes public data about student achievement, including measures of retention and graduation, and evidence of student learning outcomes.*

#### **Institutional Response:**

The Board, faculty, administration, and staff are aligned in the stated education purposes at Oak Valley. This was recognized and highlighted by the WSCUC Site Visit SAV 1 Team Report. The recognition was largely positive, but more work needed to be done. The following outlines how that work has been accomplished over the past year.

Educational objectives are found in the Catalog and the website (Academics and Student Success) are reflective of those values. The goal is not to offer students a series of courses, but to see them “live, learn, and grow” in a holistic manner and in the spirit of Christian thought as they pursue a degree in business ([CFR 1.2.01 - Educational Objectives](#)).

From Oak Valley’s website:

“Oak Valley College offers a Bachelor of Arts in Business, which is suitable for students who wish to:

- work in private industry
- support a nonprofit organization
- lead a ministry
- pursue a government career
- enter management training in manufacturing, operations, service, or retail industries
- launch a business, nonprofit, or ministry

Liberal arts coursework offers breadth and depth covering a range of topics, including project management, economics, finance, accounting, product development, marketing, and leadership ([www.oakvalleycollege.org/academics](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/academics)).”

Following the Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV) 1 and Team Report, Oak Valley administrators and senior faculty redoubled efforts to ensure the institutional purposes and standards are affirmed throughout the institution. Throughout 2020 and 2021, Oak Valley senior leadership

and faculty worked to further define, refine, and articulate Oak Valley's academic standards through six key initiatives.

1. Through the 2020 Program Review, Faculty Chair Morrow and Lead Faculty (Glessner and Martis) reviewed, revised, and articulated the program educational objectives to ensure they are consistent with the stated purposes of the program. ([CFR 1.2.02 - Program Review 2020](#)) Since Oak Valley only has one educational program, the program objectives are also identical to the institutional objectives, which were reaffirmed and reinforced by the Board through the annual strategic planning process. ([CFR 1.2.03 - Strategic Plan](#))
2. The Program Review Team reviewed and revised the program learning outcomes (PLOs) and established rubrics for each PLO. This was a months-long process to identify and adapt Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) VALUES Rubrics, selecting those that aligned with Oak Valley's program objectives and identifying other PLOs that are outside the scope of AACU (e.g. Biblical Literacy and Christian Worldview). ([CFR 1.2.04 - Program Learning Outcomes](#))
3. After the Program Review Team articulated the new PLO standards, another months-long process ensued where faculty articulated three primary PLOs for each course in the program. This was done to ensure that the overall program standards were effectively aligned with course objectives. The three primary PLOs are now identified on the Curriculum Map and faculty are asked to evaluate student performance at the end of each course using those three PLOs as guidance. ([CFR 1.2.05 - Curriculum Map](#))
4. Establishing competency standards at each program level for the PLOs (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior). Starting with Written Communication and Quantitative Literacy, the two primary areas of attention for 2021.
5. Refocusing the Writing Center to train faculty on the Written Communication competency standard. Professor Glessner is also creating a model rubric at each program level (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) and sharing sample papers so faculty can benchmark their assessment practices to focus on student achievement at the appropriate grade level.
6. Mandating in-service training each semester for faculty (included in faculty contracts). Topics target specific priority areas for the College. Thus far, training has covered assessment practices and standards, information literacy and library resources, and cultural competency.

Regarding outcomes, Oak Valley has made great strides in this area as well.

1. Dean Board worked with each faculty member to further articulate how the student learning outcomes (SLOs) align with program learning outcomes (PLOs) and is reflected in the standard syllabus template. ([CFR 1.2.06 - Sample Syllabus - Project Management](#))
2. As professors complete their courses, they articulate how well students performed in completing a signature assignment (a capstone project, final exam, or paper). The Signature Assignment Assessment and Faculty Self-Evaluation Form, revised in spring 2021, asks professors how the major assignment for the term links the SLOs to the PLOs. This process allows faculty to reflect on how their students performed in meeting the specific criteria for the signature assignment and discuss how well they feel it articulated with the broader PLOs. These reflections allow professors to modify and refine the signature assignment and SLOs to better reflect the broader PLOs and continue to improve their teaching ([CFR 1.2.07 - Signature Assignment Assessment](#)).



3. The signature assignment information is then summarized by Institutional Research ([CFR 1.2 08 - Institutional Research - Summer 2020](#) and [CFR 1.2 09 - Institutional Research - 2019-2020 Annual Report](#)), including retention, graduation, and student learning outcome data. Student success is then reported by the Dean to the Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs Committee ([CFR 1.2 10 - Dean's Report Academic Affairs January 2021](#)). Reporting is also on the website and includes student retention and graduation data ([www.oakvalleycollege.org/success](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/success)).
4. The Dean then reviews, annually, these items with each professor through the personnel review process. This gives the Dean a broader understanding of the program objectives and allows each faculty to receive feedback on his/her performance in relation to the program and program objectives.
5. As previously mentioned, the PLOs, academic standards, and program, in general, are then reviewed by the lead faculty through the biennial program review process. This process provides a critical peer-review conducted by senior faculty leaders.
6. Finally, regarding graduates, annual surveys are conducted. With fewer than 20 graduates, and less than full participation in the survey, it will take years to gather quantitative data. Meanwhile, a newly formed Alumni Association provides access to additional engagement with graduates, which helps gather anecdotal feedback. The President of the Alumni Association also serves on the Board, providing input to policy and governance decisions from an alumni perspective.

In summary, the entire process creates a reflective loop, which helps faculty and administration identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement in the learning process. This design is intended to guide Oak Valley to renew and continuously improve the learning community and focus on helping students achieve personal, professional, and spiritual success as they graduate and move on in their lives.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

Academics - [www.oakvalleycollege.org/academics](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/academics)

Student Success - [www.oakvalleycollege.org/success](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/success)

[CFR 1.2 01 - Educational Objectives](#)

[CFR 1.2.02 - Program Review 2020](#)

[CFR 1.2.03 - Strategic Plan](#)

[CFR 1.2.04 - Program Learning Outcomes](#)

[CFR 1.2.05 - Curriculum Map](#)

[CFR 1.2.06 - Sample Syllabus - Project Management](#)

[CFR 1.2 07 - Signature Assignment Assessment](#)).

[CFR 1.2 08 - Institutional Research - Summer 2020](#)

[CFR 1.2 09 - Institutional Research - 2019-2020 Annual Report](#)

[CFR 1.2 10 - Dean's Report Academic Affairs January 2021](#)

## Standard One: Synthesis/Reflections

1. *After completing this analysis, what are the 2 or 3 most important issues that should be emphasized in the review under this Standard?*

Oak Valley College is new and small, but great effort continues to be made to articulate the mission, vision, and values across the organization and share detailed analysis and student success information.

Since SAV 1, Oak Valley has grown and matured all of its systems and approaches. This is not to say that the systems were necessarily broken. As articulated by the SAV 1 Team Report, Oak Valley had, in effect, met the standards of a new institution, but efforts had to be grown and matured, which has taken place over the past 18 months.

The board, administrators, staff, and faculty are committed to long-term continuous improvement and seeking ongoing support and advice from seasoned leaders from other WSCUC-accredited institutions and leaders, including JP Catholic, William Jessup, Fresno Pacific, and Hope International Universities. Senior leaders at these institutions have provided considerable support and feedback, demonstrating their commitment to Oak Valley's success.

2. *Looking overall at the quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and its systems to support the review process, what are institutional strengths?*

One of the biggest strengths is Oak Valley's size, relatively simple business/academic model (one degree and a cohort-based student body), and access to expert resources (mature university examples of model documents, veteran higher education experts, and outside professionals, including attorneys, accountants, and management consultants).

Utilizing Oak Valley's student information system, Populi, ample data and systems are available to support robust evidence-based decision-making tools and resources. As Oak Valley grows, relying on data for effective decision-making will play a prominent role in how Oak Valley continues to mature.

3. *Looking again at the overall quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and systems, what are the areas to be addressed or improved in the foreseeable future?*

Oak Valley intends to continue establishing information gathering support and services that prove meaningful and support decision-making for student success. To date, administrators are learning that creating and mining data sets takes time and is a moving target. Given Oak Valley's modest enrollment and relative maturity, critical mass and historical data continues to slowly materialize in many areas.

Administrators and faculty are conscious not to rely too heavily on sources that may prove unreliable. Every intention is to build statistically significant quantitative and qualitative data over time to ensure that decision-making is based on sound data.

Along those lines, Oak Valley administrators have identified many systems and programs they wish to emulate from peer and aspirational institutions. But given Oak Valley's limited resources and maturity, they must be selective in which ones they choose to apply and weigh the pros and cons in making a selection.

Finally, while Oak Valley administrators feel confident that they are on the path to capture the right information to inform decision-making, quantifying results and training faculty to provide more sophisticated reporting will take time and experience. For instance, the Signature Assignment Assessment Forms are instructive and support the alignment of program learning outcomes with the major assignment in each course.

## Standard Two. Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

*The institution achieves its purposes and attains its educational objectives at the institutional and program level through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. The institution demonstrates that these core functions are performed effectively by evaluating valid and reliable evidence of learning and by supporting the success of every student.*

### **CFR 2.1 Teaching and Learning**

*The institution's educational programs are appropriate in content, standards of performance, rigor, and nomenclature for the degree level awarded, regardless of mode of delivery. They are staffed by sufficient numbers of faculty qualified for the type and level of curriculum offered.*

*Guideline:* The content, length, and standards of the institution's academic programs conform to recognized disciplinary or professional standards and are subject to peer review.

#### **Institutional Response:**

Oak Valley offers a single degree, the Bachelor of Arts in Business. Oak Valley's peers include John Paul Catholic University and Providence Christian College, aspirational peers include Pomona, Claremont McKenna, and Westmont Colleges.

The BA in Business is structured on a traditional semester calendar system (16 weeks) with four four-unit courses offered per semester, for a total of 32 courses or 128 semester units. Three significant and distinctive features of Oak Valley's program include

1. 32 courses are prescriptive (all are required, no waivers and no transfer credits)
2. Students progress through the program as a cohort, taking all courses together
3. No acceptance of AP credit or experiential learning

These standards are aligned with Oak Valley's aspirational peers. While Oak Valley is not a highly-selective liberal arts college, yet, it aspires to mature into that level of respect.

Also, the cohort model and the bonds it creates among students is at the center of Oak Valley's model. One sophomore/junior and no junior/senior withdrew during the pandemic, which illustrates the power of the cohort model. As outlined earlier in this report, the 2021 entering freshmen had a 50% attrition rate (compared to less than 30% attrition in previous first year cohorts). It is assumed that the rate was so high because this cohort was 100% online to start and failed to develop the bonds that previous cohorts developed during the first semester. As their cohort returned to 100% in-person instruction in May 2021, those bonds were created, and the health of the cohort appears to be much improved.

Through the 2020 Program Review, Oak Valley's faculty reaffirmed the structure and values of the program and made only one substitute to the courses offered and minor modifications to the course sequencing. ([CFR 2.1.01 - Curriculum Map](#))

Oak Valley courses and syllabi are modeled after courses taught at well-respected colleges and universities. Reflective of Oak Valley's principles of academic freedom, professors personalize

each syllabus to accommodate their specific teaching style and expertise. At the same time, each faculty member is asked to focus on three primary program learning outcomes (PLOs), which are marked on the curriculum map. Faculty are told that they are to create a signature assignment to assess student performance at the end of the course in alignment with those three PLOs. This expectation has been continually reinforced in 2020-2021.

Built on the standards of traditional liberal arts colleges, faculty use a mix of primary sources and undergraduate textbooks for teaching. For example, Biblical Themes in Literature, based on a course offered at the University of Edinburgh, uses selections surrounding specific biblical themes. The course features works from R.L. Stevenson, Milton, Donne, Conrad, and others ([CFR 2.1 02 - Biblical Themes in Literature Syllabus](#)). Similarly, the Literature course features writings from Homer, Hesiod, Plato, Aristotle, Virgil, Augustine, Chaucer, Cervantes, and others ([CFR 2.1 03 - Masterpieces of Western Literature Syllabus](#)).

Textbooks, when used, are selected from reputable publishers (Wiley, Cengage, Pearson, and Prentice Hall). These textbooks are designed for teaching semester-length courses at the undergraduate level. In cases where a professor uses older works (5+ years old), he/she needs to provide the Dean with a rationale for why the text is being used. For primary works, faculty are free to use these sources without prior approval.

When courses utilize a textbook, the syllabus reflects covering all, or nearly all, of the chapters. Thus, the coverage is similar to courses taught elsewhere. Most faculty teach similar courses at other institutions (primarily, California Baptist University, University of Redlands, Cal State University, San Bernardino, and others).

Faculty are selected based on their academic credentials and teaching and/or professional experience in a related field. Of the 65 courses offered at Oak Valley over the first three years of operation, 41 have been taught by individuals who teach similar courses at other WSCUC-accredited institutions and/or have terminal degrees in their discipline. The remaining 24 courses were taught by practitioner faculty/professionals with, on average, 20+ years of professional experience and graduate degrees, typically, an MBA or MA. ([CFR 2.1.04 - Faculty Profiles](#))

The Dean reviews the faculty and syllabi to ensure academic standards are met. The Faculty Senate updates and revises academic standards, courses, and program learning outcomes through the biennial program review process. The next program review is scheduled in 2020.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 2.1.01 - Curriculum Map](#)

[CFR 2.1 02 - Biblical Themes in Literature Syllabus](#)

[CFR 2.1 03 - Masterpieces of Western Literature Syllabus](#)

[CFR 2.1.04 - Faculty Profiles](#)

## CFR 2.4 Teaching and Learning

*The institution's student learning outcomes and standards of performance are developed by faculty and widely shared among faculty, students, staff, and (where appropriate) external stakeholders. The institution's faculty take collective responsibility for establishing appropriate standards of performance and demonstrating through assessment the achievement of these standards.*

*Guideline:* Student learning outcomes are reflected in course syllabi.

### **Institutional Response:**

Since Oak Valley is small and unique, the Faculty Senate, as a whole, is empowered with setting student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs), as well as general academic standards and expectations. Traditionally, it is recognized that these activities are carried out at a department, not institutional, level.

President Blum and Dean Board have worked collaboratively with Lead Faculty (Morrow, Martis, and Glessner) to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities as leaders in this shared governance.

The development, modification, and articulation of curriculum standards are analyzed and refined through the biennial program review process ([CFR 2.4.01 - Program Review Cycle](#)). The 2020 Program Review concluded with ongoing biweekly meetings with Lead Faculty to implement the findings and recommendations found in the Program Review. This work continues throughout 2021. The next program review is scheduled in 2022. ([CFR 2.4.02 - Program Review Handbook](#)).

Speaking to the issue of external review, each of Oak Valley's two program reviews included external reviews from four faculty and administrators at WSCUC accredited programs (John Paul Catholic University, William Jessup University, California Baptist University, and Fresno Pacific University). Reviewers were chosen based on their experience with the program review process at their home institutions. While some reviewers were familiar with Oak Valley College, there were reviewers in both reviews who had no prior knowledge or connection with the College. In all cases, reviewers were strongly encouraged to follow the WSCUC method of review providing both commendations and recommendations. ([CFR 2.4.03 Dr. Shoup Review](#), [CFR 2.4.04 Dr. Erickson Review](#), [CFR 2.4.05 Dr. Connolly Review](#))

To ensure systematic cohesiveness, professors are provided with a model syllabus, which, in most cases, has been adapted from notable colleges or universities. Each professor has the academic freedom to customize the syllabus based on their individual teaching style and approach to the topic. The final course syllabus includes: the professor's contact information, pre-course instructions, course description, SLOs, how a Christian worldview will be integrated, major topics to be covered, required text(s), schedule of class sessions with the specific topics to be covered, reading/writing/project assignments, policies on attendance and participation, quizzes and exams, guidelines for writing, grading criteria with rubric, workload expectations, and academic honesty. The SLOs as articulated through the rubric and grading criteria become the basis for assessing student performance.

When hired, faculty are informally advised, “You have been hired as the discipline expert. Your role is to take the course and make it your own through the SLOs, lectures, discussions, classroom activities, and assessments, including exams, presentations, and individual and group projects.” The final syllabus is provided to the Dean who reviews and approves any major changes. Updating the course description or learning outcomes are to be reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate since that may influence coverage of the PLOs and alter expectations of the program objectives. ([CFR 2.4.06 - Freshman Writing Seminar Syllabus](#), and [CFR 2.4.07 - Project Management Principles and Practice Syllabus](#))

At the end of each course, professors perform a self-evaluation designed to analyze how well they feel they taught the course, how they would improve, and any challenges they may have encountered. This process helps Dean Board and the faculty member identify areas of improvement or highlight any challenges the professor may have encountered. It also provides a jumping off point when aligning the feedback found in the student evaluations and whether there are any areas of misalignment. It is common for professors to identify several areas that they intend to revise their approach when teaching the course next time, and this allows Dean Board to engage in a discussion with them on some new approaches they may attempt to continuously improve.

A Signature Assignment Assessment Form is also submitted by the professor, which validates the major course assignment or final exam, how well it aligned with the PLOs, and what the professor intends to do in the future to improve the signature assignment and its alignment with the PLOs ([CFR 2.4.08 - Signature Assignment Assessment Form](#)).

Based on this feedback along with student evaluations, classroom observations, participation in Faculty Senate and other campus activities, Dean Board prepares an annual performance review with each faculty member.

Assessment standards are frequently discussed, articulated, and reviewed at Faculty Senate meetings. Additionally, Lead Professors Glessner and Martis have begun training and articulating competency standards for written communication and quantitative literacy in an effort to create benchmarks for academic performance at grade levels (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior). Additional competency standards are being formed and will be rolled out in other areas, including information literacy and oral communication.

Students evaluate each professor and course prior to receiving final course grades. The student evaluation is available online, via the student information system, Populi, a week before Finals. Students may not view their final grades until they complete a course evaluation. The student evaluation asks students to evaluate teaching and how well the SLOs and PLOs were covered during the course ([CFR 2.4.09 - Student Course Evaluation](#)).

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 2.4.01 - Program Review Cycle](#)

[CFR 2.4.02 - Program Review Handbook](#)

[CFR 2.4.03 Dr. Shoup Review](#)

[CFR 2.4.04 Dr. Erickson Review](#)

[CFR 2.4.05 Dr. Connolly Review](#)

[CFR 2.4.06 - Freshman Writing Seminar Syllabus](#)

[CFR 2.4.07 - Project Management Principles and Practice Syllabus](#)

[CFR 2.4.08 - Signature Assignment Assessment Form](#)

[CFR 2.4.09 - Student Course Evaluation](#)



## **CFR 2.5 Teaching and Learning**

*The institution's academic programs actively involve students in learning, take into account students' prior knowledge of the subject matter, challenge students to meet high standards of performance, offer opportunities for them to practice, generalize, and apply what they have learned, and provide them with appropriate and ongoing feedback about their performance and how it can be improved.*

### **Institutional Response:**

At Oak Valley, students join as a cohort and progress through the entire program together with a set schedule of courses each semester. That program schedule allows students to move in lock-step from introductory through mastery-level course experiences and expectations. The nature of Oak Valley's liberal arts curriculum combined with an applied general business major is designed to help students develop building blocks to practice, generalize, and apply what they have learned.

Being such a small and intimate community, students receive regular on-going, and very specific feedback about their learning and performance. The nature of a small liberal arts education, and an Oak Valley education, in particular, is to have faculty and students engage one another in the learning process. The final capstone experience, the Launch Pad course, ensures that students engage in a specific area of interest, their Launch Pad project, and receive direct feedback from professors throughout that three course sequence. ([CFR 2.5.01 - Launch Pad Example #1](#), [CFR 2.5.02 - Launch Pad Example #2](#), [CFR 2.5.03 - Launch Pad Example #3](#))

In more general terms, the sequential learning process at Oak Valley helps students move from introductory topics to more advanced skill development. For instance, students take Early American History (pre-Revolution) and build on that knowledge in the next semester through US Government and Politics, which begins with the Federalist period. Old Testament Survey is followed by New Testament Survey, which provides the foundation for Systematic Theology and Spiritual Formation. Math for Economics serves as an introduction to Economic Principles (macroeconomics), which is then applied further in Economic Analysis (microeconomics). From there, students move on to Financial Accounting and Managerial Finance. In several course sequences, the same professor teaches the 2-3 courses in sequence, which provides a continuum of learning and steady progression toward mastery of the subject matter. ([CFR 2.5.04 - Curriculum Map](#))

In addition to the progression of coursework, professors increase their expectations for student performance as students advance through the program. This is being formally articulated by Professor Glessner, written communication, and Professor Martis, quantitative literacy. Both professors are building competency standards to ensure students progress through the curriculum building their competency over the eight semesters. ([CFR 2.5.05 - Freshman Writing Standard](#))

### **Applied Learning**

Throughout their education, students are able to choose projects and topics that are of specific interest to them and applied in nature. This is illustrated in both individual and group projects found at every level of the curriculum and culminates in the capstone, Launch Pad, where students must conceive, plan, prototype, and implement a project of their choosing.

Starting Summer Semester 2021, Career Center Director Javier Blanco introduced an internship program designed to provide students with an opportunity to gain professional experience with a host company or organization. The internship was designed as a non-degree credit course to ensure accountability and provide students with an academic record of their internship experience. Six students participated in the pilot internship program in Summer 2021. Students are being recruited for successive semesters. It is anticipated that many students will continue in their internships across multiple semesters, on a formal (repeating the non-credit course) or informal basis. Based on the early success, an eight semester internship program is under development and is anticipated to be launched in Fall 2022.

During senior semesters, students demonstrate mastery of their knowledge in several courses. Specifically, the Launch Pad sequence, over three semesters (one year), requires students to develop a business plan for a new product or service, present their plan to an outside sponsor, and analyze the success or failure of the plan. This systematic approach to practical applied learning gives students a taste of the real world and a portfolio they may showcase to prospective employers.

### **Learning Outcomes Measured**

Learning outcomes are broadly mapped at the course level representing the expectations each course is intended to meet ([CFR 2.5.06 - General Education Mapping to Learning Outcomes](#) and [CFR 2.5.07 - Curriculum Mapping to Program Learning Outcomes](#)).

Professors are able to provide students with timely and comprehensive feedback in many forms. Faculty members may use the model rubric supplied by the College or design their own. The rubric provides an objective scale to grade students on a specific assignment, [www.oakvalleycollege.org/rubric](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/rubric). In addition, all the program learning outcomes have their own model rubrics, and professors are asked to familiarize themselves with those rubrics in order to gain a valuable appreciation of how the PLOs fit within the context of the course, [www.oakvalleycollege.org/success](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/success). Professors add written comments to help students improve their work in the future. This process has been discussed at Faculty Senate meetings and emphasized with new faculty members as they are oriented to teaching at Oak Valley, [www.oakvalleycollege.org/facultyorientation](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/facultyorientation).

Oak Valley's learning management system, Populi, has embedded rubric tracking, which simplifies the process, so professors may quickly and effectively communicate results with students. Grading and tracking progress, more generally, is also available within Populi, allowing students and faculty to easily monitor grades throughout the semester. To date, there have been no major concerns raised by students about grading, indicating professors are diligent and responsive in providing feedback.

Due to the small class sizes and personal attention provided by faculty, professors frequently talk with students about their course progress. For instance, "XXXX, do you understand the assignment?" "XXXX, do you have a minute to go over my comments on your paper?" "XXXX, XXXX and XXXX, I sent you an email about your group project. Did you understand the expectations? How may I help you?"

## **Progress Reports**

From its opening, Oak Valley established a formulaic means to provide progress reports for students who are struggling or falling behind. Faculty provide regular progress reports during the semester (weeks 2, 4, 6, and 12), with particular attention paid to any student who has a C- or lower in the course, may be missing classes, or demonstrating signs of poor performance or stress. The progress report is provided to the student's advisor, who is to intervene and counsel the student. Oak Valley's Manager of Student and Faculty Support, Meg Herring, also connects with the student to provide support.

The progress report interventions have provided numerous opportunities to engage and support struggling students. The Dean maintains tracking reports on these interventions and, over time, Institutional Research will be able to analyze how these interventions have helped "save" students from failing. As of now, there are numerous anecdotal experiences where students who have struggled have been "saved" and even thrived after one or more interventions. Several examples are cited below.

1. Student #1 was failing one course in Spring 2021 and was borderline failing two more. There were multiple missing assignments and lack of virtual attendance. After speaking to the student about the potential of having to retake several classes and possibly not graduating with the rest of their cohort, the student has shown significant progress. This student has reprioritized their education and is currently passing all Summer Semester courses.
2. Student #2 was struggling in Fall 2020 balancing life as a single parent of three children. It showed in the student's lack of consistency in attending classes, in missing assignments, and little to no motivation to improve. After speaking to this student, helping with time management and reassuring how important it was to ask for help, this student now attends every class, has not missed a single assignment and is on the path to graduation. Summer 2021 has been this student's best semester yet.
3. Student #3 was on the fence about continuing their education due to the pressures of balancing college requirements, personal life, and working. A staff member noticed a drop in their attendance. Upon talking to this student, there was a sense of renewal. This student now has remained in high attendance, and has learned different scheduling tactics.

### **List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 2.5.01 - Launch Pad Example #1](#)

[CFR 2.5.02 - Launch Pad Example #2](#)

[CFR 2.5.03 - Launch Pad Example #3](#)

[CFR 2.5.04 - Curriculum Map](#)

[CFR 2.5.05 - Freshman Writing Standard](#)

[CFR 2.5.06 - General Education Mapping to Learning Outcomes](#)

[CFR 2.5.07 - Curriculum Mapping to Program Learning Outcomes](#)

## **CFR 2.6 Teaching and Learning**

*The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance. The institution ensures that its expectations for student learning are embedded in the standards that faculty use to evaluate student work.*

*Guideline:* The institution has an assessment infrastructure adequate to assess student learning at program and institution levels.

### **Institutional Response:**

Oak Valley's assessment infrastructure is built upon its student and program learning outcomes (SLOs and PLOs). SLOs are measured on an assignment level and PLOs are measured at the program level.

At the beginning of every course, professors highlight the SLOs that will be covered in the syllabus. At the end of every course, professors report how well students performed on the PLOs through the Signature Assignment Assessment Form. ([CFR.2.6.01 - Signature Assignment Assessment Form](#))

As part of Oak Valley's Program Review 2020, the PLOs were revised and updated in order to better align with Oak Valley's stated learning outcomes ([www.oakvalleycollege.org/success](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/success)). Furthermore, standards articulated by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) were used to adapt and improve Oak Valley's PLOs.

Assessment standards were re-articulated to the faculty in July 2020 and have continued to be reinforced throughout 2020 and 2021. The goal is to ensure all faculty are aware of the assessment standards and expectations. In specific areas, written communication and quantitative literacy, Lead Professors Glessner and Martis have been training faculty to apply consistent standards and expectations for written communication and quantitative literacy based on the course level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior). This process will be expanded into other PLOs in the coming semesters. For written communication, Professor Glessner is establishing standards at each grade level ([CFR 2.6.02 - Freshman Writing Standards](#)).

Oak Valley's Academic Affairs Committee, meeting every other month, reviews academic standards, expectations, and outcomes, with the Dean reporting results of student success and faculty performance on a regular basis. The Office of Institutional Research (IR) provides information resources and reporting to support the process, including end of the semester and annual reports on student performance, satisfaction, and other metrics. IR gathers the end of the semester course evaluations, faculty self-evaluations, and Signature Assignment Assessment Forms. Information is then analyzed by the Dean and reported to administration (Cabinet), Faculty Senate, and the Academic Affairs Committee. ([CFR 2.6.03 - Dean's Report January 2021](#)).

Each group then provides feedback, analysis, and perspective in a process of continuous improvement. ([CFR 2.6.04 - Academic Affairs Committee January 2021](#))

The Academic Affairs Committee provides guidance and direction from a board perspective to the Dean, and the Faculty Senate provides independent leadership to support and improve academic standards. The Dean collaborates with the Faculty Chair to identify opportunities for

improvement and prepare materials to review during the biennial program review process. ([CFR 2.6 05 - Assessment Process Flow Chart](#))

At the course level, a model syllabus template is provided to new faculty highlighting the PLO to SLO alignment. As faculty adapt the syllabi to their teaching style, they are asked to maintain the integrity of the PLOs in order to ensure program outcomes are standardized and met at the course level. Each semester, the latest syllabi are posted to the web ([www.oakvalleycollege.org/programreview](http://www.oakvalleycollege.org/programreview)). This is done in preparation for the next program review cycle and to allow faculty to review any syllabi. The goal is to encourage faculty to understand the context in which their course is being taught, what comes before, what comes after, and what is offered concurrently.

The overall educational experience of the first three graduating classes has gone well with relatively high graduation rates (comparable with peer institutions). However, due to the pandemic impacting two of the three graduating cohorts, it is somewhat difficult to identify significant trends. ([CFR 2.6.06 - Oak Valley vs Local Schools](#))

The overall effectiveness of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the Program Review Team, as well as the solid reporting from IR, all point to a robust assessment infrastructure and the ability to effectively track, analyze, and support faculty, students, and the alignment of the program objectives (PLOs) with the mission, vision, and values of the College. This support infrastructure provides a firm foundation on which to grow Oak Valley in the coming years and fulfill its educational mission.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 2.6.01 - Signature Assignment Assessment Form](#)

[CFR 2.6.02 - Freshman Writing Standard](#)

[CFR 2.6.03 - Dean's Report January 2021](#)

[CFR 2.6.04 Academic Affairs Committee January 2021](#)

[CFR 2.6 05 - Assessment Process Flow Chart](#)

[CFR 2.6.06 - Oak Valley vs Local Schools](#)

## CFR 2.10 Student Learning and Success

*The institution demonstrates that students make timely progress toward the completion of their degrees and that an acceptable proportion of students complete their degrees in a timely fashion, given the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs it offers. The institution collects and analyzes student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, satisfaction, and the extent to which the campus climate supports student success. The institution regularly identifies the characteristics of its students; assesses their preparation, needs, and experiences; and uses these data to improve student achievement.*

*Guideline:* The institution disaggregates data according to racial, ethnic, gender, age, economic status, disability, and other categories, as appropriate. The institution benchmarks its retention and graduation rates against its own aspirations as well as the rates of peer institutions.

### **Institutional Response:**

A key to achieving Oak Valley's mission is to graduate students from diverse backgrounds who are well prepared for the workforce free from student debt. In order to accomplish this, Oak Valley has adopted some formulaic processes to provide a clear path to complete the degree on time with support systems to guide them along the way. This is accomplished through several different means, including:

1. A structured course schedule (no electives/no transfers)
2. A cohort of peers to create a family-like environment to create peer support
3. Adherence to the program learning outcomes (PLOs)
4. Personal support from professors, administrators, advisors, and staff
5. Regular academic advising (progress reports to identify and support students who struggle and require more direct intervention)
6. Prayer for students
7. Additional support through the Writing and Career Centers

Since the cohorts are lock-step and full-time, the only way a student falls behind is if he/she fails a course or withdraws. When a student fails a course, he/she is advised how to make up the course (typically, through independent study) and progress to graduation.

Thus far, Oak Valley has demonstrated solid retention and graduation rates. In broader terms, Oak Valley has maintained positive comparisons with local private and public universities.

[\(2.10.01 Oak Valley vs. Local Schools\)](#)

In addition, end of semester and annual data compiled by Institutional Research (IR) captures additional details that help inform Oak Valley's Board, administration, faculty, and staff. This data provides rich information at various levels and continues to be refined in order to provide important feedback regarding current enrollment trends, student success, satisfaction, and graduation/alumni information. Disaggregated data has been assembled by IR according to racial, ethnic, gender, age, economic status, first generation college student, and a few other areas. ([2.10.02 Semester Report Summer 2020](#), [2.10.03 Annual Report 2019-2020](#))

From the first three cohorts, the student retention rate for freshmen to sophomores has averaged 81%. This particular statistic tends to be viewed as a key indicator of overall student

satisfaction. The entering freshmen in Fall 2020 fell below 50% due to the pandemic. However, continuing students fared remarkably well, which is an indication that students who were able to fully immerse themselves in the cohort experience before the pandemic built strong bonds and were able to persevere through the challenges encountered over the last year.

While these figures are promising and align well with Oak Valley's mission, vision and values, it is recognized that just a few students can swing these percentages. Therefore, leaders are careful not to draw long-term expectations or conclusions from these early statistics. As Oak Valley grows, data sets will become more meaningful.

Student satisfaction and other quality assurance measures are tracked through the end of the semester course evaluations and semi-annual student focus groups. The evaluation process leans heavily on quantitative data, while the focus groups provide meaningful qualitative data. These evaluative tools as well as job placement and, eventually, alumni data, are intended to provide a rich understanding of the student experience, where to improve, and any challenges that need to be addressed. Student focus groups were suspended in 2020 due to the pandemic and are restarted in Summer 2021.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[2.10.01 - Oak Valley vs. Local Schools](#)

[2.10.02 - Semester Report Summer 2020](#)

[2.10.03 - Annual Report 2019-2020](#)

## Standard Two: Synthesis/Reflections

1. *After completing this analysis, what are the 2 or 3 most important issues that should be emphasized in the Review under this Standard?*

The experience, quality, dedication, and passion of Oak Valley's faculty and administration are found in its unique character, approach to higher education, and care for students on an individual basis. Student learning, success, and growth are at the heart of Oak Valley's culture. Oak Valley embodies a somewhat classical approach to teaching, learning, and student success - namely, professors (individuals of character, wisdom, and experience) are here to impart character, wisdom, and experience to individual students who are to become the next generation of business, ministry, nonprofit, and community leaders.

The careful preparation of program criteria, course requirements, and program learning outcomes (PLOs) are systematically reviewed with great care and effort. Beyond this, administrators and faculty are committed to fulfill Oak Valley's mission leaning on the best practices found in WSCUC and other WSCUC institutions. This is exemplified in the seriousness in which administrators and lead faculty delve into the standards and expectations outlined by WSCUC, as well as continuously reaching out to other WSCUC schools and leaders to continually evaluate its approach to teaching, administration, policy development, and procedures. Oak Valley administrators and staff continuously look to other institutions to benchmark its approach and seek best practices from its peers, primarily JP Catholic, William Jessup, Simpson, Fresno Pacific Universities, and Providence College. As well as aspirational schools like Claremont McKenna, Pomona, and other elite small liberal arts colleges.

The focused and balanced curriculum featuring applied business, theological, and general education courses provides an integrated experience for students and has positioned Oak Valley to come alongside its peers in the long-standing tradition of high-quality well-rounded small liberal arts colleges.

2. *Looking overall at the quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and systems to support the review process, what are institutional **strengths**?*

Although Oak Valley College is new, data gathering has come a long way. Primary strengths include:

1. Signature Assignment Assessments - Early on, Oak Valley had a difficult time aligning the student learning outcomes (SLOs) and program learning outcomes (PLOs). In talking with peer institutions, Oak Valley was able to initiate the newly revised assessment process. The data have proven incredibly beneficial for both faculty and administration.
2. Program Review - The inaugural program review process in 2018 was instructive and highlighted many opportunities for improvement. The most meaningful outcomes resulted in the creation of a more independent and well-led Faculty Senate. With the new Senate in place, Oak Valley undertook the 2020 Program Review. That review not only led to incredibly valuable updates and revisions to the program, but it enabled lead faculty to gain a more hands-on experience, leading the curriculum efforts. It was that hands-on experience that empowered faculty to fully exercise their independence and leadership.
3. Institutional Research - Data gathering has become well structured and sophisticated. In many instances, data sets are too small to prove meaningful for important decision-making, but administration and IR are well versed on the College data needs.



End of semester and end of year reporting are in place and provide opportunities for effective data tracking and analysis.

3. *Looking again at the overall quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and systems to support the review process, what are areas to be addressed or improved in the foreseeable future?*

Meaningful trends have yet to emerge in many areas (e.g. graduation and alumni success). Only through time and significant student enrollment will truly meaningful results emerge. With cohort sizes growing, Oak Valley should have suitable data in the coming years.

Even given the small numbers, there is a tendency to draw conclusions that are not representative of a larger community. Faculty and administrators must remain patient and wait for adequate trends to develop. Until then, decision-making is carefully considered based on the limited data that is available, which sometimes leads to decisions based on a best guess.

## Standard Three: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

*The institution sustains its operations and supports the achievement of its educational objectives through investments in human, physical, fiscal, technological, and information resources and through an appropriate and effective set of organizational and decision-making structures. These key resources and organizational structures promote the achievement of institutional purposes and educational objectives and create a high-quality environment for learning.*

### **CFR 3.1 Faculty and Staff**

*The institution employs faculty and staff with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution. The faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualification, and diversity and to achieve the institution's educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic and co-curricular programs wherever and however delivered.*

*Guideline:* The institution has a faculty staffing plan that ensures that all faculty roles and responsibilities are fulfilled and includes a sufficient number of full-time faculty members with appropriate backgrounds by discipline and degree level.

#### **Institutional Response:**

Oak Valley is well served by a talented pool of dedicated professionals committed to excellence and serving the institution through their strong dedication to students. Somewhat masking the overall nature of Oak Valley's staffing is the fact that the College is supported, indirectly through its partnership with Sunrise Church. This partnership, in essence, eliminates the need for several staff positions (e.g. facilities manager, campus pastor, IT manager, cleaning/maintenance staff, etc.) ([CFR 3.1.01 - Organizational Chart 2021-2022](#))

Long-term, Oak Valley has adopted an Enrollment Plan, which guides its Master Plan, which includes faculty and staff plans for the next several years. While some variables are difficult to project and predict, the board and senior administration are extremely confident in how well the College is served by current and future plans. ([CFR 3.1.02 - Master Plan](#))

Listed below are Oak Valley's current lead faculty and staff. Given Oak Valley's size, many individuals serve dual or multiple roles. This is reasonable. For example, given Oak Valley's limited curriculum, cohort structure, and the fact that there are no transfers or waivers, the role of registrar, on average, is only a couple of hours per month.

- Eric Blum - President/CEO ([CFR 3.1.03 - President Job Description](#))
- Vacant - Vice President of Enrollment (also Financial Aid Director) ([CFR 3.1.04 - Vice President of Enrollment Job Description](#))
- Stacey Syrocki - Vice President of Advancement (also Chief Financial Officer/CFO [CFR 3.1.05 - Vice President of Advancement Job Description](#))
- Afarah Board - Dean and Professor of Business ([CFR 3.1.06 - Dean Job Description](#))
- Terry Morrow - Lead Faculty in Theology and Faculty Chair ([CFR 3.1.07 - Professor of Theology](#) and [CFR 3.1.08 - Faculty Chair Job Description](#))

- Robyn Glessner - Lead Faculty in General Education and Writing Center Director ([CFR 3.1.09 - Professor of General Education and Writing Center Director Job Description](#))
- Debbie Martis - Lead Faculty in Business ([CFR 3.1.10 - Professor of Business Job Description](#))
- Javier Blanco - Lead Faculty for the Launch Pad and Career Center Director ([CFR 3.1.11 - Career Center Director Job Description](#))
- Betty Crocker - Director of Institutional Research ([CFR 3.1.12 - Director of Institutional Research](#))
- Megan Herring - Manager of Student and Faculty Services (also Accreditation Liaison Officer and Registrar [CFR 3.1.13 - Manager of Student and Faculty Services](#))
- Sarahi Hidalgo - Admissions Counselor
- Michael Lopez - Graphic Designer and Social Media Manager

Oak Valley contracts with an additional 12 adjunct faculty ([CFR 3.1.14 - Faculty Profiles and Assignments](#)). Most adjuncts have taught multiple times for Oak Valley, demonstrating lasting commitment and continuity.

Regarding diversity, 26% of faculty are female and 26% are from underrepresented groups. Staff positions are 60% female and 60% underrepresented groups.

In summary, the staffing model at Oak Valley, while lean, is stable, sustainable, and sufficient to support all institutional requirements, thus allowing Oak Valley to support and continue to improve its program and operations for years to come.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 3.1.01 - Organizational Chart 2021-2022](#)

[CFR 3.1.02 - Master Plan](#)

[CFR 3.1.03 - President Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.04 - Vice President of Enrollment Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.05 - Vice President of Advancement Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.06 -Dean Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.07 - Professor of Theology](#)

[CFR 3.1.08 - Faculty Chair Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.09 - Professor of General Education and Writing Center Director Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.10 - Professor of Business Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.11 - Career Center Director Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.1.12 - Director of Institutional Research](#)

[CFR 3.1.13 - Manager of Student and Faculty Services](#)

[CFR 3.1.14 - Faculty Profiles and Assignments](#)

## CFR 3.2 Faculty and Staff

*Faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, workload, incentives, and evaluation practices are aligned with institutional purposes and educational objectives. Evaluation is consistent with best practices in performance appraisal, including multisource feedback and appropriate peer review. Faculty evaluation processes are systematic and are used to improve teaching and learning.*

### **Institutional Response:**

Oak Valley recruits faculty and staff who demonstrate a strong commitment to the mission, vision, and values of the College. The recruitment and selection process includes:

1. A job analysis is performed by the President, Vice President and/or Dean and a formal job description is prepared [CFR 3.2.01 - Vice President of Enrollment](#)
2. The job analysis and description is reviewed by one of Oak Valley's human resources professionals (e.g. Board Chair Angelo, Professor Martis, or Advisory Board Member Thalmayer)
3. The position is posted on Indeed, LinkedIn, Oak Valley's website and distributed via email through Oak Valley's professional network (e.g. the Advisory Board)
4. Candidate interviews are conducted
5. A finalist is selected based primarily on technical fit for the position

Staff position interviews are conducted by President Blum, Vice President Syrocki and Dean Board. In the case of adjunct faculty, President Blum and Dean Board conduct initial interviews. The Faculty Chair, along with any other faculty members who are available, are asked to meet with prospective adjunct faculty candidates and provide a final recommendation to the Dean. Typically, faculty recruitment takes place six months before a teaching assignment.

Faculty and staff orientations include an overview of the mission, vision, and values of Oak Valley, including the Honor Code, review of the Employee and Faculty Handbook, and training on the student information system (Populi). Staff are oriented the first week of work, and new faculty orientations are conducted 6-8 weeks prior to the start of the semester.

Staff and administrative evaluations are conducted annually and consist of a self-evaluation narrative and performance review form. Evaluations are conducted in person with an opportunity to come to a consensus on opportunities for improvement and development plans for the next year ([CFR 3.2.02 - Staff Self-Evaluation and Performance Review](#)).

Annual faculty evaluations are performed by the Dean and reviewed by the Faculty Chair and President. The faculty performance reviews consist of a review of student evaluations, faculty self-evaluations, classroom observations, and administrative capacity (meeting administrative requirements) ([CFR 3.2.03 - Student Evaluation](#), [CFR 3.2.04 - Faculty Self-Evaluation](#), and [CFR 3.2.05 - Faculty Performance Review](#)). Faculty evaluations, in priority, focus on teaching performance, student success (grading and student evaluations), and engagement with the faculty community (Faculty Senate, in-service training, etc.). A great deal of attention in the process is to review best practices, explore specific goals for each faculty member, and review what is found in the evaluations that may be used to improve student success.

Evaluation of the President is performed, annually, by the Executive Committee of the board and follows a similar process as the other administrators ([CFR 3.2.06 - President Self-Evaluation and Performance Review](#)). The Executive Committee submits a summary of the review to the entire board for approval, typically at the July Board Meeting.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 3.2.01 - Vice President of Enrollment](#)

[CFR 3.2.02 - Staff Self-Evaluation and Performance Review](#)

[CFR 3.2.03 - Student Evaluation](#)

[CFR 3.2.04 - Faculty Self-Evaluation](#)

[CFR 3.2.05 - Faculty Performance Review](#)

[CFR 3.2.06 - President Self-Evaluation and Performance Review](#)

### **CFR 3.3 Faculty and Staff**

*The institution maintains appropriate and sufficiently supported faculty and staff development activities designed to improve teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes.*

*Guideline:* The institution engages full-time, non-tenure-track, adjunct, and part-time faculty members in such processes as assessment, program review, and faculty development.

#### **Institutional Response:**

Monthly Faculty Senate meetings, facilitated by the Faculty Chair, feature discussions about academic standards, best practices in teaching, scholarship, student assessment, and development topics requested by the faculty. The Dean is invited to provide college and administrative updates and serve as a liaison between faculty and administration (the Dean has no formal authority or role in the Faculty Senate).

With a small faculty body, the President, Dean, and Faculty Chair are able to engage with faculty, one-on-one, to explore specific development topics as needed. A fund has been created to support individual faculty development ([CFR 3.3.01 Faculty Development Fund](#)).

Staff development is ongoing. Given the limited staff positions, and the newness of staff (all staff members were hired as of July 2020 or later), professional development has focused on specific training and position-related needs thus far (financial aid training with the Department of Ed and California Student Aid Commission).

Staff are provided with an individualized staff development plan as part of the annual performance review process.

Faculty may request professional development funds through a grant-based approach on an annual basis. The funds may be used for learning scholarship, research, technical training, cultural competency, integrating the Bible and business, student learning for specific curriculum, etc. Dean Board is also providing in-service group training for faculty throughout the year, once per semester.

“One who dares to teach must never cease to learn” (Dana): Professional development provides opportunities for faculty to learn about learning, about teaching, about students, and about themselves. Being an effective professor requires regular reflection and exposure to new ideas and information that is part of good professional development. Effective professional faculty development connects faculty across disciplines and career stages, serving to create a pedagogical community within the college (Facultyfocus.com).

Dean Board challenges faculty to continually improve their teaching effectiveness and scholarship. Professional development is an integral part of every faculty member’s efforts to become more effective in the classroom and plays a central role in faculty motivation and vitality. Topics that have been addressed thus far through in-service training, includes:

- Syllabus/course design
- Writing objectives

- Constructing assessments
- Rubric design and use
- Grading strategies
- Student motivation
- Learning disabilities
- Classroom management
- Scholarship research and teaching
- Educational leadership
- Individual increased educational learning opportunities

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 3.3.01 Faculty Development Fund](#)

### **CFR 3.4 Fiscal, Physical and Information Resources**

*The institution is financially stable and has unqualified independent financial audits and resources sufficient to ensure long-term viability. Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources. Resource planning is integrated with all other institutional planning. Resources are aligned with educational purposes and objectives.*

*Guideline:* The institution has functioned without an operational deficit for at least three years. If the institution has an accumulated deficit, it should provide a detailed explanation and a realistic plan for eliminating it.

#### **Institutional Response:**

Oak Valley has never faced an operational deficit and has received positive unqualified independent reviews from its independent auditors, dating back to 2013 ([CFR 3.4.01 2019-2020 Audited Financial Statements](#)).

The board is committed to maintain a reserve budget designed to cover at least six months of expenses. The reserve enables Oak Valley to sustain operations in case of a fiscal crisis. A vote of the board is required to release funds from the reserve.

Additionally, Oak Valley established an endowment fund with further restrictions. The fund is to provide a legacy and sustainability for the long-term. The endowment is providing interest and investment returns (capital gains) that support operations and specific needs. ([CFR 3.4.02 Endowment Fund](#))

Oak Valley operates a conservative budget process. The board has approved a five-year budget plan, which reflects sufficient financial resources to support current and future operations. The primary sources of revenue include student tuition, individual donations (raised through multiple events and an annual giving campaign), as well as Pell and Cal Grants. Due to the authorization of Pell and Cal Grants in 2020-2021, Oak Valley realized significant revenue growth in what would normally, due to the pandemic, have resulted in revenue shortfalls. ([CFR 3.4.03 2021-2026 Budget](#)).

Given Oak Valley serves predominantly low and middle income students, there is a large upside to Oak Valley's financial health access to Pell and Cal Grants. That upside is reflected in the five-year budget, but the true impact may only be recognized after next year, when Oak Valley will see how many students qualify during a full (post-pandemic) enrollment cycle.

Future budgets provide for increased full-time staffing. While Oak Valley has relied on discounted and volunteer administrative support over the past several years, market-rate salaries are built into the budget, which provide for long-term sustainability.

Oak Valley has established sound accounting and internal controls ([CFR 3.4.04 Accounting and Internal Controls](#)).

#### **List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 3.4.01 2019-2020 Audited Financial Statements](#)



[CFR 3.4.02 Endowment Fund](#)  
[CFR 3.4.03 2021-2026 Budget](#)  
[CFR 3.4.04 Accounting and Internal Controls](#)

## **CFR 3.7 Organization Structures and Decision-Making Processes**

*The institution's organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear and consistent with its purposes, support effective decision making, and place priority on sustaining institutional capacity and educational effectiveness.*

*Guideline:* The institution establishes clear roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority.

### **Institutional Response:**

The board serves as the independent governing body of Oak Valley College. Over the past several years, the board has further defined and refined how the College functions, not just in practice but in spirit. From those discussions, a maturing of board members has resulted in strong leadership dynamics, supporting Oak Valley's sustainability.

Committees (Executive, Finance, Financial Audit, Advancement, Academic Affairs, and Nominations) provide regular performance updates and hold staff accountable as outlined in the board manual. Each committee is overseen by board members and staffed by the appropriate personnel. Most committees also include an outside expert who volunteers (unpaid) to provide greater accountability and independent oversight.

The board functions under an annual calendar to ensure critical functions and operations are maintained and evaluated for the long-term stability of operations

Under the board's direction, the President serves as the day-to-day leader for Oak Valley ([CFR 3.7.01 President/Chief Executive Officer Job Description](#)). The Dean and Vice Presidents serve under the President. The faculty serve under the direction of the Dean ([CFR 3.7.02 Organizational Chart](#) and [CFR 3.7.03 Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Executive Officers](#)).

The Dean serves as the Chief Academic Officer, reports to the President, and provides staff support for the Academic Affairs Committee and the Faculty Senate ([CFR 3.7.04 - Dean/Chief Academic Officer Job Description](#)).

Oak Valley's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) staffs the Board Finance Committee, reviews monthly financial reports, and guides and directs the financial operation of the College. Given the small and relatively simple financial operation at the College, CFO responsibilities reside with the Vice President of Advancement ([CFR 3.7.05 Vice President of Advancement/Chief Financial Officer Job Description](#))

The Faculty Chair facilitates the Faculty Senate and serves on the Cabinet ([CFR 3.7.06 - Faculty Chair Description](#)). The Chair is independent of administration and provides a critical liaison role between the faculty and administration. The Chair assembles the faculty and leads discussions that support academic, assessment, and learning standards. The Faculty Senate is empowered to conduct biennial program reviews, identify opportunities to improve the curriculum, and review and approve program and course revisions.

### **List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 3.7.01 President/Chief Executive Officer Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.7.02 Organizational Chart](#)

[CFR 3.7.03 Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Executive Officers](#)

[CFR 3.7.04 - Dean/Chief Academic Officer Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.7.05 Vice President of Advancement/Chief Financial Officer Job Description](#)

[CFR 3.7.06 - Faculty Chair Description](#)

## CFR 3.9 Organization Structures and Decision-Making Processes

*The institution has an independent governing board or similar authority that, consistent with its legal and fiduciary authority, exercises appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, and ongoing operations, including hiring and evaluating the chief executive officer.*

*Guideline:* The governing body comprises members with the diverse qualifications required to govern an institution of higher learning. It regularly engages in self-review and training to enhance its effectiveness.

### **Institutional Response:**

The independent governing board is made up of a diverse group of seasoned professionals. The board's make-up includes several individuals with extensive educational leadership backgrounds (Miller, Beckwith, Blum, and W. Little), business owners (Angelo, Black, D. Little), Certified Public Accountant and auditor (Scudder), county administrator (Whittle), and two Oak Valley graduates (Allison, Castorena) ([CFR 3.9.01 - Board of Trustees Biographies](#)).

The board engages in self-review and training for effective board governance. The annual retreat focuses extensively on board governance and reflects on how to improve board functions, namely, to direct and protect the organization. Throughout 2020 to the present, the board is engaged in an ongoing development effort designed to provide greater independence, leadership, creativity, and accountability. This has been accomplished through a wide range of activities, including asking individual board members to lead discussions on specific topics, bringing in student and faculty speakers to connect board members with the day-to-day life of the College, and pushing more items to the various committees.

Over the past couple of years, the board has worked to update its mission, vision, and values to more closely align with the realities of what it means to serve the unique student population Oak Valley attracts. The board consensus gravitated toward four themes ([CFR 3.9.02 - Mission, Vision, Values Document 2019](#)):

1. Transforming Lives
2. Growing Community
3. Free of Debt
4. Full of Purpose

In May 2021, the board approved a modest revision to its approach to governance. The primary benefits and changes included:

- Moving from six meetings per year to four meetings (quarterly), which are no longer in duration
- Focusing the four meetings on broader themes and strategic planning, rather than tactics and detailed policies and procedures
- Empowering the Executive Committee to review and approve more minor tactical items that had traditionally been vetted by the entire board
- Asking the Executive Committee to perform initial review of policies and tactics before they come to the entire board for review and approval

Self-review is also featured at the committee level. For instance, at the January 2019 Board Meeting, the financial reports were discussed as the board started preparations for the

2019-2020 budget preparation. Vice President and Finance Committee Chair Little engaged in a series of discussions to revamp the reports to make them easier for the board to read (too dense and detailed, previously). Year to date actuals and percentage of budget were also included in the new version of the budget, rendering the document more user-friendly ([CFR 3.9.03 - 2021-2026 Budget](#)).

The Advancement, Financial Audit, and Finance Committees include independent experts (ex-officio) to serve an independent expert advisory role and to actively support best practices. These experts provide a critical eye and board members are able to ask probing questions of them as independent third-parties.

The Finance Committee reviews all internal controls and financial matters, which are then implemented by the CFO.

Maria Zalesky, who is a fundraising consultant with more than 30 years experience, supports Vice President of Advancement Syrocki with advice on Oak Valley's various campaigns with technical expertise and provides mentoring and guidance for the overall fundraising strategy.

Scott Young, CPA, is a senior audit partner with more than 30 years experience. He helps prepare the Audit Committee for its annual audit, including serving as a liaison with Oak Valley's auditor. He also reviews internal controls and addresses questions throughout the year pertaining to accounting and financial reporting standards.

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 3.9.01 - Board of Trustees Biographies](#)

[CFR 3.9.02 - Mission, Vision, Values Document 2019](#)

[CFR 3.9.03 - 2021-2026 Budget](#)

### **CFR 3.10 Organization Structures and Decision-Making Processes**

*The institution's faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure that both academic quality and the institution's educational purposes and character are sustained.*

*Guideline:* The institution clearly defines the governance roles, rights, and responsibilities of all categories of full- and part-time faculty.

#### **Institutional Response:**

Oak Valley maintains a close-knit independent faculty community where members enjoy strong connectivity among one other, students, and administration. Oak Valley places great value on making faculty feel welcome, and faculty respond by providing strong academic leadership, which is both structured and organic.

The Faculty Senate has matured considerably over the past year and includes formal leadership and direction under Faculty Chair Morrow and Professors of Business and General Education, Martis and Glessner. The three guide discussions on governance, as well as articulating the mission, vision, and values among the faculty ([3.10 01 - Faculty Governance](#)). Under the direction of these leaders, the Faculty Senate structure ensures that quality standards are being articulated and maintained.

Faculty Chair Morrow collaborates with Dean Board to set the agenda for Faculty Senate meetings, which includes faculty development activities, review of the biennial program review process, faculty training and mentoring, and academic quality control. After each semester, the faculty review the quality of instruction and student success (as measured by the various end of semester evaluations).

During the pandemic, standards remained strong, despite the move to distance learning. There were considerable challenges that were unique to the pandemic, mostly involving student motivation. These issues were dealt with by faculty discussing best practices and continually reviewing standards and expectations. The result of these discussions led to the universal adoption of Zoom as a distance learning platform (early in the pandemic, Zoom was little known, and most faculty were using Skype, chat/discussion forums, and various other tools and resources). They also discussed and landed on specific pedagogical approaches, including limiting lectures and increasing discussions and small group activities. Finally, they were able to share what they discovered about individual students or groups of students. Since cohorts remained constant, the four professors teaching across a cohort could share what worked with that cohort and how to motivate individual students who were struggling.

With classroom instruction getting back on track during Spring and Summer 2021, faculty were able to reassert the standard operations for teaching and learning. As mentioned previously in the report, the freshman class suffered from abnormally high attrition (50%+ compared to 30% in previous cohorts). The other two cohorts only lost one student combined.

While the pandemic has been one of the leading discussion items for the Faculty Senate, the group has demonstrated a strong discipline to carry on with other business. During the past several Faculty Senate meetings, discussions have revolved around student success, academic

standards, competency standards (e.g. written communication, quantitative literacy, and information literacy).

Several in-service training programs have also been offered. Past topics include student assessment (July 2020), information literacy and use of the online library system (November 2020), and cultural competency (March 2021).

The Faculty Senate is maintaining ongoing discussions surrounding character education for students, and specifically, the role of Christian higher education in supporting students' personal and professional development. Commonly, professors talk about how much student A has matured. How self-confident student B is after a few semesters, how student C is now considering graduate school, how well student D is able to communicate more effectively, how student E got a new role or responsibility at work because of a course project.

Due to Oak Valley's small size, cohort structure, and progressive curriculum program, faculty are able to track individual student progress across the program, which inevitably ends up identifying common themes of student success and maturity. While individual learning and achievement is able to be tracked at the level of student learning outcomes (SLOs), these broader themes are identified by how well students learn beyond the SLOs, in areas like:

- Self confidence
- Time management
- Maturity
- Self discipline
- Prioritization
- Judgment

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[3.10 01 - Faculty Governance](#)

## Standard Three: Synthesis/Reflections

1. *After completing this analysis, what are the 2 or 3 most important issues that should be emphasized in the Review under this Standard?*

Oak Valley has made strides over the past couple of years to mature board and faculty governance practices and has resulted in demonstrable growth in organizational function while providing direction and oversight of college operations.

Previously, board members were passionate about the mission but provided only modest practical leadership. Now, the board fully supports two events, actively engages in meaningful and substantive committee work, and asks probing questions demonstrating maturity and a desire to continuously improve operations and accountability.

Likewise, most faculty had minimal experience at the College and functioned largely as itinerant instructors. Now, a solid group of faculty leaders has emerged demonstrating strong leadership and knowledge about College academic operations and have grown to take on a wide range of responsibilities and to guide curriculum decisions to improved student outcomes.

Largely based on the recommendations provided by the SAV 1 and Program Review, faculty governance is more formalized. The roles of Faculty Chair and lead faculty have been embraced, and the Faculty Senate has emerged as an active independent body. This has relieved pressure on the Dean and provided opportunities for greater faculty autonomy, ownership, and input in academic matters.

Finally, administrators have developed clear and discrete functional expertise and the delegation of duties is well defined across the organization. Important policies and practices have been articulated up and down the organization and strong standards exist to support consistent and stable reporting and decision-making.

Overall, there are many areas that continue to develop, but critical elements are in place to support a robust and professional operation with few signs of any problems or crises affecting students or faculty.

2. *Looking overall at the quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and systems to support the review process, what are institutional strengths?*

The College has effectively standardized and systematized its data gathering, reporting, and analysis. Calendar systems have been created to ensure reviews are conducted at regular intervals and events and activities to support data gathering carries on (e.g. student focus groups, Faculty Senate meetings, program reviews, and end of the semester evaluations).

Policies and standards are easy to locate now that the College maintains a shared drive with documents warehoused by functional areas. Data collection on faculty (e.g. self-evaluations, Signature Assignment Assessment Forms, annual reviews) and students (e.g. retention, grade, demographics) has been standardized making data retrieval, reporting, and analysis relatively simple.

The ease of use and standardized reporting available in Populi, the student, faculty, donor information system allows administrators to function at a very high level with minimal staff or IT support. This is rare in higher education and serves the college well.



3. *Looking again at the overall quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and systems to support the review process, what are areas to be addressed or improved in the foreseeable future?*

Oak Valley administrators need to be careful to not draw inaccurate conclusions from limited data. In most cases, the numbers are simply too small to draw meaningful conclusions. For instance, Admissions continues to rely on word of mouth referrals for prospective students, rather than developing a robust enrollment plan built around sound data and history. Administrators are aware of these limitations and are doing their best to exercise patience while important data tracking emerges. It is anticipated that it will take several years before sufficient meaningful data is available where statistically significant figures in this area makes sense.

Faculty data gathering is improving as standardized faculty self-evaluations and signature assignment assessments have evolved. Training faculty on how to honestly and effectively use these tools is ongoing and moving in the right direction. However, data will, again, take years to evolve as courses continue to be taught and student performance is evaluated.

As faculty data gathering improves, there will be more importance placed on tracking and analyzing those data over time. Since a lot of faculty data and reporting are anecdotal and qualitative, Institutional Research is working to create more qualitative faculty data points to be able to provide more meaningful reporting that can be analyzed over time.

Finally, Oak Valley suffers from a lack of true peers in its data gathering and analyses. There are simply no schools quite like Oak Valley. Although JP Catholic University and Providence Christian College have been labeled as peers, largely because they are newer, small, and Christian, these schools serve primarily wealthier traditional students and not lower income and first generation students. This presents a challenge as the data from these schools does not conform well with Oak Valley.

## Standard Four: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

*The institution engages in sustained, evidence-based, and participatory self-reflection about how effectively it is accomplishing its purposes and achieving its educational objectives. The institution considers the changing environment of higher education in envisioning its future. These activities inform both institutional planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of institutional inquiry, research, and data collection are used to establish priorities, to plan, and to improve quality and effectiveness.*

### **CFR 4.3 Institutional Learning and Improvement**

*Leadership at all levels, including faculty, staff, and administration, is committed to improvement based on the results of inquiry, evidence, and evaluation. Assessment of teaching, learning, and the campus environment—in support of academic and co-curricular objectives—is undertaken, used for improvement, and incorporated into institutional planning processes.*

**Guideline:** *The institution has clear, well-established policies and practices—for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting information—that create a culture of evidence and improvement.*

#### **Institutional Response:**

Faculty, staff, and administration at Oak Valley College are committed to continuous learning and improvement through a number of data gathering and analysis protocols driven by the inquiry, evidence, and evaluation process ([CFR 4.3.01 – Evidence-Based Decision-Making](#)).

Starting at the top, at both the strategic and tactical level, most board work is carried out through the committee structure (Executive, Finance, Advancement, Academic Affairs, and Nominations Committees). At the committee level, strategic decisions are discussed and reviewed by the board. Administration and staff regularly provide reports and plans to guide these discussions ([CFR 4.3.02 – Annual Board Calendar](#)).

Over the past two years, two new plans have been developed to help guide these discussions, the Enrollment and Master Plans. These two plans have been integrated into the annual Strategic Plan and the Advancement Plan has been updated to include new directives to guide fundraising and development work.

Of course, the annual budget cycle reflects the funding priorities for the year, and the subsequent four years, and is closely aligned with the goals from all four of the planning activities.

At each committee meeting, a culture of evidence and improvement may be found in the discussions that take place each month, and leading up to the board meetings. ([CFR 4.3 03 - March 2021 Board Minutes](#) and [CFR 4.3 04 - May 2021 Board Minutes](#))

Academic Affairs regularly reviews course and faculty performance, which is reported by the Dean using data gathered from student and faculty reviews, grading, Signature Assignment Assessment Forms, and various other elements. This information is also a topic of discussion at the Faculty Senate. The Dean, Academic Affairs Committee, and Faculty Senate analyze student

and faculty performance and identify opportunities for improvement. Short-term improvements may be provided through faculty coaching and mentoring from the Dean. Long-term improvements are carried out through the program review process, where courses may be revised, updated, or replaced, based on an analysis of the program data, trends in higher education, and feedback from external reviewers and industry professionals.

Faculty and employee performance reviews are conducted on an annual basis using standard human resource practices with self-evaluation, performance goals, and supervisor feedback ([CFR 4.3.05 – Faculty and Staff Review Process](#)).

Oak Valley’s commitment to these principles can also be found in the seriousness that the board, administrators, and faculty took in addressing the findings from the WSCUC SAV 1 Report. Rather than simply celebrating the commendations, all levels of the College quickly went to work to review and address the recommendations the team provided. The 2020 Program Review began immediately following the issuance of the WSCUC Commission Letter, and the Board redoubled its efforts to provide accountability and transparency in addressing the needs of the organization to meet the expectations of the SAV 2 Team.

The principals openly invited outside perspectives and reviewers to examine every facet of Oak Valley’s operations. In all, more than a dozen higher education experts reviewed various facets of Oak Valley’s operation.

The attached document provides a summary of the major vehicles Oak Valley uses to gather stakeholder feedback and disseminate important information ([CFR 4.3.06 – Schedule of Information Gathering and Disseminating Activities](#)).

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 4.3.01 – Evidence-Based Decision-Making](#)

[CFR 4.3.02 – Annual Board Calendar](#)

[CFR 4.3.03 - March 2021 Board Minutes](#)

[CFR 4.3.04 - May 2021 Board Minutes](#)

[CFR 4.3.05 – Faculty and Staff Review Process](#)

[CFR 4.3.06 – Schedule of Information Gathering and Disseminating Activities](#)

## CFR 4.4 Institutional Learning and Improvement

*The institution, with significant faculty involvement, engages in ongoing inquiry into the processes of teaching and learning, and the conditions and practices that ensure that the standards of performance established by the institution are being achieved. The faculty and other educators take responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes and use the results for improvement of student learning and success. The findings from such inquiries are applied to the design and improvement of curricula, pedagogy, and assessment methodology.*

**Guideline:** *Periodic analysis of grades and evaluation procedures are conducted to assess the rigor and effectiveness of grading policies and practices.*

### **Institutional Response:**

As highlighted in the response at the beginning of this report, a great deal of attention and care has been dedicated to examine, analyze, refine, and reinforce the effectiveness of teaching and learning using national standards and best practices found at other WSCUC accredited schools, namely Cal Baptist, William Jessup, and John Paul Catholic Universities.

Lead faculty took the responsibility to review and reinforce high-quality academic standards beginning with the comprehensive program review. Based on the findings of the review, the faculty revised the program learning outcomes (PLOs), aligning them with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) standards. These standards were then reinforced with all faculty and updated Signature Assignment Assessment standards were introduced in 2021. Those standards are being rolled out and great care is being made to ensure faculty further align their student learning outcomes (SLOs) with the PLOs, so that student learning and success shows alignment with the PLOs and the competency standards that are articulated throughout the program.

At the end of each course, faculty members submit Faculty Self-Evaluation and Signature Assignment Assessment Forms. These forms along with end of semester student evaluations provide a strong basis for the Dean and faculty to discuss issues that may require attention and share experiences and resources providing for continuous improvement. ([CFR 4.4.01 – Signature Assignment Assessment and Faculty Self-Evaluation](#) and [CFR 4.4.02 - Student Evaluation](#))

Within the Signature Assignment Assessment Form, faculty provide a narrative of how the course's signature assignment applies to the general education and program learning outcomes along with an assessment of how students performed in meeting the standards. Similarly, the student evaluation process asks students how they progressed in meeting the GE and/or PLOs, which include:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Creative Problem Solving
3. Written Communication
4. Oral Communication
5. Biblical Literacy and Christian Worldview
6. Lifelong Learning
7. Quantitative Literacy
8. Information Literacy

Institutional Research (IR) summarizes and analyzes data to inform future conversations. The Dean and Faculty Chair facilitates discussions with faculty regarding best practices, student performance standards, and ideas for continuing to improve teaching and learning. The results of these discussions are used to ensure academic standards are met and to design and improve the curricula, pedagogy, and assessment methodology.

Regarding classroom performance, the Dean conducts an annual classroom observation of each faculty member, which highlights preparation and organization, instructional strategies: variety and pacing, content knowledge, presentation skills, teacher-student rapport, classroom management, and clarity of material presented.

Following the classroom observation, the professor meets with the Dean to reflect on his/her teaching and discuss opportunities for improvement. The observation is not a performance evaluation per se but more of a peer-to-peer discussion of best practices and opportunities for improvement ([CFR 4.4.03 – Faculty Observation Evaluation](#)).

The observation along with Faculty Self-Evaluation and Signature Assignment Assessment Forms and student evaluations are then taken into account by the Dean to perform an annual performance review, which helps further engage the faculty member to improve teaching and student success ([CFR 4.4.04 - Faculty Performance Review](#)).

These performance reviews can then be analyzed, more globally, to provide the Dean with reflections and analysis to inform the Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs Committee ([CFR 4.4.05 - Academic Affairs Dean's Report March 2021](#), [CFR 4.4.06 - Institutional Research Semester Report - Spring 2019](#) and [CFR 4.4.07 - Institutional Research - 2019-2020 Annual Report](#)).

**List of Attached Evidences:**

[CFR 4.4.01 – Signature Assignment Assessment and Faculty Self-Evaluation](#)

[CFR 4.4.02 - Student Evaluation](#)

[CFR 4.4.03 – Faculty Observation Evaluation](#)

[CFR 4.4.04 - Faculty Performance Review](#)

[CFR 4.4.05 - Academic Affairs Dean's Report March 2021](#)

[CFR 4.4.06 - Institutional Research Semester Report - Spring 2019](#)

[CFR 4.4.07 - Institutional Research - 2019-2020 Annual Report](#)

## Standard Four: Synthesis/Reflections

1. *After completing this analysis, what are the 2 or 3 most important issues that should be emphasized in the Review under this Standard?*

*“The institution engages in sustained, evidence-based, and participatory self-reflection about how effectively it is accomplishing its purposes and achieving its educational objectives.”*

Oak Valley leaders (board members, administration, and faculty) passionately commit to excellence in carrying out its mission. Leaders have sought support from experts in higher education and business to develop high-quality evidence-based systems, policies, and standards to achieve educational effectiveness. There is an eagerness at Oak Valley to do well, pursue best practices, and continuously improve.

*“The institution considers the changing environment of higher education in envisioning its future.”*

Oak Valley embraces this challenge as evidenced by its approach to affordability and the debt-free commitment it provides its students. Long before it was *fashionable*, Oak Valley founders struggled for nearly a decade to build a sustainable model of affordable high-quality liberal arts education. After five years, that model is delivering on this promise and leaders remain wholly committed to sustain this vision into the future.

*“These activities inform both institutional planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of institutional inquiry, research, and data collection are used to establish priorities, to plan, and to improve quality and effectiveness.”*

Though Oak Valley is small and new, organizational structures and institutional maturity are taking shape. Leaders value strong systems that support Oak Valley’s current student body and are poised for its growth. Conservative budgeting and financial reserves are in place. Institutional planning, more generally, has factored in various contingencies and best/worst case scenarios in order to ensure stability and sustainability. Finally, faculty governance and leadership relying on sound data resources are in place to improve student success in the future, and the program review process will guide faculty-led program revisions and updates.

2. *Looking overall at the quality and effectiveness of the institution’s data gathering processes and systems to support the review process, what are institutional **strengths**?*

Ultimately, at the core of Oak Valley’s success are its leaders. Through the commitment of a diverse team of dozens of committed board members, administrators, faculty, and staff, Oak Valley is well positioned to sustain its mission, vision, and values into the future. In just a few years, a sustainable business model built on the passion to serve (disciple) the next generation of leaders is providing proven results for students.

Oak Valley relies on experts in multiple facets of its operation, including a number of seasoned higher education administrators and business leaders to develop and review standards, policies, and procedures. Oak Valley has built a solid institutional research function and data gathering assets, several CPAs and finance professionals have helped to frame budgeting, financial planning, and audit requirements, and at least six management/executive coaches support strategic planning and leadership development.

*3. Looking again at the overall quality and effectiveness of the institution's data gathering processes and systems to support the review process, what are areas to be addressed or improved in the foreseeable future?*

The pandemic upended some expectations and efforts for data gathering. It is difficult to make year-over-year comparisons when so much of the data may be misleading due to distance learning this past year and the nature of so many "standard" practices that were not standard in 2020 and 2021. While data is still collected, it is assumed that many items will be asterisked for these two years. It is assumed that 2022 will present more normalized results and year-over-year comparisons can begin taking shape for 2023.

Faculty and administrators often focus heavily on poor performing students. It is right to ask, "What can we do to serve and support poor students?" However, poor performing students are a minority at Oak Valley, and they receive a lot of attention and resources. Poor performing students are first identified through progress reports, subsequent discussions are held with students by professors, advisors and the Academic Review Board if needed. Efforts are also underway to address this concern. For example, the Writing Center supports poor performing students outside of class, so faculty may spend less time in class working on students with writing deficiencies.

Finally, while Oak Valley has done well in admission, admission standards are not selective enough, yet. This leads to admitting students who may not be an ideal fit for the program. Leaders look forward to a time where admissions standards will lead to first-year retention nearing 90% and graduation rates of 80% (an aspirational goal). With full-time admissions leadership and staff, coupled with a long-term enrollment plan, steps are beginning to take shape to build on past success and plot a course toward the aspirational goal.

## Section Five: Identification of Other Changes or Issues the Institution is Facing

*This section of the report should briefly identify any other significant issues or changes that are likely to occur at the institution in the upcoming five years that are not described in preceding sections (e.g., changes in key personnel, major new anticipated programs, modifications in the governance structure, or significant financial results). This information will help the visiting team gain a clearer sense of the current and anticipated future status of the institution.*

Once Oak Valley grows to approximately 80% of its current facility capacity, a discussion will take place among senior administrators and the board to identify how the College wants to expand. The strategic planning process guides and directs the board and senior administration in the priorities to be considered into the future. As of now, those items include:

1. **Multi-campus** - Establish 1-2 new campus facilities, approximately 20-40 miles away, keeping the single degree program in place. This discussion is underway and initial exploration with stakeholders is anticipated to take place in 2022 - 2023.
2. **Cap enrollment** - Set a campus enrollment cap (250?) and consider the opportunities and limitations of the current program model, including facilities, expenses, personnel requirements, student life, activities, and more.
3. **Explore** - Consider alternative programs and services, including a business incubator (supporting student business plans), provide non-degree programs (e.g. gap-year program, build support services for the campus and local community
4. **Further Innovate** - Develop new models for student learning and success.

Also, as discussed earlier, Oak Valley intends to pursue Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Program (ACBSP) accreditation as soon practicable after WSCUC Initial Accreditation is awarded.

Outside of these initiatives, Oak Valley board and administration is primarily focused on continuing to improve academic standards, student success, and faculty-led governance over the next five years.



## Section Six: Preparation for Reaffirmation under the 2013 Handbook of Accreditation

The [2013 Handbook of Accreditation](#) focuses major attention on new areas of emphasis which will take significant time and effort to address. This component of the report asks the institution to anticipate how they will prepare for three areas when they seek reaffirmation following the granting of Initial Accreditation: (Please do not focus on the content of these areas but on the processes that will be used):

- a) *Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees*
- b) *Educational Quality: Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation, and*
- c) *Sustainability: Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment.*

### **Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees**

Oak Valley College leaders (board, administrators, faculty) share in the meaning, quality, and integrity of the degree program offered.

**Meaning** - Oak Valley's meaning is set by the board, articulated by senior administrators, and carried out to students through the faculty. Currently, and throughout the reaffirmation process, feedback will be solicited from key stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, and employers) to refine the meaning of the College and its program. This feedback is provided to the board through the strategic planning process, which informs the refinement of the meaning of the program.

**Quality** - Oak Valley defines and continuously improves the quality of its academic program through a feedback loop, which asks students and faculty to reflect on student success, which in turn, is passed through to and reviewed by the Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs Committee. This provides for analysis and refinement of the program, carried out, primarily, through the program review process. That process also includes input from alumni and employers to update and clarify the program learning outcomes and other measures of student success.

**Integrity** - Oak Valley is built on a foundation that standards of excellence are to be sought at all levels of the organization and reinforced by data gathering, analysis, and action that support the mission, vision, values found at the College. The Program Learning Outcomes are to be articulated and aligned through the courses, which contain practical student learning outcomes. The feedback of students through their performance on course assessments and evaluations will be reflected back to faculty, who will report those results to administrators, who will then fine-tune the PLOs and administer any revisions in order to continuously improve student learning and achievement.

### **Educational Quality: Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation**

Oak Valley commits to set high standards for student learning outcomes (SLOs), and more generally, through the program learning outcomes (PLOs). The process in which Oak Valley evaluates its core competencies, and will continue to do so in reaffirmation, is articulated below.

The focus on educational quality at Oak Valley is highly valued and demonstrated in the commitment to provide students with a capstone experience, the Launch Pad course sequence, along with the comprehensive final exam (administered by Peregrine). Using the results of these two experiences, Oak Valley administrators will continue to establish and reinforce quality standards throughout the curriculum in collaboration with the faculty.

It is acknowledged that great efforts must be made to further define, refine, and articulate these standards with and through the faculty and students as Oak Valley matures and grows. The consistent commitment of the board and administration is that Oak Valley is dedicated to remaining small in order to ensure such quality standards are met before growing to new campuses or adding new programs. It is best to do one thing well and move from there.

### **Sustainability: Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment**

Oak Valley closely monitors three distinct areas in order to stay relevant and sustain its educational mission. First and foremost, the local/regional/state landscape is Oak Valley's proving ground. If students graduate and meet the needs of employers, it is safe to assume that the College has a strong future.

The State higher education landscape is vital to ensure Oak Valley's future path is secure. Over the past few years, Christian colleges and universities have been threatened by a variety of potential legislation and regulation by the State. Oak Valley will stay focused on these issues and commit to adjust its approach as needed.

National trends are always on the minds of Oak Valley's administrators, who follow Department of Education policies to identify any impacts these positions may have on the College, its programs, and student success. Ultimately, Cal and Pell Grants are two very important funding tools to ensure Oak Valley's debt-free model remains sustainable.

Finally, it should be noted that administrators are well aware that its position to offer a program that is high-quality AND exceptionally affordable may attract the attention of competitors. Given the current landscape in higher education, such competition is welcomed, as the end result would, prayerfully, be that more students are able to access a high-quality degree with no student loans.

## Section Seven: Conclusion: Reflections and Plans for Improvement

*In this concluding component, the institution assesses the impact of the self-study, reflects on what it has learned in the course of the self-study, and discusses plans for improvement. This component also provides the institution an opportunity to make a case for whether **substantial** compliance has been achieved with the four Standards and 39 Criteria for Review.*

Oak Valley's administration, board, faculty, and students are in alignment with the mission, vision, and values of the College. There is near unanimity among these stakeholders that what Oak Valley strives to achieve is desperately needed. By all indications, everything is working well. Students are succeeding in relatively high numbers, high-quality professors are able to carry out their duties independently with guidance and direction from supportive administrators. The board provides strategic leadership, identifies and approves the necessary resources, and ensures accountability of senior administrators.

The simple approach of Oak Valley provides sufficient and sustainable resources for its operations, and the board is effectively directing and protecting the College into the future.

Outlined in the preceding pages are plans, processes, and practices to serve the College now and as it grows. There are no unrealistic goals and no unfunded mandates. As a maturing institution all the elements are in place to sustain operations and support student success for years to come. Multiple areas of improvement have been identified and plans have been adopted to support those opportunities.

There is nothing in the Standards and 39 Criteria for Review (CFRs) that seem overwhelming or where Oak Valley administrators consider the College deficient. Of course, there are some areas where Oak Valley needs to continue to mature, refine, and develop, but there are clear avenues to see those areas receive the required attention they deserve.

The areas that helped Oak Valley grow the most are those areas that are seemingly most critical, and it is exciting to see that development taking place:

1. **Faculty Leadership and Governance** - Oak Valley was already on a path where faculty had become more active in governing the academic program, but the self-study accelerated that process. When faculty and administrators viewed the standards, they knew how best to carry out this process and who to ask to lead.
2. **Student Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes** - The signature assignment assessment process ensures professors articulate the linkage between the major course assignments and the program learning outcomes (PLOs). The results have been encouraging thus far, and it is clear that the cycle ensures continuous improvement - PLOs are articulated, student learning outcomes (SLOs) are created that support the PLOs, professors educate students to meet the SLOs, students complete a signature assignment to demonstrate competency, professors assess how students did in meeting the standards, professors articulate how well students did in meeting the PLOs through

the signature assignment, faculty and administrators review the results and identify ways to continuously improve.

3. **Program Review** - Completing the program review process provides a number of great linkages to ensure continuous improvement. This process enables faculty to take greater ownership and leadership to ensure accountability.
4. **Institutional Research** - The self-study helped Oak Valley establish more well-defined institutional research and data-driven protocols and standards. While the protocols and standards are still young, the emergence of semester-based and annual reporting ensures data is being tracked, analyzed, and reported across the institution. This will continue to be fine-tuned, but data-based decision-making is maturing and on a trajectory that is sustainable and follows best practices.
5. **Board Development** - The board has matured and emerged in remarkable ways over the past year. While this was going to happen as board members became more familiar with each other and Oak Valley's operations, the self-study has greatly accelerated the process. This is evidenced in three ways:
  - a. committees have taken on more duties and leadership, moving from more or less advisory to action-oriented
  - b. conversations have moved from tactical to strategy
  - c. support has grown from being passive (attending board meetings) to active (driving discussions and leadership decisions and bringing others to participate in events and activities)
6. **Student Success** - Oak Valley has redoubled how it ensures student success with the addition of more tracking and analysis in student data, preparing alumni engagements and surveys, and better recognizing and following student outcomes at a course and programmatic level. The approaches adopted prepare Oak Valley to grow and maintain its highly personalized approach to student learning and success while supporting a robust data-driven decision-making infrastructure.

## Section Eight: Required Attachments

*Institutions are required to provide the following forms as part of report submission. The forms are available in the [Document List](#) on the WSCUC website. Please upload them to the folder in Box.com when you submit the report (see pages 1 and 2 of this document).*

[Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators](#)