

SECTION A

**INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF
PLANNING**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Educational Master Planning is an exercise which is always deemed to be at the core of any educational enterprise. The preparation of the document itself helps to transform the institution, but the real proof of effective planning is the evidence found long after the document has been submitted. At San Diego Mesa College evidence of a dynamic master plan may be found everywhere.

Mesa's Educational Master Plan has been a key resource in supporting a successful capital construction bond campaign, the clear establishment of a culture of evidence designed to inform key decisions and directions, the establishment of a faculty hiring priority process and the solid framework for the ongoing development and refinement of student learning outcomes (SLOs).

One of the most important aspects of Mesa's Educational Master Plan has been the breadth and depth of involvement of all campus constituencies and the clear integration of instruction and student support services. Mesa's Master Plan is a living and dynamic document; it is widely disseminated and, most important of all, widely used as we endeavor to serve a community that is changing demographically, economically, socially, and environmentally.

Mesa's Educational Master Plan is based on a solid history of educational service to our community that makes it possible to position the college for the emerging needs of the 21st Century.

Rita M. Cepeda, Ed.D.
President

INTRODUCTION

San Diego Mesa College enters its 44th year in the 2007-08 academic year. The college has attained a stellar reputation throughout the San Diego region and beyond for excellence in teaching and learning; Mesa has established itself as the premier community college in the region for transfer to public and private colleges and universities. Mesa's career-technical programs are highly esteemed by regional employers. The size and scope of Mesa provides students an outstanding range and depth of educational offerings supported by ample opportunities for co-curricular activities.

Mesa is now entering a new stage in its development with many elements of the college being renewed and re-built.

- Through Propositions S and N, facilities are being renovated and new buildings are planned to replace old worn-out ones.
- The faculty is being re-built with many new faculty hired in the past three years and more to come; the district's goal is to reach an overall ratio of 75% fulltime faculty to 25% adjunct faculty.
- An excellent technology infrastructure is in place and continues to develop to support students, faculty and staff in all aspects of their education and work.
- Work on student learning outcomes (SLOs) and assessment, with a special emphasis on success in basic skills, is leading to improved practices that will assist students to be successful.
- Campus-based research has taken a central role in decision-making and planning.
- Collaboration, outreach, and partnerships with schools, businesses, and the community are being strengthened as the college makes commitments to become a stronger player in the local community.

Mesa College is at a very exciting stage in its development. A renaissance is underway that will set the stage for the college's continued success. This Educational Master Plan provides the planning for the way forward.

PLANNING PHILOSOPHY

San Diego Mesa College views planning as an essential feature of institutional development, both as a set of activities designed to determine directions for the future and as an ongoing dialogue within the institution regarding its history, values, strengths, weaknesses, needs, challenges and opportunities. San Diego Mesa College is committed to a planning process that ensures the systematic, annual development of plans to guide the immediate, strategic and long-term activities of the institution. The college's planning processes complement the strategic planning directions of the San Diego Community College District, although the focus is institutional. The planning process is characterized by four significant features:

- 1) It integrates instructional planning, student services planning, facilities planning, operational planning and budget planning.
- 2) It is informed by data from a wide variety of sources, including institutional research, external reviews and studies, community input, general and specialized accreditation findings and recommendations, internal program reviews, internal and external surveys, student evaluations, and anecdotal evidence.
- 3) It focuses on the achievement of specific and measurable outcomes.
- 4) It is a formal process, but allows for informal input from all segments and members of the college community.

The **San Diego Mesa College Educational Master Plan** is a comprehensive planning document covering all aspects of the college's operation: instruction, student services, and administrative services. The plan covers a five-year time period from 2006-07 to 2010-2011. The strategic planning directions and goals are reviewed annually and updated as appropriate.

Previous master planning processes resulted in separate, although related, plans for the college, the instructional division, and the student services division. These have been combined into one document, this **Educational Master Plan**, to emphasize the inter-relatedness of planning activities and college goals. Throughout this document, diagrams are employed to illustrate related planning activities and timelines.

While planning is integrated, decision-making is dispersed throughout the college according to formal and informal participatory governance processes. Final recommendations are brought to President's Cabinet.

The Plan provides an analysis of the college's strengths, commitments, and strategic directions and illustrates the connection of Mesa College, as part of the San Diego Community College District, to regional educational and economic/workforce development needs.

Fundamental to planning at Mesa is a culture of evidence and decision-making based on evidence -- internal and external. Throughout the college, resource allocation such as staffing, equipment, and facilities decisions is based on evidence documented to support the need. Over time, program review has evolved into a major component of planning and has become a necessary component of requests for allocation of resources.

Formal planning is situated within the participatory governance committees and processes of the college. The President's Cabinet serves as the college-wide participatory governance body making recommendations to the President. Recommendations developed by other committees receive final discussion and action at the Cabinet

THE ROLE OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE IN EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLANNING

San Diego Mesa College takes pride in its successful structure and institutional culture of participatory governance. The process of participatory governance guides and informs the college's decision-making activities, short and long-range planning, and problem-solving tasks. With the exception of collective bargaining, personnel matters and legal issues, all aspects of the college conform to the participatory governance process.

Participatory governance is best described as a process of consultation, a framework of required interactions that ensures that all decisions are well informed by input from the four segments of the college community: administration, faculty, classified staff and students. In this regard, the participatory governance process is grounded in Assembly Bill 1725 and in the policies of the San Diego Community College District Board of Trustees.

Mesa College has taken the additional step, however, by endeavoring to govern its affairs by consensus. Even though the determinations reached through the process are advisory to the College President, who serves as the institution's chief executive officer, the majority of institutional decisions are reached through consensus. This effort ensures a healthy give-and-take in debating ideas, as well as an operative system of checks-and-balances in the review of important matters. It also promotes trust and broadens the sense of "ownership" of the decisions reached, thereby reinforcing the structure of governance.

The College's "Guide to Governance," recommended by a visiting Accreditation Team in 1998, describes the overall process of institutional governance, as well as individual responsibilities of entities charged with institutional consultation and collaboration.

THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET AND PLANNING

THE PLANNING PROCESS

To ensure that planning at Mesa College is fully integrated within all related functions, the college elected not to utilize a separate body for this purpose, but decided to employ the central, participatory governance council for this purpose: the President's Cabinet. Although the President's Cabinet charges various subcommittees for specific planning tasks, it ensures that all final plans are approved by the Cabinet itself. The President's Cabinet is structured as follows:

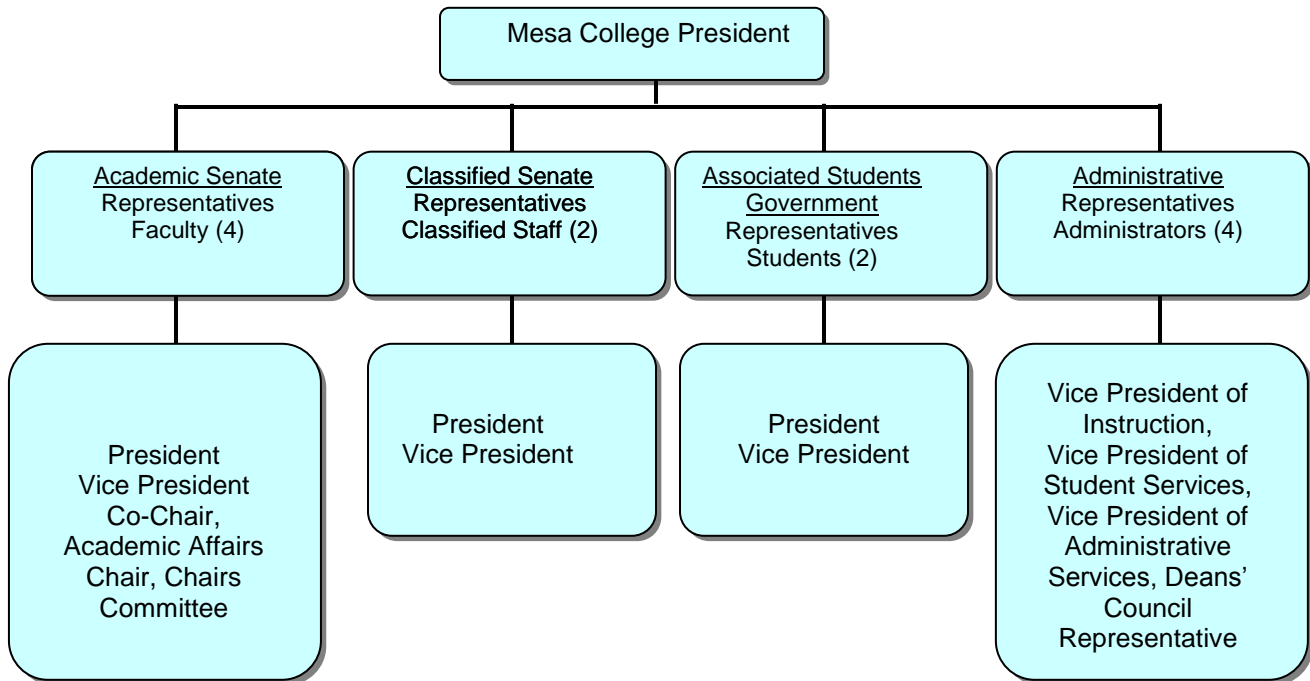


Diagram #1: San Diego Mesa College Governance

The President's Cabinet serves as the college's central, participatory governance council, functioning as the institution's primary decision-making and planning body. The structure and nature of the President's Cabinet facilitate its interaction with all institutional constituencies. As the college's central decision-making body, the Cabinet's planning role is enhanced by its familiarity with all functions of the college, ensuring both a knowledgeable and an integrated perspective.

Specialized projects are referred by the Cabinet to other governance organizations for review, such as the Academic Senate and Deans' Council for instructional matters, the Classified Senate for staffing issues, and the Associated Students for student issues. In addition, subcommittees of the Cabinet are formed to advise on selected matters such as faculty hiring priorities. These bodies report back to the Cabinet with recommendations. For most issues, the determination of the President's Cabinet is final.

In some instances, however, in which district-wide concurrence is necessary, the individual groups also make recommendations to their counterparts within the broader District. The College President is charged with representing Cabinet determinations to the Chancellor, the Chancellor's Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees.

The President's Cabinet endeavors to integrate all aspects of communication, decision-making and planning tasks rather than permit the institution to become isolated or its activities to become fragmented due to the centrifugal impulses of this large and complex collegiate environment.

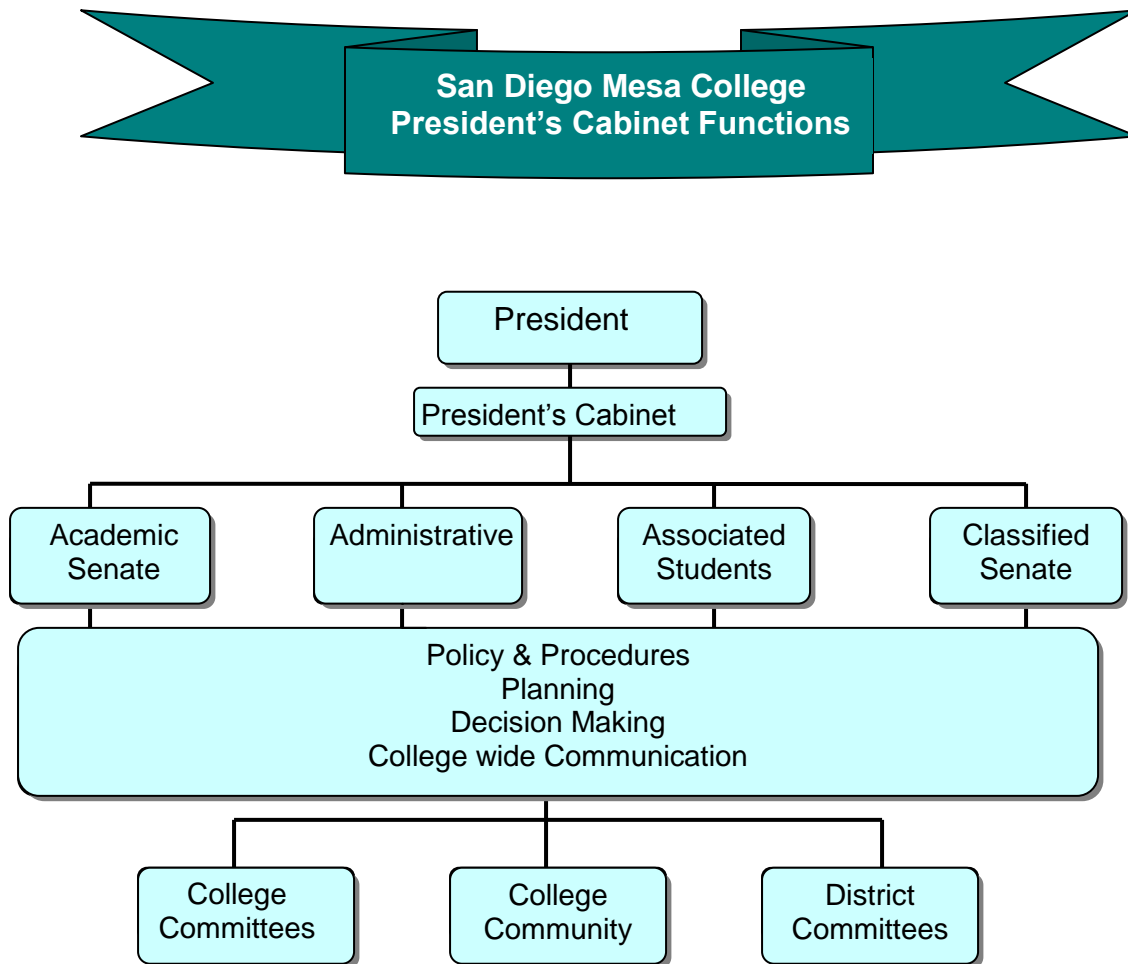


Diagram 2: President's Cabinet Functions

San Diego Mesa College Strategic Planning Cycle

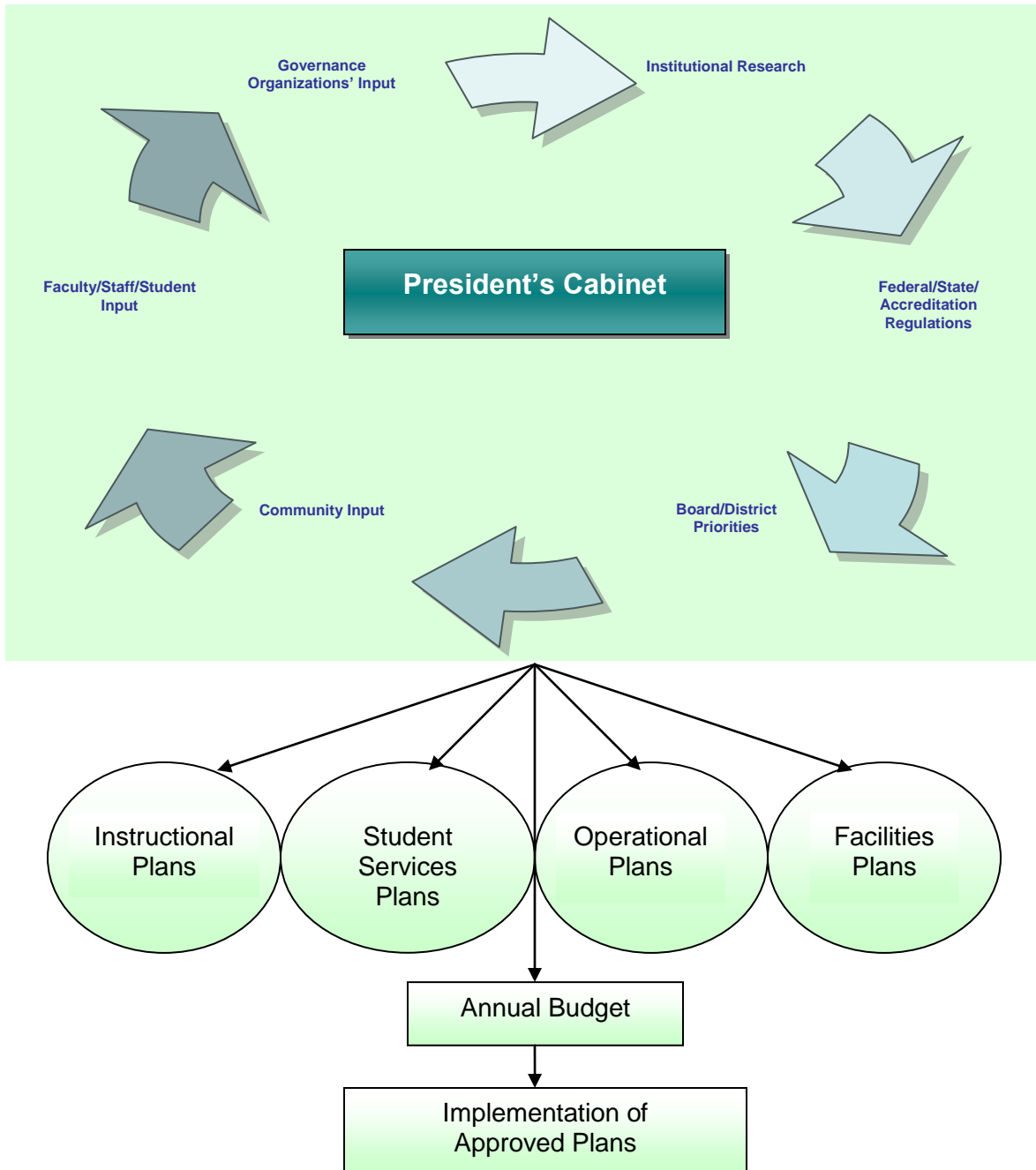


Diagram 3: Strategic Planning Cycle

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MESA COLLEGE EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

A visiting Accreditation Team in 2004 made two accreditation recommendations regarding the need for educational master planning: one for the college and the second for the district. The report emphasized the need for an integrated educational master plan to guide the college and by which the college could measure its progress. These recommendations are as follows:

The college should implement a more fully integrated process for planning and resource allocation, grounded in data from program reviews (which should include data on student learning outcomes) and student learning outcomes assessment. This process and its outcomes should be widely communicated. The college should evaluate the process regularly to assist its impact on institutional effectiveness.

In order to coordinate and assist the master planning efforts already established at the colleges, the district should continue its work to formulate an overall strategic plan that will provide a vision for the future development of the district, based on extensive dialogue among faculty and staff, students, college and district leaders, board members, and the community.

Following these recommendations, in May 2005, the President's Cabinet assumed the responsibility for Educational Master Planning with their role being to review and to provide guidance for the master plan, and, ultimately, to approve the plan. A Working Sub-Committee was established by the President's Cabinet to create the master plan. The membership includes: Chair (1), Administration (3), Faculty (4), Classified (2), and Students (2), with the Vice President of Instruction serving as the chair. The committee developed the plan during the Fall 2006 semester with final approval at the President's Cabinet in Spring 2007.

ANNUAL REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

Mesa College follows the practice of annual review and revision, as needed, of all planning processes. The Educational Master Plan is written as a five-year plan covering the time period 2007 to 2011. The plan will be reviewed annually in the fall semester by the Sub-Committee and recommendations for modifications are made to the President's Cabinet. Necessary changes will include the college's and individual unit's goals.

RELATED MESA PLANNING PROCESSES

As described above in The President's Cabinet in Planning, other governance bodies or committees are charged with specific major planning activities. They recommend actions to the President's Cabinet and their recommendations are integrated into overall college priorities and activities. Decisions about resource allocation emanate from these collective recommendations. Below is a summary of major planning activities and the governance bodies or committees responsible.

The following responsibilities are carried out either by Cabinet sub-committees or by committees that report directly to Cabinet.

- Subcommittee of the Cabinet
 - Educational Master Planning
 - Faculty Hiring Priorities
- Reports to Cabinet
 - Accreditation Self Study and Reports.
 - Facilities Planning – Facilities Committee
 - Budget Planning – Budget Committee
 - VTEA Recommendations – Career Technical Education Committee
 - Instructional Technology – Mesa Information Technology Committee
 - Research Agenda – Research Committee.
 - Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment – Research Committee.
 - Professional and Staff Development/Flex
 - Marketing Advisory Committee
 - Environmental Stewardship Committee

ROLE OF PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE IN PLANNING

A major responsibility for planning is through Program Review (both Academic and Student Services). The Program Review Committee is a sub-committee of the Academic Senate's Academic Affairs Committee. Its reports travel via Academic Affairs to the President's Cabinet. Program review serves as the locus for planning at the department and discipline level for both instruction and student services. Such planning activities are integrated into school planning, and then into division (instruction or student services) plans, which are ultimately integrated into overall college planning.

PLANNING FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

The Research Committee, in addition to its responsibility for the college's Research Agenda, is assigned the primary responsibility for Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment. However, four other committees also share responsibility for aspects of Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment as outlined below.

Research Committee:

Primary responsibility is developing Student Learning Outcomes and guiding of the process.

Program Review Committee:

Primary responsibility is reporting on progress on Student Learning Outcomes and assessment during each program's review cycle.

Curriculum Review Committee:

Primary responsibility is the program/curriculum development aspects of Student Learning Outcomes.

Professional and Staff Development Committee:

Primary responsibility is organizing workshops and training on Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment.

The chairs of these four committees meet periodically with the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee Coordinator and Vice President of Instruction to coordinate and plan activities.

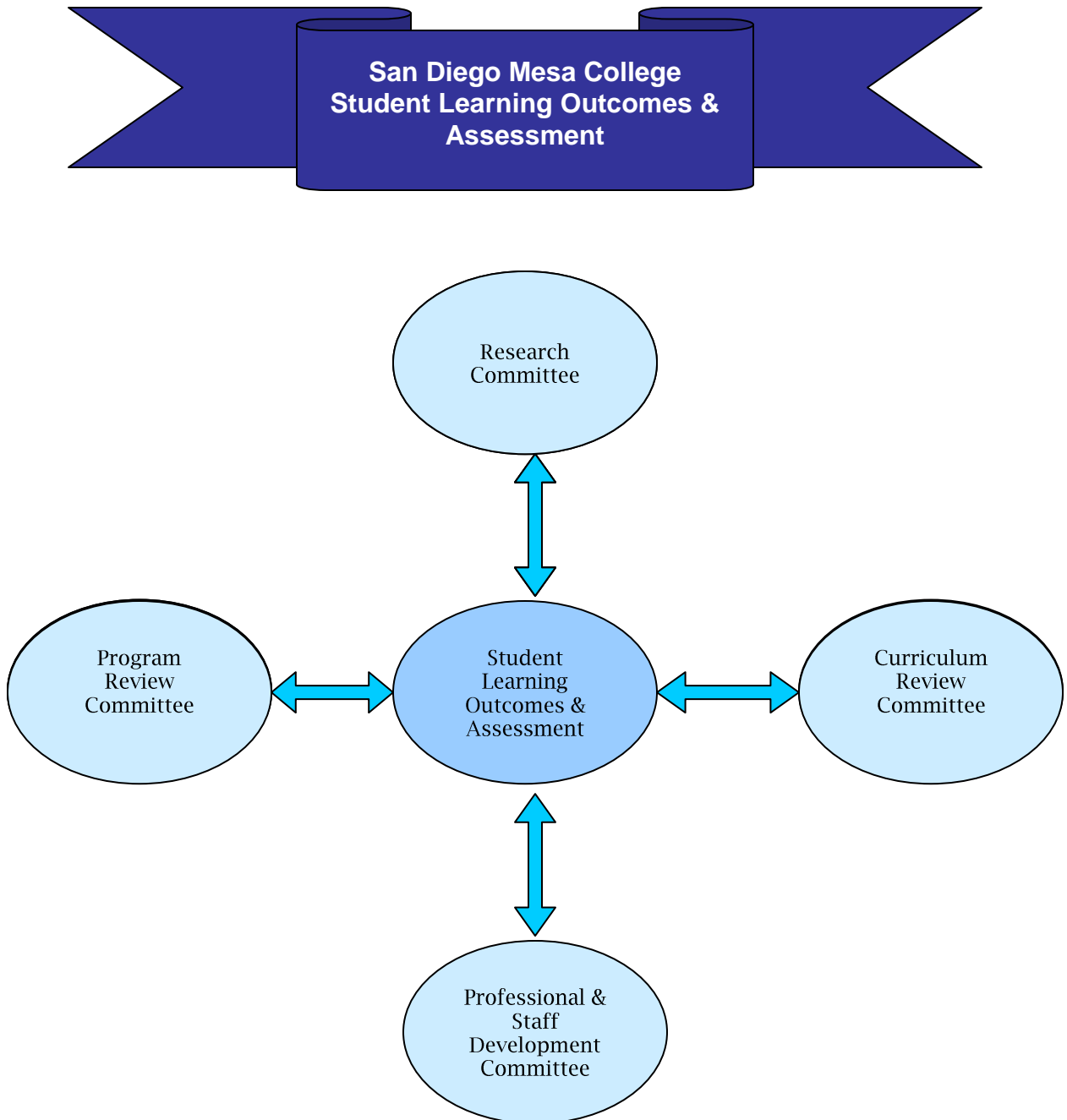
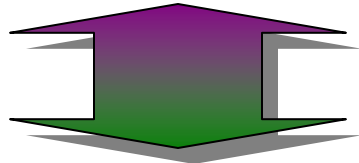


Diagram #4: Planning for Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment

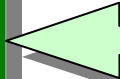
**Diagram #5 Mesa College
Strategic Planning Process**

SDCCD Strategic Planning Directions



Mesa College Strategic Planning Priorities

**Mesa College
Mission Statement**



Mesa College Annual Goals



Student Services * Instruction *** Administrative**



School Goals

Program Review