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## Foreword by the AVP



When students enroll in our programs or courses, they expect to obtain knowledge and acquire skills that will mean a lot to a potential career, as well as to obtain credentials that will propel them forward, in all facets of their personal, social, and economic futures. As the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) contends, the requirement “that colleges review the quality of their programs and the student outcomes that result, and that colleges work to improve quality and student success, is the only acceptable response to the trust students and the public place in institutions that are accredited” (ACCJC News, Summer 2009, p. 3). As an accredited institution, this is a responsibility that the college takes seriously.

When program review is done consistently and systematically in the interest of accountability and improvement, it becomes an important and critical tool for decision-making at all levels. Because it presents a bigger picture perspective for everyone involved in a program – from industry partners to faculty to administrators—the ongoing careful evaluation enables these stakeholders to determine the effectiveness of the program and how well students are succeeding in it. Administrators and faculty, in turn, use this information to improve educational quality and effectiveness with an eye toward strengthening student success and achievement. This is the whole context of doing “special” program reviews at GCC, apart from the regularized program review embedded in the TracDat assessment process.

The program reviews (and a course review) included in this third volume of the **AVP SAGA Reports** reflect my belief that the exercise of regular and careful self evaluation through program reviews is central to institutional quality. This booklet is meant to bring the results and recommendations of these reviews to a wider audience in the college community.

I thank the authors who worked diligently to study these programs from a 360-degree perspective, so to speak, in order to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of these academic and student support programs. Their recommendations now serve as the *next steps* for us to implement necessary interventions that will make them more meaningful and more responsive to student needs. It is my hope that further discussion and dialogue will continue and prosper as we turn these recommendations into concrete action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R. Somera', written over a horizontal line.

R. Ray D. Somera, Ph. D.

Vice President for Academic Affairs