

# Drafts & Revision

Please consider the following suggestions for revision:

## CONTENT

- Use the categories “Descriptive Summary,” “Self Evaluation,” and “Planning Agenda” to address each standard statement. Do not use other terms.
- *Descriptive Summary*—Does not evaluate. Summarizes, lists, or otherwise presents all data, evidence, or other information relevant to the standard statement.
- *Self Evaluation*—Does evaluate. Shows HOW the College meets the standard statement in light of the information presented in the Descriptive Summary.
- BE DIRECT! Address each standard statement precisely.
  - *A trick to ensure focus*—Identify the operative subject and verb in the statement and focus your response on that same subject and verb.

Example:

*1. The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.*

## DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

(Summarizes all evidence that the institution assures the quality of said services and demonstrates that they support student learning and the College’s achievement of its mission.)

## SELF EVALUATION

(Shows HOW the institution assures the quality of said services and demonstrates that they support student learning and the College’s achievement of its mission.)

- When not including a Planning Agenda, write, “None at this time,” under that category.
- Document evidence for each standard once at the end of the standard to avoid documenting it multiple times. In the Descriptive Summary for each standard statement you will refer to the evidence compiled in this list.

## FORMATTING

- Each draft should include a header at the top right-hand corner of each page with the draft number (draft 1, draft 2, and so forth), the date the draft was prepared, and the page number.
- Use Times New Roman font.
- See the *Quick Reference Guide*, posted on the accreditation website, for other specifics.

## STYLE

- Do not use the first person “we.” Use the third person “the College.”
- Avoid too much repetition. For example, try not to open each Self Evaluation with the phrase “The College meets the standard.”
- Remove personal opinion or hearsay. Stick to concrete evidence.
- Use active language.
  - *Avoid the passive voice.*

Example:

Passive voice—“The mission statement was developed in 1999, revised in 2000, and reviewed in 2002-2003 during the creation of the Strategic Plan.”

Active voice—“The College developed its mission statement in 1999, revised it in 2000, and reviewed it in 2002-2003 during the creation of the Strategic Plan.”

*Note that the active voice makes clear who or what is doing the action in a sentence, while the passive voice makes language less precise, forcing the reader to infer agency.*

- *Avoid unnecessary “there is” and “there are” statements.*

Example:

Poor sentence focus—“There are several statements in the mission of the San Mateo County Community College District that refer to the inclusiveness of its operations.”

Improved sentence focus—“Several statements in the mission of the San Mateo County Community College District refer to the inclusiveness of its operations.”

- *Avoid modal verbs such as should, might, could, or would.*