Introduction

Immediately, following the Reaffirmation Committee’s visit to Texas State Technical College Amarillo, the governor of Texas signed legislation to transfer the campus to Amarillo College. Due to this impending change, in July 1995, the Commission approved a Prospectus for Substantive Change for Amarillo College. The transfer became effective September 1, 1995. Texas State Technical College Amarillo has ceased to exist as a separately accredited institution. The campus is now the Amarillo Technical Center, a division of Amarillo College.

Amarillo Technical Center’s administrative organization is an extension of the existing structure of Amarillo College. The Center serves as the point of contact for programs and services needed on the campus, but the responsibility for the programs and services will remain with the single administration.

This response to the Committee’s recommendations has been prepared within the context of the transfer. In providing the Reaffirmation Committee Report to the campus, Commission Associate Director Bennett Hudson noted, “There may well be certain recommendations that would be responded to differently as a result of the merger than they would be by Texas State Technical College Amarillo as a separate institution.” Indeed, coming under Amarillo College’s governance has addressed many of the Committee’s recommendations. Amarillo Technical Center has adopted existing Amarillo College policies and procedures. Full documentation of those guidelines relevant to the recommendations are included in this report.

As the transfer is quite recent, Amarillo Technical Center is now “a work in progress.” Many changes brought about by this transition are currently underway.
3.1 Planning and Evaluation of Educational Programs

**Recommendation 1:** The Visiting Committee calls on the College to develop and implement procedures to determine the extent to which its educational goals are being achieved and that it is using the results of these evaluations to improve its instructional programs.

When visiting Texas State Technical College Amarillo, prior to the campus’ transfer to Amarillo College, the Committee noted that the College lacked a consistent means for evaluating whether departments had achieved their desired educational results. The Committee observed that educational planning procedures and evaluation varied amongst educational departments. Committee members also requested evidence that the results of the different evaluation procedures were used to improve the College’s educational program.

The educational goals of Amarillo College now apply to the programs in the Amarillo Technical Center division. The Amarillo Technical Center division is now governed by Amarillo College’s existing planning and evaluation processes, which set forth strategies for improvement of the educational program and defines measurable criteria for success. In order to be accountable for outcomes, the College’s 1995-1997 *Strategic Plan* specifies a number of institutional objectives directly tied to evaluation and improvement of the educational program. These objectives include:

- **Institutional Objective III.** Guarantee Quality General Education
- **Institutional Objective IV.** Guarantee Quality Transfer Preparation
- **Institutional Objective V.** Guarantee Quality Technical Preparation

Each institutional objective has success indicators and standards that are measured at regular intervals. These evaluation procedures apply to all instructional departments at Amarillo Technical Center and will provide a consistent manner with which to evaluate the campus’ educational program and use those results to make any needed improvements. Please see the *Strategic Plan* pp. 24-29, Attachment 1, immediately following this section.

Furthermore, in outlining the College’s critical priorities for 1995-1997, the *Strategic Plan* specifically targets long-term planning and evaluation needs at Amarillo Technical Center. The relevant critical priority reads: “Develop, implement and maintain a master plan to establish the role of Amarillo Technical Center in the panhandle region as a division of Amarillo College.” In defining the Center’s educational goals, this master plan will build upon the foundation laid in the institutional objectives. The Amarillo Technical Center Executive Director, in conjunction with the
College Executive Committee, is currently compiling this plan, which is to be completed by February 1996. Please see the Strategic Plan pp. 8, Attachment 2 immediately following this section.
Recommendation 2: The visiting
in terms of the retention and graduation of students, the job placement rates of its graduates, and
the success of its graduates on state, national, and/or professional licensing examinations.
The Committee expanded on Recommendation I by specifically citing the need for specific areas of
evaluation not evident at Texas State Technical College Amarillo. Under Amarillo College, all
areas specified are regularly evaluated by the office of institutional research. Amarillo College’s
established tracking systems monitor student retention and graduation rates, graduate job placement
rates, and the success of graduates on state, national and professional licensing examinations.
This tracking will result in consistent evaluation data for each term.

Evaluation of these areas will be used in the strategic planning process to determine the Center’s
success in achieving its educational goals. The results will also indicate what changes need to be
made if those goals are not being met.

Amarillo Technical Center will also draw upon historical data on retention, graduation, job
placement, and transfer rates for Texas State Technical College Amarillo. This data will be used to
supplement and provide a context for ongoing tracking procedures to ensure continual
improvement is achieved.
3.2 Planning and Evaluation: Administrative and Educational Support Services

Recommendation 3: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College develop and implement procedures to determine the extent to which its educational goals are being supported and that it is using the results of these evaluations to improve its administrative and educational support services.

As with the educational programs, the Committee found no evidence that Texas State Technical College Amarillo had procedures that ensured a systematic approach to administrative and educational support services. The Committee noted the need for a more formal planning and evaluation process. Such a process would set forth objectives, develop and implement procedures for achievement, accomplish the goal, and then evaluate the results.

Again, the Amarillo College Strategic Plan addresses these concerns by specifying strategies for improvement and measurable criteria for success. A number of institutional objectives are directly tied to evaluating and improving educational support services. These objectives include:

- Institutional Objective I: Maximize Student Access
- Institutional Objective II: Guide Students Toward Educational Success

These objectives are tied to success indicators and measurable outcomes. Please see the Strategic Plan pp. 10-23, Attachment 3, immediately following this section.

The Amarillo Technical Center master plan will expand on these institutional objectives. Again, this plan is in progress and will be completed by February 1996.
3.3 Institutional Research

**Recommendation 4:** The Visiting develop practices and procedures for the regular evaluation of the institutional research function.

At the time of the committee visit, Texas State Technical College had recently implemented an institutional research function; however, the new director of institutional research had been wholly occupied with the Self-Study process. Due to immediate concerns relevant to the Self-Study, the College had not conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the institutional research function.

Since the transfer, Amarillo College has assumed all institutional research functions for Amarillo Technical Center. Evaluation procedures for this office are in place. The Amarillo College director of institutional research maintains a daily log of requests made, work done, and time spent. Each person requesting data receives an evaluation form to complete when the work is finished. Like all administrators, the director undergoes an annual performance review and sets goals for the upcoming year. These goals are based on improvement initiatives and critical priorities of the College.
4.2.3 Undergraduate Curriculum

Recommendation 5: *The Visiting Committee recommends that partnerships be evaluated regularly by the College.*

The Visiting Committee found that Texas State Technical College Amarillo held numerous articulation agreements with other colleges and universities to facilitate college transfer. The College also held many Tech-Prep agreements and vocational articulation agreements with area high schools. The Committee found no evidence that these partnerships were evaluated on a regular basis to ensure continued relevance and update as needed.

All articulation agreements with post-secondary and secondary schools remain valid following the transfer. Under Amarillo College’s existing procedures, articulation agreements are evaluated through routine institutional research and financial impact reports. When needed, corrections are made through regular curriculum revision to reflect instructional content needs.
4.2.4 Undergraduate Instruction

Recommendation 6: The Visiting Committee recommends that instruction be evaluated regularly and that the results used to ensure quality instruction.

The Committee noted evidence that Texas State Technical College Amarillo maintained a process for evaluating instruction, but cited inconsistency across the campus in the manner and frequency in which that evaluation took place.

The Amarillo College Faculty Performance Review Program, which ensures consistent standards for faculty evaluation, will now apply to faculty in the Amarillo Technical Center division. (Please see documentation immediately following this section in Attachment 4.) The performance of each non-tenured faculty member is reviewed each year for the first four years and every two years thereafter, and the performance of tenured faculty is reviewed every two years.

Student, self, and supervisor evaluations are required. The Faculty Performance Review Program is to result in plans for professional development activities, which are to be stated in writing and are to be reviewed at the next evaluation. This ensures reviews are used for ongoing improvement of instruction.
4.2.5 Academic Advising of Undergraduate Students

Recommendation 7: The Visiting Advisement program regularly and/or the results to ensure that assistance to students is effective and appropriate.

Texas State Technical College Amarillo evaluated advisement services on a voluntary basis; however, there was no systematic method of using advisement results once collected.

The advisement evaluation processes currently in place at Amarillo College will now apply to students in the Amarillo Technical Center division. These processes include:

- A random student survey conducted annually among at least 20% of the student body
- A graduate survey conducted at the time students apply for graduation
- Periodic brief surveys are taken among students who come to the Advising and Counseling Center for assistance.

A copy of each survey is included following this section in Attachment 5.

Advisement personnel use the results from these surveys to evaluate success in meeting objectives and set departmental goals. Results are analyzed and used to maintain ongoing improvement in the training of counselor and faculty advisors.
4.8 Faculty

Recommendation 8: The Visiting Committee found seven cases of incomplete personnel files, which made it impossible to document that all faculty were qualified to accomplish the Institution’s purpose. All files are now complete and up-to-date showing that the faculty members in question possess the necessary qualifications. Please see documentation immediately following this section in Attachment 6.
4.8.1 Selection of Faculty

Recommendation 9: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College take steps to ensure that each faculty member employed is proficient in written communication in the language in which assigned courses will be taught.

The Committee noted that, at Texas State Technical College Amarillo, a prospective faculty member’s completed job application was the only means of evaluating written communication. The Committee pointed out that job applications may be completed by someone other than the applicant.

Amarillo College, by Board policy, requires faculty members whose primary language is not English to show evidence of proficiency in the language through a satisfactory grade on the “Test of Spoken English.” Please see documentation immediately following this section in Attachment 7. In response to this recommendation, this policy will be broadened to include a component on “proficiency in written communications.” This will be presented to the Board of Regents with approval anticipated by January of 1996.
4.8.3 Part-time Faculty

**Recommendation 10:** The Visiting Committee recommends that the College provide for appropriate orientation of all part-time faculty members.

Texas State Technical College Amarillo had published no separate policies for the employment of part-time faculty. No standard procedures for providing part-time faculty orientation were in effect.

Amarillo Technical Center now follows all of Amarillo College’s existing policies regarding the employment of part-time faculty. Part-time faculty training is designed within the Professional Development Program of Amarillo College. Each fall an orientation for part-time faculty is conducted and each faculty member receives the Part-time Faculty Handbook. Please see copy immediately following this section in Attachment 8.
Recommendation 11: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College develop, state, clearly and publicize procedures to ensure student access to part-time faculty members.

The Visiting Committee noted that Texas State Technical College Amarillo students and faculty were reasonably satisfied with access to part-time faculty; however, no written guidelines were found to ensure access.

The Amarillo College Part-time Faculty Handbook addresses this concern by requiring part-time faculty members to establish times and procedures that will provide students the opportunity to confer with them for academic assistance. Please see the Handbook, file 2.3.4 immediately following this section in Attachment 8.
4.8.6 Academic Freedom and Professional Security

Recommendation 12: The Visiting Committee recommends that Texas State Technical College, Amarillo adopt and distribute to all faculty members a statement of the principles of academic freedom as established by the governing board, ensuring freedom in teaching, research, and service.

Texas State Technical College Amarillo maintained statements of academic freedom in two published documents, the *Texas State Technical College System Guidelines* and the *Faculty Handbook*; however the statements in the two documents differed.

The Amarillo College academic freedom and code of ethics principles will now apply to the faculty in the Amarillo Technical Center division. These principles are published in the Amarillo College *Faculty Handbook*, Files 2.9.1 and 2.9.2 (immediately following this section, Attachment 9) and the *Part-time Faculty Handbook*, Files 2.3.1. Respective documents are distributed to all faculty. This ensures all faculty members receive the statement of the principles of academic freedom ensuring freedom in teaching, research and service.
4.8.10 Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation

Recommendation 13: The Visiting Committee recommends that the Institution demonstrate that it is using the results of its faculty evaluations for the improvement of the individual and/or its educational program.

While Texas State Technical College Amarillo conducted regular, formal evaluations of the faculty, the Committee found those evaluations lacking. The Committee noted that the evaluation form included recommendations for improvement, but no indication that those recommendations were addressed. There was no report by the faculty member describing accomplishments in relation to the recommendations, nor any evaluation from the individual’s supervisor.

The Amarillo College Faculty Performance Review process, which requires self and supervisor evaluations and the development of a plan of action for improving performance, will now apply to the Amarillo Technical Center division faculty. Subsequent evaluations are required to check for expected improvement. This review process is discussed in greater depth and accompanied by documentation previously in this report in section 4.2.4, Recommendation 6. [Attachment 4]
4.9 Consortia Relationships and Contractual Agreements

4.9.1 Consortia Relationships

Recommendation 14: The Visiting Committee recommends that all consortial agreements be in writing with the approval of the administration and the governing board.

When the Committee visited Texas State Technical College Amarillo, it specified two informal “quasi-consortial” agreements in existence. The Committee noted that these agreements were not in writing and lack official approval from the College administration and governing board.

Currently, both agreements (the Texas Higher Education Consortium and the Southwest Center for Advanced Technological Excellence) are formalized in writing and have been approved by the Amarillo College administration, but have not been approved by the governing board. Amarillo College is in the process of revising its Board Policy Manual to reflect recent changes and will address the need for board approval of such consortial agreements. Currently, the responsibility for approving consortial agreements, in writing, falls under the powers delegated by the Board of Regents to the College president.
5.3 Information Technology Resources and Systems

**Recommendation 15:** The Visiting Committee recommends that a campus-wide plan be developed for ongoing training of faculty and staff so that they may make skillful use of application software.

The Visiting Committee found that Texas State Technical College Amarillo provided faculty and staff members with training to enhance the skillful use of appropriate application software, internet and e-mail; however this training was only available upon request.

Staff at Amarillo Technical Center will participate in the College-wide program resulting from the creation of the College’s new Information Technology Services Division, which became effective September 1, 1995. Information Technology Services (ITS) is designed to provide a single point of contact for the development, implementation, and support of the information needs of the entire institution. Within ITS, the Technology Support Services department provides an end-user support facility for the entire college community. The department’s responsibilities include:
- providing PC software support to the faculty and staff
- offering and coordinating training in the use of equipment and software for the college staff.

Furthermore, the Dean of Information Technology is currently developing a plan, which will address in greater detail the ongoing training of personnel in application software. This Technology Master Plan is to be completed by Summer 1996.
5.4 Student Development Services
5.4.1 Scope and Accountability

Recommendation 16: The Visiting Committee recommends that Texas State Technical College assess the needs of all students in all areas of student development to develop goals consistent with student needs.

The Visiting Team found no evidence that the goals of student development at Texas State Technical College Amarillo were based on predetermined needs of enrolled students. Amarillo Technical Center, under the existing policies of Amarillo College, now surveys students annually to capture needs along with an assessment of how well those needs are being met. This information is used in formulating student development goals. It allows the College to design goals consistent with student needs. The Student Survey used for this purpose is further discussed in Section 4.2.5, Recommendation 7. A copy of the Survey follows that section in Attachment 4.
Recommendation 17: The Visiting Committee recommends that student development services be available for evening students.

The Visiting Committee noted that Texas State Technical College Amarillo had no student development services available for evening students. Amarillo Technical Center maintains on-campus evening student services during peak times such as registration and the beginning of each term. The campus’ extremely low evening enrollment (a maximum of one or two small classes a night) does not justify a separate evening counselor at all times; however, the Center is monitoring evening enrollment in order to add services if the need arises.

Furthermore, since the transfer to Amarillo College, Amarillo Technical Center takes advantage of Amarillo College full evening student services program. Counselors and other student development services are available on the Washington Street campus Monday through Thursday (the evenings night classes are held.)
5.4.3.2 Student Government, Student Activities and Publications

Recommendation 18: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College’s policy statement on institution’s responsibility for student publications be approved and published in appropriate institutional publications.

When the Committee visited Texas State Technical College Amarillo, a policy statement regarding student publications was in existence, but had not been approved as part of any institutional documents. Amarillo Technical Center now falls under Amarillo College’s existing Student Publications Policy. This policy appears in the College’s Board Policy Manual and is on file in the Student Publications Office. A copy of the policy follows this section in [Attachment 10](#).
6.1.5 Administrative Organization

Recommendation 19: The Visitor Committee recommends that current organizational charts be included in all appropriate publications.

Texas State Technical College Amarillo had included organizational charts in various official publications; however, those charts had not been up-dated to reflect changes when the Committee filed its report. Since the transfer, the organizational chart for Amarillo College will reflect the incorporation of Amarillo Technical Center. This chart is published in the Faculty Handbook, the Part-time Faculty Handbook and the Planning Book, which is available in each department or division of the college. Please see the copy of the chart immediately following this section, in Attachment 11.
Recommendation 20: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College develop a procedure for periodic performance evaluations for all administrators to include a specific schedule for the evaluations.

The Committee noted that Texas State Technical College Amarillo had an operating standard regarding the evaluation of administrators; however, that policy had not been followed. Administrators in the Amarillo Technical Center division will now be subject to the Amarillo College procedure for the annual review of all administrators. That administrative evaluation form follows this section. [Attachment 12]
6.2.2 Fund Raising

Recommendation 21: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College adopt policies and procedures for fund raising and ensure that such policies are appropriately disseminated and followed.

Texas State Technical College Amarillo did not have a policy in place that specifically linked fund raising to the College or incorporated it into the planning and evaluation process. Amarillo Technical Center now falls under Amarillo College’s fund raising policies as set by the administration and Board of Regents. The College’s guidelines governing grants are also in effect. Please see the Resource Development Guide immediately following this section. [Attachment 13]
6.3.3 Budget Planning

Recommendation 22: The Visiting Committee recommends that the College take steps to ensure that the operational budget is preceded by sound educational planning.

The Committee noted that, at Texas State Technical College Amarillo, the relationship between budget planning and sound educational planning was not clear. Faculty and staff had shown dissatisfaction regarding the College’s allocation of resources to achieve its goals.

This concern has been remedied since the transfer to Amarillo College. As a division of Amarillo College, Amarillo Technical Center’s budget will be a part of the total College budget and developed according to the budget planning procedures, which directly tie all resources allocated to the department or division’s fulfillment of the College’s Critical Priorities. A copy of the 1995 1996 Budget Request Packet follows this section. [Attachment 14]