Course Reduction:
An Example of a Systemic, Participative Process which Led to Improvement
A concrete illustration of the participatory/shared decision-making process occurred in Fall 2012. At that time, the College chose to reduce the number of course offerings for the 2012-2013 academic year in order to balance the budget as a result of statewide budget reductions and uncertainty. This was no easy task. The Vice President of Academic Affairs convened a meeting of academic and student services deans, members of the Executive Board of the Academic Senate, other key faculty leaders, and student representatives who collaborated in developing a strategic approach for reducing the number of course sections. Discussions included student achievement data, as well as the expressed guiding principles of the College, the mission, values, and vision of the College. Ultimately, approximately 263 course sections were reduced for the spring 2013 semester. But this unfortunate reality evinced a concomitant triumph in that the administrators, faculty leaders, staff, and students worked together on a difficult project and, in doing so, established process and precedence for future deliberations. In lieu of across-the-board cuts, there was honest dialogue and concern, placing student learning and achievement above self-interest. Faculty, staff, administrators, and students understood the motivation and process informing the reductions, making the tough cuts a palpable reality.