

MAY 15 2008

Progress Visit Report

Golden West College
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A Confidential Report Prepared for the
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Golden West College on April 14-15, 2008.

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Introduction and Overview

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on June 6-8, 2007, reviewed the institutional self-study report and the report of the evaluation team. The Commission took action to reaffirm accreditation with a requirement that the college complete a Progress Report. The report was to be followed by a visit by Commission Representatives. The Commission asked that a Progress Report be submitted that would focus on the institution's resolution of the recommendations and concerns as noted below:

The team members, Dr. William Andrews (chair) and Dr. Pam Eddinger, visited Golden West College on April 14-15, 2008. The purpose of the team visit was to verify the contents of the college's Progress Report.

College Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The team recommends that the college review College Goals to ensure that they are aligned with the mission and measurable so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed (Standards I.A.1 and I.B.2).

Team Observations:

The college has conducted a campus dialogue regarding the Mission Statement. It has completed the revision of the statement to appropriately reflect the tripartite mission of the college in basic skills education, university transfer, and career technical education. This mission has been placed in the catalog currently being printed. The college noted that this mission will drive the alignment of the value statement, and institutional goals as work progresses through the summer. The timetable points to a consolidation of information and drafts in summer 2008 for adoption by the campus by fall 2008.

The college submitted, along with its narrative, a document titled "Review of College Goals – 2007." The document supports the assertion that the college has conducted a thorough review of college goals, and substantive revisions are evident. The review began in the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, where a task-group was formed to: 1) determine the report format and elements, and 2) conduct the first round reviews of existing goals.

The eight recommendations of this task-group cover both content and process of the review, and reiterate the need for measurability in the articulation of the goals. As a part of its recommendation, the task-group proposes a 2-year review cycle for college goals, which seems sustainable, and if carried out according to plan, should be informative without being burdensome.

Conclusion:

The College made substantial progress and has met this recommendation. An important piece of evidence for the Mid-Term Report would be the new goals promised in this Progress Report, and a validation of the viability of this 2-year cycle.

Recommendation 2

The team recommends that the college initiate and sustain dialogue about Student Learning Outcomes to reach a broad-based understanding of outcomes and assessment (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, and I.B.5).

Team Observations:

There is evidence that the college has increased its efforts on a campus-wide understanding of outcome and assessment. This is seen in 1) dialogues and presentation at key organizational/planning venues, 2) the articulation of committees' objectives and their intended assessment, 3) the ACCJC SLO status report, and the commitment to completing Program Outcomes in Spring 2008, and 4) a self-assessment survey using the three rubrics on Institutional Effectiveness supplied by the Commission.

The conversation at the Progress Visit with key leaders (President, VPs of Instruction, Student Services, and Administrative Services, Academic Senate President, Researcher; and Faculty Leadership) revealed that there is an expert understanding of the outcome and assessment process at the leadership level, and an emerging (developmental) understanding of the process at the general operational level. The president noted that the ability to tie the outcome and assessment process to the critical components of resource allocation and program development through program and budget review has turned the tide at the college community. They now begin to see the impact of outcome and assessment at the operational level.

The convergence of the Associate Degree compliance review requirement from the State Chancellor's Office also added to the interest in outcome and assessment. The college has taken advantage of this compliance requirement by asking all new Associate Degree proposals to contain an outcome component. Forty programs now have SLOs, when 20 were previously anticipated.

The district and college have also adopted the software eLumen to implement course SLO assessment at the classroom level. The college then intends to map those course SLO assessments and results directly to Program SLOs.

Conclusion:

There is evidence of a sustained dialogue on outcome and assessment. SLOs on course, program and general education levels are discussed, and evident in completion of course SLOs and Program SLOs.

There is a framework for continuous implementation of outcome and outcomes assessment planned through the use of eLumen. There is intent as well as evidence that the college is evaluating its planning processes through either the Commission's or the CAI rubrics; the evaluation is a self-assessment within a cross-function group as defined in the IE Committee, and the Planning and Budget Committee. The college will expand this self-assessment to other planning groups. The 5-column model is used in this self-assessment.

These instruments and processes developed by the college serve a dual function as both the tools of assessment, as well as educational tools for the campus on the concepts of outcomes and assessment.

The college has made satisfactory progress and has met this recommendation.

Recommendation 3

The team recommends that the college stabilize, make vibrant, and validate the nascent planning structure. The team further recommends that the college formalize processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the various components of the Core planning structure, including its committees, processes, and planning tools (Standards i.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, and I.B.5).

Team Observations:

The college has created a chart of its Core Planning Structure, a map of how planning is conducted, and what elements are contained in each phase. It lists Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning Process, College Plans, Budget Allocation, and Program Implementation as successive phases in the Planning Cycle. The college has also created a self-assessment survey using the three rubrics on Institutional Effectiveness supplied by the Commission to gauge progress in SLOs, program review, and planning processes.

The Program Review form has been reviewed. Standard data is generated for Instruction; Student Services Data have greater variation, and are reviewed periodically for relevance now that it is in its third cycle of review. Instruction, Student Services and Administrative Services areas are aware that Program Review is being used for resource allocation, and understands the 2-year review cycle.

This process is monitored and evaluated by the IEC. The IEC also created working definitions (a glossary) for the various components of the planning process, and an educational packet for the college community.

Conclusion:

The college has made notable progress in institutionalizing the new planning structure. Conversation with senior staff and senior faculty leadership validates that institutional

planning is indeed taking root at the college; and there are more formalized definitions, and detailed processes in place.

The newly created planning map and working glossary provide a precise college-wide vocabulary for explaining the interaction among SLOs, program review, planning processes, and college goals in the planning cycle. The 5-column model for assessing the implementation of committee objectives also made clear that the goals of planning are operationalized, and evaluated on a regular cycle.

The college has met this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

The team recommends that the college identify and formalize key performance indicators for Institutional Effectiveness, and clarify the connection of Institutional Effectiveness to the Program Review process (Standard I.B.6).

Team Observations:

The college is using the ARCC (Accountability Report for Community Colleges) issued by the (CCCCO) California Community College Chancellor's Office as a key part of its Institutional Effectiveness measure. These are stable indicators embedded in the California Community College system reporting, and should serve as a good component of the college's collection of institutional effectiveness measurements.

The college has also added the Commission's Rubrics for Institutional Effectiveness as part of its indicators. The map created to illustrate the Overall Planning Process clearly defines the elements for IE. It clarifies the place of Program Review in the overall Institutional Effectiveness measures.

The college has also created a philosophical statement for IE, and a working glossary and educational package for dissemination.

In its Progress Report as well as supporting documentation, the college has clearly identified the role of Program Review vis á vis Institutional Effectiveness. The report noted that "*The Program Review process is one of many sources of information that make up the evaluation component and the assessment of institutional effectiveness. Program Review information initiates and forms the basis of program planning. Additionally, information from program review is compiled, aggregated, organized, and fed into the Strategic Planning Process to inform institutional-level strategic planning decisions.*" This is further elucidated and validated in the planning process mapping.

Conclusion:

The college has clearly defined for itself the meaning of Institutional Effectiveness, and articulated that understanding on paper. The college has made significant progress in dialogue, clarification, and documentation.

The college has met this recommendation.

Recommendation 5

The team recommends that the college evaluate its current progress in defining and establishing student learning outcomes, and through broad based and inclusive dialogue renew its efforts to develop a common understanding of student learning outcomes. The college must establish student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees (Standards IIA.1.c, II.A.2, and IIA.3).

Team Observations:

Via a self-assessment survey to 27 committee members (from 2 different high-level planning committees), the college determined that it is in the “developmental” stage in the SLO process.

In its ACCJC Annual Report of SLOs for 2007, the college noted that almost all courses have SLOs. 40 instructional programs have SLOs. All Student services programs have SLOs. The college has also completed its General Education degree outcomes review. All programs are to have SLOs completed by Spring 2009.

The college has purchased, via a district-wide collaboration, the software eLumen to map course SLOs to Programs and General Education. eLumen will manage course SLO assessment information at the classroom level. The college then intends to map those course SLO assessments and results directly to Programs SLOs.

Conclusion:

There has been adequate assessment of current progress on SLOs at all levels. The college has examined its process for developing SLOs, and made two key determinations:

1) establishing a timeline for getting the work done at all levels (instruction to complete a first round of assessment, and student services completing a third round of assessment), and

2) securing a piece of software and developing an accompanying plan that will help assessment implementation in the classroom, and mapping to program outcomes.

The college is making adequate progress at this time on SLOs. It is important to show in the next benchmark that the SLO process is moving across the 5-column model to the 5th column, where the impact on program improvement is felt. There is evidence that the college has reached the Developmental Level in the Commission’s rubric for SLOs.

Commission Concern

The college must demonstrate that it is in compliance with Eligibility Requirement 10 which requires the college “. . . define and publish for each program the program’s expected student learning and achievement outcomes. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes.”

Team Observations:

The Team was presented with evidence that 40 instructional programs have SLOs. Student services programs all have SLOs. The college has also completed its General Education degree outcomes review. All programs are to have SLOs completed by Spring 2009.

Conclusion:

The Team was impressed with significant progress in course and program expected student learning and achievement outcomes. Over 99% of courses have completed SLOs and valid plans are in place for completion of instructional program SLOs by the end of the 2008-09 academic year.

The college has not completed, but has made significant progress in meeting this Commission Concern.

Recommendation 7

The team recommends that the college commit to student equity and diversity through implementing the goals of the student equity task force, in order to assure equitable access and learning support for all of its students (standards II.B.3.a and II.B.3.d).

Team Observations:

The college has provided the Student Equity Progress Report 2007, which illustrated the progress made in the goals of the student equity task force. Further, the Student Equity Committee has been reconstituted as the Student Equity and Access Committee, whose work is now embedded in the college planning process cycle. The committee produces an annual report, and in accordance with the college’s planning cycle, a Student Equity Plan with five standard goals.

The college has also aggregated the Skills Committee, the Matriculation Committee, and the Student Equity and Access Committee into a larger umbrella group called the Student Success Committee. It processes the collective strategies of the three groups to ensure that there is a holistic approach to solutions. The Student Success Committee is a subcommittee of Planning and Budget. Resources are allocated through the Student Success Committee for the Student Equity plan.

The assessment of Student Equity strategies is done through Student Services SLOs; the assessment of the committee process is conducted through the planning assessment process.

Conclusion:

The college has made substantial progress on this recommendation, both in building an appropriate process, a committee, plans, and related resources to conduct the work of student equity.

The college has met this recommendation.

Recommendation 16

The team recommends that the college and district adhere to the Commission policy for the evaluation of institutions in multi-college districts by immediately delineating specific district functions as distinct from those of the colleges' functions, and communicate these delineated functions to all college and district constituencies, so there is a clear understanding of their respective organizational roles, authority and responsibilities for the effective operations of the colleges, and in meeting the Accreditation Standards. (Standards IV.B, IV.B.3, IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.g and Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems, January 2004)

Team Observations:

Team members validated the existence of an organizational chart for the Board of Trustees/District Administration for the 2007-2008 year. The chart documents the reporting relationships of district positions and personnel, but does not clearly delineate functions, roles, authority, and responsibilities of district and college operatives or units.

The team found that the district and its colleges have only recently begun to address Recommendation 16. District activity in support of Recommendation 16 has been undertaken at the conceptual/philosophical level. The team noted that a workshop for "board-chancellor governance" occurred on February 26, 2008. The workshop's March 4, 2008, Summary Report observed that ". . . the District is experiencing confusion over roles and responsibilities, widespread frustration, and unnecessary and excessive expenditures of resources, energy, and time." The team also verified that the district Board had conducted a special meeting on March 5, 2008, to hear a joint presentation titled, "Participating Effectively in District and College Governance," given by Scott Lay, Chief Executive Officer of the Community College League of California (CCLC), and Mark Wade Lieu, President of the Statewide Academic Senate of California Community Colleges. The presentation included a discussion of AB1725, participatory governance, and regulations for academic senates, staff, and students in relationship to community college Boards.

Working documents, Delineation of Authority and Organizational Delineation of Responsibility prepared by the district administration, were discussed with team members by the chancellor's

executive staff. These documents had not been the subject of broad constituent review nor Trustee deliberation at the time of the team visit. Consequently, these documents did not constitute an official mapping of current district/campus functions.

The team found that the district is proposing "...to explore proposals and options to clarify the distribution of authority, accountability, and college autonomy, lead[ing] to a more definitive response to the accreditation standards..." as part of their district planning process in the spring of 2008.

The team concluded that the district has failed to adhere to the Commission policy for the evaluation of institutions in multi-college districts. The district continues to lack clarity in defining its functions as distinct from those of the colleges. The district and its constituent colleges continue to operate without a clear understanding of their respective organizational roles, authority, and responsibilities. The team believes, therefore, that this recommendation has not been addressed and reiterates the original recommendation made by the spring 2007 comprehensive evaluation team as noted below.

Conclusion:

The team recommends that the college and district adhere to the Commission policy for the evaluation of institutions in multi-college districts by immediately delineating specific district functions as distinct from those of the colleges' functions, and communicate these delineated functions to all college and district constituencies, so there is a clear understanding of their respective organizational roles, authority and responsibilities for the effective operations of the colleges, and in meeting the Accreditation Standards.