

Program Review Committee Report Spring & Fall 2011

Introduction

Program Review is an ongoing process that every area of the college undergoes in a six-year cycle. Career Technical Education programs are also required to submit abbreviated reviews in years 2 and 4 of the cycle. It should be noted that the committee is in the process of developing an annual report format and structure to further support institutional planning. This process is taking place in collaboration with the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, Institutional Research, and department chairs.

The goal of program improvement drives the process. To help programs prepare for program review the committee offers multiple orientation sessions for programs scheduled for review the following year. Additionally, Institutional Research provides a common dataset to instructional programs and works with student support programs to design specialized data collection tools. All programs are asked to report on outcomes assessments and how the program is responding to those.

Generally, programs take the review process very seriously and often comment on the positive aspects and value of the opportunity for self study and reflection. The committee respects the efforts of the programs and strives to provide meaningful feedback. Observations of issues or concerns shared by multiple programs are incorporated into the annual committee report and designated as overarching issues. The Program Review committee overlaps membership with the Curriculum and Institutional Effectiveness committees to ensure there is sharing of information, and to strengthen committee processes and communication. The findings of the Program Review Committee are incorporated into the institutional planning processes.

Observations

The committee notes there has been general improvement across many programs in the use of data, outcomes assessment, and the use of data and assessment to inform program decision making. Documentation of these activities has also improved, although in many cases there is room for further improvement.

Implementation of the S/ILO portal has helped standardize the collection of instructional program S/ILO assessment. Implementation of the SUO portal for assessment for Student Services programs is imminent. Standardization of UO assessment for administrative units is not far behind. Both the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and the Office of Institutional Research have been working directly with programs and providing training to improve program

understanding of and ability to collect and analyze data, and to effectively assess SLOs, SUOs, and UOs. Notwithstanding these efforts, many programs need to improve documentation of outcomes assessment results, especially detailing how these results are used in program planning.

Supporting Institutional Planning

Since all programs at the college undergo the program review process, committee members who often serve multiple years are afforded a broad view of the impact of shifting demographics, best practices, common concerns, research and assessment, connections between programs and services, and opportunities for collaboration and sharing. The committee spends many hours in thoughtful review, providing feedback, and discussing how this information fits into the broader picture to help inform planning at the college.

As the institution grapples with an extended period of annual budget reductions, concern about the resulting impact on student success and retention is evident. The college has a reputation for implementing innovative programs and strategies, all of which have either focused on increasing student success or improving and/or creating greater efficiency of institutional infrastructure and processes. Identifying exemplary strategies and best practices which have the potential for the greatest impact on student success and retention across the board is critical to maintaining the excellence of the institution. Hard decisions can prove to be the catalyst for opportunity and innovation. The Program Review Committee encourages the different planning bodies to consider the thoughtful work of the committee as discussions take place about the level of support to be maintained for programs, services and strategies.

Committee Membership

The Program Review Committee is fortunate to have members who have served for multiple years, thus providing historical knowledge. Committee member dedication to a very time intensive process is appreciated and acknowledged.

Mary Colavito, Faculty, Life Sciences, Chair
Katharine Muller, Administrator, Vice Chair
Sara Brewer, Faculty, Communications
Bill Lancaster, Faculty, Design Technology
Fran Manion, Faculty, Math
Mary Jane Weil, Faculty, Disabled Student Services
Matthew Hotsinpiller, Faculty, English
Makiko Fujiwara-Skrobak, Faculty, Modern Languages
Sehat Nauli, Faculty, Physical Sciences
Randal Lawson, Administrator
Erica LeBlanc, Administrator, Academic Affairs
Sonali Bridges, Administrator, Outreach

Programs Reviewed and Accepted

The following programs were scheduled for full program review in Spring and Fall 2011:

Program	Unit or Student Outcomes			Curriculum Updates
	Developed	Assessed*	Program Response to Assessments**	
Career Services	Yes	Beginning	Not Evident	NA
Community Services	Yes	Not Evident	Not Evident	NA
DSPS	Yes	Accomplished	Under Discussion	Completed
Earth Science	Yes	Accomplished	Under Discussion	Completed
English	Yes	Accomplished	Under Discussion	Completed
Grants	Yes	Accomplished	Changes Implemented	NA
Human Resources	Yes	Not Evident	Not Evident	NA
Institutional Research	Yes	Not Evident	Not Evident	NA
Transportation	Yes	Not Evident	Not Evident	NA
Upward Bound	Yes	Accomplished	Under Discussion	NA
Veterans Resource Center	Yes	Beginning	Not Evident	NA
Welcome Center	Yes	Not Evident	Not Evident	NA
Workforce and Economic Development	No	Not Evident	Not Evident	NA

*Noted along the following continuum: Not Evident → Beginning → Developed → Accomplished

**Program Response is noted along the following continuum:

Not Evident → Under Discussion → Plan Developed → Changes Implemented

CTE Programs 2 Year Review

The following career technical education programs completed abbreviated biennial reviews:

Program

Communications

Cosmetology

2011 Recommendations for Institutional Support for Specific Programs

Executive summaries for all programs reviewed in Spring and Fall 2011 are included in this report. In addition to a narrative, the summaries include commendations, recommendations for program strengthening, and, recommendations for institutional support. Recommendations for institutional support for the programs reviewed that have not already been addressed are listed for consideration in institutional planning processes:

1. Support the development and implementation of a Section 508 compliance plan and identify a 508 compliance officer. (DSPS)
2. Provide support to assist programs developing and maintaining accessible web sites. (DSPS)
3. Review the current facilities, staffing and needs for test proctoring, and develop a workable interim plan. (DSPS)
4. Investigate the feasibility of mandating institutional training on legal responsibilities and requirements, both institutional and individual, related to serving students with disabilities. (DSPS)
5. Support the maintenance and staffing of the planetarium at a level which meets instructional needs, at a minimum. (Earth Science)
6. Support English department efforts to develop staffing formulas for hiring instructional assistants that align with demand and do not place an excessive burden on the department. (English)
7. Support efforts to develop a “writing across the curriculum” model that includes an effective level of student support. (English)
8. Develop an institutional plan to support the increasing demand for instructional technology. (English)
9. Move forward with establishing a federally approved indirect cost rate. (Grants)
10. Review the College’s relationship with LACOE and determine options for addressing problems with the system, the true cost to the District in terms of staff time, opportunities for errors and inconsistencies, and opportunities for improving efficiency. (Human Resources)
11. Support efforts by Human Resources and Payroll to align record keeping and differences in interpretation of leave policies. (Human Resources)
12. Find a way to support the employment needs of a program that is providing direct services to a high school population within federal grant requirements that don’t fit neatly into college processes and systems. (Upward Bound)
13. Determine the level of support the institution currently provides to support the Veterans Resource Center and assign a distinct location code to improve documentation of institutional support, especially for purposes of grant applications. (Veterans Resource Center)

Recommendations of the Committee Based on Overarching Trends Observed

Every year certain issues emerge as concerns for more than one program or as a result of committee discussions. These are placed on a list of overarching issues the Program Review Committee includes in this report to DPAC and the Superintendent/President for referral to the appropriate body or planning process. Items with an asterisk ** have previously been identified by the Program Review Committee as overarching issues and continue to surface as significant concerns.

Research and Data

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has offered training in research tools and the use of data, and actively works with many programs to develop assessment tools. It is recognized that the desire for data and research support will always exceed the capacity of the OIR. Thus the committee recommends a reasonable level of standard data be made accessible for each type of program (instructional, student/learning support, administrative) with some accompanying support for analysis and additional data. Perhaps some form of data mart would assist programs, which would need to be trained in its use, to begin to develop a basic level of program capacity to engage in research and/or better articulate and formulate research parameters.

Some programs clearly engage all, or a large number of, program members in program planning and in the program review process (i.e. writing of the report). The practice of other programs has historically been to leave it to the program leader to write reports and set program objectives. With greater emphasis placed on both institutional and program planning in recent years, it is important that the institution support strategies to ensure participation of all program members in planning.

1. Establish a base set of data for each type of program (instructional, student/learning support, administrative) and determine the level of additional support and research it is that is feasible to provide.
2. Provide training in assessment of outcomes and strategies for documenting how the assessment results are used in program planning.

Technology

Technology Support & Maintenance

Technology has both changed and enhanced many operations of the college, and will continue to do so. From technology support in the classroom, to infrastructure support, to systems that enable data collection, tracking, and communication, the college community has come to expect and depend on ever increasing levels of support. Establishing priorities and funding bases for maintaining technology is a concern identified by most programs.

When funding is available, instructional programs have access to restricted funds that can be used to maintain instructional technology and infrastructure. In contrast, administrative units do not have set aside allocations that help ensure consistent hardware and software is used by all unit members to facilitate efficient communication, and the sharing of documents, processes, programs and systems.

Instructional departments increasingly note the desire to have all classrooms outfitted with “smart” technology. Even if done over time, this would require a much more comprehensive technology replacement plan than is currently in place.

3. Address the increasing use of the MAC platform, mobile technology such as iPads in the classroom, and phone apps for student processes. Ensure there is sufficient college technical support to manage and support this shift in use and expectation.
4. Address the staffing needed to support the shift in applications and platforms (training staff and revising or developing new job descriptions).
5. Ensure technology replacement plans address the demand for ever more technology.
6. Address the need of administrative units for consistent infrastructure, hardware and software among staff.

Web Support

Web and other social media presence has become the norm. Programs regularly express a desire to maintain such a presence but are able to do so only if someone in the program volunteers to maintain the content and connections. Other programs do not have resident expertise and need support to implement or maintain a presence. Given the impact of web and social media presence, for programs as well as the institution, strategies for consistently supporting maintenance of social media presence for programs should be explored. These strategies could include a team assigned to work with programs to keep on-line information up to date, training for program volunteers, or official inclusion of such duties in an assignment.

7. Identify the best strategies for assisting programs to maintain a web and social media presence.

Curriculum

The committee acknowledges that the curriculum process is strong and comprehensive. As technology becomes more accessible and ubiquitous it has become apparent that more and more programs are accessing and teaching the same tools and creating new curriculum to support a discipline specific perspective. In the current economic climate it may now be appropriate to review whether a proliferation of similar courses is appropriate, explore ways in which resources can be shared or aggregated, and encourage stronger collaboration

between programs. At the very least, establishing common terminology to be used in course descriptions would help students identify the appropriate course to take when similar topics are offered by multiple disciplines.

8. ****Develop a consistent approach to the titling of software based courses.** Many programs use the same software for specific discipline applications. Some programs list the software in the course title, others do not. This is often confusing for students who do not know which course will best meet their needs.
9. Review in the aggregate all courses that teach similar technology and applications, rather than solely as each course relates to a specific program, to encourage greater collaboration among and between programs.

SLOs

All programs have developed outcomes (SLOs, SUOs, UOs). However, some programs have yet to assess their outcomes. Additionally, many programs do a poor job of documenting how the assessment results are used for program improvement and planning. Administrative outcomes will be the last implemented in the portal so these programs tend to lag in both assessment and documentation. Universal understanding of how such documentation fits into institutional planning processes, and contributes to institutional compliance of meeting accreditation requirements, could be stronger.

Development of the ISIS portal for capturing outcomes assessment results has helped instructional programs, and more recently student service programs, document assessment results in a consistent manner and in a way the institution is able to connect those assessments to the ILOs. Fewer programs are documenting how the program uses the assessment results. It is clear that training in this area is needed.

10. Develop additional strategies and training to help programs use and document the use of assessment results to support program improvement and planning.

Support Services

The college has an outstanding record of providing a level of excellent support services that far exceeds what is offered at other institutions. There is a clear institutional desire for data that integrates use of support services with specific student information to enable programs and the institution to reach more informed conclusions about which services have the most impact on student success.

A concern for all instructional programs is the lower success rates of Hispanic and African-American students. While the college has implemented many successful programs and services targeted at improving the success of Hispanic

and African-American students, there has not been a comprehensive, systematic approach. Identifying the most successful strategies for improving success and retention rates for these groups, documenting their impact, developing new strategies, providing training in the application of these strategies, and committing as an institution to systematic implementation is a goal worthy of an innovative college.

The committee notes that similar, though often targeted, student services are provided by many or most student support services. Some student support programs indicate they are serving greater numbers of students not in the target population. In some instances, inconsistencies in operating processes and schedules between programs may be encouraging students to seek help wherever convenient. Reviewing program guidelines and scheduling, and implementing consistent practices where appropriate, could enhance the ability of programs to better serve targeted populations.

At the same time many instructional programs have voiced a desire for dedicated support, especially counselors. Traditionally, the primary means for obtaining such support has been through grants, which sets up expectations for continuing dedicated support when grant funds end. In an era of diminishing resources, establishing criteria for how and when dedicated support is allocated could support long range planning.

11. **Ensure there are systems in place to track student lab use across the college that would enable the college to track time spent meeting required lab hours, as well as to correlate the access of on-line materials and general lab use to student success.
12. Develop a plan for identifying and implementing a systematic approach to improving success and retention of Hispanic and African-American students.
13. Review the operational and scheduling guidelines for student support services to ensure a level of consistency that encourages students to use the appropriate service.
14. Develop criteria for determining the appropriateness and sustainability of allocating dedicated services to specific programs.

Other

15. ** Provide resources to support section 508 compliance and assign someone to serve as the 508 compliance officer to ensure the college meets federal compliance regulations.
16. **Develop strategies and technology support for ensuring records across campus are updated so that, for example, when individuals leave the college, all areas of the college are notified and can take appropriate action to terminate access such as signature authority (including auxiliary accounts), ISIS access etc.

17. **Explore the efficacy of and the efficiencies to be achieved by creating a student account system.
18. **Storage, both of documents and of materials and supplies, is an ongoing problem for multiple programs. Many old records are inaccessible and/or inappropriately stored. Units whose functions and responsibilities require records to be kept should have a plan to sort, weed out, digitize and appropriately store records. The institution should explore options for document scanning and storage as well as off-site storage of items which require only intermittent access.
19. Explore strategies for encouraging and training future leadership at all levels of the institution.
20. Revisit the idea of college credit cards (for selected staff and functions) to improve efficiency and timeliness as not everything can be effectively accomplished within current processes (ex: on-line purchases).

Activities

In addition to reviewing the self studies for the listed programs, the committee established a work group to develop an on-line program review process using Curricunet that will also include an annual report format. Having an annual component will ensure that institutional planning is based upon up to date information from all programs. Throughout the development process iterations have been shared and feedback solicited from all types of programs. Multiple volunteer programs are now testing the new format in paper form. This will provide the basis for final revisions before the on-line process is implemented.

The committee also provided orientation for programs scheduled to undergo review in 2011-12, met with the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, Institutional Research subcommittee and MIS, and provided regular reports to DPAC.