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PURPOSE

The Student Learning and Program Effectiveness Committee’s purpose is:

- To lead an ongoing college-wide dialogue that facilitates student achievement of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes.
- To provide and refine procedures that enable the systematic evaluation of programs to improve student learning, student achievement, and institutional planning and effectiveness.

The Student Learning and Program Effectiveness Committee’s goals are:

- To implement a systematic institutional process that captures and maintains student learning outcome and assessment data and evidence for continuous quality improvement in compliance with ACCJC standards.
- To provide an opportunity for programs to demonstrate their contributions to the mission of West Valley College;
- To improve linkage and accountability between program review and resource allocation; and
- To strengthen the quality of program reviews leading to improved program practices.
INTRODUCTION

As part of the integrated planning process, the Student Learning and Program Effectiveness Committee (SLAPEC, formerly the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee and Program Review Committee) works to inform College Council deliberations and annual goal planning by identifying critical College themes as they are revealed in program reviews. These themes are presented in an annual report that continues to build upon West Valley College’s systematic processes. This report serves to inform planning, resource allocation and decision making. It is presented to the Academic Senate and to College Council and is shared broadly for college-wide dialogue.

The report is organized along the following components:

1. Executive Summary
2. Methods
3. Themes
4. Informing Budget and Planning
5. A Dialogue on Student Success
6. Process in Review
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In reviewing program reviews, five primary themes emerged:

1) Programs are beginning to embrace student learning outcome assessments as a guide to ensuring student success.
2) Programs have enthusiastically pursued opportunities for professional development and collaboration.
3) Programs struggle to maintain College efficiency goals in the face of College-wide declining enrollment.
4) The ability to deliver quality content and services to students is hindered by the lack of adequate financial resources.
5) Unfilled positions and the elimination of support staff has significantly impaired programs’ ability to perform administrative duties effectively.

Based on these five primary themes, several recommendations are presented to the College:

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that the College continues to support and provide opportunities for programs to engage in interdisciplinary and collaborative dialogue on student success, using discussions on student learning outcome assessments as a tool to promoting student success.

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that the College continue to support and expand its professional development opportunities, especially in the areas of student learning and teaching pedagogy.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that the College

- a) expands its marketing and outreach efforts to attract more students to West Valley College.
- b) provides and uses student success, retention, and efficiency data that includes late-start courses as well as Winter and Summer sessions.
- c) provides professional development opportunities to help faculty and staff read, analyze, and interpret a variety of data pertaining to student success, retention, and equity.

**Recommendation 4:** It is recommended that the College take steps to stabilize its budget and to help programs find and apply for grants when College budget and resource allocation is insufficient.

**Recommendation 5:** It is recommended that the College

- a) make a commitment to rebuilding unfilled positions, support staff, and resources, and
- b) provide adequate release time for faculty to perform their instructional, administrative, and institutional duties.
METHODS

THE INSTRUMENT

Survey Monkey was used as the program review submittal instrument. Each program review submitter received an individual link to their program review. There were some issues with lost links and Survey Monkey not saving some of the inputs.

PROGRAM REVIEW SUBMISSION RESULTS

No Submission Made 5%

On-time Submission 95%

  Instructional (%) 74%
  Non-Instructional (%) 57%
  Administration (%) 73%

Unsatisfactory Submissions 32%

DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative content analysis was performed on data consisting from the responses in three areas – eight key questions from the Administrative questionnaire, seven key questions from the Non-Instructional program review questionnaire, and 12 questions from the Instructional program review questionnaire. These questions focused on Notable Accomplishments, Student Success and Retention, Enrollment and Efficiency, Program Improvements, and Student Learning Outcome Assessments.

All responses to this set of 27 questions were assigned to 11 SLAPEC members to read. By reading all the narrative responses to each particular question, the readers identified and summarized various recurring themes.

The thematic summaries of the 11 readers were then compared, resulting in the discovery of the five most prominent themes across the different programs. These five themes form the foundation of this report.
THEMES
The five primary themes that emerged from the content analysis of the narrative program review responses are:

- Student Support, Outreach, and Success
- Professional Development and Collaboration
- Enrollment and Efficiency Challenges
- Budget and Resource Challenges
- Personnel Resource challenges

STUDENT SUPPORT, OUTREACH, AND SUCCESS
SLOs AND STUDENT SUCCESS
Programs identified that pedagogical improvements resulting from collaborative faculty discussions of SLO assessments have positively affected their student retention and success.

To address student success, programs are increasingly using SLO assessments to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to engage in meaningful dialogue to address those weaknesses. Such dialogue has resulted in the employment of more flexible instructional methodologies, hands on activities, and collaborative projects with other faculty to share ideas and to improve teaching and learning in the classroom.

Faculty and staff have largely embraced a learner-centered environment. They report using SLO assessments to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their programs and have taken action to address these weaknesses. Programs are employing flexible instructional methodologies, hands on student-centered activities to engage students with relatable topics that exercise both collaboration and independence in creative problem solving.

OUTREACH AND SUPPORT
Non-instructional programs reported being highly motivated by the results of SLO assessments to reach out and educate students and peers by offering workshops, trainings, presentations, etc. By surveying students and participants of these outreach efforts, non-instructional programs have reviewed, evaluated, and revised their SLOs such that their methods of outreach increasingly support more students. As a result of their analyses, non-instructional programs have developed and implemented numerous workshops, trainings, and presentations to better serve and inform our students.

Additionally, non-instructional programs stated that a major component of their success was working with various departments, programs, and student service areas to help better serve the student population. Through teamwork among the committees and programs, faculty and staff reported achieving greater student success by tackling specific goals or tasks.
CHALLENGES TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Challenges to student success most frequently cited include the following:

- Inadequate instructional materials, facilities, and equipment needed to teach to current standards for the subject matter, including general education courses such as the sciences, art, and languages, and career programs. A major concern in this area was the inadequacy or unavailability of classroom equipment, including, for example, laboratory equipment and computer classrooms.
- Inadequate support for faculty to assure improvements in instruction. Major concerns regarding improving instruction were the need to hire additional faculty who have expertise in new areas of a field, the need for more faculty training and development, the lack of economic incentives for associate faculty to attend meetings and workshops, and the lack of sufficient release time for administrative duties decreasing the time available for lesson preparation, grading, and individual student counseling.
- Disproportionate instructional teaching load. In particular, the science programs reported that improved individual student-instructor contact time is critical for continued student success and is negatively (adversely) affected by science faculty being loaded at base 18 instead of base 15.
- The State and local economic crisis and the elimination of State grants have negatively affected funding for books, tuition, financial aid, transportation, institutional support, and co-curricular activities.

ACTIONS TAKEN TO PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS

Overwhelmingly, programs would like to improve their student success and retention by doing one or more of the following:

- Implement new SLO assessments to identify specific subject areas that faculty need to focus on improving.
- Revise curricula to use more learner-centered strategies and hands-on learning.
- Encourage better student preparation by requiring or strongly recommending pre-requisites for some courses.
- Expand outreach to students by contacting them when they are repeatedly absent and advising them of student support services such as counseling and tutoring services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the College continues to support and provide opportunities for programs to engage in interdisciplinary and collaborative dialogue on student success, using discussions on student learning outcome assessments as a tool to promoting student success.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION

As noted in the 2013 Program Review Theme Report, many programs had cited the need for more professional development opportunities to learn best practices.

During the 2013 – 2014 Academic year, programs increasingly pursued professional development opportunities by attending a variety of conference and workshops, including OnCourse and the Salzberg Global Education Conference.

Faculty in instructional programs reported participating in collaborative meetings to improve their teaching methods and to share ideas to improve their classroom teaching methods. They cited attendance of workshops such as OnCourse and the Salzberg Global Education Conference as key to their efforts to diversify their classroom presentation techniques and to create new assignments which address a variety of different learning styles.

In addition, several programs report reaching across the campus to promote collaboration between peers in different disciplines. For example, the Art department reported a successful collaboration with the Physics program in engaging students in a “STEM to STEAM” project.

The Global Citizenship and Sustainability Committees sponsored its 2nd annual Climate Change/Sustainability Symposium with participation from students, faculty, and staff from a variety of disciplines, as well as members from the larger community. EOPs, with support from the Mathematics department, successfully implemented the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Academy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Programs have enthusiastically pursued opportunities for professional development and collaboration.

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that the College continues to support and expand its professional development opportunities, especially in the areas of student learning and teaching pedagogy.

ENROLLMENT AND EFFICIENCY CHALLENGES

Enrollment challenges led to reductions in course offerings and course cancellations, leading to a decrease in efficiency for many programs.

Many programs cited that their reported efficiency numbers were strongly influenced by one or more of the following factors:

- overall drop in college-wide enrollment
- early cancellation of courses as directed by the College
- the use of inaccurate efficiency data

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<http://westvalley.edu/committees/program-review/documents/Documents_And_Files/2013/2013_program_review_annual_report_academic_senate.pdf>
In regards to inaccurate efficiency data, several programs reported that the efficiency data used to evaluate it were inaccurate, for the data was based on student enrollment at the time of census and did not reflect their late start classes. These programs reported that their efficiency was significantly higher than reported when including the data from late start classes.

To address efficiency and enrollment challenges, programs continue to

- work with PGC to monitor enrollments
- evaluate the impact of online sections on enrollment.
- review and revise scheduling courses and sections including reducing and re-evaluating sequencing and frequency and adding short-term sections.
- revise and update curriculum, including the creation of new Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs)
- expand internal outreach to current students and external outreach to feeder schools, 4-year partners, and community agencies

RECOMMENDATIONS

A College-wide decline in student enrollment has significantly affected the efficiency of various programs.

Data is provided for programs to analyze, interpret, and take action. This data ranges from student success and retention to student equity. Through program review programs are asked to analyze and interpret this data, but are not given the training nor the support needed to make reasonable inferences and conclusions from the data.

**Recommendation 3:** For programs to engage in meaningful dialog over student success, retention, and equity, it is recommended that the College:

- a) expands its marketing and outreach efforts to attract more students to West Valley College.
- b) provides and uses student success, retention, and efficiency data that includes late-start courses as well as Winter and Summer sessions.
- c) provides professional development opportunities to help faculty and staff read, analyze, and interpret a variety of data pertaining to student success, retention, and equity.

BUDGET AND RESOURCE CHALLENGES

In an environment of continued financial distress, programs struggle to maintain a high level of service to their constituents.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES

The major challenges within the various administrative offices/areas/services were

- budget reductions and
- adapting to the changing budgetary environment.
Several administrative areas expressed concern about College projections in regards to the changing budgetary environment. With economic uncertainty and evolving technology, numerous offices stated their desire for the College to address a variety of economic and technological subjects. Some topics to address include changes in the regional economy, funding sources to develop programs geared towards the regional area, strategies of being innovative within the college, and ways of utilizing technology to maintain student enrollment.

In addition, much administrative effort is placed on compliance with ever-changing state requirements. For instance, Student Success and Student Equity plans have required much of administrative services to develop and provide mandatory student assessment, orientation, and education planning, along with new standards in instruction and accreditation. Federal and State regulations also require developments of secure technological mechanisms, maintaining software licensing, and keeping abreast of emerging technologies. All of which proves to be difficult with insufficient funding and staffing.

Administrative areas have been significantly affected by state economics and governmental regulations and standards. In an effort to promote the College and gain support in lieu of ongoing budget insufficiencies, administrative offices have been building strong relationships with community organizations, governmental bodies, and regional four-year institutions. Fee based classes have been increased and efforts have been put toward identifying subjects in demand.

**INSTRUCTIONAL CHALLENGES**

Instructional programs cited that the unstable budgetary environment negatively impacts their ability to offer quality instruction.

For many departments and programs, an insufficient budget due to limited federal and state funding has dramatically affected their resources, available personnel, continuing faculty and staff education, safety, and student success.

Inadequate instructional materials, facilities and equipment needed to teach to current standards for the subject matter, including general education courses such as the sciences, art, and languages, and career programs. A major concern in this area was the inadequacy or unavailability of classroom equipment, including, for example, lab equipment and computer classrooms.

**NON-INSTRUCTIONAL CHALLENGES**

Due to the budget reductions, many non-instructional programs had to make significant changes in the way they function. Numerous programs and student service areas stated that the budget reduction from the state, economy, and grants negatively impact their ability to offer student support and services. The program/services have had to reduce hours for extended academic programs or services (tutoring, writing center, etc.), postpone the hiring of additional personnel/staff, or remove one-on-one tutoring.
RECOMMENDATIONS
The unstable budgetary environment has negatively impacted programs’ ability to offer quality instruction, to provide sufficient support and services to students, and to adequately serve their various constituencies.

It is recommended that the College take steps to stabilize its budget and to help programs find and apply for grants when College budget and resource allocation is insufficient.

PERSONNEL RESOURCE CHALLENGES
Many administrative, instructional, and non-instructional areas reported that the loss of staff has led to increased pressure on remaining staff and faculty to maintain quality services and support to our students.

Due to budget reductions, many crucial job positions have remained vacant, have been delayed, or have overwhelmed other staff and faculty members with additional workload. In addition to having unfulfilled staff positions, lack of sufficient funding has hindered academic programs from expanding and providing more assistance to its instructors.

Instructional areas reported having insufficient release time to perform department administrative duties and an insufficient number of laboratory instructional technicians to support with the preparation and delivery of laboratory content has decreased the time available for lesson preparation, grading, and individual student counseling.

Programs reported the need for improved dialogue at all levels within the college, citing that poor communication has led to the redundancy in the workload across various programs, student services, and offices. Some programs/students services have stated that there have been “duplicated efforts among multiple offices.” By having continuous discussions, programs/student services felt this could help train staff with updated mandates or have multiple accesses to share the Ed plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
The loss of staff and insufficient release time has led to increased pressure on remaining staff and faculty to maintain quality services and support to our students

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that the College

a) make a commitment to rebuilding unfilled positions, support staff, and resources, and
b) provide adequate release time for faculty to perform their instructional, administrative, and institutional duties.
NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Faculty and staff of West Valley College continue to make many notable accomplishments in the face of increasing enrollment challenges and in an era of budget uncertainty. These accomplishments include:

Creation of the Budget & Resource Advisory Council (BRAC)

The Budget and Resources Advisory Council (BRAC) is a participatory sub-committee of the College Council, comprised of representation from the Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Associated Students Organization (ASO) Student Senate, and administration. Reporting to the College Council, BRAC guides the overall budget and resource allocation process, including establishing the budget and planning timeline, implementation of related procedures, and the policies and criteria used as the basis for evaluation of proposals.²

Formation of the Student Success Team

West Valley College institutionalized the implementation of SB 1456 (Student Success Act of 2012) as one of the three college priorities within the framework of Institutional Effectiveness.

The Student Success Team is a newly configured structure that encompasses the former Basic Skills Advisory Committee, the Matriculation Committee, and the Student Equity, Access, and Success Committee. The Student Success Team is led by a newly identified Faculty Coordinator.

The Student Success Team will ensure that SB 1456, the Student Success Act of 2012, will be smoothly implemented by providing seamless assessment, education plan, and orientation process for our new students. The Team will begin focusing on an institutional benchmarking process in consultation with the Academic Senate, College Council, and other constituency groups.³

Creation of the PAL Academy

EOPS successfully offered the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Academy, which is facilitated by Mathematics instructor Faun Maddux. Three separate one-hour supplemental instruction sessions were offered for Math 10, Math 103 and Math 106.


PAL Academy offers supplemental instruction and peer tutoring. PAL is a wraparound program where instructors, counselors and tutors collaborate to help students complete their math requirements. All EOPS student enrolled in Math 10, 106 or 103 are eligible to participate in this exciting program.4

Expanded Mental Health Awareness

Health Services successfully conducted the National College Health Assessment II survey in spring 2013 and utilized the NCHA II data as the basis for its student needs assessment. Health Services implemented the second year of a state Mental Health Initiative Grant in 2013 – 14. The grant provided funds for Health Services to present several campus wide Mental Health Awareness events in 2013 - 2014.

Jean and E. Floyd Kvamme Planetarium

(TBD)

INFORMING BUDGET AND PLANNING

A goal of the program review process is to offer program leaders the opportunity to reflect candidly at student learning assessment results when they evaluate the performance of their program and resource needs.

As part of the integrated planning process, the Student Learning and Program Effectiveness Committee (SLAPEC) works to inform College Council deliberations and annual goal planning by identifying critical program themes. College Council annual goal planning addresses the most appropriate uses for College funds in order to best accomplish the College’s mission. SLAPEC collects and posts all program review resource requests on the Program Review website in order to inform the Budget & Resource Advisory Council. BRAC then addresses budget refinement, resource allocation priorities, and budget submissions.5

The SLAPEC Chair will meet with College Council to report on significant themes and to collaborate on its 2015 – 2016 annual college goals retreat.

PROCESS IN REVIEW


PROGRAM REVIEW 2014

ACCJC

West Valley College was evaluated by the ACCJC in the spring of 2014. The college’s Program Review process is a critical component of the college’s overall integrated planning. West Valley’s program review process was found to be effective in ensuring that the college has a sustainable and continuous quality improvement process that refines and improves program practices which results in improved student achievement and learning. In fact, the Program Review process was commended as being a model for other colleges to follow.

PROCESS IN REVIEW

There were a number of process changes that took place during the 2014 program review. First, there was a significant delay in the data support that came from the state. While program review started on schedule, program leaders were only able to complete the qualitative related questions. Because of significant efforts necessary to provide data for the accreditation visit, it then took several weeks for college researcher to translate the state data into meaningful information for the programs to use in their assessment. Additionally, with launching of the BRAC, and its associated process deadlines, there developed a very tight window to provide meaningful budget request data beyond base. The reality was that the new budget timeline and the established Program Review time line no longer aligned, and as such, it is doubtful that there was an effective opportunity for Program Review data to effectively inform the budget process, as noted in the ACCJC report.

DISBANDED

Over the last four years, it has been increasingly apparent that the intention of ACCJC is that there is a very close and integrated relationship between Student Learning Outcome data and Program Review data as drivers for institutional planning and budgeting. The goal is that these data result in sustainable and continuous improvement in overall institutional effectiveness. Because of the overlapping nature of these committees’ goals, the Integrated Planning Team recommended that the two committees be combined. As such, in May of 2014, the Academic Senate moved to disband both the Program Review & Student Learning Outcome committees, while at the same time establishing SLAPEC.

BUDGET PROCESS

A significant challenge to the integrated planning process during the 2013 – 2014 program review cycle was the short turnaround time between when the BRAC received the program review budget and resource requests to when it had to make its budget decisions. This short window resulted in significant challenges for BRAC to make informed decisions in time to meet the District’s budget deadline.
PROCCESS IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The use of Survey Monkey again proved to be a very stable platform to conduct program review and its continued use proved to be successful in collecting meaningful data from the programs. However, its limitations indeed had a negative impact on a very small percentage of program review submission.

To address these and other issues for the 2014 – 2015 Program Review cycle, SLAPEC will improve the program review process in a number of ways:

- Each program will do an “Update” instead of a comprehensive program review.
- Add one or more questions to the program review to address ACCJC Recommendation #2 for Institutional Benchmarking of student equity.
- Begin the review process in early December. This will allow for programs to complete the program review process at an earlier date than last year. Because of the earlier start date, BRAC will have more time to make budgetary decisions.
- Use Angel as the instrument to implement program review. There are numerous advantages to using Angel, including the ability to
  - "grade"/evaluate responses against a rubric (especially useful for program review/budget prioritization).
  - give feedback easily and directly for each response
  - report on the progress of each program's submission (% complete)
  - generate reports easily
  - assign teams to allow multiple people to tackle different groups of questions.
  - export responses to Excel.
  - migrate data to future Course Management Systems
  - quickly implement program review and have ample time for the committee to test it before launching it to the college.
  - leverage our existing Angel experts (Max Gault, Amy Vu, etc.) to quickly provide a robust solution for Program Review
  - allow submitters to view their program reviews after submitting it
  - have faculty already trained in using Angel

Using Angel introduces the possibility of facing a few issues that are easily mitigated:

- some reported issues with typing into textboxes. There is a fix for that.
- some issues of cutting and pasting from a Word document into Excel. There is a workaround for this.
- some browser issues.