FOLLOW-UP REPORT
SUBMITTED BY

COLLEGE OF THE SISKIYOUS

800 COLLEGE AVE, WEED, CA 96094

TO THE

ACCREDITING COMMISION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

ON MARCH 14, 2011

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STATEMENT ON REPORT PREPARATION

In September of 2010, College of the Siskiyous President/Superintendent Randall Lawrence convened the Accreditation Steering Committee (2010-2011) to guide the College's response to the findings from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) conveyed in their letter dated June 30, 2010. The committee is a representative body, consisting of the Accreditation Liaison Officer (currently on sabbatical, but actively participating during meetings via phone conference), and two representatives appointed by each employee group including the Academic Senate the Classified staff, the Administrative Support/Management Group and Senior Administration. Members of the Accreditation Steering Committee agreed to a two-year term. Faculty member Dave Clarke agreed to serve as chair of the committee.

> Accreditation Steering Committee Membership
> Kristy Anderson – Administration
> Denise Broomfield - Classified
> Dave Clarke, Chair – Faculty
> Rob Frost – Administration
> Mike Graves – Faculty
> Doug Haugen – Administrative Support/Management
> Steve Reynolds – Accreditation Liaison Officer, Faculty
> Val Roberts – Administrative Support/Management
> Dawnie Slabaugh – Classified

The President serves as an ex officio member, attending most of the meetings, including the first one. At that initial meeting the group identified three main activities for their charge:

- Track and account for the College's progress on the four recommendations identified by the ACCJC
- Prepare the College's Report to the Commission
- Monitor and communicate on-going progress on the recommendations during 2011-2012.

The Accreditation Steering Committee has met weekly since its inception. Meeting notes (1) reflect a wide variety of topics, all directly connected to the College's response to the recommendations. This report is a product of the committee. The committee broadly and deeply contributed to the report. The final report was first reviewed and approved by the Accreditation Steering Committee, then approved by the College President, Randall Lawrence, and finally reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees on March 8, 2011.

INTRODUCTION

ANALYSIS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In March of 2010 College of the Siskiyous (COS) submitted its self-study (2) to ACCJC. In it the College identified plans addressing areas in which improvement was necessary. Taken in sum, the plans generated several themes which were identified in the last pages of the self-study. Those themes included Planning and Evaluation, Data Management, Accountability, and Resources.

In July of 2010, ACCJC placed COS on warning (3), and directed the College to immediately address issues identified in four of the recommendations made by the site visit team. Not surprisingly, the themes identified in the self-study figured prominently:

Recommendation 1 – Research
Recommendation 2 – Program Review
Recommendation 3 – Evaluation
Recommendation 7 – Strategic Planning

The four recommendations to which the commission directed the College's attention are intertwined. A brief analysis of the content of the recommendations and how they relate to one another is included in this introduction, as this analysis helped the College to frame its response and helped the Accreditation Steering Committee to write this report.

One example of the interconnected nature of the recommendations is the impact of the areas identified by the first three recommendations — research, program review and evaluation—on the fourth recommendation, planning. An assessment of the College's previous planning processes revealed that much of it had been reactive, short-sighted and uninformed. There are two primary reasons for this. First, the College's research capacity (Recommendation 1) for the last several years has been inadequate. Second, efforts to connect Program Review (Recommendation 2) with Planning and Budgeting have fallen short in their implementation. That we have not continuously evaluated (Recommendation 3) the College's program review and planning processes and their outcomes allowed the latter situation to continue longer than necessary.

The College also quickly realized that the scope of needed action was such that a timeline for satisfying the commission's request—and more importantly, to bring the College to a better place—could not be completed in time for submission of this progress report. While the College acknowledges the urgency of its situation, the realization that this is a multi-year process allows the College to respond with deliberation and foresight, producing a framework for the College's activities over the last six months and for the next several months so that COS is in a sound position to move into the future.

Given that all four recommendations are interconnected and address large institutional themes, many of the actions taken in response impact more than one, and

sometimes all, of the recommendations. Consequently, simply addressing each recommendation in this report as an isolated entity would fail to provide a complete picture. Considering this, the response is presented in two forms. First, this report briefly describes the College's activities somewhat chronologically, linking them to the recommendations. As noted above, several of those activities actually predate the submission of the self-study (March 2010). Second, this report addresses the College's accomplishments and continuing efforts on each recommendation in a detailed fashion.

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLEGE'S ACTIVITIES

Ad Hoc Dialogue Group

At the beginning of the academic year 2009-2010, President Lawrence convened a small ad hoc group that met weekly to advise him on a wide variety of topics, most of which ended up being directly related to the recommendations. The group's participants varied as time passed, but always included a balance of faculty and staff with experience at COS and with a history of participation in decision-making. These conversations formed the basis of the College's ability to quickly gear up with structures and processes to respond to the recommendations. When the letter from ACCJC arrived in early July, this group was utilized by the President to help frame the response to ACCJC's directives. Consequently, the Dialogue Group continued to meet and work through the late summer and early fall of 2010. While formal meeting notes were not initially kept, it became clear with the arrival of the letter from ACCJC that the group would play a more formal role, and meeting notes were then kept. (4) The Dialogue Group was involved in the College's response to Recommendations 2, 3, and 7 by offering a preliminary analysis and by making recommendations to the campus at Orientation Day (August 2010) on a planning model. This model was informed by program review and provided the campus an opportunity to evaluate and make their own recommendations on the work of the Dialogue Group.

Merging of Instruction and Student Services

In summer of 2009, President Lawrence announced his intention to consolidate the areas of Instruction and Student Services, then administered by two Vice Presidents, into one area to be overseen by a single Vice President of Student Learning. This reorganization was in full transition at the time of both the College's self-study (fall 2009) and site visit (spring 2010). For most of the academic year 2009-2010, the College had an interim Vice President of Instruction and was engaged in the search process for the new Vice President of Student Learning. In spring, the outgoing Vice President of Student Services left COS for a position at a fellow California Community College. The College's new Vice President of Student Learning arrived on campus within days of the receipt of the ACCJC letter. He immediately joined the Dialogue Group and was charged by the President with creating a blueprint for implementing a new institutional master plan, using the conceptual framework developed by the Dialogue Group.

This paradigm shift, considering all direct student contact activities an integrated whole, affects planning and budgeting, and how we evaluate those activities. The merging of these two units impacts the planning process (the Educational Master Plan) in that formerly separate plans from Instruction and Student Services are now an integrated Student Learning Plan (further explained in Recommendation 7) to which the other areas of the College link in support. This is key to the integration of the entire Educational Master Plan as it seeks to support the Institutional Goals derived from the College's Vision (see page 20 for visual representation). All of this impacts the College's response to Recommendation 7.

The Education Master Plan

At the all-campus Orientation Day (fall 2010), the President presented a PowerPoint (5) highlighting the work of the Dialogue Group. That presentation also included the blueprint for the creation of the Education Master Plan (EMP). The EMP has at its core the Student Learning Plan, which is directly linked to the Vision and to the Institutional Goals derived from the Vision. Completing the EMP is a Human Resources Plan, an Institutional Advancement Plan, a Technology Plan, a Facilities Plan, and a Business Services Plan. All of these plans have been constructed in support of the College's primary focus— learning—as reflected in the Student Learning Plan. Each plan was created by a taskforce comprised of members from each employee group. The EMP effort is directly responsive to Recommendations 3 and 7, and will eventually impact Recommendation 2 by providing a path for assessment results from the program review process to be incorporated into the College's planning and budgeting.

Office of Planning, Assessment and Research

In November of 2009 the President moved forward with the creation of a new office and position: Director of Planning, Assessment and Research (DPAR). The title and job description reflect the College's acknowledgement that there were deficiencies in these areas, which were repeatedly identified in the self-study. Also, though the phrase "institutional effectiveness" is not a part of the formal position title, the job description (6) includes responsibilities related to the evaluation of the College's institutional processes. The hiring process proceeded through spring 2010 and concluded in the summer with the hiring of the College's new Director. The DPAR has since been actively working on the Educational Master Plan to ensure both data-driven planning and assessment methods are used to evaluate the success of the plan. She has also been working on both the design of and assessment methods for the program review process (7). In addition, the DPAR has instituted processes for requesting and retrieving data (8), conducting research and ensuring that we have assessment methods for the evaluation of all the College's processes and programs. Implementation of the plan to create and staff an Office of Planning, Assessment and Research is responsive to all the recommendations.

<u>Evaluation</u>

The College has performed several evaluation activities in the last six months. First, an evaluation of the College's Program Review content and process was evaluated by the Academic Senate Program Review Committee and the Dialog Group, and resulting changes will be implemented beginning fall 2011. Second, from that evaluation, modification regarding campus-wide resource allocation was made. The existing Budget Oversight Committee was disbanded and the creation of a representative Budget Committee was charged by the President. Third, in the course of creating the Educational Master Plan, the planning taskforces performed a great deal of evaluation relative to their specific areas, as reflected in meeting notes (9) from the various groups. Finally, the President's Advisory Council (PAC), the College's primary participatory governance body, reviewed (10) the Planning and Governance Document, as did the Board of Trustees (11). In addition, a representative Governance Working Group (12) was formed to assist the President in evaluating and recommending changes to this process, which resulted in the Decision-Making initiative outlined immediately below. These activities are responsive to Recommendation 3.

<u>Decision-Making</u>

One outcome of these evaluations was that the College has decided to overhaul its entire decision-making process. The system currently in place (13) channels all decisions through the President's Advisory Council (PAC), and has resulted in some delays, with PAC trying to manage too many things. In particular, it became apparent that several kinds of decisions were unnecessarily coming before PAC. Academic and professional matters, charged to the Academic Senate, should have gone straight from the faculty to the Board of Trustees or its designee, the President. In addition, many operational matters should be handled through participatory management and not the participatory governance process.

As a result, the Board of Trustees directed (14) the President to create a new model for governance. The President convened a working group with appointees from each employee group to assist him in this task. This group met several times through late fall and early spring. It became clear to the group that its charge needed to be expanded, in that the College had been inappropriately using the term "governance" to refer to all decision-making. The solution was to create a decision-making model (15) that distinguishes four general types of decisions: governance, planning and budgeting, academic and professional matters, and operations. This was followed by input sessions for each of the College's constituent groups (16) and two general campus-wide forums. The group is currently working on a final draft to be mutually agreed upon by the constituent groups and the Board of Trustees. That the College is embarking on a new decision-making framework is relevant to this report in several ways, but primarily in that it came about as a result of evaluation of the College's current process. This initiative is responsive to Recommendation 3.

These six general activities collectively constitute the institutional response to the four recommendations. They will all be referred to repeatedly in the next section, which more specifically describes the College's response to each recommendation.

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 – Research Capacity

In order to fully comply with the standards, the team recommends the College increase the research capacity of the institution to conduct the College's research agenda, to assist College staff with the use of research-based information in decision-making, and to ensure that the College's planning and resource-allocation processes are infused with relevant and timely information on the effectiveness of the institutional practices and student learning.

Background

One of the themes found throughout COS's 2010 Self-Study is the College's need for increased research support. Consequently, it came as no surprise that increased research capacity was one of the ACCJC Recommendations. A lack of adequate research impacted planning, decision-making, and program review. The problem was two-fold in that data was sometimes difficult to obtain, and there was limited expertise on hand to help employees use research and data to evaluate and assess progress toward desired outcomes. As a result, decision-making at COS has not always been data driven.

Description

Concurrent with the self-study process the College put into motion a plan to hire a Director of Planning, Assessment, and Research (DPAR). The hiring committee, composed of representatives of all segments of the campus community, carefully considered the College's needs in crafting the job description (6) Research was primary among those needs. The College first posted the position in the spring of 2010 and conducted final interviews in late June. The successful conclusion of the process resulted in the hiring of a DPAR who brings more than twelve years of experience in the field of Institutional Research and Planning.

In early August of 2010 the new Director of Planning, Assessment, and Research (DPAR) began her duties. In order to facilitate success, the DPAR was quickly integrated into several key institutional committees. The DPAR is an active member of the College's Educational Master Plan Steering Committee, the Budget Committee, the Banner Steering Committee, the Basic Skills Initiative Advisory Committee and the Accreditation Steering Committee. She meets weekly with the President and attends the All Administrators meetings and Student Learning Deans and Directors meetings regularly. These connections help the DPAR to understand the research and assessment needs of the College community, which subsequently led her to form a team of the College's Data Custodians. (17)

The Data Custodians Group is a key component in the College's effort to increase research and data capacity. Newly formed, the committee facilitates communication among key areas of the College to increase discussion of research and data processes and procedures. For example, the Data Custodians are currently discussing key terms that need to be documented and identified in order to standardize data analysis at COS. Individual Data Custodians serve as experts in their area of data and information. The Committee is made up of the Directors of Human Resources, Enrollment Services and Instructional Services, as well as the Controller, a Senior Programmer and the Director of Information Technology. The DPAR chairs the Data Custodians Group, which meets twice monthly.

Working with the President's Executive Cabinet (Senior Administrators and the Director of Human Resources), the Data Custodians, the Accreditation Steering Committee, and others, the DPAR reviewed Recommendation 1 and the College's current situation to identify three key objectives to help meet the research and information needs of the College. They include:

1. Facilitate campus access to and use of existing research and assessment-based information and data
2. Increase the amount of relevant research and assessment-based information available to the College community
3. Integrate research and assessment practices into planning and budgeting

Each of these objectives led to multiple activities and, as a whole, form the foundation of the College's response to Recommendation 1.

The DPAR, with the assistance of the Data Custodians and others, is taking several steps to facilitate employees' access to existing research and data. Primary among these is a revision of the College's data request process. In February, the DPAR shared with the campus the framework for how research requests are to be handled (18). In early March, an e-mail (19) was sent to the campus which provided a link to instructions and the form for making a request. The revised Institutional Research and Data Request process allows any employee of COS to request information and help via the Information Technology Help Desk System. Requests can be made to obtain basic data, or for assistance designing and implementing a research or assessment project. Requests are tracked so that the Data Custodians can gather information on the types of projects end users are pursuing. This will help to identify commonly requested data so that formal reports can be developed to meet end users needs.

One of the challenges in launching a request process is the limited access to College databases through existing data extraction tools. The College is transitioning from a locally-developed data information system to a commercial product known as Banner. The conversion to Banner is consuming much of the COS programmers' time, and consequently, data extraction tools are not yet in place for Data Custodians and end users to develop and run reports.

The Data Custodians were initially concerned about launching the request process without a common data extraction tool in place for Banner. However, after much discussion, it was determined that a number of other data resources exist and can be used to help fill many of the likely requests, and requests requiring access to Banner filled by programmers in Information Technology. The advantages to having the Request Process in place now, are (1) it provides the Data Custodians a tool to track needs and (2) it provides a clear path for end users to make requests.

To support the "Institutional Research and Data Request" process and encourage use of existing data, the COS Institutional Research web site has been revised and now includes several links to COS-specific research projects and data sources (20). Links to the Chancellor's Office's DATAMART and formal reports such as the ARCC (Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges and IPEDS (Integrated Post-secondary Education Data Systems) also enhance what is available for use.

Another part of the plan to increase employee access to existing data is to provide professional development by training campus community members to access and analyze data without the overt assistance of the DPAR. As an initial step in that direction, in August Cal-PASS personnel trained a number of faculty and staff (21) in the use of their data tool, SMART (22). SMART utilizes the information reported by COS to the Community College Chancellor's Office. The tool allows the user to dig much deeper and parse more specifically than does the Chancellor's Office's system. Additionally, the interim Director of Enrollment Services, a highly skilled Banner user, is offering twice monthly sessions that allow employees to better utilize the functions of the Banner Information System, such as the development of student cohorts that will allow extraction of data about specific groups (23). The Data Custodians are discussing additional training opportunities, including topics such as completion of the Research and Data Request process, MIS reporting, and accessing and using existing data sources.

The College President and others made several decisions this year to increase the amount of relevant research based information available to the College community. First, the President and the DPAR agreed on a 5-year Survey Plan that will have the College regularly surveying both students and employees. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement is being administered during the spring of 2011, and a Campus Climate Survey of campus employees is planned the coming fall semester. Second, working with the Accreditation Steering Committee, the President has identified several key institutional processes that will be evaluated at regular intervals (24). (See also Recommendation 3 - Evaluation). The results of these assessment activities will inform multiple institutional decisions.

Third, the College has selected some modules that will be used to enhance the Banner system's functionality for the College as it relates to research and assessment. For example, the data extraction and reporting tool Argos was purchased, and appropriate hardware has been acquired to support the implementation of this tool. The

data blocks for Argos are scheduled to be built in late spring. The goal is to have a catalog of reports available for end users to utilize without having to be trained report developers.

Finally, the Data Custodians have identified the need to develop a calendar of external reporting requirements to help ensure that the College data is as accurate as possible and that reports are submitted in a timely manner. The Director of Information Technology is currently working with Data Custodians to identify timelines and determine contacts for area review and responsibility.

As described in other sections of this report, the College planning and budgeting processes are currently under revision. The College is developing a Planning by Design system designed to ensure that all planning is assessment driven and relies on data for decision-making. (25) Instructions given to the Educational Master Plan taskforces this year called for clearly stated goals, intended outcomes, and measurable objectives. Most chapters of the EMP have not only identified their intended outcomes but have already developed measurable objectives (26). In some cases, baseline data has been obtained, in other cases, the need to collect this information still exists. In order to connect this assessment-driven planning process with the budget development process and to help facilitate the use of data-driven decisions, the DPAR serves on both the Educational Master Plan Steering Committee (27) and the Budget Committee (28).

Analysis

In a relatively short period of time efforts by the College to increase data capacity have led to progress on all three of the identified objectives. Additionally, several key decisions made this year will enable COS to continue to increase capacity in the coming months and years. The College will need to continue focusing resources in this area to ensure Banner and its modules become useful tools for the College and its research capacity. Communication and employee development around the availability and use of research and data for decision-making will need to be on-going if COS is to fully meet is research objectives.

Tools such as the Institutional Research and Data Request process and the newly revised Institutional Research Web Site exist to increase campus access to institutional research and data. Training and communication about these resources and their value will continue to ensure they become relevant to the College community.

A regular schedule for survey and evaluation activities will allow College employees to practice their collection of data and use of results for decision-making. For this to be possible, the College will need to institutionalize and sustain support for data and assessment tools. For example, the Argos data extraction tool will need to be integrated with Banner and programming time will need to be made available to develop the reports required to make this tool valuable to end users. Additionally, the Data Custodians will need to work with end users and Information Technology to finalize the

standardization of language and definitions around key reporting elements such as retention, success, and student achievement.

The outcomes and measurable objectives emerging in the Educational Master Plan Chapters as well as the clear call for assessment as a key component of the draft Planning by Design System show that the newly revised planning system is designed to be evidence-based. As the portfolio of research and data that is easily accessible grows, continued vigilance is required to ensure that it gets used for planning, program review, and other decision-making and that a culture of assessment takes hold at COS.

Recommendation 2 – Program Review

In order to fully comply with the standards, the team recommends that all College departments and programs complete the annual program review and strengthen its linkages to the College's planning and resource allocation processes. The team further recommends that the College make its mission statement and detailed student achievement and student learning data central in the dialogue and reflection that informs the program review, institutional planning, and all College decision-making processes.

Background

For most of the last several years, all instructional departments were on a six year program review cycle. In addition, some areas such as some of the Career and Technical Education Program performed more frequent reviews as required by outside entities such as program specific accrediting bodies.   Beginning in 2007, the College transitioned to a model utilizing annual program reviews.

Reviews of student service programs were performed largely at the behest of outside entities (reporting agencies, granting agencies, etc) and are performed annually or less frequently. The College has held a fairly strict definition of Program Review, and many of these assessment efforts were not considered by the College to be 'program reviews' and therefore were not reported as such in the self-study. From year to year some programs have been grouped into a single entity to be reviewed and in others disaggregated to be reviewed separately.

Program review activities in offices, departments and programs which are not directly connected to student learning (for example, Human Resources, Maintenance, Operations and Transportation, Technology Services) have occurred sporadically – some regularly and some not at all. Again, the primary motivator for review appears to have been outside requirements.

This lack of consistency in the review process, and the relative lack of value that program reviews have had in informing planning and budgeting, is a direct consequence of the College's failure to determine and convey the parameters of what program review should accomplish at College of the Siskiyous.

Description

An analysis by the Dialogue Group of past program review efforts led to the realization that while results from Program Review were used in budget development, they were not as influential in strategic planning. This year, as part of the decision to develop an overall Planning by Design System for COS, the College decided that Program Review should be integrated into the overall planning design. Program Review's role in overall planning was introduced in the form of a diagram at the College's August 2010 Orientation Day (which appears on page 20 of this report).

In response to discussions of the model and the need to make the Educational Master Plan and the Planning by Design system a campus-wide effort, the President announced that Program Review during the 2010-11 Academic Year would be suspended. It was anticipated that this would provide time for and encourage participation of faculty and staff in the EMP and Planning by Design Development. Some areas, such as the Counseling Department, continued their program review efforts despite program review not being required as a College-wide activity.

The new Planning by Design System draft (25), first shared widely with the College community in January 2010, includes a Program Review section. The draft suggests a model for non-instructional program review and provides a possible framework for instructional program review. Conversations regarding program review are currently occurring in both venues: the Academic Program Review Committee (29) (an Academic Senate chartered standing committee) in association with the Vice President of Student Learning and the Director of Planning, Assessment and Research; and at the Accreditation Steering Committee. Some basic principles have been identified and discussed such as:

- Program Review should be about assessing and improving student learning and institutional effectiveness
- Program Review should occur across the College
- Program Review and Student Learning Outcomes should be connected in instructional areas
- Program Review should be useful and simple for those engaged in it

Several questions have been raised as part of this discussion, including:

- How is a program defined for the purposes of program review?
- What are the common components of program review?
- What information is needed from program review for college and program planning?
- What are the common elements of a program review?
- How frequently should program review be performed?
- How should student learning outcomes assessment fit into program review?

While discussion is on-going as of this writing, the President has set a goal for the College to have the basic tenants of a Program Review finalized by the end of the Spring Semester. This will allow tools and training to be developed over the summer so that Program Review can be resumed College-wide in the fall.

Analysis

The College has made progress in understanding that Program Review should serve a greater purpose than primarily informing individual budget requests and identifying other resource needs. This understanding has provided a foundation for meaningful dialogue about the key questions of Program Review. The Administration

and the Faculty Senate Sub-Committee for Program Review will ensure that the basics of a Program Review Process will in place by the end of spring semester and to be ready for implementation in the fall.

Recommendation 3 – Evaluation

In order to fully comply with the standards, the team recommends the College conduct regular, rigorous and inclusive evaluation(s) of its participatory governance, program review, and planning processes. The results of the evaluation(s) should be broadly communicated to the campus community and the Board of Trustees, and the evaluation results should be central to process improvement.

Background

In the past, while attempts have been made to evaluate key institutional processes and activities, such as the 2009 Staff Survey (30) on institutional planning, they have been sporadic and often lacked the rigor required to produce results that could lead to institutional change. In addition, results have not been adequately shared. Consequently, the College has been limited in the identification of and response to problems in those areas. Consequently, the College finds itself, on the heels of its self-study (an assessment activity in itself), making several large institutional changes concurrently.

Description

In the last six months, the College has engaged in a great deal of introspection. Each Master Planning taskforce (8), made up of members of all constituent groups, evaluated its area and through frequent meetings determined areas of most needed improvement. Each group utilized data from a wide variety of conventional sources and also solicited input from College staff on Planning Day Fall 2010. From these evaluations, goals and supporting objectives were written into each chapter of the EMP.

In addition, both the Board of Trustees and the President's Advisory Council (as directed in self-study plans) have evaluated the 2005 Institutional Governance, Planning and Budgeting Processes document (13, 31, 32). The analyses led to the College's understanding that the processes prescribed in the document inappropriately directed all decisions to the President's Advisory Council, and resulted in the drafting of a proposed model for governance which includes a process for a change in decision-making (described in the Introduction). The proposal was generated by a representative Governance Working Group (12) which was convened by the President. The group examined several governance models and settled on a set of principles which would drive the College's decision-making. The President then took the model to each constituent group for feedback and held two campus-wide forums for additional input. The group is currently developing processes to implement the decision-making structure.

The College recognizes, however, that these activities do not meet the standard "regular" evaluation. A first step towards making regular evaluation part of the College's ethos is the adoption of modified policy language on evaluation, adopted by the Board

at the March 2011 meeting. The Board reviewed and updated Policy 3250, Institutional Planning and Evaluation which now requires the College to conduct regular institutional planning and evaluation and further requires that these activities be broadly communicated (33) This change in policy language is intended to ensure that the results of evaluations are broadly communicated and that these principles drive all of the College's evaluative processes:

- Promotion of student learning and student success
- Access and equity for all constituents
- Efficiency and stewardship of resources
- Continuous quality improvement
- Broad-based inclusive dialogue
- Evidence-based decision making

A second step taken to help insure thoughtful and rigorous evaluation is the creation of a draft document entitled Planning and Assessment Cycles. (24) Developed by the Director of Planning, Assessment and Research, at the request of the President, the document describes the intervals at which various institutional processes will be evaluated, sets some criteria on which the evaluations may be based, and begins to identify tools for assessment.

Analysis

On-going evaluation takes time to demonstrate, however, the College has made some significant steps the intended result. Efforts to codify evaluation into Board Policy demonstrate the desire to make evaluation regular. The critical eye with which the College has reviewed and changed some large institutional processes such as governance, and efforts to seek broad input in evaluating current practices for planning, are two examples of the College's commitment to be more rigorous and inclusive in its evaluation practices.   The draft document detailing the evaluation of the College's planning and assessment cycles provides a good start but needs to be fully completed, adopted and implemented. A growing commitment to related activities such as institutional research and assessment-based planning will, over time, help to build a culture of assessment that makes evaluation more of a norm than a challenge.

Recommendation 7 – Strategic Plan

In order to fully comply with the standards, the team recommends the College's new strategic plan fully integrate human resources, facilities, technology, and financial resources to support the College's short- and long-range needs.

Background

For several years, the College has had a strategic plan in place, has been performing regular program reviews in the academic areas, and has had an Action Plan process in place which was designed to tie resource allocation to institutional priorities and program reviews. However, while they had the potential to become integrated processes, in practice the linkages were not always utilized effectively. There were several factors that played a role in this disconnect:

- A reactive mode of decision-making or trouble shooting as opposed to a proactive mode of planning manifested most directly at the level of the President's Advisory Council.
- The lack of a uniform and consistently applied program review process that clearly requires that the connection between Action Plans, institutional priorities, and resource allocation be articulated.
- The overuse of Action Plans for every need.
- A lack of clarity about the mission of the College being student learning at the core of every resource allocation.
- A dearth of research capacity.
- The absence of a designated 'location' where planning occurred. For the last several years, the Vice President of Student Services, in addition to her regular duties, functioned as the College's lead 'planner', writing the Strategic Master Plan and coordinating all the associated activities.

The expiration of the 2005-2010 Strategic Master Plan (34) combined with the College's adoption of its Vision in 2009 created an opportunity to improve the College's approach to planning.

Description

The Dialogue Group's (whose composition and focus are outlined in the Introduction) conversations in late summer 2010 (3) centered on three principles essential to changing the College's focus in planning:

- Make student learning the center of all College activities. In the old strategic plan model, all individual units were asked to link their planning directly to the institutional goals without considering the impact on other functional areas.
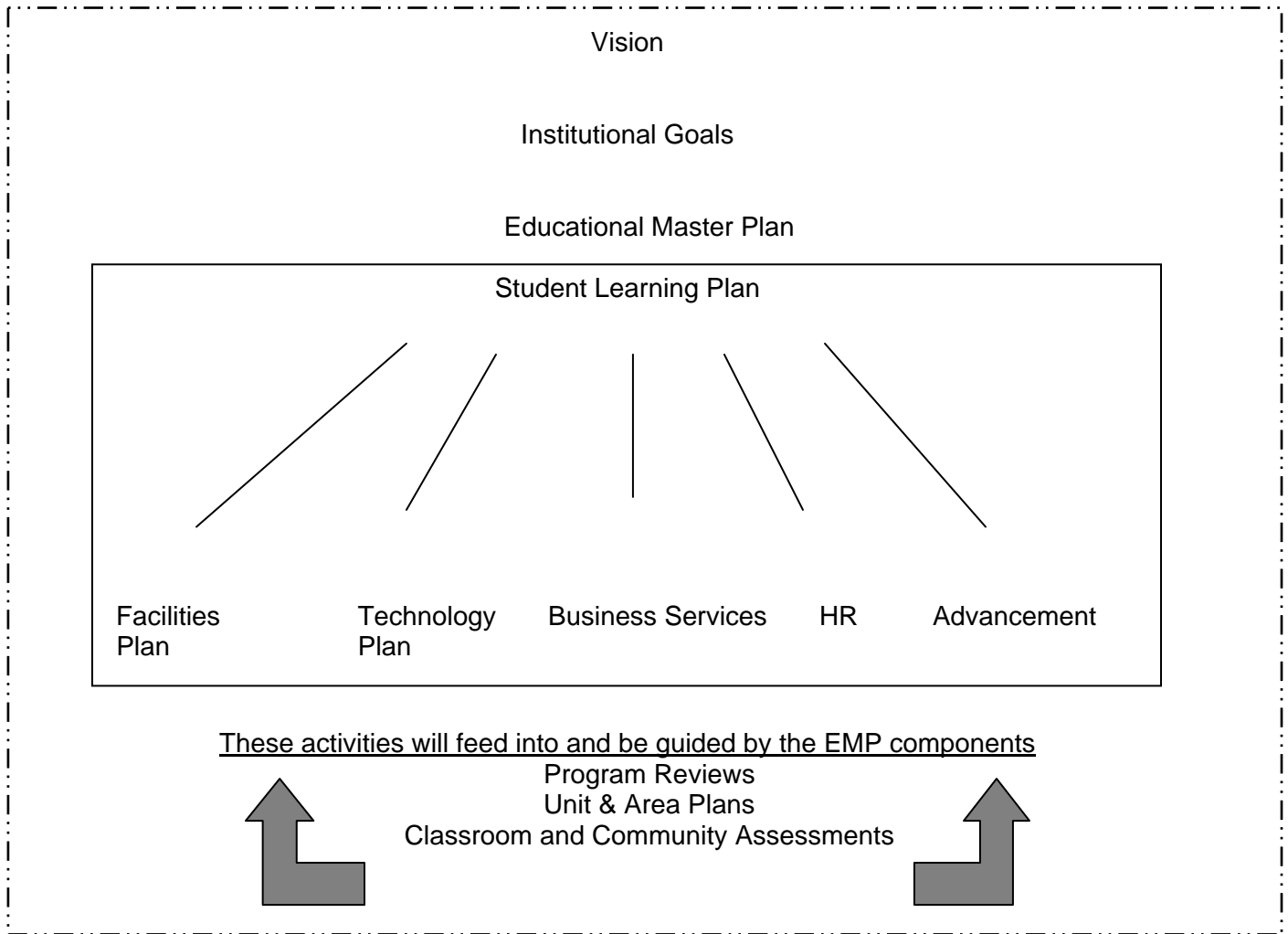
- Use effective program reviews and other annual and unit-based planning and assessment to inform the institutional plan.
- Commit to data-informed decision-making. The College has been lacking adequate research capacity and as a result fell into the habit of presenting plans without adequate data supporting those plans, and without assessment strategies.

These principles led the Dialogue Group to suggest a planning model with these characteristics:

- Replacing the term "Strategic Master Plan" in favor of "Educational Master Plan" (EMP). Referring to the College's overarching planning document as an "Educational" document reinforces stakeholders' focus on the core mission.
- Placing the Student Learning Plan (SLP) at the center of the EMP. The SLP includes all aspects of the College's activities with direct connection to student learning: instruction and student services. The SLP links directly to the College Vision and to Institutional goals, created by the EMP Steering Committee in order to unify the goals of each chapter (identified below).
- Supporting the SLP would be the other unit plans (Facilities, Institutional Advancement, Technology, Business Services, Human Resources).
- Institutionalizing Program Reviews and other smaller scale evaluative activities as the primary drivers for keeping the EMP a dynamic, proactive, and responsive document.

Concurrent with and complementary to the Dialogue Group's conversations, and at the direction of the President, the new VPSL created a Blueprint for Master Planning. This blueprint detailed taskforces to be created, tasks to be completed, and timelines for the completion of those tasks.

On All Campus Orientation Day of fall semester 2010, the President, along with the Dialogue Group, presented the new planning paradigm and the blueprint to the campus community in the form of a PowerPoint presentation (5), from which the key image is presented below. Feedback from the campus community was enthusiastic.

Vision

Institutional Goals

Educational Master Plan

Student Learning Plan

| Facilities Plan | Technology Plan | Business Services | HR | Advancement |

These activities will feed into and be guided by the EMP components
Program Reviews
Unit & Area Plans
Classroom and Community Assessments

After a review period of approximately three weeks, during which the College community was invited to make suggestions to improve the blueprint, revisions were made and the document was approved by the President's Advisory Council (35) and recommended to the President. Shortly thereafter, an EMP Steering Committee and six taskforces were formed to implement the process and develop the plan. A review of the rosters (27) of the taskforces demonstrates the commitment of the College community to this process. Over a third of the fulltime employees of the College stepped forward to participate; as well, thirty-six of the forty-eight fulltime faculty members are serving on a taskforce. The Vice President of Student Learning and the Vice President of Administrative and Information Services were asked to lead the process and serve as the EMP Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

When the College committed to hiring a researcher, a priority was that the position's portfolio would include both planning and assessment. This commitment is reflected in the title of the position – Director of Planning, Assessment and Research.

Since the newly hired Director came on board in August, she has utilized her twelve years of planning experience to shepherd the College through the Educational Master Plan process.

On Planning Day October 8, 2010, the Vice President of Student Learning explained the implications of the EMP Blueprint in detail and highlighted why having an Educational Master Plan is an important part of achieving the COS Mission and Vision and supports learning (36). Everyone in attendance was asked to contribute ideas to the Educational Master Planning process (37). Focused department meetings were facilitated to generate input designed to help guide the work of each of the six EMP Taskforces. (38)

In the afternoon of Planning Day all of the members of the six EMP taskforces and the Steering Committee met as a group. The Co-Chairs of the EMP Steering Committee spoke to the group about the Blueprint and the task ahead. Integration of key ideas to form one cohesive plan was the focus, and participants were asked for input on the development process. (39) Immediately following this session, each taskforce met independently to begin the process of reviewing the morning's input, developing a list of information needs, and discussing possible chapter themes.

Since the COS Planning Day in early October, the EMP Steering Committee and the six taskforces have each been meeting regularly (9). An employee-only section of the COS web site was established for information sharing, posting of meeting notes, and so employees could follow the progress of the work.

Each EMP taskforce worked throughout the year on its chapter of the Educational Master Plan. (26) Goals and objectives have been developed for the foundation of the plan. Research and data were integrated as appropriate and available, to develop these goals and objectives. Taskforces have used the same basic chapter template to include a narrative discussion of the goals, some assessment measures, and some suggested activities for accomplishing the desired outcomes. These elements will allow the College to track and assess its progress over the life of the plan.

The EMP Steering Committee has also been meeting (40), and continues to meet, every Monday at 8:00 a.m. and is responsible for keeping the EMP process moving forward. The meetings allow the EMP Taskforce chairs and lead authors to discuss areas that overlap between the chapters, identify and share information/data needs, discuss language (i.e., "goal" vs. "objective") and generally coordinate the various sections of the plan. Regular meetings provide the opportunity to discuss areas of concern and/or difficulties with the EMP co-chairs and the Director of Planning, Assessment and Research.

In January, members of the College community were given the opportunity to review a draft of each of the area chapters of the Educational Master Plan. Chapter drafts were posted and faculty and staff were encouraged to review them and provide feedback. Four open forums were hosted by the EMP Steering Committee to provide employees the opportunity to come together to discuss, debate, and offer feedback on

the plans (41). Lead authors took the input provided and revised the chapters as appropriate to improve the plans. During this time, overlaps and connections between chapters were identified and resolved.   For example, it was determined that the Student Learning Chapter's Goal 6, concerning the learning environment, was more appropriately placed in the technology and facilities chapters. Also at this time, a set of institutional goals, to be included in Chapter 1 of the EMP, were shared. Recently, on March 3, final drafts of the area chapters were submitted to the Co-Chairs and DPAR for final integration and editing. This process will continue over the next several weeks and a final draft will then be shared with employees of the College.

Also shared in January was a first draft of the Planning by Design system. Drafted by the Vice President of Student Learning and the DPAR, the draft was first reviewed by the EMP Steering Committee and then shared widely for comment. The Planning by Design document solidifies the process for master planning and contains many of the principles first identified by the Dialogue Group. It also integrates a Program Review process and identifies the connection between budgeting and planning. This document will be reviewed by the College's governance process and eventually become one of the institutional processes that is regularly used, updated and evaluated.

Recommendation 7 also directs the College to ensure that the College's strategic planning is linked to the College's budget process. To insure that the College fulfilled this recommendation, the College asked a faculty member in the Business Department to chair a Budget Committee that works with the EMP Steering Committee. In January 2011, the Board reviewed a proposal on the makeup and charge for this group and representatives from the constituent groups were requested (42). The committee, once finalized, will be developing a participatory budget process, working with the EMP Steering Committee to forge links with the planning process, acting as the communications conduit on budget information to the campus as a whole and eventually monitoring the macro spending of the College's budget to ensure it is consistent with the College's planning. The process they will develop over the next couple of months will be implemented at the start of the next academic year in the preparation for the 2012/13 budget.

Analysis

At this point, the College has a set of draft chapters that make up the bulk of what will become the Educational Master Plan (EMP). The chapters contain goals, objectives, and outcomes. A set of Institutional Goals has been developed to link the Educational Master Plan and the College's Vision. Informal connections between functional areas (chapters) were made throughout the development of the plan. More documentation of these efforts to integrate support areas with the Student Learning should be a priority of the next planning process. While the EMP is not yet complete, it already contains elements of assessment that will allow the College to track its achievements. The EMP needs to be finalized this spring and the process for implementation needs to be communicated to the College community.

Additionally, the Planning by Design document contains several key items that will guide the College's planning and link it with program review, evaluation, and budgeting. This document needs further campus review, and for the budget and program review processes to be finalized. Program Review is under discussion between the administration and the Academic Senate this semester. The Budget Committee's first meeting was on March 9th. (43) And while this group is just getting started on its work, the Board's directive clearly charges the Budget Committee to make "...fiscal recommendations which support the College's plans and vision...".   The College will have a budget process that is integrated with the College's planning by fall 2011.

Once the College has functional Program Review and Budget processes, the Planning by Design document will be taken through the governance process. A documented planning design system will help to ensure on-going integration of these key institutional processes.

CONCLUSION

In responding to the focused recommendations from the Commission, College of the Siskiyous has evaluated many of its processes and found them to be inadequate, a conclusion that the College had come to in the self-study as well. As described within, these included the College's processes for strategic planning and budgeting, program review, institutional decision-making (governance) and the system for reviewing these processes regularly. In response to these evaluations, the College has made significant changes to each of these processes and, as important, has integrated them. Since these processes are very large in their scope, and as a result of the College's desire to involve as many stakeholders as possible, the changes are in different stages of completion. However, it is the College's intent to finish all of them by fall 2011 so that they can be implemented at the start of the new academic year. Most importantly, the College now has a Board Policy that requires the regular evaluation these processes for their effectiveness, with evaluation criteria; and is working on the procedure which includes timelines for when such processes get evaluated.

All of this work is being informed and integrated by the new Office of Planning, Assessment and Research. Because of the efforts of this office, in cooperation with data custodians, the College has increased (and will continue to increase) the data and research that informs evaluations and changes to the above-mentioned processes. In addition, this office will provide the College with data, research and assessment tools as it evaluates the effectiveness of the changes.

The College wishes to emphasize its efforts to integrate all these processes with each other and to inform them by the use of data and research, and believes the intent of each individual recommendation is being addressed while honoring the underlying principle that they act in concert with each other. To that end, this report is offered to you with the expectation of productive discussions.

EVIDENCE

Evidence for the College of the Siskiyous Follow-Up Report is located in the following table. The table is also part of the electronic version of the Follow-Up Report, and the Descriptions of Evidence are live links to the evidence located on the College of the Siskiyous website.

- The left column matches the citations in the Follow-Up Report, the middle column is what page the citation appears on, and the right column is a short description of the evidence.

- Several pieces of evidence are cited multiple times, in these cases the first citation number is used throughout the document.

- Some of the evidence consists of a directory of several relevant documents

- Some of the evidence is located in password-protected sections of the College of the Siskiyous website. These sections are not available to the general public.

Doc Ref #	Report Page #	Description of Evidence
1	3	Accreditation Steering Committee Meeting Notes
2	4	COS Institutional Self-Study and Application for Reaffirmation of Accreditation - March 2010
3	4	ACCJC Letter - June 30, 2010
4	5	Dialog Group Meeting Notes - Summer/Fall 2010
5	6	Orientation Day PowerPoint - August 2010
6	6	Director of Planning, Assessment and Research (DPAR) - Job Description/Announcement
7	6	Draft Planning By Design System - See Pages 12 - 20 (Appendix 4) for Program Review Section
8	6	Institutional Research and Data Request Process Web Site
9	7	EMP Work Area - Includes Steering Committee and Taskforce Meeting Notes and Documents
10	7	PAC Minutes September 7, 2010 - Review of Planning & Governance Document
11	7	Board of Trustees Retreat October 16, 2010 - Review of Planning & Governance
12	7	Governance Working Group List, Meeting Notes, and Models
13	7	2005 Planning & Governance Doc
14	7	Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes Regarding Governance
15	7	Current Draft of New Governance Model (March 2011)
16	7	Constituent Groups Meeting Notes from President's Presentations on New Governance Model
6	8	Director of Planning, Assessment and Research (DPAR) - Job Description/Announcement
17	8	Data Custodian Group Members
18	9	Institutional Research and Data Request (IRDR) Process - Overview Flow Chart
19	9	Research Request Process E-Mail
20	10	The Institutional Research Web Site
21	10	Cal-PASS Flex Activity Sign In Sheet
22	10	Documentation for SMART Tool Training
23	10	Banner Training and Cohort Building Information
24	10	Draft Planning and Evaluation Cycle
25	11	Draft Planning By Design System - See Pages 12 - 20 (Appendix 4) for Program Review Section
26	11	Draft Chapters of Educational Master Plan
27	11	EMP Steering Committee & Taskforce Membership List

Doc Ref #	Report Page #	Description of Evidence
28	11	Budget Development Committee Membership List - March 2011
25	14	Draft Planning By Design System - See Pages 12 - 20 (Appendix 4) for Program Review Section
29	14	Academic Senate Sub-committee on Program Review Notes from Meetings with VPSL&DPAR
30	16	COS 2009 Staff Survey of Planning and Evaluation
8	16	EMP Work Area - Includes Steering Committee and Taskforce Meeting Notes and Documents
13	16	2005 Planning & Governance Doc
31	16	PAC Minutes - Review of Planning & Governance
32	16	Board of Trustees Retreat October 16, 2010 - Review of Planning & Governance
12	16	Governance Working Group List, Meeting Notes, and Models
33	17	Board Policy 3250: Institutional Planning & Evaluation
24	17	Draft Planning and Evaluation Cycle
34	18	2005-10 Strategic Master Plan
4	18	Dialog Group Meeting Notes - Summer/Fall 2010
5	19	Orientation Day PowerPoint - August 2010
35	20	PAC Minutes September 7, 2010 - Approval of EMP Blueprint
27	20	EMP Steering Committee & Taskforce Membership List
36	20	Educational Master Plan Blue Print
37	20	Planning Day October 2010 - Morning Activity Handouts
38	20	Planning Day October 2010– EMP Taskforce Collection of Information from Department Input
39	21	Planning Day - EMP Joint Taskforce Agenda & Handouts
9	21	EMP Work Area - Includes Steering Committee and Taskforce Meeting Notes and Documents
26	21	Draft Chapters of Educational Master Plan
40	21	EMP Steering Committee - Meeting Notes
41	21	Feedback Notes from EMP Open Forums - January 2011
42	22	Minutes from BOT Meeting - Reviewing Proposal for Budget Development Committee
43	22	Budget Development Committee - 1st Meeting Agenda

Certification of the Follow-up Report
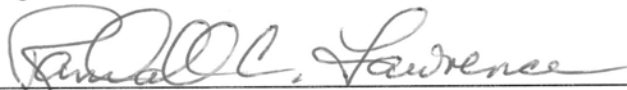
TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
                Western Association of Schools and Colleges

FROM: College of the Siskiyous
                800 College Ave
                Weed, CA 96067

This Follow-up Report is submitted for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institution's accreditation status

We certify that there was broad participation by the campus community, and the Follow-up Report reflects accurately the progress to date in addressing the recommendations as required by the Accrediting Commission.

Signed:

_____
Randall C. Lawrence   President/Superintendent

_____
Alan Dyer   President, Board of Trustees

_____
David Clarke   Chair, Accreditation Steering Committee