

FOLLOW-UP VISIT REPORT

Evergreen Valley College

3095 Yerba Buena Road

San Jose, CA 95135

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission

For Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited

Evergreen Valley College

On

October 29-30, 2012

By

Don Warkentin, Chair

West Hills College Lemoore

Dr. Thomas Green, Team Member – Lake Tahoe Community College

Mr. Tom Burke, Team Member – Kern Community College District

INTRODUCTION

In October 2010, a team representing the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Evergreen Valley College, one of two colleges in the San Jose/Evergreen Community college District, as part of the institution's request for reaffirmation of accreditation.

At its January meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) placed Evergreen Valley College on Warning with the stipulation that Evergreen submit a Follow-Up Report by October 15, 2011. The Follow-Up Report would address progress made on several 2004 college recommendations, the 2010 college recommendations, 2010 shared district recommendations, and two Commission concerns. The Follow-Up Report would be followed by a visit of representatives from the commission in November 2011.

At its January 2012 meeting, the Accrediting Commission reviewed the Follow-Up Report submitted by Evergreen and the evaluation report and recommendations from the Follow-Up visitation team. The Commission acted to continue the Warning status for Evergreen Community College and asked that the college complete an additional Follow-Up Report describing progress made in correcting deficiencies noted. The Follow-Up Report would be due to the Commission by October 15, 2012. The Commission also gave notice that the Follow-Up Report would be followed by a visit of Commission Representatives.

This latest Follow-Up visit occurred on October 29-30, 2012 and consisted of a three member team that visited the college along with the district office in order to assess progress on the remaining nine recommendations: three college recommendations from 2004, three college recommendations from 2010, and three shared district recommendations from 2010. The Evergreen Valley College evaluation team was also joined by a team visiting San Jose City College to verify the contents of their Follow-Up report. The two teams joined together for the visit to the district office to assess progress on the shared district recommendations.

The team visiting Evergreen Valley College received the Follow-Up Report prior to the visit to the college and found it to be complete and thorough. The team confirmed that the Follow-Up Report was compiled through broad participation by the college community including staff, faculty, and college and district administration.

In its Follow-Up Report, Evergreen Valley College provided examples, evidence, and data to demonstrate progress in meeting its recommendations. Upon arrival at the college, the team met with several members of the administrative staff to include the college President, Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Student Services, Vice President for Administrative Services, the Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator, SLO Subcommittee Chair, Student Services Representatives, Curriculum Committee Chair,

Faculty Senate President, and appropriate committee members. Members of the team also met with the College Technology Committee including the consultant from CampusWorks.

Members of the team also visited the district office along with the San Jose City College team and met with several district personnel including the Chancellor, board members, the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, and the Executive Director of Research and Institutional Effectiveness.

The team commends the college for providing a comprehensive Follow-Up Report that addressed the Commission's recommendations and for providing documentation and evidence during the visit that allowed the team to make informed decisions. The college is also commended for its willingness to engage in open and honest dialogue concerning college and district issues. The team verified that substantial progress has been made addressing the recommendations identified in the Follow-Up Report.

College Responses to the Commission's 2004 Recommendations:

2004 Recommendation 5: *The team recommends that the college complete the process of identifying learning outcomes for courses, instructional and student support programs; developing appropriate direct measures of student learning; compile, disseminate, and reflect on those measured outcomes, and take appropriate action based on those outcomes to improve student learning and associated college practices that support student learning. (Standards II.A.3, II.A.6, II.B.3, II.B.4, and II.C.2)*

Findings and Evidence:

The college has made significant progress in the area of learning outcomes assessment over the last year. Through the hiring of, and subsequent leadership provided by, an SLO Coordinator; additional resource commitments associated with the curriculum revision process; and the heightened level of guidance and support of a more stable senior leadership team, the college has developed a more focused institution-wide commitment to incorporating learning outcomes assessment into its ongoing efforts of continual improvement.

These investments have led to gains in a number of areas, including the establishment of clearer, more structured processes and tools. From updated course outlines of record (COR) templates to standard reporting forms and assessment matrices, the team found that mechanisms are now in place for developing SLOs and methods of assessment; mapping course-to-program and course-to-institutional learning outcomes; and scheduling and tracking the assessment of stated learning outcomes.

The team found evidence that the college has been able to accelerate its progress toward identifying learning outcomes at the course (SLO), program (PLO) and institutional (ILO) level. Through interviews with staff, faculty and administrators; a review of mandated follow-Up reports and associated evidence; analysis of CORs; the review of curriculum committee meeting minutes, curriculum revision schedules

and other data; and the analysis of the college's active course inventory and related CORs indicate that nearly, if not all courses now have SLOs. In addition to previously established PLOs for student services and support areas, the college now possesses PLOs for all instructional programs that contain a course of study leading to a degree or certificate. Over the last year the college has established five ILOs based on their existing general education outcomes. The team also confirmed that through existing processes, the college has and continues to make students aware of said outcomes through syllabi, the college catalog, and various other student publications.

The college has also accelerated its assessment of SLOs, PLOs, and ILOs, with assessment schedules, methodologies, and results accessible and clearly and consistently documented in a centralized web-based repository. Through the review of data contained in this repository, in tandem with interviews and other supporting documents, the team was able to confirm that the college is actively engaged in the mapping and assessment of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Further, ample evidence was provided demonstrating that the results of assessment, where available, are being reflected upon by individuals, departments and the institution as a whole as part of ongoing improvement efforts.

The team was encouraged by the college moving toward the adoption of an annual program review update process that explicitly ties the consideration of learning outcomes assessment results to planning and resource allocation. It was also encouraged to learn that the college was considering the adoption of a more robust learning outcomes database repository, and mapping/reporting tool (i.e., TracDat, etc.). Recognizing that as recurrent cycles of assessment are conducted, there will be a greater need for more robust mapping, tracking and reporting tools.

Conclusion:

The college has made *has* completed the process of identifying course, program and institutional level learning outcomes and assessment strategies and has actively compiled, disseminated, reflected and taken action based upon learning outcomes assessment results. The college has addressed this recommendation and meets the Standards.

2004 Recommendation 12: *Integrate the college Technology Master Plan into a comprehensive strategic plan for the entire college. Combine the objectives of the two colleges into a District Technology Master Plan. (Standards III.C.1.a, III.C.1.c, III.C.1.d, and III.C.2)*

Findings and Evidence:

The team reaffirmed that Evergreen Valley College had completed the development of a comprehensive technology master plan in fall 2011. The plan integrates technology plans for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Services, and Infrastructure Support. The plan formalizes the work and provides direction for the Campus Technology Committee. The team verified through interviews that the EVC

Technology Master Plan provides input into the college's strategic plan and is tied to resource and budget allocation. The plan is linked to the college's mission statement.

At the time of the Follow-Up visit in November 2011, the team confirmed that a District Technology Master Plan did not exist. In December 2011, the district contracted the services of CampusWorks to provide an in depth assessment of information technology services throughout the district. As a result of that assessment the SJECC Board of Trustees approved the hiring of CampusWorks to work with the district and the two colleges to develop an integrated technology plan. In October 2012, the board approved the SJECCD Strategic Information Technology Plan. The team confirmed that EVC technology committee members were actively involved in the development of the Strategic Information Technology Plan.

A consultant from CampusWorks is on-site at the district office and serves as the equivalent of the Chief Information Officer for the district. This consultant reports to the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services. The role of the consultant is to guide the district in meeting its IT Strategic Initiatives and provide leadership in developing the governance structure for information technology.

Although the plan is new, College Technology Committee members who serve on the District Technology Leadership Group feel it has brought more uniformity between the two colleges, created initiatives with timelines, and provided a mechanism for governance and decision making pertaining to information technology.

Conclusions:

The district now has a District Technology Information Technology Plan and is providing district level leadership for information technology needs and planning. The district technology plan incorporates the objectives of the college with identified goals and timelines. The college and district have addressed this recommendation and now meet Standards.

2004 Recommendation 14: *Resource allocation should be a collaborative process with dialogue between the district and the college constituencies using board priorities and college plans to develop the budget. This process should result in written procedures for the initial allocations for the district office, San Jose City College and Evergreen Valley College and the on-campus allocations. (Standards III.D.1, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, and III.D.1.d)*

Findings and Evidence

The team found evidence of significant progress in enhancing dialogue between the campuses and the district in the budget development process. The District Budget Committee plays a significant role in the vetting and review of allocations as well as reviewing financial results and projections throughout the budget year. The committee is chaired by the Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services and has representatives from all district wide stakeholders.

Historically the district uses the current-year budget as the foundation for the next year's tentative budget. As current year progresses, the district updates next year's tentative budget to reflect all

personnel changes adopted by the Board of Trustees (e.g., resignations, appointments, etc.) Vacant positions are budgeted based upon budget assumptions approved by the District Budget Committee. Additionally benefit costs are updated as information is received throughout the year.

Discretionary expenditure budgets within the District Operations, San Jose City College, and Evergreen Valley College roll forward and are adjusted at the request of the department/campus if the requested adjustments are budget neutral. Transfers out are also analyzed to ascertain the required backfill to categorical programs. District-wide expenditure budgets (e.g., insurance, utilities, etc.) are adjusted to reflect projections based upon historical analyses.

Finally the process concludes with a determination of projected fund balance. If the fund balance is estimated below 7%, then further analysis and discussions occur to determine what budget modifications are needed to get the fund balance up to the targeted percentage.

Evergreen college's budget planning processes are fully integrated with its college planning and program review processes. This includes regular reviews and updates of the college's programs. The college is currently piloting a new process to provide more timely updates to their program resource requirements. It is clear the addition of the Vice President of Administrative Services has enhanced the College's planning and resource allocation processes.

Conclusion

Though the district does not have specific written procedures for establishing initial allocations, evidence indicates that an historical allocation practice has evolved that has remained relatively consistent over time. Thus due to the consistent allocation practice utilized by the district and the significant stakeholder input provided by the District Budget Committee, the district's allocation practice is transparent to all district stakeholders. The efforts made by the district to date are adequate to meet the Standards.

College Responses to the Commission's 2010 Recommendations:

2010 Recommendation 2: *The team recognizes that progress has occurred with identification of course level student learning outcomes; however, the team recommends that efforts be accelerated to complete SLO identification and expand recurrent cycles of authentic assessment and improvement for all instructional and student service programs, with campus-wide dialogue on results, in order to reach proficiency level by 2012. Furthermore, faculty and others directly responsible for student progress towards achieving student learning outcomes should have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. (Standards I.B.1, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.f, II.B, II.B.4, and III.A.1.c)*

Findings and Evidence:

See 2004 Recommendation #5 above. The college meets this component of the standard.

The team did not find that the evaluation process for those directly responsible for producing student learning outcomes includes an explicit reference/mechanism for assessing effectiveness in producing such outcomes. The team did identify some aspects of the existing evaluation process lend themselves to such an assessment: from self-reflection criteria to requirements that faculty participate in course and curriculum development and demonstrate the ability to teach students effectively.

Conclusions:

The team encourages the college to develop explicit mechanisms for evaluating faculty and others directly responsible for student progress towards achieving student learning outcomes and on their effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. Other than Standard III.A.1.c, the college meets these Standards.

2010 Recommendation 4: *In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college complete the review and revision of all course outlines of record and ensure that the catalog information regarding currently offered courses and programs is accurate. This action should be implemented to ensure currency, relevancy, and instructional quality. (Standards II.A, II.A.2.e, II.A.6.c, II.B.2.a, and II.B.2.b)*

Findings and Evidence:

Interviews with Curriculum Committee members; a review of Curriculum Committee minutes and the college catalog; and an analysis of the college's active course inventory were conducted to determine the degree to which the college has completed the review and revision of its active course curriculum. Through this review the team determined that the vast majority of all active COR's had been reviewed and revised within the last six years. All active CORs were found to contain student learning outcomes. The catalog accurately reflects these curricular and programmatic changes.

Conclusion:

The college has addressed this recommendation and meets the Standards.

2010 Recommendation 5: *In order to fully meet the standard, the college needs to develop a recurring evaluation process of its budgeting and other financial management systems. Furthermore, Evergreen Valley College should incorporate total cost of ownership projections with their facilities planning reports for specifically planned projects. (Standards III.B, III.B.2, III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b, III.D.1, III.D.1.c, III.D.1.d, III.D.2.c, and III.D.2.g)*

Findings and Evidence

The district and college have begun regular reviews of the district's/college's financial management processes. This effort has been significantly enhanced by the addition of the Vice-President of

Administrative Services at the college and the hiring of a new Vice-Chancellor of Administrative Services at the district office. The district's Vice-Chancellor of Administrative Services meets monthly with college VP's of Administrative Services and accounting managers to review district wide business issues and processes. These meetings allow for ongoing review and resolution of district business practices and issues. In addition as part of the district's new technology plan a review of business processes associated with the district's financial management systems will be conducted by the district's consultant Campus Works.

Total Cost of Ownership has been implemented with new construction projects and is part of the district's architectural design and planning processes. This was confirmed during the 2011 follow-Up visit.

Conclusion:

The district is actively reviewing with the colleges the financial management processes. The college meets these Standards.

College and District Responses to Commission's Shared District Recommendations:

Shared (District) Recommendation #1 (Research and Evaluation)

The district in collaboration with the colleges should develop and implement a plan that will provide the necessary resources to increase college and district research capacity to analyze progress toward achieving progress toward achieving institutional goals and objectives including improvements in student achievement and student learning. (Standards I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, II.A.2.c, II.A.2.e, IV.B.3.b, and IV.B.3.c)

Findings and Evidence:

Since the visit in November 2011, the district has filled the position of executive director for research and institutional effectiveness (RIE) with an experienced, knowledgeable individual. An additional research analyst position has also been filled to provide support for the district and the colleges in data analysis.

San José City College has established and filled a dean of research, planning, and development to provide campus based support for institutional research and strategic planning. The dean reports to the president and complements the services being provided by the district RIE Office. Discussions are underway about the need for a similar research position at Evergreen Valley College. Until a campus researcher has been identified at Evergreen Valley College, key personnel have been trained and provided access to decision-support data through the district office.

The Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness was included as part of the first ever program review for district office programs. Using survey evaluative data, the program review established

benchmark and improvement metrics for a series of service indicators. The district then developed and adopted a plan to “enhance research and institutional effectiveness” that includes the:

- development of strategic planning and student success metrics at the district and college levels,
- environmental scans for both district and college strategic plans,
- systematic provision of data for program reviews,
- planned development of an expanded data warehouse through the technology contract with CampusWorks,
- plans for improved use and training on the Hyperion data access tool through the train-the-trainer model, and
- other improvements in data services to support the planning, program review, and student success agenda.

Conversations with various data user groups indicated an improved sense of service and data availability from the RIE Office and support for the planned expansion of services. There appears to be developing a true understanding of the importance of evidence and its use in the college’s planning, resource allocation, program improvement processes and assessment of learning outcomes. This improvement will need to be sustained through continued communication about not just the data and reports available but on the planned activities of the RIE Office, broader access to data, and continued refinement of the success metrics employed by the college.

Conclusion: With the additional staffing and resources at the district and college levels, and the development of a plan to further enhance research and data capability, the college meets the recommendation.

Shared (District) Recommendation 5 (Board Governance)

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends the Board of Trustees systematically review and revise the board policy manual to ensure that policies are up to date. To be included in this process should be a robust ethics policy that establishes steps to be taken should a board member violate the policy. The policy update should include the development of a policy on evaluation of the college presidents. (Standards IVB.1, IVB.1.f, IVB.1.h, and IVB.1.j)

Findings and Evidence: During the 2011 follow-Up visit, the team found that the board had begun the process of revising its policies and had already adopted a policy related to the evaluation of college presidents. The revision to the ethics policy to include sanctions or processes for dealing with violations of the ethics policy had not yet been adopted nor had a specific schedule been adopted for the systematic review of board policies.

The Board of Trustees adopted a revised ethics policy on January 10, 2012 that now includes a section related to processes and sanctions in event of an alleged ethics violation.

The Board of Trustees has adopted a schedule of policy review and developed a dashboard to monitor systematic review of board policies. The board did complete a review of 20 percent of its policies during the past year, in accordance with the plan.

The team also commends the board for the continued development of its comprehensive self-evaluation process and related work plan, for its initiation of the student success task force, and for its continuing commitment to policies of prudent financial management.

Conclusion: The college and district have fully implemented the recommendation.

Shared (District) Recommendation 6 (District/College Governance)

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the functions of the district and colleges be clearly delineated and mapped through dialogue and improved communication. This delineation must include operational responsibilities as well as procedures that provide specific guidance to all District and College personnel. There should also be regular and systematic evaluation of the District's functions, governance, decision-making structure, and communication. This activity must be central to the District's continuous improvement efforts in assisting the Colleges to meet educational goals (Standards IV.A.2, IV.B.3, IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.f, and IV.B.3.g)

Findings and Evidence: The district and colleges completed an initial mapping of functions in July 2011. This mapping clearly delineated responsibilities and associated functions between the colleges and district operations. In May 2012, the district conducted a "District and Institutional Effectiveness Survey" which captured the following data: employee demographics, employee awareness of governance, decision-making and communication, employee evaluation of the effectiveness of district office function, and employee awareness regarding the delineation of functions between the district office and colleges.

Analysis of the results of the various responsibilities and functions was conducted to identify areas for clarification and refinement of the functional mapping. In August 2012, the district modified the functional mapping document incorporating recommendations from the analysis of survey results. Survey results are also being shared to educate and provide greater clarity to district stakeholders on the various district and college functions. The district intends to conduct a follow-Up assessment next year to assess the extent to which employee awareness and understanding of functions, governance, and communication has increased.

Conclusion: The district and college has addressed the recommendation and meets Accreditation Standards.