

Evergreen Valley College

**Accreditation Gap Analysis and
Recommendations:
Focus on Outcomes**

March 30, 2012

Matthew C. Lee, Ph.D.

Table of Contents

Preamble	3
Background: Accreditation Sanctions	4
Review and Analysis Process	5
College Responses to Team Recommendations	6
General Observations.....	6
2004 Recommendation 5 and 2010 College Recommendation 2: Student Learning Outcomes.....	8

Evergreen Valley College
Accreditation Gap Analysis and Recommendations: Focus on Outcomes
Matthew C. Lee, Ph.D.
March 30, 2012

Preamble

At its January 2011 meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) placed Evergreen Valley College (EVC) on Warning, and required a Follow-Up Report in October 2011 to demonstrate resolution of nine 2004 Recommendations that were still applicable, five 2010 College-level Recommendations, six 2010 District-level Recommendations, and two 2010 Commission Concerns. An evaluation team visited campus in early November 2011 to verify the College's progress, and issued its own report in December. The team's report indicated that the College had made substantial progress on several fronts, but had not yet fully resolved Recommendations in the following areas:

- 2004 Recommendation 5: Student learning outcomes (SLOs)
- 2004 Recommendation 12: Integration of the College Technology Master Plan with a District Technology Plan
- 2004 Recommendation 14: Resource allocation model at the District level
- 2010 College Recommendation 2: SLOs; effectiveness in producing learning outcomes as a component of evaluations
- 2010 College Recommendation 4: Course outlines of record review and revision
- 2010 College Recommendation 5: Evaluation of budgeting and financial management systems; incorporation of total cost of ownership in facilities planning
- Shared District Recommendation 1: Research and evaluation capacity
- Shared District Recommendation 5: Board ethics policy and a schedule for review of all Board policies
- Shared District Recommendation 6: Delineation of District and College functions, and evaluation and improvement of District functions, governance, decision-making structure, and communication

In its February 1, 2012 Action Letter, the ACCJC continued the College on Warning, with a requirement for another follow-up report and visit in October 2012.

The College contracted with me specifically to evaluate its progress to date on 2004 Recommendation 5 and 2010 College Recommendation 2, and to make recommendations on the direction of work needed to reach full resolution. The primary purpose of this report is to summarize my findings and identify actions that the College can take to close the gap between where it is now and where it needs to be, in terms that are more concrete and detailed than those in the Recommendations. The aim is not just to resolve the Recommendations and gain reaffirmation of accreditation—to “get out of trouble”—but more importantly, to improve the effectiveness of Evergreen Valley College permanently. The consultant recommendations listed are designed to facilitate planning and implementation of lasting, positive change.

Beneath the Recommendations, I have reproduced the ACCJC Standards to which they refer. To formulate and execute the most productive responses to the Recommendations, the College needs to understand those Standards as well as the language of the Recommendations themselves.

Finally, it is the nature of a report such as this to focus more on the specific steps that still need to be taken than on what is already in good shape or well underway. Consequently, readers will not see as much coverage of the many positive aspects of the College as might appear in, say, an outreach brochure or history of the institution. I urge readers to view the report not as a source of discouragement, but rather as a call to action, to move forward in the right direction for the benefit of the College and its students.

Background: Accreditation Sanctions

As noted in the Commission's *Accreditation Reference Handbook*, Warning is the first level of sanction. It indicates that the "institution has pursued a course deviating from the Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies to an extent that gives concern to the Commission." Probation is a stronger sanction than Warning. It indicates that the institution actually "deviates significantly from the Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, but not to such an extent as to warrant a Show Cause order or the termination of accreditation." Show Cause, the strongest sanction short of termination, is a Commission order to the institution to "show cause why its accreditation should be continued." A college under any of these three sanctions does retain its accreditation.

The final sanction, in the absence of sufficient corrective action, is Termination of accreditation. U.S. Department of Education rules require Termination if an institution fails to correct deficiencies and come into compliance with Accreditation Standards within a two-year period, though the Commission may grant an extension of that deadline for good cause.

It is important to note that the Commission's policies do not require it to follow the sequence of steps from Warning through Probation and Show Cause to Termination. It has the ability to impose any sanction at any time, or to terminate accreditation at any time if it concludes that the institution is significantly out of compliance with the Standards or the Eligibility Requirements.

I want to be very clear about all these Commission sanctions, not to frighten anyone, but to highlight the severe consequences of inadequate action, to call attention to the fact that the clock is ticking, and to convey a sense of urgency to the College community. EVC has made significant progress since the team's initial visit, and some progress since its follow-up visit, but more work is needed before the College is back in the Commission's good graces.

Review and Analysis Process

This report is based in part on my review and analysis of numerous documents, including the following:

- 2010 Accreditation Self-Study
- 2010 Evaluation Report
- January 31, 2011 Commission Action Letter
- Spring 2011 ACCJC Annual Report
- 2011 Follow-Up Report and Addendum
- 2011 Evaluation Report
- February 1, 2012 Commission Action Letter
- District and College foundational statements
- Research documentation
- Training materials
- Selected documentation of the work of the College Council, Institutional Effectiveness Committee, All-College Curriculum Committee, Budget Committee, and other groups
- Selected institutional planning documents, including the strategic initiatives, CTAs, educational and facilities master plan, facilities master plan update, and technology master plan
- Documentation of selected course, program, and institutional SLOs, and of service outcomes and objectives
- Documentation of the relationship of outcomes to planning, program review, and resource allocation processes
- Samples of course and program outcomes assessments
- Curriculum templates
- Collective bargaining contracts
- Documentation of policies, structures, and processes associated with all the items listed above

In addition, I conducted structured interviews with the following people during a two-day visit to campus:

Lynette Apen	Vicki Brewster	Eric Narveson
Irma Archuleta	Eugenio Canoy	R. J. Ruppenthal
Keith Aytch	Henry Gee	Henry Yong

The findings in this report thus rest on a substantial amount of evidence, and I am confident that they accurately reflect that evidence. However, I have not read every possible document, nor have I interviewed every employee and student. To the extent that the information I have analyzed is not sufficiently comprehensive, or not entirely representative of the College's structures, processes, and issues, it is possible that my findings in some particulars might be subject to revision. Of course, it is up to the President and the College to decide what weight to give those findings, and how best to respond to my recommendations.

College Responses to Team Recommendations

General Observations

This section contains observations that are indirectly related to outcomes, or that apply to improving institutional effectiveness overall.

- 1) The Accrediting Commission requires far more from every college than an immediate “fix” in response to its Recommendations. It requires sustainable practices to resolve all the Recommendations and meet all the Standards permanently. It is crucial for administrative and constituency leadership and the campus community to recognize this requirement, and engage in constructive dialogue and actions that will move the institution in the right direction both now and in the long term.
- 2) Reportedly, some members of the College community initially viewed Warning as primarily a District problem, and did not recognize the need for significant improvements at the College level. That perception has shifted, and recognition of the need for such improvements is now reportedly pervasive, especially on the major committees and among administrative and constituency leadership.
- 3) Active participation by all constituency groups in governance committees is reportedly the rule at EVC, which gives it a substantial advantage over many colleges on sanction.
- 4) Research Support
 - a) Until recently, a lack of systematic research support had impeded the College’s progress in processes such as program review and outcomes assessment in both instructional and noninstructional areas. The District Interim Executive Director of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (RIE) began to address those needs primarily for instruction during his tenure, and the appointment of a permanent Executive Director promises to facilitate further progress.
 - b) The need for research support remains acute in Student Affairs, where programs such as Financial Aid, CalWORKs, and EOPS would benefit from systematic studies of their effects on the success of the populations they serve, and in Administrative Services, where reportedly most departments have yet to begin program review and outcomes assessment.
- 5) Program Review
 - a) The existing program review process, which appears to be integrated with the resource allocation process, has been in place for about three years, during which time the criteria that spell out requirements for reviews have been updated annually. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC), which coordinates all program review on campus, evaluates and provides written feedback on all submissions. Program review is reportedly seen by most participants no longer merely as a mechanism for justifying resource requests, but rather as a process to facilitate program and ultimately institutional improvements, some of which might require additional resources. This change in perception is reportedly due in part to an increased emphasis on the connection between program self-evaluation and institutional mission, strategic initiatives, and Commitments to Action.

- b) Current program review criteria require in Part C that courses and programs “that have current student learning outcomes” be listed, along with assessment mechanisms and results. However, they do not require that the outcomes be listed, nor do they require an explicit connection from analysis of assessment results, to identified improvements, to any resource allocation requests associated with those improvements.
 - c) Reportedly, instructional programs are now receiving a standard set of demographic and performance data (e.g., course retention and success, WSCH/FTEF) for program review, and are using them productively to identify patterns and issues that require attention.
 - d) Program review is now on a six-year staggered cycle. However, the IEC is developing an annual online update process, which is scheduled for pilot testing in Summer 2012.
- 6) I was unable to find minutes or other documentation of meeting deliberations for the current term, or in some cases even for last year, for some key campus committees on the EVC public website, and was informed that there is no other central source for such documentation.

General Consultant Recommendations

- 1) Research Support: The IEC and the SLO Subcommittee should jointly develop specifications for additional research support for program review and outcomes assessment in noninstructional areas, and then, with the support of the President, request that support from the Executive Director of RIE.
- 2) Program Review
 - a) The College should fully implement the program review annual update process for all programs as soon as possible, to enhance timely integration of the outcomes assessment, planning, and resource allocation processes.
 - b) The IEC should consider revising the program review criteria to require, in lieu of the current Part C, attachment of outcome assessment templates (see page 10) completed or updated during a specified period. The templates clearly show the connection from analysis of assessment results to identified improvements. In addition, the IEC should consider requiring, for any resource request that is intended to support such an improvement, an explicit link between the request and the improvement. Together, these changes will help demonstrate that in part, institutional decision-making and resource allocation are based on the results of outcomes assessment and directed toward improving student learning.
- 3) To promote informed dialogue and transparency in planning and decision-making, the College should establish expectations for all key campus committees to post their agendas and minutes in timely fashion in a readily accessible online location. The entire campus community should be regularly reminded of that location, and of how to access it.

2004 Recommendation 5: Student Learning Outcomes

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.5, II.A.6, II.B.3, II.B.4, II.C.2)

2010 College Recommendation 2: Student Learning Outcomes

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 services 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, 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)

- I.B.1. The institution maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.
- I.B.3. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. Evaluation is based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.
- I.B.4. The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.
- I.B.7. The institution assesses its evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, and library and other learning support services.
- II.A. Instructional Programs: The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.
- II.A.1.c. The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.
- II.A.2.a. The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.
- II.A.2.b. The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.

- II.A.2.f. The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.
- II.A.3. The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course. General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following: [II.A.3.a-c not specifically cited by evaluation team]
- II.A.5. Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.
- II.A.6. The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline.
- II.B. Student Support Services: The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.
- II.B.3. The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.
- II.B.4. The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.
- II.C.2. The institution evaluates library and other learning support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.
- III.A.1.c. Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.

Observations: Progress to Date

- 1) Coordination, Training, and Documentation: The newly appointed SLO Coordinator and SLO Subcommittee of the All-College Curriculum Committee (ACCC) have overall responsibility for coordinating and supporting work on outcomes in all areas of the College, and supplying information and training on outcome formulation and assessment to the campus community. Subcommittee members act as mentors/facilitators for personnel in the process of developing and assessing outcomes. Work on outcomes at all levels has accelerated in recent months, prompted by the evaluation team's reiteration of the Recommendations above and the approaching Fall 2012 deadline for achieving the Proficiency level on the Commission's *Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness—Part III: Student*

Learning Outcomes. Indeed, the Coordinator and Subcommittee have made remarkable progress in just the last few weeks, as indicated by the following examples:

- a) The SLO Subcommittee has developed assessment templates for course SLOs and for program SLOs and service outcomes in instruction, student services, and administrative services.
 - i) The course SLO assessment template lists each SLO, along with the tools used to assess it, the timeline for and results of assessment, and the action plan (including the timeline) for improvements to be made to instruction, the SLO, or both.
 - ii) The instructional program SLO assessment template lists each program SLO, along with the plan for assessing it and the action plan (including the timeline) for “modifications [that] will be made to improve the SLO outcomes and when.” It also maps each program SLO to every course that contributes to its achievement at one of three levels: introduction, development and practice, or mastery and measurement.
 - iii) The student services program SLO assessment template mirrors the course SLO template, with appropriate changes in column header text, but also identifies for each SLO the target population and core activity or service associated with it.
 - iv) The service outcomes assessment matrix, which is suitable for use with such outcomes in any area of the College, also mirrors the course SLO template, with appropriate changes in column header text.
- b) The SLO Subcommittee has established an online repository for SLO information, including resources, assessment templates, and samples of completed SLO assessments and templates. It is accessible to anyone who has been informed of the URL.
- c) The College devoted over half its Professional Development Day (PDD) on March 23, 2012 to SLOs formulation and assessment. The primary focus in Instruction was on course SLOs, though programs could choose to devote some time to their program SLOs. This workshop also provided an opportunity for the SLO Subcommittee to introduce the proposed institutional SLOs (see below), and to gauge the overall progress of the College on course and program outcomes. The event was reportedly a great success.
- 2) Many programs have engaged in outcomes assessment for years, though the level of documentation they have maintained has varied. English faculty, for example, use common departmental final exams to assess student achievement of course SLOs.
- 3) Most faculty and managers, and many staff, are reportedly sufficiently committed to and engaged in outcomes formulation and assessment, though until recently many have lacked the tools and knowledge necessary to move through the full cycle in their departments.
- 4) Course SLOs: According to the Spring 2011 ACCJC Annual Report, 78.5 percent of all courses at that time had defined SLOs. The calculation was reportedly based on the fact that the ACCC required all courses undergoing their sexennial curriculum review starting in 2004 to include course SLOs. Thus all courses whose last review was in 2003 or before do not have approved SLOs. The ACCC chairperson has

informed the faculty that all such courses will be inactivated by April 1, and thus can no longer be offered. However, if a faculty member is now updating such a course and brings it to the ACCC for approval before the end of the Spring 2012 semester, that course will be reactivated. With the execution of this process in place, the ACCC chairperson is confident that 100 percent of active courses will have defined SLOs by the end of the Spring 2012.

- 5) Program SLOs and Service Area Outcomes (SAOs)
 - a) The College formulates and assesses instructional program SLOs only for programs that lead to a certificate or degree; other instructional programs, such as academic disciplines, evaluate student learning through course SLOs, and their own effectiveness through the program review process.
 - b) By November 2011, eight of the 10 Student Affairs departments had formulated program SLOs, had identified assessment methods, and had established timelines for completing reports on the results of assessment by Fall 2012, according to a divisional summary provided for the Follow-Up Report Addendum.
 - c) At the March 23 PDD, both Student Affairs and Administrative Services departments were scheduled to work on their program SLOs and SAOs. As noted above, some programs in Instruction could also choose to work on their program SLOs.
- 6) Degree/Institutional and General Education SLOs: The SLO Subcommittee developed and recommended five outcomes as both degree/institutional SLOs and General Education SLOs (I/GESLOs) to the ACCC, the IEC, and the Academic Senate in mid-March. At this writing, the IEC and the ACCC have approved the recommendation with minor modifications, and it is scheduled for review by the Academic Senate on March 27. If approved, it will be forwarded to the College Council for final review and approval on April 9.
- 7) Professional Development Days provide the main opportunities for systematic campuswide dialogue on student learning and outcomes assessment. Campus committees such as the IEC, the ACCC, and the SLO Subcommittee are the primary venues for more detailed and focused dialogue in this area.

Observations: Issues Requiring Action

- 1) Accreditation Requirements: To resolve the Recommendation, the College must demonstrate that it has reached the Proficiency level on the Commission's SLOs Rubric by Fall 2012. The Proficiency level has the following characteristics:
 - Student learning outcomes and authentic assessment are in place for courses, programs and degrees.
 - Results of assessment are being used for improvement and further alignment of institution wide practices.
 - There is widespread institutional dialogue about the results.
 - Decision-making includes dialogue on the results of assessment and is purposefully directed toward improving student learning.
 - Appropriate resources continue to be allocated and fine-tuned.
 - Comprehensive assessment reports exist and are completed on a regular basis.

- Course student learning outcomes are aligned with degree student learning outcomes.
 - Students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled.
- 2) Coordination, Training, and Documentation
- a) The SLO Coordinator is currently only a .30-FTEF faculty position, but in my judgment the demands for coordination, training, and continuing support during the drive to Proficiency and then to Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement suggest the need for the College to devote significantly more resources to that function.
 - b) The College has implemented no centralized repository or set of tools for systematically recording, monitoring, and reporting the status of the outcomes cycle at the course, program, and I/GESLOs levels. For example, all instructional program SLOs are maintained by the articulation specialist in a Word document, and the existence of such outcomes for degrees and certificates is recorded in an Excel spreadsheet, but noninstructional program outcomes are not included, nor is progress on assessment. The EVC course outlines of record in the District curriculum system do include course SLOs and a list of SLO assessment methods, but no assessment status information. The lack of a centralized repository makes it very difficult to determine with confidence the completion of outcomes cycles at any level (see below), and the College's overall progress toward Proficiency.
 - c) The instructional program SLO assessment template does not show assessment results, nor distinguish in the Action Plan directions between changes in the SLO itself and changes in instruction to improve student achievement of the SLO.
 - d) The student services program SLO assessment template, unlike the other templates, does not include directions for use.
 - e) At present, reportedly neither the SLO Subcommittee nor others involved in outcomes formulation and assessment receive any support from the District Office of RIE.
- 3) Progress in the Outcomes Cycle
- a) Observations on Completion of the Cycle
 - i) In my judgment, the minimum progress needed to claim completion of an outcomes cycle includes the following documented steps:
 - (1) Formulation of outcomes
 - (2) Identification of sound measurement methods
 - (3) Assessment using those methods
 - (4) Analysis of the results of assessment
 - (5) Based on the analysis, identification of any improvements needed to facilitate achievement of outcomes, whether those improvements are in pedagogy, curriculum, service, or other practices, or in the outcomes themselves, or both
 - (6) Actual implementation of needed improvements, with a firm schedule for repeating the full cycle
 - ii) The most conservative approach to documenting cycle completion would also require reassessment of outcomes after a reasonable period of implementation of improvements, followed by further improvements as needed. However,

fulfilling that criterion would require more time than the College has available before its next evaluation team visit.

- b) Course SLOs
 - i) In some courses, SLOs are reportedly more detailed and numerous than is typical of appropriately constructed course outcomes, which suggests the need to review and refine their scope during the next assessment cycle, after any remaining gaps in SLO formulation have been filled.
 - ii) Assessment of course SLOs reportedly has not progressed as far as course SLO formulation, despite the claim in the Spring 2011 ACCJC Annual Report that 78.5 percent of all courses at that time had ongoing assessment of SLOs. A few impressive examples of course SLO assessment rubrics appear on the Student Learning Outcomes and Curriculum website, but no documentation of completed assessments or implemented improvements is available on that site. The 11 2010-11 and 2011-12 instructional program reviews available to me showed (or contained a link to) their course SLOs, but only three covered course SLO assessment methods per se, and none showed assessment results or subsequent improvements directly tied to results. With the new assessment templates now available, and with concerted efforts on the part of the faculty, the SLO Coordinator is hopeful that by Fall 2012, the course SLO cycle will have reached identification of improvements needed in some 85 percent of courses.
- c) Program SLOs/SAOs
 - i) Instruction
 - (1) My analysis of “Evergreen Valley College Current Degrees and Certificates—Program Learning Outcomes,” which is dated March 21, 2012 and lists 59 current 2011-12 degree and certificate programs, indicates the following:
 - (a) 28 (approximately 47 percent) of the programs have program SLOs as such. This figure represents a considerable advance over the six percent shown in the Spring 2011 ACCJC Annual Report, but still falls short of a majority.
 - (b) 22 (37 percent) have program objectives instead of SLOs.
 - (c) Nine (15 percent) have neither.
 - (d) In a significant minority of the 28 programs with SLOs, the SLOs are more detailed and numerous than is typical of appropriately constructed program-level outcomes, which suggests the need to review and refine their scope during the next assessment cycle, after the remaining gaps in program SLO formulation have been filled.
 - (2) My examination of 2010-11 program review documentation indicated that in at least one program (Chemistry AA), the objectives shown in the March 21, 2012 list actually had been replaced by outcomes some time ago, which suggests that the consistency of SLO sets that appear in multiple documents should be monitored.

- ii) Student Learning and Support Activities
 - (1) As of the Spring 2011 ACCJC Annual Report, 50 percent of student learning and support activities had defined SLOs, and only 20 percent of them had ongoing assessment of SLOs.
 - (2) Student Affairs programs have made considerable progress since then (see page 11), but have not yet completed the cycle. Moreover, although some programs have done informal assessment of SAOs (e.g., using satisfaction surveys developed by department managers, or calculating average processing times), they are not well documented, and assessment of SAOs is not systematic.
 - (3) Similarly, though Student Affairs programs have certainly implemented procedural and service improvements in recent years (e.g., implementing electronic codes to authorize students to add classes), the linkage of such improvements to outcomes assessments is not at all clear.
 - (4) The current status of other student learning and support activities with respect to program SLOs is not clear. Among the five support programs that did program reviews in 2010-11 or 2011-12, three listed program SLOs, but the programs varied in their coverage of assessment. The three support programs whose SLO assessments are available on the website date from 2009-10; all three did identify program SLOs, but the quality of assessment methods and improvement information varied.
- iii) Administrative Services departments reportedly have developed few service area outcomes as yet, and only one has conducted a program review, though a few years ago departments did develop some service criteria based on industry standards. They are scheduled to work on both outcomes and program review during Summer 2012.
- d) I/GESLOs
 - i) The SLO Subcommittee has not yet recommended assessment methods or a timeline for assessment of the recommended I/GESLOs, and of course no assessment has yet been done, despite the claim in the Spring 2011 ACCJC Annual Report that ongoing assessment applied to 90% of ISLOs.
 - ii) ACCJC Standards require that institutions establish “outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees,” and the Proficiency level on the ACCJC SLOs Rubric requires that “Student learning outcomes and authentic assessment are in place for courses, programs and degrees.” Because ACCJC calls out degree outcomes and program outcomes separately, many colleges have interpreted degree outcomes to mean overall “institutional outcomes,” as distinct from the outcomes of particular programs that lead to degrees. The Proficiency level also requires that “Course student learning outcomes are aligned with degree student learning outcomes.” The determination of EVC’s status in meeting this latter requirement depends on how one interprets it in light of the Standards. The EVC instructional program SLO assessment template does map course SLOs to the SLOs of specific programs that lead to degrees, and a liberal interpretation of the requirement would indicate that EVC will meet it as soon as all those programs have completed their assessment templates. However, a

more conservative interpretation of the requirement would indicate that meeting it would necessitate mapping course SLOs (perhaps through the program SLOs) to the I/GESLOs, which do not yet appear on the assessment templates.

- e) Reportedly, resistance to the outcomes formulation, assessment, and improvement process persists among a small proportion of faculty and staff, but the proportion is gradually declining.
- 4) Communication and Dialogue
 - a) To my knowledge, there is no evidence of the extent to which students “demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled,” another of the requirements for Proficiency.
 - b) With one exception (Nursing), program SLOs do not appear in the 2011-12 online Catalog, although the concept of SLOs receives one paragraph of coverage under Academic Policies.
 - c) Two PDDs were eliminated over the past year, which reduced the opportunities for campuswide dialogue on assessment results and student learning.
 - d) The extent to which dialogue on assessment results and student learning contributes to institutional decision-making is unclear.
- 5) Ensuring Quality
 - a) I have found no handbook or manual that documents or provides guidance on the outcomes process.
 - b) The SLO Subcommittee reportedly has not yet performed any formal evaluation of the outcomes process, nor of its own effectiveness in facilitating and supporting that process.
- 6) The evaluation team noted that the College will fail to meet Standard III.A.1.c unless “faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving student learning outcomes...have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.” Of course, this requirement, which has caused consternation in many districts, is subject to negotiation, and therefore progress depends on action at the District level. My examination of the collective bargaining agreements indicated that effectiveness in producing SLOs is not a component of personnel evaluations.

Consultant Recommendations

- 1) Coordination, Training, and Documentation
 - a) The SLO Coordinator position should be increased dramatically, and extended through at least the end of the 2012-13 academic year, both to facilitate substantive progress toward Proficiency and beyond, and to signal to the evaluation team and the Commission that the College is serious about making and sustaining progress in this area.
 - b) The SLO Subcommittee should coordinate an evaluation of available computerized systems for tracking and reporting on the outcomes cycle in all areas of the College, with the goal of implementing such a system (and making all the outcomes information it contains available to the campus community) as soon as practicable. The College should be aware that evaluating, selecting,

purchasing, installing, and thoroughly testing even a well-designed and mature system takes a substantial amount of time, as does training all personnel in its use and then entering all the requisite outcomes information for the first time. Because the process can take many months, the College is unlikely to have a system in place and populated with data before the Follow-Up Report is due in October 2012.

- c) In the meantime, to document progress in the outcomes cycle reliably, the SLO Subcommittee, in consultation with applicable groups and individuals, should design and coordinate implementation of a relatively “low-tech” tracking and reporting system that is accessible to the entire campus community. For example, as outcomes are formulated and assessed using the new templates, divisional staff or Subcommittee members could enter status information from submitted templates in a central Excel workbook located in the recently established online SLO repository. The spreadsheets in the workbook should record each applicable course or program, outcome, primary assessment tool, time of assessment, location of results and analysis, improvements identified, improvements implemented, schedule for reassessment, and other information as appropriate. Each spreadsheet should contain summary information, so that status reports at each level of outcomes could be generated as needed. At the same time, the SLO Subcommittee and IEC should jointly establish a process to monitor the consistency between SLOs as reported in program review documents and SLOs as recorded in the online repository (and, in the case of course SLOs, as shown in the course outline of record), and initiate corrective action as needed.
- 2) Progress in the Outcomes Cycle
 - a) The College should devote a substantial portion of its Fall 2012 PDD to workshops on completion of the cycle for program outcomes and the I/GESLOs. The success of the March 23 PDD suggests that such workshops would significantly advance the College’s overall progress toward Proficiency.
 - b) In addition, at least until the College reaches Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement on the ACCJC SLOs Rubric, every subsequent PDD should provide workshops to facilitate completing and repeating the outcomes cycle, as well as opportunities for Collegewide dialogue concerning assessment results and student learning (see below).
 - c) The College, through the appropriate administrative and governance structures and processes, should set a specific, reasonable deadline for completing the assessment of each existing course SLO, each program outcome, and each I/GESLO. The SLO Subcommittee should document and disseminate the schedule, and monitor the work to ensure that each assessment occurs in timely fashion. As new outcomes are formulated, a deadline should be set for assessment of each.
 - d) The SLO Subcommittee, in consultation with other groups as appropriate, should recommend a process for mapping the I/GESLOs to applicable course and program outcomes on an ongoing basis, and document and disseminate the results of that process.
 - e) The SLO Coordinator and the SLO Subcommittee should continue to provide all information and other support needed for participants to meet their assessment

- deadlines. An especially important component of this support will be helping participants to develop and apply sound direct assessment methods, and then to analyze and interpret the results properly. If necessary, the College should augment the membership of the SLO Subcommittee. Administrative Services departments in particular will need assistance in developing appropriate SAOs and measures, since few have done so to date.
- f) Student Affairs departments should formally add SAOs to their outcomes assessment processes where appropriate, beginning with the 2012-13 cycle.
 - g) By the end of Summer 2012, each Administrative Services department should formulate SAOs (along with service objectives if desired), and identify appropriate measurement methods. By the end of Fall 2012, each department should complete assessment of at least one SAO, analyze the results, identify any improvements needed, implement those improvements, and establish a regular schedule of outcomes assessment and improvement aligned with program review.
 - h) The SLO Subcommittee should add a column to each assessment template, or adopt some other appropriate method, to document actual implementation of improvements based on outcomes assessment (i.e., completion of the cycle at the most basic level).
 - i) After the College has demonstrated its achievement of Proficiency, and as it works toward Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement, the SLO Subcommittee should undertake the following tasks:
 - i) Identify those programs that have program objectives rather than SLOs, and recommend that the applicable faculty establish true program SLOs.
 - ii) Identify those SLO sets at the course and program levels that appear to be more detailed and numerous than they should be, and recommend that the applicable faculty review those sets and consider revision or consolidation within them.
 - iii) Identify any remaining quality control issues in the formulation of SLOs, and initiate corrective action as needed.
- 3) Communication and Dialogue
- a) The SLO Subcommittee and the IEC, with the support and participation of the President and the rest of campus and constituency leadership, should explore options for promoting ongoing, robust, widespread dialogue about outcomes assessment results, student learning improvement, and institutional effectiveness in the PDDs and in additional venues every year. The College should implement those options that promise to be most effective beginning no later than September 2012. As part of this effort, the Subcommittee should explore the reasons for any persistent resistance to the outcomes process, and address them through dialogue.
 - b) The SLO Subcommittee, in consultation with the Executive Director of RIE and other groups and departments as needed, should develop and implement a method for gauging student awareness of the “goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled” on a regular basis.
 - c) In the interests of demonstrating adherence to Standard II.A.6, the College should publish degree and certificate program SLOs in the Catalog’s curriculum descriptions, and if it has not already done so, should establish a process to ensure

- that the SLOs in all course syllabi are consistent with those in the corresponding course outlines of record.
- d) Committees involved in institutional decision-making and resource allocations should ensure that their minutes accurately reflect the extent to which their deliberations on those topics include dialogue on assessment results and student learning.
- 4) Ensuring Quality
 - a) The SLO Subcommittee should develop a handbook or manual to document the whole cycle of outcomes formulation, assessment, and improvement, and to guide instructional and noninstructional areas in completing and repeating the cycle. The handbook should include provisions for review and revision of the cycle and of the handbook itself.
 - b) The SLO Subcommittee should perform an initial evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of the outcomes process by the end of Spring 2012, implement any improvements it regards as crucial by Fall 2012, and establish a firm schedule for further evaluations beginning in Spring 2013.
 - 5) The EVC President should join the San Jose City College President in raising the issue of meeting Standard III.A.1.c (the relationship of the outcomes process to personnel evaluations) with the Chancellor, and request that negotiations on this issue begin as soon as practicable.