

Progress Report to AACJC November 1, 2005

Introduction

Since March, the College of Marin has continued to make a remarkable amount of progress in a relatively short time in terms of implementing a new participatory governance structure, creating student learning outcomes, and conducting data-based, collaborative strategic planning at many levels. A new governance structure is in place, committees are populated and have begun meeting, training for governance groups has been held, and on-going evaluation of this system is in place. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) have been developed or drafted at the campus level, for most instructional disciplines, and for all of student services, and the first group of departments are working to develop and implement assessments of their discipline-focused SLOs, with other departments engaging in this process over the course of the next two years. The Educational Master Plan, Phase II, is well underway with the goal of completing a draft by December first, and other planning efforts are in progress as well, including an Enrollment Management Task Force and revision of the Educational Blueprint. The momentum is building in all of these efforts in a positive and productive way that will ultimately help the College better fulfill its mission.

The following report describes our progress on these three recommendations; a few key documents are attached to this report and other supporting documents will be available in the Team Room for review during the visit.

Recommendation #1. The college should finalize immediately an effective governance structure that reinforces respectful dialog, defines shared commitment, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all constituent groups for participation in informed decision-making processes. The processes must be designed to result in action with on-going assessment and evaluation of institutional effectiveness to improve student learning (Standard IV .A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, and IV.A.5).

Progress to date:

The Governance Review Committee completed its work to review and revise the Participatory Governance System in May, 2005 and the Board approved the new system at its May 10, 2005 meeting. All constituent groups, after much discussion and debate -- including attending a session on governance held on April 12, 2005 by David Viar (of the Community College League of California) and Kate Clark (President of the Statewide Academic Senate) -- came to consensus on this new governance system and have indicated their eagerness to move forward by populating all the committees as of early October.

The final Participatory Governance System description is available in the team room and has also been posted on the College's intranet, under "Accreditation," to improve access for the college community. This document clarifies all the roles and responsibilities of all constituent groups, of committee members, and of chairs and co-chairs as well as the charges of each committee.

As of early November, all of the newly constituted governance committees will have begun meeting. The Technology Committee and College Council have been meeting since the beginning of the semester; the Budget Committee began meeting the first week of October; the Educational Planning Task Group (see below) began meeting on September 27; the Student Services Planning Committee began meeting October 10; and the Equity and Diversity Committee held its first meeting on October 19. The Governance Review Council will begin meeting again during the spring semester to conduct the governance plan evaluation and the Instructional Equipment Committee will meet in the spring semester if funding is available. The Institutional Planning Committee first met October 26 and the Facilities Planning Committee is meeting in the first week of November. All meeting times and locations, in addition to the names of committee chairs, are on the online calendar under the "Faculty and Staff" link to improve communication and transparency campus-wide.

Governance Training Activities

An integral part of the new Participatory Governance Plan involves training all standing committee members, particularly in consensus methods. This activity will become a regular part of our governance system in the future to ensure that all committee members understand the overall governance system and their role as committee members.

The main training event was held Wednesday, October 12, 2005, 1:30-4:00, for all standing governance committee members. This workshop included information about the new governance system and committee structure, an opportunity for teambuilding and training in meeting process. The training was conducted by Kate Clark, former State Academic Senate President and Ian Walton, current State Academic Senate President. A PowerPoint presentation is also available online on the Intranet to explain the key elements of the new governance structure, committee meeting processes, chair and committee member responsibilities, and so on. Finally, members of the Budget Committee will be trained by members of College Operations in the budget process, how to read Fiscal Services reports and other matters that will help them carry out their responsibilities.

Assessment of the new participatory governance system will take place at the beginning of the Spring 2006 semester, after a full semester of implementation. The Governance Review Council is charged with conducting this evaluation, as well as conducting an annual evaluation, and with recommending changes and revisions based on the outcome of the evaluation process.

Attachment

- Memo from Kathleen Kirkpatrick: Governance Update

Key Documents in the Team Room, Recommendation #1

- Participatory Governance System description (final document)
- List of committee members, Fall 2005
- Governance Review Council minutes, April – May 2005
- Governance training activities, Fall 2005
- Participatory Governance Plan, Guidelines and Operations (PowerPoint slides)
- College Council minutes, April – October, 2005

- Participatory Governance System Evaluation Framework Draft
- May 10, 2005 Board minutes

Recommendation #3. The college implement, by January 2006, an institutional planning process based on agreed upon institutional values, a redefined mission, and measurable outcomes, that is strategic, systematic, data-driven, evidence based, focused on student learning and holds responsible parties accountable for actions and timelines. The planning process must integrate institutional effectiveness and program review processes to inform educational master planning, facilities master planning, technology planning, student learning and services programs development and revision, and resource allocation. To ensure effective and sustainable plans and informed decision-making, the college must assess its current organizational structure and use of resources to create and support a culture of evidence, research and data (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.7, II.A.1a, II.A.2e, II.A.2f, II.a.6B, II.B.4, II.C.2).

Progress to Date

As noted in the March 15, 2005 progress report, the College approved a new mission statement on March 8th and has also updated the board policy to require mission review on a regular basis (Board Report B.13.B from May 10, 2005 Board meeting; Board Policy 1.7020). The next step was to reflect on the College's vision and values. Planning for that process was conducted by the Task Force during late Spring, 2005, and at the Fall College Convocation, faculty, staff, students and some community members worked in facilitated small groups to identify the College's core values. As a follow-up to the successful revision of the College of Marin Mission Statement during the 04-05 school year, an open forum was held in Spring 2005 for participants to share ideas regarding values. These and other values collected randomly from faculty, staff, and students over the summer served as a starting point for expansion of the list of values during breakout sessions at the Fall 2005 Convocation.

The Strategic Planning Task Force (a continuation of the Mission Task Force) is using the same successful format followed to derive the current Mission Statement to establish the summary list of COM values to date. The College Vision Statement will then be formulated from this list of values. This Task Force met on October 19 to produce a draft list of college values, which will be shared with the larger campus community and the senates in the coming weeks. Based on the feedback received, the Task Force will then draft a vision statement in November and also share that with the larger campus community for feedback.

At the convocation, the President's address focused on the current state of the college, including information about demographic trends, sliding enrollment, and the need for the completion of the second phase of the Educational Master Plan. This process has moved forward since June, when an Educational Master Plan Selection Committee (consisting of the Academic Senate President, two other faculty members, the Classified Senate President, a student representative, the President and Vice President of Student Learning, and consultants engaged in the modernization efforts) was formed to select a firm to assist the college in completing the second phase of the Education Master Plan. This committee recommended the CCS Group to facilitate this process and the Board approved a contract for this group on June 14, 2005.

The CCS Group began by compiling data and meeting with individuals and groups over the summer. This evolving set of data on the college has been shared with the Board of Trustees, the Department Chairs, Deans and the Vice President of Student Learning, and formed the basis of some of Dr. White's Convocation remarks. The CCS group is also facilitating the meetings of the Educational Master Plan Task Force, with a goal of creating a draft of the Phase II plan by December 1. In addition, a faculty co-facilitator, Michael Brailoff, has been selected by the Academic Senate to assist in bringing the Educational Master Plan to a successful conclusion.

On September 22nd, College Council approved the merging of the Educational Master Plan Task Force with the Educational Planning Committee for the purpose of working on the Educational Master Plan in order to meet Accreditation deadlines. The two groups are meeting together as the "Educational Master Planning Task Group" this fall. The Educational Master Plan Task Group consists of all the Department Chairs, the Curriculum Chair, VP of Student Learning, Deans, Directors, two staff members and two students. It was approved by College Council last spring to move educational master planning forward because the new governance system had not been finalized. Once the Educational Master Plan is complete, the Task Group will be dissolved and the Educational Planning Committee will continue its role as defined in the Participatory Governance Plan (available on the Intranet). This Task Group is co-chaired by David Rollison, Academic Senate President, and Elise Schneider, VP of Student Learning.

Other planning efforts are also in the works. In the Spring 2005 semester, an Enrollment Task Force was established to examine factors affecting the College's declining enrollment and to make recommendations for how to improve enrollment. The Enrollment Management Task Force (EMTF) presented their report outlining their work to date to the Board of Trustees June 14, 2005. Short-term action plans to be completed by January 2006 were outlined. In addition, during the 2005-2006 school year, the EMTF is focusing on long-range goals for improving enrollment. The Technology Committee has continued its work with regular meetings since the beginning of the semester. In addition, the Department Chairs and Vice President of Student Learning have committed themselves to creating an updated version of the College's Blueprint this semester. This document indicates which courses in each department will be offered in which semester for a two-year period, to enable students to plan their coursework so they can complete their programs in a timely manner.

Attachment

- Timeline and progress report on the Education Master Plan, Phase II

Key Documents in the Team Room, Recommendation #3

- Mission review policy
- Board minutes (approval of mission review policy at the May 10, 2005 Board meeting)
- Vision and Values activities and notes from the Convocation small group work
- President's Convocation Address
- Enrollment Task Force information, reports and minutes
- Joint Department Chair minutes, August and September, and Educational Blueprint
- Educational Master Planning Task Group minutes and handouts, September –October 2005
- Reports to the Board on Educational Master Planning, presented by CCS Group, September and October, 2005

Recommendation #4. The college, by January 2006, develop and implement a systematic, inclusive, on-going process that addresses student learning outcomes at the course, program, and discipline level as well as for the general education program. The process must begin with a faculty-driven institutional dialogue that leads to action, assessment and measurement of student learning resulting in institutional improvements (Standards II.A.1a, II.A.Ic, II.A.2a, II.A.2b, II.A.2e, II.A.2F, II.B.4, II.C.2).

Progress to date

The following report, produced by Yolanda Bellisimo (SLO Facilitator & Social Science Faculty Member) and the SLO Phase I Committee (Barbara Bonander, ESL; Tony Montieth, Math; Patricia O'Keefe, Communications; Derek Wilson, Arts and Technology), details the progress made on developing Student Learning Outcomes at the campus level, discipline level and for student services.

The following is a brief history of the College of Marin's work to date integrating SLOs at the college, program and course level. We began the research and writing of our SLO plan during fall semester 2004. This was a direct result of the reflective work we did during the preparation and writing of our WASC accreditation report the previous year. Faculty and administrators recognized that our efforts to determine if students were learning what we expected them to learn, and what we were assuming we were teaching, failed to meet the most basic criteria for "college-wide outcomes assessment."

We recognized that we needed to do a fair amount of background research, institute a plan for implementing SLOs, and bring the full faculty into the process, and that we needed to accomplish this on a fast time line. This would require the full involvement of faculty and administration and financial support for this effort. To that end, these are the steps we have taken and the time line we have followed.

- **Research and Presentation to Faculty**

Fall, 2004 the Union-District Workload Committee (UDWC) awarded three units to a faculty/expert on student learning outcomes to research what other institutions were doing about SLOs, including interviews of faculty from other California community colleges about SLO plans and progress, and prepare a plan for College of Marin. Yolanda Bellisimo was awarded this research project and prepared a written report and a presentation to the full faculty during Spring 2005 flex week. The UDWC award letter outlining the project plus the PowerPoint presentation given during the Spring 2005 flex workshop are available in the team room. A binder containing all research materials gathered is archived by UDWC.

- **First Campus-Wide SLO Set**

During the Spring 2005 flex workshop, participants broke into small groups and worked on the creation of a campus-wide student learning outcome that would cross all disciplines. As a result of those small group meetings, the faculty set as its first department level goal to research and assess whether students were taught to problem-solve using the methods of masters or experts in

the field. As examples, do history classes teach students to use the historical method or do economics classes teach students to solve problems using the methodologies practiced by economists? Each department/discipline wrote its own goal about teaching students to problem-solve as the experts in the field do. This information was used by each department/discipline as a first step in writing a program level SLO and referenced in the preparation of a final critical thinking SLO. Copies of the first drafts were made available to other departments/disciplines to help them in writing a critical thinking SLO.

- **Workshops Attended**

As a result of the flex workshop, two faculty members (Yolanda Bellisimo and Derek Wilson) attended an FACCC Education Institute at Diablo Valley College on SLO planning and assessment. In February, four faculty attended an AAHE/WASC workshop, "Assuring Improvement in Student Learning," held in San Mateo. Faculty members included Yolanda Bellisimo, Paul Da Silva, Tony Monteith, and Derek Wilson. Two administrators also attended this session, Francisco Arce, the Interim Dean of Math, Sciences and Learning Technology, and Blaze Woodlief, Director of ESL Services, Assessment and Testing (and Accreditation Liaison Officer).

- **SLO Plan Written and Approved for Implementation**

Members of this ad hoc group wrote an SLO plan and submitted it to the college president and vice president in March 2005. In addition, the plan was presented to the Academic Senate and the United Professors of Marin (UPM). The plan included a three-year time line for integrating SLOs into all departments and programs and developing a system for creating and assessing campus-wide SLOs. The plan called for a set number of units to be awarded to each department participating in the creation of SLOs, plus funding for workshops and assessment experts. The plan was approved by the president, Dr. Fran White.

- **Request for Phase I Faculty Participants**

Blaze Woodlief prepared a request to UDWC for funding and faculty were asked to submit applications for the Phase I group. Units were also awarded to an SLO facilitator. UDWC selected the following faculty as members of the Phase I group:

Yolanda Bellisimo, Social Sciences
Barbara Bonander, Communications
Tony Monteith, Math
Patricia O'Keefe, ESL

Yolanda Bellisimo was selected to serve as SLO facilitator and Derek Wilson, as chair of the Curriculum Committee and a member of the Art Department faculty, served with the Phase I group as an ad hoc member. Blaze Woodlief was assigned as the administration liaison to the SLO Phase I group.

- **SLO Plan Presented to Board of Trustees**

In April 2005 Yolanda Bellisimo and Derek Wilson presented the SLO plan at a regular meeting of the COM Board of Trustees for review and comment. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation

given to the board is available in the team room.

- **SLO Plan Presented to the Academic Senate and the United Professors of Marin**
In April 2005 Yolanda Bellisimo presented the SLO plan to the full Academic Senate. During a question and answer period, the senate members asked about the methods used to protect faculty from a misuse of data. A Memorandum of Understanding was drafted by the Phase I Group during the summer workshop and presented to the senate in fall 2005. A presentation of the plan was also given to the United Professors of Marin. Questions arose regarding compensation for faculty work on the planning and execution of SLOs. As a result, the UPM president, Ira Lansing, sent out an email on the union listserve to other colleges asking if SLOs had been included in contract negotiations. Colleges responding said that SLOs were handled by the Academic Senate.

- **Phase I Group Summer Workshop**
The Phase I group met for two days, July 21 and July 22, 2005, at the Indian Valley campus. Each participant received a binder with background material and working documents for the various tasks. Costs for materials, meals, and an expert on classroom assessment were covered by the district.

- **Thursday July 21, 2005 Workshop Results**

MOU: The Phase I group prepared a draft for "How Information Will Be Used" using examples from other colleges. The group determined that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be reviewed and revised by the Academic Senate and signed by the senate president, the college president, and the president of the board. A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding is attached to this report.

Fall Flex Workshop: It was decided that the fall flex workshop would be held on a mandatory day, ensuring the attendance of a maximum number of faculty. The workshop agenda was planned to include a general session explaining our SLO charge from WASC, followed by three presentations demonstrating how the campus-wide SLO is being applied to Math, ESL, and Speech. Following the presentation, faculty would be divided into discipline/program level small groups and would be given three questions to address as a first step in planning for the campus-wide SLO.

Discipline and Course Level SLOs: The group discussed discipline/program level SLOs and wrote drafts for SLOs in Math, Speech, ESL, History, and Political Science. Each department representative developed SLOs for at least two courses and shared these with the full group.

In addition, the Phase I group further refined the department level goals and discussed ways in which their disciplines would conduct testing and reporting of student performance. The outcome of the math, communications, social sciences, and ESL disciplines/program level SLO, testing methods and time line for testing were also defined, discussed and refined.

- **Friday July 22, 2005 Workshop Results**

Assessment Expert Presentation: An expert in classroom assessment, Jason Ravitz, Ph.D, from The Buck Institute for Education met with the Phase I Group and discussed how to create assessment tools for course level SLOs and discipline/program SLOs. Dr. Ravitz provided examples via a PowerPoint presentation and handouts. Dr. Ravitz also worked with group members individually on specific discipline and course level testing and assessment issues.

Critical Thinking Rubric: The group, with the assistance of Dr. Ravitz, developed a critical thinking rubric for disciplines/programs to use in assessing student performance on the discipline-level SLO. They planned to share the rubric with faculty in the Phase II Group and pilot test it by Phase I and Phase II disciplines for course and discipline SLOs beginning in spring 2006.

Curriculum Committee SLO Template: The group worked with Curriculum Committee Representative Derek Wilson designing an SLO Discipline Review Template for departments that will be going through discipline review. We are institutionalizing the SLO process by making it a part of discipline review. Using the template, disciplines would be required to identify their discipline-level SLO and how it is addressed. Every course outline would also identify course-level content outcomes and how they will be assessed. The Discipline Review SLO Template will be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for review Fall 2005. Once approved by the Curriculum Committee, the template will be presented to the Academic Senate for review.

Set Fall Meeting Schedule: The group set its meeting schedule for Fall semester 2005 and reviewed tasks and the time line. The group also discussed logistics for bringing in the Phase II group and informing administration, the union, and the academic senate of the work done during the summer workshop. Plans were also made to meet with the Student Services component of the SLO process to discuss a combined campus-wide SLO on campus literacy for the 2006-2007 school year.

- **Campus-Wide Fall Flex Workshop**

A two-hour faculty workshop was held on Thursday, August 18th with approximately 90 faculty in attendance. The first hour was spent in a general session introducing the faculty to the concept of student learning outcomes and demonstrating how the campus-wide SLO was being applied in math, speech, and basic skills.

The second hour was spent in a breakout session in which faculty, grouped by department or discipline, worked on writing their department or discipline-level SLO and answered the following prompts:

- 1) In our department we teach students to solve problems using the following methodology
- 2) We can demonstrate how this problem solving strategy is used in the following assignment/s
- 3) We would use the following test/s to assess this assignment/s

Each department kept notes of their work and flip chart copies were recorded by the session leaders for tracking by members of the Phase I Group and as a future reference for the department/discipline participants. During the fall semester, session leaders will follow up with the departments they worked with to make sure that this exercise is completed and that departments are prepared to test their department level SLOs in spring semester 2006. This department level work on assessing problem solving skills, in the aggregate, will provide the data for the campus-wide critical thinking SLO, which will be collected and reviewed in Spring 2006.

- **Department Chairs Meeting SLO Update**

Yolanda Bellissimo met with department chairs on September 6th to review the documentation each department will be expected to prepare for the department-level SLO. Chairs working with their departments/disciplines will prepare a department and/or discipline level SLO by October 1st and will complete the full department-level SLO report by December 1st. Data collected fall semester will be analyzed and applied to improvements or modifications to programs during spring semester 2006. Departments are given the choice of writing one SLO for their full department or one for each discipline within the department. As an example, the Social Science Department chose to write an SLO for Economics, Ethnic Studies, History, and Political Science, rather than one for all four disciplines. A follow-up memo was sent to department chairs.

- **MOU and the Academic Senate**

The Memorandum of Understanding prepared by the Phase I Group during the summer workshop was presented to the Academic Senate for review on September 15, 2005. Corrections were made to the wording in two sections and the MOU was passed by the Senate pending United Professors of Marin (UPM) executive council determining that it would not conflict with contract negotiations. The corrected version was given to UPM on September 28th and the executive council for the union was asked to review the document and make recommendations. Once reviewed, the MOU was reconsidered by the Academic Senate and further edited and returned to UPM for final revisions. UPM reviewed the document on October 17th and approved it with minor revisions. On October 20th the Academic Senate approved the final version of the MOU and it was signed by the senate president. A copy of the final version is attached.

- **SLO Template for Curriculum Review**

The SLO template for use by departments going through curriculum review was introduced to the Curriculum Committee for review and revision on September 12, 2005. The committee continued review and revision at the September 19 meeting. Once approved by Curriculum Committee, the template will be presented to the Academic Senate.

- **Phase I Group Meeting**

The Phase I Group met again on September 23rd to continue their work on the Curriculum Review template, planning for Spring Flex activities, and data collection.

- **Request for Phase II Faculty Participants**

A request for Phase II participants will be reviewed by UDWC. Once approved, an announcement will be sent to faculty in the group of disciplines selected to participate in Phase II. UDWC will select a faculty member from each discipline and once identified, Phase II members

will meet with Phase I at the November meeting of the Phase I group.

- **Department/Discipline Student Learning Outcomes**

As a part of the Fall Flex Workshop, departments/disciplines worked on a first draft of a common SLO. These were refined by each of the departments during department meetings and some disciplines used flex time to work on SLOs. Over the course of the semester, suggestions were made to change the stem of the SLO statement. After several iterations, the stem was changed from: “In our department we teach students to think as experts in the field do by...”, to a statement that took into account the importance of method in a world where the solution is not always possible. Most disciplines settled upon the stem: “In our department we teach students to approach solving problems by...”

Departments/disciplines submitted final versions of their SLOs by October 17th, and a full list of their SLOs to date is available in the team room.

Attachment

Final Memorandum of Understanding between the Academic Senate and administration on Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Key Documents in the Team Room, Recommendation #4

- UDWC Award Letter
- Spring 2005 Presentation
- Campus-Wide SLO Template
- SLO plan and timeline
- UDWC announcement
- COM Board Presentation
- July 21 – 22 Workshop agenda
- Critical thinking rubric
- Curriculum review template
- Fall 2005 flex presentation
- Department chairs memo
- Phase I meeting agendas
- Discipline level SLOs
- Student services SLOs