Follow-up Report to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

College of the Sequoias
915 S. Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277

October 2008

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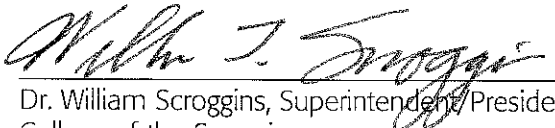
Preparation of Accreditation Follow-up Report

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 9-11, 2008, reviewed the Progress Report submitted by the College of the Sequoias and the report of the evaluation team, which visited on Thursday, November 29, 2007. The Commission took action to "accept the report, remove Warning, and reaffirm accreditation." The Commission asked, "a Follow-up Report be submitted by October 15, 2008," in order to "demonstrate the institution's continued implementation and improvement of institutional practices." The Commission's letter requested that the college respond specifically to Recommendations number 2, 5, and 6 of the site visit team's report. Responsibility for preparation of the follow-up report was assigned to the Vice President of Academic Services and Accreditation Liaison Officer, Dr. Ron Johnson.

Dr. Johnson assembled a team of administrators and faculty who have been leaders in the efforts the College of the Sequoias has made to respond fully to the Commission's recommendations as specified in the Commission's letter of January 31, 2008. This team has gathered information and data that document the efficacy of the college's efforts and the intensity with which those responses have been instituted.

Team members included: Frances Gusman (Vice President of Student Services), Dr. Jennifer Vega La Serna (Dean of Arts and Letters), David Maciel (Director of the Disability Resources Center), Professors Marla Prochnow and Dr. Jeanette Rollinger (Co-chairs of the Student Learning Objective Committee of the Academic Senate), Linda Paradez (Director of Foster Care & Independent Living) and Mr. Tim Garner (Director of Institutional Research and Planning). Additionally numerous faculty, administrators and senior support staff contributed valuable assistance and information.

Dr. Johnson presented the draft report to the College Council on September 9, 2008 and the Council approved the final version on September 23 for recommendation to the President and the Board of Trustees for their review and approval at their meeting of October 13.

Signed:

Dr. William Scroggins, Superintendent/President
College of the Sequoias

Date: 9/29/08

College of the Sequoias Response to Team Recommendations and the Commission's Action Letter

As requested by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, this progress report is submitted in order to affirm the College of the Sequoias' continued implementation and improvement of institutional practices in areas of particular interest to the Commission.

Recommendation 2

The team recommends that the college engage all campus constituent groups in an institutional decision-making and planning process, which is linked and central to the college mission. The process should be an ongoing, effective, and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, research, and re-evaluation. This cycle should include such processes as curricular development, program review, and assessment and allocation of technological, physical, financial, and human resources...The college has reached the stage where it is appropriate to now review the planning and improvement process and refine it as necessary.[1]

"Based upon available evidence and the significant increases in positive perceptions by all constituent groups, the committee asserts that all campus constituent groups do engage in an institutional decision-making and planning process, which is linked and central to the college mission. Though the processes are currently in development, substantial changes in the administration of the college hold promise for the continuation *and rapid growth* of these college-wide initiatives."[2]

"Conclusion: The visiting team found that the college had made satisfactory progress on this recommendation."[3]

Response:
COS has achieved the level of Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement in both program review and in planning.

Program Review
- Program review processes are ongoing, systematic and used to assess and improve student learning and achievement.
- The institution reviews and refines its program review processes to improve institutional effectiveness.
- The results of program review are used to continually refine and improve program practices resulting in appropriate improvements in student achievement and learning.[4]

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Instructional Council spent a great deal of its time engaged in dialogue about program review. The Council's particular emphasis was on examining how to increase the meaningfulness of the reporting process by 1) assuring that baseline data was perceived as being consistently accurate, 2) by increasing the opportunities for faculty to ask for and receive additional data for in-depth investigation that goes beyond the baseline comparative data, 3) by creating well-defined and institutionally comparative criteria or rubrics by which program review documents would be evaluated, and 4) by assuring that meaningful institutional outcomes result from

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[1] ACCJC Letter, January 31, 2007.
[2] Accreditation Progress Report to the ACCJC, College of the Sequoias, October 2007
[3] Progress Evaluation report, November 29, 2007. W. David Pelham, Ed. D.
[4] Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part I: Program Review. WASC, 2007.

improved program review based inputs. The Council established an ad hoc committee (the Program Review Task Force) to address these goals and recommend actions.

In order to expand the base of our understanding of the current best practices in program review a 3-person team attended the "Data and Decisions Workshop" in Austin, Texas, co-sponsored by the Association for Institutional Research, American Association of Community Colleges, and National Council for Community College Research and Planning during December of 2007. Upon its return the COS team recommended that the Instructional Council sponsor an all day workshop that would present an overview of national best practices on campus prior to the commencement of our annual program review cycle. That campus workshop was held on February 1, 2008 facilitated by Dr. Trudy Bers, Executive Director of Research, Curriculum & Planning at Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, IL. All Program Review teams in the current cycle (including Student Services and Administrative Services teams) were invited to participate together in the workshop, and several teams of faculty who would be included in the following cycle of reports attended.

New forms and processes were developed (based both on the ideas presented by Dr. Bers and the on-going dialogue in the Instructional Council) and are currently being piloted while an Academic Senate and Academic Services joint committee (chaired by Professor Thea Trimble) reviews the work and continues to refine our new processes. One of the major goals of this work is to align our program review processes directly with WASC Accreditation Standards and to assure that data, assessment, and evaluation tools provide the basis for continuous improvements. Academic Services Vice President Johnson has proposed significant changes to the Program Review Steering Committee (see Attachment 2) which have been reviewed and approved by Senate and are pending approval by the College Council. The new committee charge and membership reflect more effectively the implementation of continuous program improvement principles.

We have improved our Program Review cycle and processes to the point where the College of the Sequoias' Program Review drives academic planning, decision-making and resource allocations, constantly stimulates a campus-wide dialogue, and meets the definition of "best practices."

Institutional Planning

- The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.
- There is dialogue about institutional effectiveness that is ongoing, robust, and pervasive; data and analyses are widely distributed and used throughout the institution.
- There is ongoing review and adaptation of evaluation and planning processes.
- There is consistent and continuous commitment to improving student learning; and educational effectiveness is a demonstrable priority in all planning structures and processes.[5]

For many years, College of the Sequoias has had a standing committee of the College Council for Institutional Planning. This committee's charge has been:

The Institutional Planning Committee is responsible for monitoring the planning process at College of the Sequoias and for making recommendations to College Council.

This Standing Committee will monitor the planning process by coordinating, aligning, and evaluating existing College planning documents.

By synthesizing information contained in these documents, by staying alert to trends on the federal, state, and local level, and by anticipating the consequences of such trends on the institution, the

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[5] Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Part II: Planning. WASC, 2007.

Institutional Planning Committee will inform College Council of short and long-range institutional needs.[6]

In response to the recent recommendations of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)[7] regarding Accreditation standards[8], and its current recommendations to COS, Institutional Planning Council Chair Professor Jan Woodall and Vice President Ron Johnson jointly developed a proposal for changes to the committee structure, charge, and processes, that assure that standard is met and will improve the overall effectiveness of planning processes at COS. (See Attachment #1.) This new charter for the institutional planning process will expand the scope of the Institutional Planning Committee and provide for continuous monitoring, feedback and evaluation of the success of our planning efforts.

Linking Planning with Resource Allocation

As referred to in the Progress Evaluation Report[9], the College of the Sequoias' Budget Oversight Committee and the Vice President of Administrative Services have published and disseminated the document "Fiscal Principles and Procedures for College of the Sequoias."[10] This document clarifies for the college community how program review data and institutional planning documents are utilized in the college's decision-making and governance framework to drive the allocation of resources. This document has become a valuable resource for the entire college community to use as a reference tool that clarifies the relationships between our visions for the future and the feasibility of financing and sustaining those visions.

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[6] Approved by College Council 10-17-06

[7] Specifically, in their letter of January 31, 2008.
"Recommendation 2: The team recommends that the college engage all campus constituent groups in an institutional decision-making and planning process, which is linked and central to the college mission. The process should be an ongoing, effective, and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, research, and re-evaluation. This cycle should include such processes as curricular development, Program review and assessment and allocation of technological, physical, financial and human resources."

[8] "The institution provides the means for students to learn, assesses how well learning is occurring, and strives to improve that learning through ongoing, systematic, and integrated planning" (Standard I).

[9] Progress Evaluation report, November 29, 2007. W. David Pelham, Ed. D.

[10] Fiscal Principles and Procedures for the College of the Sequoias. Revised September 8, 2007

Recommendation 3

The team recommends that the college develop, review, and measure student learning outcomes in all of its courses, programs degrees/certificates, the general education pattern, and institution-wide practices.[11]

The November 29, 2007 visiting team found "substantial progress" on this recommendation. "Evidence across the campus indicates that faculty has a heightened awareness of and support for the value of student learning outcomes (SLOs)....Conclusions: the visiting team found that the college had made satisfactory progress on this recommendation."[12]

Response

The College of the Sequoias is currently at the Development level (as defined by the Commission's rubric for Student Learning Outcomes) and is rapidly moving toward Proficiency status.

- College has established an institutional framework for definition of student learning outcomes (where to start), how to extend, and timeline.
- College has established authentic assessment strategies for assessing student-learning outcomes as appropriate to intended course, program, and degree learning outcomes.
- Existing organizational structures (e.g. Senate, Curriculum Committee) are supporting strategies for student learning outcomes definition and assessment.
- Leadership groups (e.g. Academic Senate and administration), have accepted responsibility for student learning outcomes implementation.
- Appropriate resources are being allocated to support student learning outcomes and assessment.
- Faculty and staff are fully engaged in student learning outcomes development.

Student learning outcomes have really taken hold at College of the Sequoias. They have become a topic of conversation at all levels of student contact and service: staff, faculty, and administrator. Outcomes statements and concerns for authentic assessment are heard throughout the campus at every committee meeting.

The college is served well by a dedicated team of faculty from across disciplines on the Student Learning Outcomes Committee. Both faculty (through Academic Senate) and administration (through leadership and funding) have demonstrated their collective commitment SLO advancement. The COS SLO Committee is a standing committee of the Academic Senate and the administration provides the two co-chair positions, each with a .2 reassigned workload.

The SLO Committee is developing procedures and processes, along with detailed responsibilities and term limits, to ensure that the business of outcomes assessment does not lie with any one person or any single committee. Their goal is to assure that outcomes become a part of the campus culture and the modus operandi of planning and evaluation. The on going processes of training, creating, reviewing, evaluating and reporting outcomes assessment in order to improve teaching, learning and student success is our primary endeavor.

During the last year, the SLO Committee was restructured to support data reporting and storage as well as continued training for Academic Services and Student Services.

- Co-chair positions include one person to manage the webpage, data gathering, information management, and reporting of progress.

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[11] ACCJC Letter, January 31, 2007.
[12] Progress Evaluation report, November 29, 2007. W. David Pelham, Ed. D.

- The other co-chair is responsible for training, in addition to, scheduling, organization, agenda and minutes of SLO Committee meetings. This person is also responsible for soliciting membership and maintaining communications within the group.
- Both co-chairs have divided supplemental campus-wide committee memberships and attendance of meetings related to the SLO Committee's mission. These include: Academic Senate, Executive Committee, Curriculum Committee, Essential Learning Initiative (BSI) Committee, Student Equity Committee.
- Members of the SLO Committee also serve on a variety of other committees including but not limited to Academic State Representative, Program Review Committee, and Distance Education Committee.
- Both co-chairs engage in regular campus-wide communications.
- SLO co-chair and key SLO committee members attended the Student Success Conference and the SLO Coordinators Meeting, fall 2008.
- Co-chairs attended two spring 2008 SLO regional coordinator meetings.
- Both are scheduled to attend the Student Success Conference and SLO Coordinators Meeting, October 2008.
- One co-chair is scheduled as a presenter at the Student Success Conference on the topic of completing the Assessment Cycle.

SLO's are integrated into the conversation of every committee meeting and have become the common ground on which every member of the COS campus (staff, faculty and administrator) can have thoughtful discourse.

Recommendation 5

The team recommends that the College focus on the needs of its diverse populations both on campus and in the community, including new students, non-traditional populations, and persons of limited English ability. The College must pay particular attention in all of its learning environments to the needs of persons with disabilities, including access to facilities, services, instructional materials, and print and electronic media. The College should ensure that its public representations are universally accessible.[13]

Response

The College of the Sequoias models innovation and creativity in outreach and accessibility for diverse populations both on campus and in our community. COS is achieving state-wide recognition for new initiatives that have substantially increased accessibility to our classes and programs through targeted outreach programs at every level of instruction and student support.

The College of the Sequoias is currently (as of September 2008) experiencing a 15% growth in student enrollments. This growth significantly out-paces that of most California community colleges as they are reporting single digit growth. Our early analyses of this situation indicate that factors influencing this growth may include:

1. The poor economy (both federal and state) *is* clearly pushing citizens back to school for job re-training and educational growth,
2. The rapid and sustained rise of the cost of living and the cost of higher education at universities are creating effects that will not *completely* recede when the economy improves (such as high gasoline prices, the cost of textbooks, and tuition and residency expenses).

We cannot help but consider that our college's recent successful innovations in recruitment, preparation, retention and student success have made COS more attractive than ever for new students.

Student Services provides student access and services to meet the needs of its diverse population both on campus and in the community, including new students, non-traditional populations, and persons of limited English ability as evidenced by the following:

Student Equity Plan

The Student Equity Plan has been re-engineered with specific goals, objectives, and activities this past year. The chair of the committee is a faculty member and the remaining members are comprised of faculty, staff, and the college president. The committee has successfully identified and designed "Cultural Heritage Months" which will focus on celebrating the cultural diversity on our campus through the Arts, literature and selected guest speakers. Specific months and events have been identified with Faculty and Staff spearheading each event. The goals of the Student Equity Plan have been incorporated into COS' Program Review process for all programs.

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[13] ACCJC Letter, January 31, 2007.

Registration-to-Go Process – Early Bird Registration

Reg-to-Go was piloted in spring of 2007. It was expanded in the spring 2008 to include seven feeder high schools, serving close to 809 students. Counselors from College of the Sequoias conducted a brief orientation on the catalog and schedule of courses and created student education plans for the first semester with each new student. College of the Sequoias Peer Mentors/Student Ambassadors joined staff and assisted students in creating a fall schedule. Admissions and Records register the student onsite, and Financial Aid Specialists are available to answer questions. First Year Experience Program Staff and other special programs such as Puente are also available to recruit and enroll interested students into their programs.

First Year Experience and Freshman Seminar

The First Year Experience Program or FYE was designed to help incoming freshman build relationships with their peers and instructors to help ease the transition into college. Students are placed into a learning community, which consist of two more linked courses that students move through together as a cohort. Working in conjunction with the Basic Skills Initiative, the First Year Experience Program offers at least five developmental communities each semester. Those communities are each comprised of a developmental English, Math, and Student Success course. These "Framework" communities offer students with basic skills challenges additional support by way of peer-to-peer collaboration and mentoring and instructor cohesion across disciplines. The instructors of the communities work collaboratively to share assignments create common themes, and support students in their success. Upon successful completion of their first semester, students are urged to continue onto the next phase of learning communities in the spring.

Another component of FYE is the Freshman Seminar Course. This course focuses on college success, goal setting, and research techniques using electronic databases, graduation/transfer requirements, and organization skills. The Freshman Seminar Course is strongly recommended for students unable to participate in a learning community.

By promoting access, success and retention, the goal of the First Year Experience program is to help participating students; develop intellectual and academic competence; create a sense of community and connectedness to the college; develop interpersonal relationships; decide or achieve clarity about a career goal; create a sense of personal value; develop multicultural awareness and learn to tolerate, affirm and appreciate differences among people; and receive supportive services such as mentoring, tutoring and counseling. College of the Sequoias is offering five sections of this course for the fall 2008 semester.

First Giant Step Orientation / Parent Orientation

This first-time event was held in August and was open to new students, students with limited completed units, and students who applied but never registered. It was a full day event consisting of: FYE Component; Vocational/Career Outlook Presentation; Student Services Presentation; Importance of general education courses; Student Services Fair; and Workshops provided by the Financial Aid and EOPS offices, Campus Technology Uses – website, blackboard, etc. and Learning Skills Resources. It was very successful with a total count of 609 students participating. Students attending the orientation earned a half unit.

Following the First Giant Step Orientation, a student event, the second Parent Orientation was held on September 3, 2008. COS had 20 parents attending this informational session.

California Tomorrow Project "Raising Student Voice for Access and Equity in Community Colleges Internship Opportunities"
In conjunction with the *California Tomorrow* project a student internship program was piloted in the spring of 2007.

California Tomorrow was founded in 1984 by a diverse group of civic and community leaders who were dedicated to ensuring their multicultural state became a model for a thriving, inclusive, and equitable society. Since then, they have marshaled resources and partnerships to produce groundbreaking research focusing on systemic equity issues that affect the quality of life for children and youth in low-income communities of color, with a special emphasis on immigrant youth and families. *California Tomorrow* works to strengthen the capacity of California community colleges to improve access and success for students of color, immigrants, and low-income students.

Students from various COS diverse groups and programs participated in this project and successfully completed an internship during the spring semester. They met with the *California Tomorrow* Coordinator for this project twice a month during a dinner meeting. Through this project, the students were provided with support needed to engage in conversations that are currently driving reforms on their campuses and at the system and state levels. The program provided the students with a hands-on experience on student equity issues in California, such as affordability (e.g., fees, policies, costs of text books, gaps in financial aid) as well as the need to significantly expand student access to high impact student support programs like basic skills courses, tutoring, childcare, and model programs (e.g., Puente). The COS students traveled with the coordinator to Sacramento to meet with local legislative representatives.

COS English as a Second Language Non-Credit Courses
On-campus
In spring 2008, COS started offering a noncredit option for courses in English as a Second Language for the first time in the college's history. COS received approval for 17 noncredit ESL classes and three noncredit ESL certificates. In addition, COS received SB361 Enhanced Funding culminating in a Noncredit Certificate to begin in fall 2008. COS now offers three Noncredit Certificates of Completion:

- ESL Beginning/Elementary Level Certificate of Completion
- ESL Intermediate Level Certificate of Completion
- ESL Advanced Level Certificate of Completion

Historically, approximately 80-90 students audit ESL classes each semester. These audit students are not counted for enrollment or FTES. The new noncredit option allows students who would normally have audited a course to enroll. We are now able to capture enrollment numbers and generate FTES at the noncredit rate of $2745, and eventually the enhanced funding rate. Additionally, this noncredit option allows COS to provide ESL classes to students who would traditionally not have access to college courses, since noncredit courses are free of charge.

Community off-site ESL classes
The college began offering community-based ESL classes in fall 2007 through our collaboration with the Cesar Chavez Education Institute to provide ESL courses in remote communities. In spring 2008, after an in-depth review of the program, the College decided to institutionalize the program. In fall 2007, we had five community classes and enrolled over 200 students, by spring this grew to seven classes:

- Cutler/Orosi—Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Hanford— Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Kettleman City—Family Resource Center

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- Visalia Oval—Two classes at Community Services Employment Training (CSET)
- Richgrove—Sitton Pistachio Plant
- Terra Bella—Community center

COS also developed a historic collaboration with West Hills College and Porterville College to provide the community-based courses in their districts.

This fall 2008, we have nine community based ESL classes:
- Hanford— Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Goshen—Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Kettleman City—Family Resource Center
- Visalia Oval—Two classes at Community Services Employment Training (CSET)
- Cutler/Orosi—Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Pixley— Community Services Employment Training (CSET)
- Earlimart— Self-Help Enterprise Community Resource Room
- Lindsay— (in progress)

In collaboration with the Cesar Chavez Education Institute, CSET, and Radio Campesina, we initiated a strong community outreach marketing campaign. Our classes have also been advertised via television on the Arriba Valle Central-Univision morning Spanish community program.

Parenting Classes
In the spring of 2007, members from College of Sequoias, the community-based HEART After School Program, and Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) collaborated to create a plan to provide parenting classes to parents with children at the elementary and middle school grade level. The HEART Program contracted with the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) Program to provide the course curriculum and instructors. HEART also provided childcare services to the children during the class time. VUSD provided the parent population, school sites, and facilities to hold the classes and childcare.

In the spring semester of 2008, there were two sessions of the Parenting course held at VUSD. The first session had 259 parents attending at seven school sites. COS enrolled 31 parents into the CHLD 310AC Parenting for Education Success .5 unit course. The number of parents receiving credit for the course was low due to barriers presented to many parents by the matriculation/enrollment process. The second session had 168 parents attending at six school sites with the COS enrollment for this course session at 29 parents. Again, the matriculation/enrollment process was a major barrier preventing parents to register for the course.

A non-credit course, CHLD 410 Parents for Student Success, was written to remedy the barriers for parents to attend the parenting class. This course is currently in the approval process at the State Chancellor's office. The new non-credit course will allow for a huge increase in parents attending the classes as community college students.

Foster & Kinship Care Education
In 1984, legislation (Senate Bill 2003, Royce) was passed to create the Foster Children and Parent Training Fund for the training of foster parents. The mission of the Foster & Kinship Care Education Program is to provide quality education and support opportunities to caregivers of children and youth in out-of-home care, so that these providers may meet the foster children's educational, emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs.

College of the Sequoias offers approximately 300 hours of free training per year for foster care providers, group home staff, county social services and probation staff, other professionals who work with foster

children, and other interested persons. Topics focus on parenting and behavior management, working with the Child Welfare Services System, and issues specific to caring for foster youth. In addition to the face-to-face training, the Foster & Kinship Care Education Program has an extensive lending library that is available to all residents of Kings and Tulare Counties.

Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success - California

Student success outcomes for foster youth have been historically dismal, with 50% becoming homeless within the first 18 months of emancipation. Less than half of former foster youth are employed 2.5 to 4 years after leaving foster care, and only 38% have maintained employment for at least one year. Forty-four percent are less likely to graduate from high school, and after emancipation, 40 to 50% never complete high school. Girls in foster care are six times more likely to give birth before the age of 21 than the general population. Twenty-five percent of foster youth are incarcerated within two years of leaving foster care; and a mere 3% earn a college degree.

One of only eight community college districts awarded a Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS) grant, College of the Sequoias is working to change those outcomes for the 50 current and former foster youth at COS. This new program provides multi-level training and practical learning opportunities that correspond to real life situations in four areas: education, employment, daily living skills, and financial literacy. In addition to the training, YESS provides a continuum of service through which college and YESS staff model and promote the cultivation of permanent relationships with caring adults. To that end, the YESS Program employs an Advising Specialist who works one-on-one with the youth to ensure that they complete key tasks, develop a support system, know how to access resources and how to advocate for themselves, understand the importance of post-secondary education in preparing them for a living wage job, and overall, are well prepared for independent living.

Music Classes for Seniors

The College received approval for four noncredit courses specific to the older adult community. These four classes are housed in the Fine Arts division's music program.

- Symphony Orchestra for Seniors
- Symphonic Band for Seniors
- Jazz Ensemble for Seniors
- Community Chorus for Seniors

This program helps COS outreach to the community and this special population. Historically 50-75 students have audited these music classes. The new noncredit option makes it easier for older adults to enroll in the music classes increasing interest in participation. The Fine Arts division is also developing courses for older adults in theater and art gallery that will attract this population to the college.

Access to Persons with Disabilities

The DRC responds to the needs of students and the community to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided access to campus facilities, services, and instructional material.

Physical Accessibility

1. The Director of the DRC is also the Safety Officer for the campus and is an active participant on the Facilities/Safety Committee. The Facilities/Safety Committee's primary mission is to consider and make recommendations to the College Council on all issues that impact the College of the Sequoias with regard to campus facilities and safety conditions or concerns. The committee members routinely respond to concerns regarding safety issues such as illumination, walkways, emergency response systems, and make recommendations to College Council so that resources can be dedicated to address such issues. A hazardous materials business plan is being formalized

that includes emergency evacuation processes with appropriate provisions to ensure the safety of individuals with disabilities.

2. In terms of ensuring that the campus is physically accessible to individuals with disabilities, the Director of the DRC routinely brings issues to the attention of the Facilities/Safety Committee that might require mitigation. Within campus walkways, pavers have been replaced and sidewalks ground when they have been identified as posing a safety risk to students with disabilities. Additionally, bathroom fixtures have been retrofitted with sensors when it was discovered that they were difficult to use for persons with limited mobility. The Director of the DRC recently contacted the California Department of Rehabilitation Access Unit to explore the feasibility of surveying the campus to determine its accessibility to individuals with disabilities and compliance to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Information with regard to the cost of surveying the campus was presented to College Council.

3. The DRC works closely with the Room Utilization Committee in order to review classroom configurations and make recommendations so that classrooms are accessible to students with disabilities and that there is ease of access and egress from each classroom. There have been occasions in which second floor classes have been reassigned to the first floor in order to ensure that students with mobility impairments were not denied an opportunity to attend class(es). Additionally, the staff of the DRC coordinate the placement of adjustable desks within classrooms when it is determined that students who use wheelchairs might benefit from such an accommodation.

4. The DRC provides temporary handicapped parking permits to students with disabilities and assists them with the process to obtain permanent handicapped placards from the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

The Disability Resource Center is responsive to Student and Community Needs
The DRC has an active advisory committee composed of campus staff and faculty, as well as community stakeholders. The committee meets once each semester to provide input to the DRC. In response to committee feedback, the DRC is pursuing the following goals in order to demonstrate that it is a responsive forward thinking program.

1. The DRC is developing a vendor relationship with Central Valley Regional Center to offer a LITE (Living Independently through Education) program for students with intellectual disabilities who perform at the pre-collegiate level.
2. At the request of the California Department of Rehabilitation, the DRC will initiate a Workability III program to assist students make the transition from college to competitive employment.
3. In conjunction with the County Mental Health and our Health Center, the DRC plans to develop a proposal to fund a supported education component to assist our students who have severe psychiatric impairments.
4. In collaboration with our basic skills initiative committee (ELI), the DRC plans to expand Learning Assessment services to provide early detection and intervention for students who test at the basic skills level.
5. The Lead Interpreter of the DRC is developing a mentoring program so that the college can recruit and retain American Sign Language interpreters in adequate numbers to address the needs of hard of hearing and deaf students.
6. Each year during the last three years, the DRC has coordinated a Disability Awareness Day (DAD) event. The event provides an opportunity to educate and sensitize campus personnel about the barriers and needs of persons with disabilities. The event also provides an opportunity for students to become familiar with community resources. In 2007, over 300 participants of DAD and over 30 community organizations and associations targeted their services to persons with disabilities.

Instructional material and print electronic media

1. The staff and faculty of the DRC provide technical assistance to the campus so that the campus can take assertive steps to ensure that it provides learning environments that are accessible to persons with disabilities. The DRC provided a faculty enrichment presentation at the beginning of the fall 2008 semester in order to collaborate more effectively with faculty on the provision of accommodations and services to students with disabilities. The presentation was video tapped and the video tape as well as a power point presentation has been posted on the Faculty Enrichment Committee web page.

2. The Access Specialist of the DRC works with faculty to advise them about the necessity and legal requirements to provide instructional material in accessible formats. She routinely identifies resources that are available so that material can be provided to students in alternative formats. Additionally, when not producing alternate media for students with disabilities, she can produce material in alternate formats for faculty.

3. To ensure that campus publications are provided in alternate formats, the Director and the Access Specialist developed a policy statement on alternative formats so that the public can obtain publications of the college in accessible formats. The DRC has the capability to produce educational material and publications in alternative formats.

4. The staff of DRC and the staff of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) have met to discuss video captioning. It is now the policy of the LRC to purchase only captioned videos. Older videos are currently cataloged to determine how frequently they might be used so that they can be captioned as well. A task force has been assembled to develop policy on how to handle the use of videos which are neither new, nor the property of the LRC and are not captioned so that the campus can take deliberate steps to ensure accessibility of all of its videos.

5. The Access Specialist is an active member of the Technology Committee and provides them with support and technical assistance so that the college can take steps to ensure that the various forms of electronic communication conform to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794d) standards. Recently she acquired funding from the Chancellor's Office so that distance education courses could be made accessible. Throughout the year, the Access Specialist installed, coordinated, and provided technical support for student access to assistive technologies campus wide in mainstream computer labs and the High Tech Center. She provided technical assistance in matters related to accessibility for people with disabilities by serving on the Institutional Technology Committee, Academic Board Policy Revision Committee, and the Distance Education Committee. Additionally, the Access Specialist contributed toward the efforts of website accessibility compliance by providing advice and assistance to the Website Taskforce. She developed training materials and participated as a presenter at a staff-training day during the fall semester, and participated in meetings regarding the new website development in the spring.

6. Computer labs with more than ten stations for use by students have at least 10% of those stations configured so that they are accessible to students with disabilities. Computers in the LRC have been imaged with assistive software (JAWS, Zoomtext, and Kurzwail) so that they are accessible to students with disabilities.

Recommendation 6

The team recommends that the College develop a process by which all policies are regularly reviewed and updated to meet Accreditation Standards, including, but not limited to:
- *Tenure Review*
- *Hiring & Evaluation processes (management, classified, and faculty)*
- *Employee Professional Ethics*
- *Board policy concerning Ethics Policy violation[14]*

With regard to Recommendation 6, the Commission requests the college to specify the status of the policies listed, indicating whether they have been reviewed and updated.[15]

Response

All COS Board Policies have been reviewed, modified to meet new changes in governing regulations and codes, and approved by the Board of Trustees. COS has achieved the level of Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement in the review and updating of Board policy.

In spring of 2007, President Scroggins charged his Executive Cabinet with the task of a complete review and re-authorization of all Board Policies at the College of the Sequoias. Each Cabinet member was responsible to organize a complete review (to include staff and faculty input and participation) of all policies that affected their own area of responsibility. At the same time, all areas submitted new policies or revisions to existing policies that were needed in order to assure compliance with the significant revisions to Chapter 6 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulation that had taken effect in August of 2007.

All policies affecting academic and professional areas were reviewed and recommended by the Academic Senate, and all proposed policy revisions were submitted to the College Council for approval and have been adopted by the Board of Trustees.

In the current academic year (2008-2009), all administrative policies are undergoing the same process of review, revision, and adoption. Administrative, Student Services, and Human Resources AP's have been proposed and are currently under review. Academic Services administrative procedures are currently being reviewed and modifications are being developed in conjunction with the Academic Senate. All administrative procedures will complete the review and approval process before the end of the current academic year.

At the College of the Sequoias, policies and procedures continue to be updated on a periodic basis and on an "as needed" basis as law and regulations continue to change. The College maintains its membership in the Community College League of California's Policy Service in order to be kept continuously up-to-date on these changes.

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[14] ACCJC Letter, January 31, 2007.
[15] Progress Evaluation report, November 29, 2007. W. David Pelham, Ed. D.

Conclusion

The College of the Sequoias meets and exceeds WASC Accreditation standards as is expected of all colleges whose accreditation has been recently affirmed. The College appreciates the work of the Commission and the importance of the role the Commission plays in assuring the achievement and maintenance of the highest standards of quality and student service higher education. We look forward to reporting further growth in excellence at the College of the Sequoias in next year's mid-term report.

Attachments

Attachment #1

Recommendations for Change to the Institutional Planning Committee:

Vision:
The vision for this committee is that it will operate through four sub-committees, each having specific responsibilities. Sub-committee chairs will be selected from the full committee membership and will rotate in order to provide individual members with a well-rounded leadership experience. Succession planning principles will be applied.

Subcommittees would be responsible for:

1. Accreditation standards; implementation, assessment and reporting.
2. Institutional effectiveness; evaluation and recommendations.
3. Strategic planning; development and recommendations.
4. Institutional Program Review

Name Change:
The name of the committee becomes the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC).

Charge:
The Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC) is a standing committee of the College Council and is charged to:
1. Provide recommendations and process models that improve institutional planning and effectiveness.
2. Facilitate the review, coordination, and integration of the college's institutional planning processes.
3. Annually assess the effectiveness of institutional planning processes.
4. Ensure college compliance with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges standards for accreditation and the accurate and timely submission of required accreditation reports.
5. Recommend short and long-range institutional plans to the College Council.

The IPEC fulfills its charge by such means as:
- Developing processes for setting institutional goals.
- Assessing the progress of the Strategic Plan.
- Integrating the WASC accreditation standards into the college planning agenda.
- Assessing progress toward accreditation recommendations and reporting on that progress.
- Assuring that the College's mission statement, WASC Accreditation standards, institutional goals, and institutional student learning outcomes are regularly reviewed and consistently integrated throughout both planning and decision-making processes.
- Supporting planning at all levels of the college community.
- Providing guidance to all college constituencies as each works to support the college mission.
- Providing a comprehensive annual report to the College Council that assesses the state of college planning and effectiveness.
- Providing the College Council with annual reports and prioritizations of Program Review documents for use in planning and resource allocation decisions-making."

Recommended Changes to the Program Review Steering Committee

INTRODUCTION
The Program Review Steering Committee voted on Tuesday, March 11, to recommend significant changes in the structure and functions of the Committee. Therefore, this document is forwarded to College Council and Academic Senate for concurrence.

PROPOSAL
Committee Name
We propose to change the name of the Program Review Steering Committee to the Institutional Program Review Committee (IPRC).

Charge
The committee is responsible to:
  A. Actively participate in the Program Review process in an advisory capacity that includes receiving periodic updates from Program Review committees, and responding constructively; addressing any IPRC concerns about content or direction and suggestions for improvements.
  B. Devise program review timelines and monitor the progress of units that are scheduled to produce program reviews.
  C. Assure that all participants follow program review timelines and process.
  D. Evaluate program review documents.
  E. Report to the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee on the final status of each program review, making the documentation available for public examination.

Reporting
The IPRC will be designated as a sub-committee of the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee, which is a standing committee of the College Council.

Membership
The membership of the Committee will consist of representatives from the three administrative areas: Academic Services, Administrative Services, and Student Services.

Co-chairs of the committee:
> The Vice President of Academic Services (or designee) and
> The SLO chair
> The chairs are non-voting members

Faculty:
> Four members of the faculty representing and selected by the Academic Senate.
> * one of which must be from Student Services Division

One Classified Staff from Admin Services:
> Selected by the Classified Council

Ex Officio:
These members will serve as resources to the committee:
> The Director of Institutional Research (non-voting)
> Vice President of Administrative Services (or designee)
> Vice President of Student Services (or designee)

Respectfully submitted:
Ron Johnson, Chair
Don Mast
Kathie Lewis
Jan Woodall
Linda Paredez
COS Academic Senate

(Revised 5/2008)
Approved by the Academic Senate and presented to College Council 9/23/08 (First Reading).