

ACCREDITATION MIDTERM REPORT

MARCH 22, 2008

In response to the June 28, 2005 recommendations of the

**ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES**

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES



Victor Valley Community College
18422 Bear Valley Road
Victorville, CA 92395
(760) 245-4271
www.vvc.edu

Table of Contents

STATEMENT OF REPORT PREPARATION	2
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REVIEW	3
RESPONSE TO THE ACTION LETTER OF JUNE 29, 2005.....	4
Recommendation 1: Improving Institutional Effectiveness	4
Progress and Accomplishments.....	4
Evaluation/Analysis	5
Planning Agenda	5
List of Supporting Evidence.....	6
Recommendation 2: Student Learning Outcomes	7
Progress and Accomplishments.....	7
Evaluation/Analysis	9
Planning Agenda	10
List of Supporting Evidence.....	10
Recommendation 3: Organizational Structure and Staffing.....	11
Progress and Accomplishments.....	11
Evaluation/Analysis	12
Planning Agenda	12
List of Supporting Evidence.....	12
Recommendation 4: Financial Resources	13
Progress and Accomplishments.....	13
Evaluation/Analysis	13
Planning Agenda	14
List of Supporting Evidence.....	14
Recommendation 5: Purpose/Function of Campus Committees	15
Progress and Accomplishments.....	15
Evidence/Analysis.....	15
Planning Agenda	16
List of Supporting Evidence.....	16
Recommendation 6: Campus Climate.....	17
Progress and Accomplishments.....	17
Evaluation/Analysis	18
Planning Agenda	19
List of Supporting Evidence.....	19
Recommendation 7: Evaluation of Leadership Roles	20
Progress and Accomplishments.....	20
Evaluation/Analysis	20
Planning Agenda	21
List of Supporting Evidence.....	21
OVERALL SUMMARY.....	21


Statement of Report Preparation

Victor Valley Community College (VVCC) submits this midterm report in response to the request from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (hereinafter, “the Commission”) to address progress made on seven recommendations from the comprehensive visit in March, 2005. The college submitted a previous progress report on October 15, 2007 which was accepted at the Commission meeting on January 9-11, 2008.

In its response to the sanction received from ACCJC, the college has sought to re-invent itself as a sustainable, effective learning organization by (1) clarifying its vision, values, mission, and goals; (2) ensuring that each member of the college’s workforce identifies with these core elements of the institutional identity; and (3) establishing the college’s organizational structure in a way that reflects an alignment of values and actions. The foundation of this work has been the establishment of shared governance policies and procedures that redistribute decision-making power as close to *direct positive student impact* as possible. The commitment begins with the Board of Trustees and has included all college stakeholders. Through policy and coordinated action, improvement across the college is being cast as an ongoing, institutionalized, collective activity that begins with assessment of student learning outcomes.

This midterm report was developed through established campus-wide participatory processes involving College Council, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the President’s Cabinet.

This report was shared with the Board of Trustees at its March 11, 2008 meeting.



Robert Silverman, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President

Board of Trustees Review

Meeting Date: March 11, 2008

Item Number: _____

**VICTOR VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT- BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AGENDA ITEM**

BOARD CONSENT ___ **BOARD ACTION** ___ **BOARD INFORMATION (no action required)** ___

TOPIC: ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY & JUNIOR COLLEGES (ACCJC) PROGRESS REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: College Council

RECOMMENDED BY: Virginia Moran _____

APPROVED BY: Robert Silverman _____

Description/Background:

The attached report due to the commission March 15, 2008, provides an update to progress made on ACCJC recommendations and additional Commission concerns specified.

1. Environment for Empowerment
2. Governance Structures
3. Improving Institutional Effectiveness
4. Financial Resources
5. Purpose/Function of Campus Committees
6. Campus Climate
7. Evaluation of Leadership Roles

Need:

Compliance with mandated requirements of ACCJC accreditation.

Fiscal Impact: None

Recommended Action:

This item is provided for board information.

Legal Review: YES ___ NOT APPLICABLE X ___

Reference for Agenda: YES X ___ NO ___

Response to the Action Letter of June 29, 2005

Recommendation 1: Improving Institutional Effectiveness

“The team recommends that the college provides evidence that it assesses progress toward achieving its goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. This continuing cycle should include long-term master planning; short-term strategic planning, including technology planning; and an effective, institutionalized program review process. When fully implemented, this cycle of planning, evaluation and program improvement should result in the creation of a culture of research and evidence that supports all of the college’s decision-making processes (Standard IB.3, IB.4, IB.5, IB.6, IB.7; Standard IIA.1, IIA.2, IIB.3, IIB.4, IIC.2; and Standard IIIA.6, IIIB.1, IIIB.2, IIIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2g, IIID.3).”

Progress and Accomplishments

- Although the college has a track record of organized efforts around planned budget augmentation requests, AY 2006-2007 marked the completion of the college’s first complete cycle of annual program review, planning, and budget augmentation. The process culminated in a college-wide list of recommended funding priorities for 2007-2008. At this writing, this year’s annual process has commenced, with unit plans due later this month.
- Along with organized efforts for budget augmentations, a faculty hiring prioritization process was designed, implemented, and used to identify the newest faculty hires for AY 2008-2009. The top seven priorities are currently being recruited: Counselor, Librarian, instructors in Allied Health, Aviation, Child Development, Fire Technology, and Basic Skills (see response to Recommendation 3).
- New policies were adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 13, 2007 to confirm the college’s commitment to better decision-making and sound institutionalized improvement structures: Board Policy 1201, Shared Governance; and Board Policy 1202, Institutional Effectiveness. Also at this meeting, an existing policy on planning was revised to reflect current legislation (Board Policy 3250, Institutional Planning) and ensure consistency with the new governance-related policies.
- Accompanying the new policies are administrative procedures drafted by the College Council and President’s Cabinet to guide effective implementation. To date, committee assignments have been made, and some committees have met or have scheduled their initial meeting during which a chair will be elected and the charge reviewed.
- A new policy, Standards of Educational Excellence (Board Policy 4000), was drafted and submitted by the college’s Faculty Senate to the College Council. The policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on December 11, 2007. It frames educational excellence, its measurement and improvement, in the context of ongoing professional development of

improved teaching skills for the benefit of student learning. As far as we know, this policy is the first of its kind in the CCC system.

- The Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) commenced its work with an inaugural meeting in December 2007. To date, committee members have clarified their charge, agreed upon a preliminary definition of “institutional effectiveness, drafted a timeline with milestones to guide their work, and devised a strategy for developing an evaluation system.
- A work session of the IEC was conducted to begin development of an evaluation system for institutional effectiveness. A definition was established, categories were developed for use in specifying measures, and workgroups formed to draft operational definitions. In addition, non-academic committee members learned about what assessment is and why it is important through an instructional exercise facilitated by the IEC chair.

Evaluation/Analysis

The college has a 3-year track record of annual program review, planning, and budget augmentation processes, culminating in an annual list of funding priorities linked to the educational master plan. This year’s revision to the college mission statement and the adoption of new board policies and administrative procedures specifically define *institutional effectiveness* in terms of 3 types of assessment:

1. Program review;
2. Use of data and analysis to inform institutional planning and improvement; and
3. Assessment of student learning.

This ensures that planning decisions remain integrated with a process of evaluation against established college-wide priorities, and that the ultimate focus is *planning for improvement*. Furthermore, the foundation laid by district policies and procedures enables us to move forward towards specifying and analyzing indicators of institutional effectiveness.

Planning Agenda

- Complete this year’s annual cycle of program review, planning, and budget augmentation.
- Continue work through IEC to define, specify, and assess the college’s institutional effectiveness, and publish findings (including strategies for improvement) through an annual report to the community by Fall 2008.
- Upon completion of this year’s annual cycle of program review, planning, and budget augmentation, evaluate the process to determine impacts (positive and negative). Prepare and disseminate a report to the campus community of the planned improvements—including but not limited to creating the necessary linkages to the budget development processes. In this way, the annual process includes not only requests for augmentations, but a means to develop annual budgets as well.

List of Supporting Evidence

- PRAISE templates, 2008-2009 (Instruction; Student Services; Campus Support; actual plans available at www.vvc.edu/PRAISE)
- Faculty Hiring Prioritization (supporting documents and final list)
- Board Policy 1201, Shared Governance (and accompanying administrative procedure)
- Board Policy 1202, Institutional Effectiveness (and accompanying administrative procedure)
- Board Policy 3250, Institutional Planning
- Board Policy 4000, Standards of Educational Excellence (and accompanying administrative procedure)
- Agenda and Minutes, Institutional Effectiveness Committee
- Workplan for Development of Institutional Effectiveness Evaluation System
- Institutional Effectiveness Indicators Matrix (Draft)

Recommendation 2: Student Learning Outcomes

“To meet the standards' focus on ensuring student success and the quality of programs and services, the team recommends the college conducts meaningful, timely, and inclusive dialogue with all campus constituents to identify student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels. The college should also systematically assess these student learning outcomes and use the results of these assessments for the improvement of institutional effectiveness (Standard I1B.1, IB.4, IB.7; Standard IIA.1c, IIA.2c, IIA.2b, IIA.2f, IIA.2g, IIA.2h, IIA.2i, IIA.3, IIA.6, IIA.6a, IIB.1, IIB.4, IIC.1a, IIC.2; Standard IIIA.1b, IIA.1c; and Standard IVA.1, IVA.2b, IVB.1b).”

Progress and Accomplishments

- Student learning outcomes have been written for approximately 200 out of an estimated district total of approximately 1100 credit courses. SLOs have been required components of each course outline of record since Fall 2004. In order to facilitate curriculum development and approval, CurricUNET (a curriculum management system) was implemented in September, 2007. At the same time, curriculum submission requirements were revised to include student learning outcomes and course objectives, and methods of assessment. In addition, student learning outcomes and methods of assessment are now required for approval of certificates. Since implementation, more than 100 course proposals and seven degree or certificate proposals have been initiated.
- Board Policy 4000, Standards of Educational Excellence, was approved by the Faculty Senate on November 1, 2007, reviewed by College Council, and approved by the Board of Trustees on December 11, 2007. This policy formalized the district commitment to excellence in curriculum, learning assessment and improvement, institutional effectiveness, and instructional proficiency. Also approved by Faculty Senate on November 1, 2007 was Administrative Procedure 4000, “Sustaining Standards of Educational Excellence,” which specifies standards for curriculum review, course-embedded learning outcomes assessment on all levels, requires components in the cycle of SLO assessment and improvement, the use of SLO assessment for program evaluation, and district support for professional development.
- Eight assessment teams, supported by Title V Hispanic Serving Institution grant funds, implemented assessment plans during the Fall 2007 term. Teams submitted documentation of assessment results, analysis, and department dialogue for project efforts during Fall 2007; also included in the required reports were improvement plans for the following term. Thus, project schedules called for the completion of a full assessment-improvement cycle by the end of Spring 2008.
- On December 6, 2007 the Faculty Senate approved and forwarded to the President’s Office a formal Faculty Senate Resolution, recommending the hiring of a full-time faculty SLO Coordinator. Included with this recommendation was a detailed description of the responsibilities associated with this position. A comparable request was approved by the Faculty Senate and forwarded to the President in February of 2007. At this writing, an

agreement has been made to provide re-assignment to 2 additional faculty members in order to facilitate progress (an SLO Coordinator, and chair of the Senate SLO Task Force).

- The challenges posed by implementing a new curriculum management software system and the need to establish more consistent understanding of SLOs across the campus compelled a re-evaluation of the curriculum development process. The Faculty Senate established an SLO task force comprised of members of the Learning Assessment and Graduation Requirements Committees to oversee the process of writing effective SLOs for each active course. While SLOs have been a required component of the curriculum proposal process since 2005, tasking a separate group of informed and experienced faculty members with shepherding the SLO development process spreads the work load and enables quality control.
- The President has established an SLO assessment planning and oversight group, comprised of Faculty Senate leadership, faculty members, and administrators. This group has agreed to support and will meet regularly to facilitate the college goal: 100% of active courses will have defined SLOs and matched assessments by June 8, 2008. Moreover, GE SLOs will be developed and assessed by the end of Spring 2009. This will be a collaborative effort between the Faculty Senate's SLO Task Force and administration. In addition, faculty members trained through the SLO Academy last summer will work alongside department chairs to share their expertise and ensure quality of SLOs and their assessments.
- On November 1, 2007, the Faculty Senate amended the existing Program Review process to include SLOs and assessment on the course, program, and learning support levels. Instructional and Learning Support Program Review reports for the 2008-2009 year include a planning form to be used to report self-imposed deadlines for SLO approval and assessment for each course, certificate, and support service or activity. The original deadline for SLO writing and approval for all courses, certificates, and services was June 1, 2010. However, the deadline for defining course-level SLOs has since changed to June 8, 2008.
- The Faculty Senate developed and approved Assessment Report forms that are to be submitted by each instructional and learning support department beginning with Program Reviews for the 2009-2010 year. The final deadline for completing and reporting SLO assessment of all courses, programs, and support services is Fall, 2010.
- Information competency was included in the general education philosophy as a student learning outcome for the associate degree, and the Graduation Requirements Committee has proposed an implementation date of Fall 2008. The focus of the library's information competency program is a library skills instruction session and workbook required for all English 101 (English composition and reading) students. Student learning outcomes for the library's information competency program have been developed and a collaborative effort with English faculty to assess SLOs will be implemented in the Spring 2008 semester.
- Drafts of general education learning outcomes (considered among institution-level SLOs, but not exclusively; others to be developed) and an assessment plan for Academic Year 2008-2009 have been presented to the SLO assessment task force, and chairs of key departments offering General Education courses have been recruited to refine and finalize the

draft GE SLOs. Librarians have prepared a final draft of Information Competency learning outcomes (a new addition to the graduation requirements) and are consulting with the English department on incorporating these outcomes into the course outline for English 101 (English composition and reading). Assessment of information competency as a general education SLO is planned for the Spring 2008 term in conjunction with a library exercise that is required in all sections of English 101 (English composition and reading).

- A draft schedule of weekly SLO training, dialogue, and professional development activities in the Teaching Learning Center was prepared and presented at the December 7, 2007 Learning Assessment Committee meeting. To date, open sessions for curriculum development occurs every Thursday from 2pm to 5pm. Sessions providing assistance on developing SLOs and assessments are planned for Fridays from 11am to 2pm.
- In Spring 2007, the college participated in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and data from this survey contributed significantly to our understanding of how students learn. Additionally, a set of five benchmarks for effective educational practices was established to gauge and monitor student performance in areas that are truly central to collaborative learning for tutoring and supplemental instruction programs.
- Through *Project Synergy*, the college's re-organization effort, a new administrative position has been proposed: Executive Dean, Curriculum Development and Learning Resources. This position will work alongside the faculty SLO Coordinator, created in response to the Faculty Senate resolution. Core functions include administrative coordination and support for student learning outcomes and assessment, curriculum development, and professional development. Faculty will have ultimate control over defining, assessing, and dialoguing about SLOs; administrators will provide the structure and support to ensure assessment practice flourishes and leads to instructional and institutional improvement.
- In addition to changes in the college's organizational structure that reflect its institutional commitment to assessment practice and empowering decision-makers at the level of direct student impact, the job description for instructional deans is currently being revised to ensure facilitating SLOs is an inherent function. In this way, responsibilities for SLO assessment practice across all levels—faculty, department chairs, deans, and senior administration—can be shared and clarified.

Evaluation/Analysis

Implementation of CurricUNET has had its challenges—some related to the customary problems associated with all software implementations, and some related to problems with our business processes. The college has responded with a collaborative (faculty and administrative) effort to meet an aggressive goal that 100% course-level SLOs will be formulated with assessment methods identified by June 8, 2008; and that GE SLOs will be developed and assessed by Spring 2009. The current cadre of SLO practitioners will provide the training and translation of *good practice* standards—which is further buttressed by the emerging community of practice in the Teaching-Learning Center. In addition, integrating an assessment reporting requirement in the annual program review and planning process, in tandem with the clarification of the various roles

in support of SLO development currently underway in the SLO task force, provides a sound foundation for establishing sustainable SLO assessment practice.

Planning Agenda

- Evaluate and improve as necessary curriculum approval process. Continue curriculum development training, to include course and program-level SLOs.
- Finalize GE SLOs and organize disciplinary assessment teams for Spring 2008 training and implementation of Fall 2008 GE assessment plan.
- Review and revise, as necessary, Board Policy 4025, Philosophy and Criteria for the Associate Degree and General Education. Draft Administrative Procedure 4025, a detailed statement of the district's GE SLOs and procedures for GE SLO assessment, data review/analysis, and improvement planning.
- Update Administrative Procedure 4000 with standards for curriculum quality, reliable and authentic assessment, appropriate use of data, faculty participation, assessment reporting, and district support.
- Design and implement integration of SLO assessments in program review for student services, library, and tutoring.
- Augment the SLO Assessment reporting forms for instructional Program Reviews to include GE assessment requirements and reporting.

List of Supporting Evidence

- Sample Assessment Reports Chemistry, English-Reading, Philosophy, Religious Studies
- Board Policy & Administrative Procedure 4000
- Senate SLO Coordinator Resolution and Coordinator Responsibilities
- Revised Program Review Template: SLO Assessment Planning Forms, SLO Assessment Report Forms
- Notes, Workplan for Course-level SLOs
- Draft GE SLOs and Assessment Plan
- Information Competency Outcomes, Objectives, Assessments
- TLC Spring 2008 SLO schedule.
- Sample CurricUNET Word Reports.
- TLC SLO resources (Course SLO Guide; Mapping Objectives to Outcomes; SLO Verbs per Bloom's Taxonomy)
- Draft of job description, Executive Dean of Curriculum Development and Learning Resources

Recommendation 3: Organizational Structure and Staffing

"The team recommends that the college evaluates and addresses its organizational structure and staffing needs. The evaluation should include, but not be limited to, technology support, risk management, maintenance and operations, and human resources. The college should take appropriate actions to implement the results of the evaluation and must address the lack of sufficient staffing (Standard IIC.1d, IIC.2, IIIA.2 and Standard IVB.2a)."

Progress and Accomplishments

- College Council and the Synergy Group collaboratively planned an all day workshop for November 27, 2007 to kick-off *Project Synergy*—the college’s re-organization efforts. The workshop was facilitated by an organizational change expert from the office of the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools. The purposes of the workshop included: (a) enabling dialogue about collaboration and innovation; (b) allowing for reflection on the implications of redirection/reinvestment of our organizational structures and processes; and (c) equipping participants with fundamentals in facilitating collaboration and innovation. The experiential outcomes provided a philosophical background, which Synergy Group members sought to maintain throughout their dialogue. The more practical outcome for the workshop was the creation of a six- month action plan for reorganization efforts.
- The Synergy Group executed its charge in the months following the workshop, disseminating information via the college website (www.vvc.edu/offices/president/project_synergy.shtml). A summary of the recommendations for college organization was presented to the Board of Trustees on March 12, 2008.
- An ad hoc committee was formed to develop recommendations for college re-organization. This group of volunteers from across the college adopted the name “Synergy Group” at its first meeting because it denotes cooperation and working together. These notions better capture the intent of the group, which is to consider the college’s organizational structure from new perspectives, rather than simply reshuffling work units on an organizational chart. Foremost in these new perspectives are the themes of collaboration and innovation, two of the newly adopted core values for the college; the writings of Sally Helgesen (*Web of Inclusion*, 1995) and Etienne Wenger (*Communities of Practice*, 2005) are core ideas in the discussion. Most importantly, the group maintains we are stronger together than separate, and intends to create an organizational structure where silos no longer exist.
- The Technology Committee has selected a private vendor to undertake an analysis of campus technology platforms, staffing, training, and other technology-related matters. A major piece of this analysis is the college’s capacity to respond to growing demand for technology support, and its preparedness for expansion of online instruction. In preparation for such expansion, the college’s Teaching-Learning Center is re-establishing an online training component to ensure continued professional development of faculty.

- The college has developed a risk manager position, and is currently recruiting this position. In the year following the 2005 visit, the college addressed structural and staffing needs in technology support, maintenance and operations, and human resources as reported in previous progress reports. In addition, a systematic process was developed and implemented for prioritizing faculty hires based on established college goals and priorities. This year's efforts resulted in 7 new faculty positions, which are currently being recruited: Counselor, Librarian, instructors in Allied Health, Aviation, Child Development, Fire Technology, and Basic Skills.

Evaluation/Analysis

The college has evaluated and addressed its organizational structure and staffing needs consistent with new shared governance policies and procedures. Moreover, during the re-organization discussion, the college community identified core principles to maintain as the new structure was created. The final organizational structure is truly a culmination of many hours of dialogue, and reflects the principles and values for the redesign. In this way, progress on established college-wide priorities should be facilitated.

Planning Agenda

- Conduct department chair elections consistent with new organizational structure in May 2008. Develop and deliver summer academy to orient and train new department chairs to ensure empowerment.
- Implement new college organizational structure as of July 1, 2008.
- Continue recruiting and hiring efforts for the following positions: Counselor; Librarian; Instructor, Allied Health; Instructor, Aviation; Instructor, Child Development; Instructor, Fire Technology; Instructor, Basic Skills; Helpdesk Technician; Sign Language Services Interpreter II; Sign Language Services Interpreter I; Senior Instructional Assistant - Math & Science (50%); Dean of Instruction, Humanities and Arts.
- Evaluate recommendations derived from technology audit with respect to structure and staffing in the areas of technology services and management information systems. Develop, recruit, and hire positions in those areas as deemed feasible.

List of Supporting Evidence

- Summary of Project Synergy (new college organizational structure)
- Recruiting announcements for current job openings.

Recommendation 4: Financial Resources

“The team recommends that the college’s institutional planning be reviewed so that it reflects a realistic assessment of its financial resources, the development of additional financial resources through public/private partnerships, and the management of expenditures. The team further recommends that the college, to ensure long term financial stability, clearly identifies appropriate resources and plans for full payment of the 1997 Certificate of Participation (Standard IIID.1b, 1c, 2c, 3).

Progress and Accomplishments

As we write this update, the Governor’s budget reductions for 2008-2009 looms large over us. We are planning to use our new PRAISE process (**P**rogram **R**evue, **A**llocations and **I**nstitutional **S**trategies for **E**xcellence) as a tool for prioritizing budget allocations for 2008-2009. Along with the newly reformed shared governance Finance/Budget and Planning Committee, the administration will work toward a comprehensive annual process to include all areas of the college. A new component has been added for the first time that is specific to program review in Student Services and campus support areas.

- In developing the 5-year budget, the college has relied on the newly adopted Vision, Values, Mission and Goals (Board Policy 1200) to guide decisions. In addition, Budget Assumptions have been adopted to guide decisions for the difficult budget year ahead.
- This year’s program review and planning cycle is guided by the new Administrative Procedure 1201, Institutional Effectiveness. The rationale for any budget-related decisions “must systematically integrate the above priorities in deliberating and deriving any conclusions relevant to that process.”
- The VVCCD Board recently authorized refinancing of the 1997 Certificates of Participation (COP). In addition, the Board has authorized a survey of the community to determine the feasibility of a successful general obligation bond campaign on the November 2008 ballot. Should the college pursue a bond, the COP obligation would be eliminated and key elements of our educational master plan would be facilitated, such as a center on the west side.
- A proposal is being developed for a senior housing and restaurant project and hotel convention center in partnership with local business partners.

Evaluation/Analysis

The college’s institutional planning processes have included an annual cycle of program review, planning, and budget augmentation that is linked to its educational master plan. Still to be determined are processes for linking the annual process to budget development. That notwithstanding, great strides made in re-defining shared governance have contributed to a campus climate characterized by open dialogue among constituency leadership, increased communication across the campus, and broad-based participation in the college’s most important decisions.

Planning Agenda

- Complete this year's program review, planning, and budget augmentation cycle.
- Revise 5-year budget plan once State situation is clarified.

List of Supporting Evidence

- Budget Assumptions
- Five-Year Budget Plan
- Board minutes authorizing refinance of the 1997 Certificates of Participation.
- Copy, Community Survey

Recommendation 5: Purpose/Function of Campus Committees

“The team recommends that the purpose and functional relationship of campus committees, and their membership, be clearly defined to advance the mission and goals of the institution. Furthermore, the college should eliminate the duplication of committees and committee work (Standard IVA.2, IVA.2a, IVA.5).

Progress and Accomplishments

- New policies were adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 13, 2007 to confirm the college’s commitment to empowerment, better decision-making and institutional improvement structures: Board Policy 1201, Shared Governance; and Board Policy 1202, Institutional Effectiveness. Also at the meeting, an existing policy on planning was revised to reflect current legislation (Board Policy 3250, Institutional Planning) and ensure consistency with the new governance-related policies.
- Accompanying the new policies are administrative procedures drafted by the College Council and President’s Cabinet to guide effective implementation. To date, committee assignments have been made, and some committees have met or have scheduled their initial meeting during which a chair will be elected and the charge reviewed. During the committee formation process, faculty and staff representatives on College Council were faced with a strong showing of volunteers. In some cases, there were more volunteers than there were committee spaces available—a rare occurrence in an organization where ordinarily 20% of the workforce accomplishes 80% of the work. This stands as a testament to the improved morale and willingness found across the campus to be part of our improvement efforts.
- Formal administrative procedures have been drafted and presented to College Council for review and discussion: Administrative Procedure 3280, Grants Development and Administration, and Administrative Procedure 7120(a), Interim Appointment to Vacant Management Positions.
- Shared governance committees have convened, clarified their charge, and established meeting patterns. A website was created to disseminate committee work to the community. In addition, many committees established “team spaces” on the college’s Novell Teaming & Conferencing System. This has enabled committee members to share documents, have discussions, and in some cases conduct surveys to gather information relative to their charge.

Evidence/Analysis

The college has evaluated the purpose, functional relationship, and membership of campus committees in connection with the re-design of its shared governance policy and procedures. Each committee has a clear charge, and communication lines between and among committees and College Council are open and fluid. While no committees are charged with the same tasks, discussions can overlap at times. For example, the Faculty Senate Budget Committee has purview of instructional supply funding; their decisions and priorities become a part of the

discussion for the Fiscal/Budget and Planning Committee, which has responsibility for the entire college budget.

Planning Agenda

- Provide training in Novell Teaming & Conferencing System to enable options for execution of committee work and ensure open communication among members.
- At year's end, evaluate shared governance procedures, committee focus, work and membership to determine areas in need of improvement.

List of Supporting Evidence

- Board Policy 1201, Shared Governance (and accompanying administrative procedure)
- Board Policy 1202, Institutional Effectiveness (and accompanying administrative procedure)
- Board Policy 3250, Institutional Planning
- Administrative Procedure 3280, Grants Development and Administration
- Administrative Procedure 7120(a), Interim Appointment to Vacant Management Positions
- Committee website: www.vvc.edu/offices/president/committees.shtml
- College Council Agendas & Minutes: www.vvc.edu/offices/president/CC_docs.shtml

Recommendation 6: Campus Climate

“The team recommends that the college establishes a positive campus climate that embodies a culture of respect, civility, dialogue, and trust designed to improve institutional decision-making, planning, and effectiveness (Standard IB.1; Standard IIIA.1d, IIIA.4, IIIA.4c; and Standard IVA.2, IVA2.a, IVA.3, IVA.5).

Progress and Accomplishments

As reported in the October 2007 progress report, the college has worked together to transform the organizational culture by improving its shared governance policies and procedures. Under the leadership of our new chief executive officer, key members of the college’s constituency groups have reviewed the college’s policies and procedures related to shared governance and have created new ways of participating in decision-making. Accomplishments have included the following:

- New policies were adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 13, 2007 to confirm the college’s commitment to better decision-making and institutional improvement structures: Board Policy 1201, Shared Governance; and Board Policy 1202, Institutional Effectiveness. Also at the meeting, an existing policy on planning was revised to reflect current legislation (Board Policy 3250, Institutional Planning) and ensure consistency with the new governance-related policies.
- Accompanying the new policies are administrative procedures drafted by the College Council and President’s Cabinet to guide effective implementation. Committee assignments have been made, and some committees have met or have scheduled their initial meeting during which a chair will be elected and the charge reviewed.
- During the committee formation process, faculty and staff representatives on College Council were faced with a strong showing of volunteers. In some cases, there were more volunteers than there were committee spaces available—a rare occurrence in an organization where ordinarily 20% of the workforce accomplishes 80% of the work. This stands as a testament to the improved morale and willingness found across the campus to be part of our improvement efforts.
- Open dialogue takes place regularly in the Faculty Senate and in various Senate committees. These committees include a permanent place on the agenda for an administrator or any guest—including the college president, Board members, or the president of the Associated Student Body.
- Managers and Human Resources employees attended a mandatory training on employment, education, and labor law to equip these key individuals with the knowledge necessary to facilitate positive staff interactions. Other training opportunities focusing on key issues such as ethics are offered at frequent intervals and can be accessed online. Even the Board of Trustees attended ethics training at their January 2008 retreat.

- In collaboration with the Title V Hispanic Serving Institutions grant, the college has cultivated a campus climate supportive of the needs of diverse students and staff. Numerous workshops focusing on understanding issues of diversity and equity followed a *train-the-trainers* format, resulting in nine faculty members who will serve as trainers for their peers in Spring and Fall 2008.
- To foster a campus climate supportive of equity and diversity, the college has sponsored numerous activities and cultural events that contribute to the celebration and appreciation of multicultural perspectives.

Evaluation/Analysis

The college community has rallied around the efforts to become a more inclusive institution. This is particularly evidenced in the consistently high attendance rates at committee meetings where motivated collegial dialogue has spurred additional planning agendas for the college. New respect is being generated and trust is beginning to be restored. Recent comments by college leaders (faculty, board, and staff) during board meetings and other venues reflect these positive changes:

“...I am happy to report, we are all at the table, processing and reorganizing how we do things around here. We are collaborating and succeeding at a phenomenal rate. Collaboration is the ticket. We are working together again ...” (Mike Smith, President, Local Chapter, California Teachers Association, September 11, 2007).

“...For the first time, I’ve seen the respect among everyone, open communication and a common goal. All of this has created a better learning environment for every student on campus. There is a change on campus and everyone seems to be on the same page for the first time...” (Heena Mehra, Associated Student Body President, October 11, 2007).

“...We have a new working relationship that I feel is very successful right now. We’re feeling respect and I think it is mutual with all of the other administrative staff. We feel like we are all working together...” (Debra Blanchard, Faculty Senate Vice President, October 9, 2007).

“...All groups were represented in the Shared Governance. I want to congratulate you all in coming together to do this because I think this is a good way to go...” (Joe Range, President, VVC Governing Board, September 11, 2007).

...“We are hoping this is the beginning of a better relationship with the District, with the administration of the campus, and with the president. Especially for accreditation we need to be there for the students and we anticipate that the morale of the classified employees and just the whole atmosphere will change because we have a better working relationship...” (Arlene Greene, President, California School Employee Association or CSEA, August 14, 2007).

Overall, the impact of activities on campus climate can be seen on multiple levels across the college—from staff-to-staff interactions, to decision-making processes and planning. For example, board meetings are conducted with more efficiency and with less rancor; community workshops have been held before every board meeting on important topics like accreditation and student success; and a collaborative process for determining new faculty hires for the coming academic year was successfully implemented. The earnestness and effort put forth collectively by the college to ensure a more productive and pleasant work environment is intended to have profound, lasting, and sustainable impact. With a renewed campus climate, we continue to build a new future together.

Planning Agenda

- In connection with updates to our Student Equity Plan and efforts by the Diversity Committee to profile the college’s workforce, a survey of campus climate will be administered to members of the college’s workforce during Fall 2008.
- Through the survey, the college will (a) determine whether re-inventing shared governance practices on campus has had a positive impact on employees’ satisfaction with their work environment; (b) monitor whether dissemination of summary notes from Cabinet and other committee meetings has improved the quality of communications; and (c) gauge whether improvements to “respect, civility, dialogue, and trust” can be seen as a result of recent efforts.
- We will continue to test our new shared governance practices as established by Board adoption of BP 1201 and 1202 through ongoing committees meetings and personal collaboration.

List of Supporting Evidence

- Agenda and minutes to date, College Council
- Agenda and minutes to date, other shared governance committees
- Board Policy 1201, Shared Governance
- Administrative Procedures 1201, Shared Governance Structures and Responsibilities
- Board Policy 3250, Institutional Planning

Recommendation 7: Evaluation of Leadership Roles

“The team recommends that the college evaluates the role of college-wide leadership in institutional governance and implements the results of the evaluation to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of organizational processes, practices, and decision-making. Furthermore, the college should eliminate the current leadership configuration of the Academic Senate and the Faculty Union (Standard IVA.1, IVA2.a, IVA.2b, IVA.3, IVA.5).

Progress and Accomplishments

- Faculty Senate and the full-time faculty union have been separate entities since 2006, with separate leadership.
- The new chief executive officer for the college, Dr. Robert Silverman, commenced his charge on July 9, 2007. Under his leadership and working closely with the various constituency groups, shared governance policies and procedures have been completely revamped.
- The role of the Faculty Senate has been clarified within the new policies (BP 1201 and BP 1202). The senate committees are being evaluated for update, and each will be empowered as appropriate.
- Consistent with the intention of the District to strengthen the role of the Faculty Senate, State law governing consultation, and good practices in higher education, the regular Faculty Senate report at the Board of Trustees meetings was moved to the beginning of the monthly meeting without the time limitation imposed on public testimony. This is a significant change from prior practice and is intended to express a renewed professional respect between administration and faculty.
- The College Council continues to address the college’s organization to ensure that the structure facilitates empowerment of decisions-makers closest to the classroom and/or direct delivery of services to students (see response to Recommendation 3 herein). The discussions at the Council meetings have been very stimulating and demonstrate a willingness to change and articulate our commitment to students in new ways.

Evaluation/Analysis

Through these actions, the College Council was empowered to re-conceptualize shared governance, participatory decision-making, and institutional planning—including how these concepts should be implemented. More importantly, the College Council participated in shaping its own future and, as a result, is authorized to recommend policy changes directly to the Board of Trustees (see Administrative Procedure 1201). Strong college-wide committees are critical to empowerment and participation by all staff and students, and are defined in the new Shared Governance policy (Board Policy 1201). These committees are the forum which ensures the participatory function of the college on matters of shared importance.

Planning Agenda

- Ensure that leadership roles are evaluated as part of the campus climate survey.
- Continue development of CEO evaluation with report to community in May or June, 2008.
- Develop evaluation for Board members with report during summer Board Retreat.
- Review and refine as necessary evaluations of department chairs and administrators.

List of Supporting Evidence

- Management Evaluation Process
- Management Goals and Expectations
- Management/Supervisor Performance Evaluation Form
- Management/Supervisor Self-Evaluation Form

Overall Summary

As a whole, the planning agenda items described herein will facilitate our continuing efforts to cultivate our emerging culture of empowerment. A solid foundation has been laid via our successfully addressing the Commission's concerns expressed in its letter of June 29, 2007 relative to (1) creating an environment for empowerment and (2) establishing governance structures for working together. The college has paved a road to a new beginning—leaving behind the turmoil of the past. Fundamental to this journey is careful attention to our newly established policies and procedures for participatory decision-making, and the re-organization of college work units. Both have been crafted with intentionality and purpose, ensuring consistency with our core values. As we specify, implement, and evaluate these plans the college creates for itself many opportunities to discuss issues openly, to norm expectations, and to improve upon how we serve students.