

**SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FOLLOW-UP EVALUATION TEAM REPORT**

**Solano Community College
4000 Suisun Valley Road
Fairfield, CA 94534-3197**

**A Report Prepared for the
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
of the
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Solano Community College on November 13, 2012**

Team Chair	Title	Institution
James W. Hottos	Retired President	Palo Verde College
Team Members		
Thomas Jones	Information Services Specialist	College of the Desert
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DATE: December 1, 2012

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

FROM: James W. Hottois, Team Chair

SUBJECT: Report of Follow-Up Visit Team to Solano Community College

Introduction

Solano Community College underwent a comprehensive accreditation review in the fall of 2011. In January of 2012 the Commission took action to place the college on Warning status and instructed the college to take action to “completely resolve the deficiencies noted in Recommendations 2, 3, and 8 [of the 2011 team report] which were originally noted by the 2005 evaluation team, by **October 2012.**”

As required by the Commission, Solano Community College submitted a follow-up report on October 15, 2012 addressing the nine recommendations contained in the Commission’s Action Letter. The report was followed by a visit on November 13, 2012 by the present evaluation team consisting of Dr. James Hottois (Chair), Mr. Thomas Jones (a member of the October 2011 Team), and Mr. Brian Thieboux. This document is a report of that visit.

Prior to its visit, the evaluation team studied the 2011 Team Report, the Commission’s Action Letter, Solano Community College’s October 2012 Report to the Commission and the evidence which the college supplied as background to the report including Solano College’s 2011 Self-Study Report. During its visit, the team interviewed or met with approximately 100 members of the college community including administrators, faculty, staff members, students, and members of the Board of Trustees. During its visit, the team also reviewed additional written evidence provided to it by the College.

Solano Community College did an excellent job preparing for our visit. The physical facilities for our visit were excellent. Any request we made was met quickly and completely. We were made to feel totally at home by all those whom we met.

As noted by previous visiting teams, this team found that there is a productive dialogue involving all constituents at the college. We found a college that is confident about its future and mindful of its past. As with previous teams, this evaluation team found that Solano Community College is committed to meeting the Commission’s Standards.

Our report speaks to each of the nine recommendations which resulted from the October 2011 Comprehensive Visit. However, we gave special attention to Recommendations 2, 3 and 8 which the Commission instructed to the Solano Community College to “completely resolve” by October 2012. The Recommendations were:

Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College modify its mission statement in order to identify its intended student population and its commitment to achieving student learning. The College should consistently use the same mission statement in all documents and publications. Additionally, the mission statement should be used by the college as a primary force in decisions made by the College. (Standards I.A, 1-4; IV.B.1.b)

Recommendation 2 (to be met by October 15, 2012):

As noted in recommendations 1, 2, and 3 from the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, and in order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College should build upon its progress in developing an integrated planning process in order to ensure that:

- **processes are documented and consistently implemented for all college planning**
- **the various college plans are clearly linked to each other and the interrelationship between the plans is clearly articulated**
- **program reviews are regularly assessed for quality and incorporated into resource allocation processes**
- **all major resource allocation is clearly linked to college planning, including hiring, enrollment management, and bond projects**
- **integration of planning and resource allocation occurs in a timely manner**
- **planning processes are widely understood and followed by the entire campus community**
- **planning processes are ongoing and systematic and continue to be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary**
- **There is broad participation and meaningful engagement from all members of the College community in the planning processes.**

All planning processes should be clearly linked to fulfillment of the College mission and strategic goals, and to support continuous improvement of student learning and student success. (Standards I.B.1-7, II.A.2.e-f, II.B.3.a, III.A.6, III.B.2, II.B.4, III.C.2, III.D.1.a-d, IV.A.1, IV.B.2.b), IV.B.2.b.)

Recommendation 3 (to be met by October 15, 2012):

As noted in Recommendation 4 of the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, in order to meet the standards and achieve proficiency in achieving student learning outcomes by Fall 2012, the team recommends that the College:

- Accelerate its schedule for the completion and assessment of effective and measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses, instructional programs, and the institution; and that the development and assessment is faculty driven.
- Accelerate its schedule for the completion and assessment of effective and measurable SLOs or service area outcomes (SAOs) for student services and other operational services.
- Provide SLO/SAO training for all instructional, student services, and other staff.

(Standards I.B.3, II.A.1.c, II A.2.a, IIA.2.b, II A.2.f, II.A.2.g, II B.4, II.C.2, ER10)

Recommendation 4:

In order to meet the standards and to ensure institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that resources and support for institutional research be made available to provide necessary and timely data and information for program review, evaluation of institutional effectiveness, documentation of assessment results, and tracking of planning processes. The results of these efforts should be used to demonstrate that the institution regularly uses data in all integrated planning processes and has developed a culture of evidence in all decision making (Standards: I.B,II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.3, IV.B.2.b)

Recommendation 5:

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College expand its data collection, analysis and planning related to meeting the needs and fostering the success of an increasingly diverse student population. Student and staff equity and diversity plans should be fully integrated with the College's planning processes and should include strategies geared toward attracting a diverse pool of qualified applicants able to contribute to the success of the College' student population. (Standard II.A.1.a, II.A.2.d, II.B.3.d, III.A.4.a-c)

Recommendation 6:

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College develop mechanisms and learning support systems to ensure that students enrolled in distance education courses are achieving stated learning outcomes at a level comparable with students enrolled in onsite programs and courses. (Standard II.A.1.b-c)

Recommendation 7

In order to meet the standards and increase institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving student learning outcomes. (Standards, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, III.A.1.c)

Recommendation 8 (to be met by October 15, 2012):

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College develop a plan to provide equitable access to appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students who are taking classes at the Vacaville and Vallejo Centers and online. Increased funding and staffing for the libraries at the two centers should be a priority. This plan should also include a regular evaluation of the services. (Standards II.B.3.a; II.C.1)

Recommendation 9:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College develop a clear, written code of ethics for all its personnel. (Standard III.A.1.d)

**THIS TEAM’S FINDINGS, ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
REGARDING EACH RECOMMENDATION**

What follows are the Current Team’s Findings and the Analysis of those Findings for each recommendation. Where appropriate we have referenced the evidence which we reviewed or interviews which support each finding.

Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College modify its mission statement in order to identify its intended student population and its commitment to achieving student learning. The College should consistently use the same mission statement in all documents and publications. Additionally, the mission statement should be used by the college as a primary force in decisions made by the College. (Standards I.A, 1-4; IV.B.1.b)

Findings and Analysis

In response to this recommendation, the college's Process Evaluation and Review Team took leadership in evaluating and revising Solano Community College's Mission Statement. After studying other colleges' Mission Statements, appropriate state regulations, and the Commission's Standards, a first draft was finalized in May of 2012. By the end of the 2011-12 Academic Year the revised Mission Statement had been reviewed by several of the college's constituent groups (Minutes of PERT and Shared Governance Council).

With the beginning of the new academic year, the revised Mission Statement was submitted to the entire college with a request for review and comment. It was also submitted to other discrete constituent groups (Minutes of PERT, Academic Senate, and Cabinet). At the time that the October 15, 2012 Report to the Commission was prepared, dialogue was continuing on proposed changes to the draft Mission Statement. According to the Superintendent/President, the revised Mission Statement is scheduled to be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at its December 5, 2012 meeting.

The revised Mission Statement is explicit in its identification of the students who Solano Community College serves. Similarly, it is clear in stating the college's commitment to student learning.

The October, 2011 Evaluation Team found some confusion in Solano Community College's publication. In some places the brief Mission Statement appeared. In other places, the Mission Statement seemed to include means by which the mission would be achieved. In addition, the 2011 Evaluation Team noted that the college's website did not contain the Mission Statement. The current team found the current Mission Statement to be clearly defined within the college's website, the current schedule of classes, and the college's catalogue. The Mission Statement is also posted conspicuously throughout Solano Community College. The posted Mission Statement matches the published Mission Statements. We found that the confusion observed by the October, 2011 Evaluation Team no longer exists.

Both Recommendation 1 and Recommendation 2 speak to the need for Solano Community College's Mission Statement to play a central role in institutional planning and decision-making. Recommendation 1 stated: "...the mission statement should be used by the college as a primary

force in decisions made by the college.” Recommendation 2 stated: “All planning processes should be clearly linked to the fulfillment of the College mission....” This team found that planning processes are appropriately tied to the College’s Strategic Plan which, in turn, is tied to the Mission Statement. Thus, the Strategic Plan serves to place the Mission Statement is the lynchpin of the planning process. This is discussed in greater detail in the Findings and Analysis for Recommendation 2.

Our interviews with various college officials led us to conclude that Solano Community College intends to begin the revision of its 2010-2013 Strategic Plan at the beginning of the Spring, 2013 semester. It is likely that this will be a new strategic plan. The revised Mission Statement will be in place to guide the development of the new Strategic Plan. The college intends to have the new Strategic Plan in place at the beginning of the 2013 Academic Year.

Conclusions

The college has taken timely and appropriate steps to resolve the issues included in Recommendation 1. The Mission Statement is being revised in a well-organized and highly participatory fashion involving all of Solano Community College’s constituent groups. The revised Mission Statement will appropriately reference who the college’s students are and the importance of their learning. The college’s publications consistently present the same mission statement. And, it is clear that the Mission Statement drives the college’s Strategic Plan which, in turn, serves as the lynchpin for integrated planning. The Board of Trustees had not considered the revised Mission Statement at the time of our visit.

The team concludes that Solano Community College has partially met Recommendation 1

Recommendation 2 (to be met by October 15, 2012):

As noted in recommendations 1, 2, and 3 from the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, and in order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College should build upon its progress in developing an integrated planning process in order to ensure that:

- **processes are documented and consistently implemented for all college planning**
- **the various college plans are clearly linked to each other and the interrelationship between the plans is clearly articulated**
- **program reviews are regularly assessed for quality and incorporated into resource allocation processes**
- **all major resource allocation is clearly linked to college planning, including hiring, enrollment management, and bond projects**
- **integration of planning and resource allocation occurs in a timely manner**
- **planning processes are widely understood and followed by the entire campus community**
- **planning processes are ongoing and systematic and continue to be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary**
- **There is broad participation and meaningful engagement from all members of the College community in the planning processes.**

All planning processes should be clearly linked to fulfillment of the College mission and strategic goals, and to support continuous improvement of student learning and student success. (Standards I.B.1-7, II.A.2.e-f, II.B.3.a, III.A.6, III.B.2, II.B.4, III.C.2, III.D.1.a-d, IV.A.1, IV.B.2.b), IV.B.2.b.)

Findings and Analysis

The October, 2011 Evaluation Team recognized that, at the time of its visit, the College had an Integrated Planning Process in place. The 2011 team described the process as “carefully considered and well-designed.” However, the 2011 team was concerned that the process was new and had not yet completed a cycle of assessment and planning, and thus was not yet proven. (2011 Confidential Report, page 25.)

At the time of the visit by the 2011 Evaluation Team, the College had begun using its new process for “Recourse-Based Planning,” had put in place a means for evaluating the process by the Process Evaluation and Review Team, and had “a very thorough planning manual” in place. (2011, Confidential Report, page 25.) Following the October, 2011 visit, the College determined the prioritization process needed to be improved. The Integrated Planning Process was revised to strengthen the College’s existing Strategic and Operational goals and their integration with fiscal resources allocation (Resource-based Planning Report).

The College identified four components in strengthening its planning process:

1. As noted in the Report of the October, 2011 Evaluation Team, the College had in place a process for Resource-Based Planning and a Resource Allocation Guide. The College revised that process to more tightly align it with the College's various plans and allocated \$500,000 from a variety of sources to fund "strategic proposals." Since this followed a \$100,000 allocation the previous year, this gave the process more credibility with constituent groups.
2. The College revised the process for allocation of resources for hiring as described in the "Draft Faculty and Non-Faculty Staffing Allocation Process." Interviews during our visit confirmed that hiring decisions are now firmly tied to plans. This is a significant change.
3. The October, 2011 Evaluation Team found that the quality of Program Reviews was "highly variable." In response, the College has developed a new "Program Review Handbook" and is revising its program review forms to assure more consistency in the process. The objective is to assure that Program Review is tightly integrated with the resource allocation processes described in 1 and 2 above. One purpose of the new "Planning and Assessment Database," described below, is to bring greater consistency to Program Reviews.
4. The key element for integrating all of the College's planning processes is the development of a "Planning and Assessment Database." This database will assure that all plans and planning data are in a consistent format and are available in a single location. As part of the "roll-out" of the new database. Our team confirmed through interviews and review of documents that the College has begun training its staff to both enter data and to access data already available in the Planning and Assessment Database. The College expects that the relationships between various plans and planning processes will be made explicit.

The Finance and Budget Planning Advisory Council and the Shared Governance Council approved the revised Integrated Planning Process (FABPAC Minutes, 2/1/12: President's Retreat Notes: 8/2/12). This improvement established resource planning as the main method of dispersal of discretionary funds. Our interviews with College personnel provided evidence that, since the process has been used twice during a time of budget stringency, staff now view it as the process by which resources will be allocated. Further assessment of the effectiveness of the Integrated Planning Process allowed for a more effective allocation of resources (Pert Committee Minutes: 2/28/12).

The new Integrated Planning Process has refined the College's hiring and planning procedures by requiring a formal analysis and prioritization of need for all new positions, and integration with the Program Review and Unit Planning Processes (PERT Committee Minutes: 3/28/12 and interviews with College personnel).

As already noted, the College is in the process of developing an integrated Planning and Assessment Database. When it is completed, the database will: 1) collect planning and assessment data as well as MIS and Banner course and student performance data and present it

for faculty and staff review and analysis. Additionally, it will assist the College in linking the various plans and their relationship to one another. Moreover, it ties Program Review to resource allocation and the budgetary process through the Unit Planning Process. A data warehouse brings together course schedule data and MIS data tables, allowing the College to collect timely data that will allow for longitudinal analysis of key performance indicators. Such key indicators include, Student Demographics, Enrollment patterns, and persistence, retention and success rates. This data is then made available to all stakeholders allowing them to reference the various datasets when making decisions for future program offerings as well as other actions in support of the College's Mission and Goals. The Team reviewed these databases (See Recommendation 4, "Findings and Analysis" below) and was impressed by the work that has been completed.

At the time of our visit the database structure had been completed. The collection of current and historical data is going to be an ongoing continuous process. To effectively train the faculty and staff on the use and management of this database, the Institutional Research team conducted twelve workshops to ensure accurate complete data collection. Training opportunities and widely circulated materials have also been presented on the retrieval and analysis of key performance data. As evidenced by various email messages as well as discussions with staff members, these opportunities have been presented through faculty flex days in addition to greater availability of online data resources. During interviews with the Research Director, he understands the continued training and support of faculty and staff relative to accessing and referencing the various databases is going to be a continuous process. He plans to make use of FLEX days as well as open sessions during the academic year, moving forward, to offer training to the college community in order to keep all stakeholders informed as to what new data is available at the time. Our interviews with other college staff members confirm that information from the database is already being used in planning processes.

A less obvious outcome of the training process has been better clarifying to the College's constituent groups the linkages between the various plans and planning processes. This was confirmed during our interviews with various groups at the College

The College has developed a process for linking the various College plans. That process outlines the interrelationships between each plan: Program Reviews are completed on a four year schedule with annual updates. The results of each Program Review provide the basis of the Division Report, which links all requests for resource allocations to the Unit Report. The Unit Reports come together to drive the budgetary process. This process is completed annually in accordance with the budgetary approval process set by the College's Board of Trustees.

College staff members affirmed to our Team that the many training sessions provided to all college constituents, as well as the participation by the various committees, has improved the integration of planning and allocation processes, and has increased broad stakeholder participation in them.

Conclusions

The College has made excellent progress in revising its already robust planning processes to address the deficiencies noted in Recommendation 2 as well as its own assessments of the planning process. As a result of that assessment, the college instituted adjustments to the process and identified new goals for the plan during the coming year. The college has already identified issues to be addressed and areas to be strengthened. This process has demonstrated a continuation of the efforts noted by the October, 2011 Evaluation Team to sustain continuous quality improvement.

The Team concludes that the College has taken significant steps to resolve the issues noted in Recommendation 2 and to build on the work which had been done previously. However, there has not been enough time for the College to complete an annual cycle of Program Reviews thus making it impossible to evaluate the overall impact of the changes that have been made.

Recommendation 3 (to be met by October 15, 2012):

As noted in Recommendation 4 of the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, in order to meet the standards and achieve proficiency in achieving student learning outcomes by Fall 2012, the team recommends that the College:

- **Accelerate its schedule for the completion and assessment of effective and measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses, instructional programs, and the institution; and that the development and assessment is faculty driven.**
- **Accelerate its schedule for the completion and assessment of effective and measurable SLOs or service area outcomes (SAOs) for student services and other operational services.**
- **Provide SLO/SAO training for all instructional, student services, and other staff.**

(Standards I.B.3, II.A.1.c, II A.2.a, IIA.2.b, II A.2.f, II.A.2.g, II B.4, II.C.2, ER10)

Findings and Analysis

The College appears to have made significant progress in satisfying Recommendation #3 and in achieving associated standards, especially with regard to establishing SLOs for courses, programs, service areas and the institution as a whole, and performing assessments of them. The College has established systems for the collection and analysis of SLOs in a central database, formulated “curriculum maps” for programs, provided training in SLO identification and assessment, appointed faculty members to serve as SLO coordinators, developed an effective organizational structure in the form of the SLO Committee and completed assessments on nearly all courses and a significant portion of programs, service area outcomes and institutional outcomes.

The College submitted the Status Report on Student Learning Outcomes Implementation on October 10, 2012, required by ACCJC, stating that 88.5% of courses had been assessed; 59% of programs had been assessed; 73% of learning and support services had been assessed and 50% (2 of the four institutional learning outcomes) had been assessed as of November 2012. The team verified these accomplishments by reviewing a sampling of assessments submitted to the SLO database.

Among the evidence examined by the team were results of the Institutional Learning Outcomes Survey (October 2012) on two of the four institutional outcomes: global awareness and personal responsibility; Status report on SLO Implementation (October 2012); Outcomes Assessment Reports for various service areas (Admissions and Records, Counseling, DSPPS, Children’s Programs, EOPS, Tutoring Center); SLO Database (courses and academic programs);

Conclusions

The team concludes that the College has accelerated its efforts leading to the assessment of student learning outcomes (courses, programs and institutional) and service area outcomes, and has provided training in these areas.

The team concludes that Solano has fully met the expectations of Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 4:

In order to meet the standards and to ensure institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that resources and support for institutional research be made available to provide necessary and timely data and information for program review, evaluation of institutional effectiveness, documentation of assessment results, and tracking of planning processes. The results of these efforts should be used to demonstrate that the institution regularly uses data in all integrated planning processes and has developed a culture of evidence in all decision making(Standards: I.B,II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.3, IV.B.2.b)

Findings and Analysis

Since the comprehensive team visit in October, 2011, the college has invested personnel and resources in training and implementing the new Banner system. This system replaced the System that was limited in its ability to produce comprehensive and accurate data and statistical reports. Through public forums and one-on-one interviews with faculty and staff, the team confirmed that prior to changing to Banner, the faculty and leadership considered institutional data to be unreliable.

In September 2011, a Director of Institutional Research joined the leadership team at the college. The College supplemented its Institutional Research team by hiring a Research Analyst in January 2012. In this short period of time, the Institutional Research team has provided significant training on the Banner system, and has begun to produce data reports, and to develop databases and data warehouses in order to support planning and the decision-making process of the college. As noted earlier (see Recommendation 2) the team found that The Institutional Research team has already implemented a “Planning and Assessment Database” to support decision-making throughout the College. The general feeling of the faculty and staff is that the current data resources provided by the Institutional Research Office are accurate and very helpful in development of processes and procedures moving forward.

The College’s Program Review reports are key documents in the College’s process for linking resources to program needs and the budget (PERT Committee Minutes: 6/24/12). The use of the new data reports has quickly become invaluable in assessing Program Reviews as well as their annual updates. The college has completed a cycle of Program Review for 11 of its programs. With better access to reliable data, the College is able to make more informed decisions as to budget and resource allocation. This new process is helping the college to more effectively use its resources to support student learning. Persons interviewed by the team point to the support they have received from the Institutional Research team as just one of many examples where the College has begun to regularly uses data in all integrated planning processes.

As an example of the new data-drive process: the English Department was able to use live data to assess the value of a co-requisite for a lab in the college's English-370 course. Utilizing the improved data, the department faculty discussed and assessed the value of the lab component of this class. Ultimately, the faculty decided to beta-test the course without the lab component. The student learning outcomes and supporting success rates indicated the lab component was not a factor in increasing student learning for that course. The college has since taken steps to remove the lab component from English-370.

In September 2012, the College purchased the Tableau and Crystal Reporting software. These two data management tools have allowed the College to format large amounts of data into reliable useful reports. Team members reviewed the College's Data warehouses and verified that significant improvements in data collection have taken place since the last team visit. As evidenced by discussions with various constituent groups, the experience and expertise of the Director of Research and his analyst are trusted by faculty, staff and administration. This trust is an important element in the culture of evidence which continues to develop at Solano Community College.

Conclusions

The College has acquired key personnel and advanced data query and reporting tools and improved its planning and resource allocation processes. As a result, the college is routinely using data in all integrated planning processes and to develop a culture of evidence in all its decision making. Moreover, the Team is impressed with, and recognizes, the wide-spread support of the Institutional Research department as it has quickly become an invaluable resource for reliable, consistent data.

The Team concludes that the college now meets the Standards cited in Recommendation 4 and has resolved the issues that are noted in Recommendation 4.

Recommendation 5:

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College expand its data collection, analysis and planning related to meeting the needs and fostering the success of an increasingly diverse student population. Student and staff equity and diversity plans should be fully integrated with the College's planning processes and should include strategies geared toward attracting a diverse pool of qualified applicants able to contribute to the success of the College' student population. (Standard II.A.1.a, II.A.2.d, II.B.3.d, III.A.4.a-c)

Findings and Analysis

After receiving this Recommendation from the 2011 visiting team, the College leadership determined the Institutional Research department needed to first hire a Research Analyst to augment the Research Department. As mentioned in the Findings and Analysis for Recommendation 4 above, this position was filled in January, 2012.

As stated in the Findings for Recommendation 4, the team verifies that the College has expanded its data collection pertaining to student demographics, persistence, retention, and success rates as well as other basic data reports. This data is used to inform policies and practices to improve academic achievement potential among all students. This process has yielded several proposals including the 2011-12 acquisition of services of the Center for Urban Education, an organization that works with educational institutions to address success gap of ethnic groups. The goal of this partnership has been to more conscientiously address the variety of academic needs of the diverse student body of the College.

The College's Student Equity Committee is in its second year of existence. The Committee has been charged with revising the college's current Student Equity Plan. The plan is currently in a draft form and, pending completion of a campus-wide review, will be implemented. The plan is data driven and is integrated with the planning process through the assessment of student needs. The Equity Plan was based upon evidence collected by the Student Equity Committee. In turn, the Equity plan has highlighted the need for additional data and analysis. According to the Director of Research, his department continues to work to develop the data for future consideration by the college stakeholders during their decision-making processes.

The College's Human Resources Department has examined past practices and the composition of previous applicant pools to determine its success in developing a diverse pool of applicants for positions that were filled. As a result of this assessment, the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (EIAC), working with the Human Resources Department, expanded the advertising sources the college uses in order to acquire a more diverse applicant pools (BSI Committee proposal for Student Equity). The College is satisfied it is moving in the right direction to build a more diverse employee base.

Conclusions

Through expanded data collection and analysis of student demographics and the development of an equity plan that is integrated with other College plans, the College has taken steps to ensure it meets the learning needs of a diverse student population. The improvement of employee recruitment procedures, similarly, will ensure greater diversity in applicant pools.

The Team concludes that the College partially meets the Standards cited in Recommendation 5 and has partially resolved the issues that are noted in the recommendation.

Recommendation 6:

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College develop mechanisms and learning support systems to ensure that students enrolled in distance education courses are achieving stated learning outcomes at a level comparable with students enrolled in onsite programs and courses. (Standard II.A.1.b-c)

Findings and Analysis

In response to this recommendation, Solano Community College cites several recent initiatives to address the recommendation and associated standards. The team reviewed progress on each initiative by examination of documents and interviews with faculty and administrators, with these findings:

- Faculty are required to list SLOs in online syllabi, just as they do for onsite syllabi. The Team verified this by reviewing several current course syllabi, for online as well as onsite courses, all of which prominently list student learning outcomes.
- Faculty is beginning to use SLO tracking tools in the College's learning management system for their online courses. The Team examined the SLO Database to verify this finding.
- The newly-created Academic Success Center is to provide tutoring support and workshops for students, and to make workshops available to online students via recorded videos and teleconferencing. The Team verified this finding by reviewing the Academic Success Center proposal and through interviews with staff members. The draft survey of distance education students' needs and interests also speaks to this matter,
- An Online Writing Center has been proposed. The team interviewed the English instructor who wrote the Writing Center proposal.
- Plans were formulated to provide for tutors "embedded" in online courses. The College is currently piloting the project with two sections of History 17. The Team verified through interviews with faculty members involved with the project.
- The program review process is currently being revised to provide for comparison of student success rates in online and onsite courses. The Team verified this by reviewing a sample of data comparisons on retention rates of online and onsite classes. We also viewed Tableau and reviewed the draft Program Review Handbook which includes items pertaining to distance education courses.
- A new system for reviewing and approving online courses to ensure compliance with ACCJC guidelines is being initiated. This was verified during an interview with the Distance Education Coordinator and by reviewing documents include "Strengthening the Distance Education Program at SCC" (October 2012) and the draft Program Review Handbook.

- Mandatory orientation, including an online option in addition to the face-to-face orientation was started Fall 2012. This was verified by interviews with appropriate staff and by reviewing the sample online orientation of History 17.

Additionally, the team reviewed “Development Timeline for the Solano College Distance Education Program” (November 9, 2012) a three-year plan with provisions for staffing/budget, academic quality, faculty development, technology/facilities, and student success/services.

Each of these initiatives is laudable and will, hopefully, help provide opportunities to achieve success and learning for online students comparable to the opportunities for onsite students.

Conclusions

To the extent that the Solano Community College has developed, as required by Recommendation 6, “mechanisms and learning support systems” to benefit online as well as onsite students, the College satisfactorily addresses the recommendation and associated standards. Because of the newness of most of these initiatives, it will be some time before the College can assess their effectiveness. Along those lines, the College should develop provisions for assessing each initiative vis-à-vis their expected results.

The College has partially addressed Recommendation 6 and is making significant progress toward resolution.

Recommendation 7

In order to meet the standards and increase institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the College develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving student learning outcomes. (Standards, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, III.A.1.c)

Findings and Analysis

The college's response to Recommendation #7 addresses two groups of employees, namely, teaching faculty, represented by the Solano College Faculty Association (SCFA), and educational administrators and managers, represented by the Administrative Leadership Group (ALG).

As for the SCFA actions, the document presented as evidence of compliance with the standards is an excerpt from Article 19, Workload, from the Collective Bargaining Agreement, July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2015. Article 19, Section 19.104, states: "All faculty will develop and assess SLOs/SAOs," page 61. This requirement, which applies to instructors, counselors, and librarians, is listed under the heading, "Work Assignments," and is among other work activity for which faculty are paid as part of their work obligations. It is evident that faculty are required to perform, and apparently are paid for performing, student learning outcomes assessments.

If there was a direct connection between SLO assessment and performance evaluations that connection would be evident in Section 4.3, "Areas of Instructional Evaluation," page 5 of the collective bargaining agreement between the College and its faculty. Section 4.3 lists among the areas to be evaluated "Area/Departmental Responsibilities and College-Wide Service." It does not explicitly call out SLO assessment.

The instrument used to evaluate faculty is the "Instructional Faculty Performance Evaluation," found in Appendix I of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Question #8, under the heading, "Area/Departmental Responsibilities and College-Wide Service," states that [faculty member] "Participates in Area and Departmental duties and responsibilities." The faculty member is rated 1, 2, 3, or N/A by the evaluator. However, the instrument does not identify SLO assessment as part of the evaluation component.

The team finds that the assessment of SLOs is insufficiently explicit to meet the standard as a component of faculty evaluations. The connection between the rule that "all faculty will develop and assess SLOs/SAOs" and the evaluation instrument is too tenuous and lacks the documentable rigor required of this standard.

As for the ALG, the educational administrators, the team reviewed minutes of the September 7, 2012 meeting of the ALG in which the organization agreed "to incorporate the development and implementation of Student Learning Outcomes in our evaluation process." The team also reviewed drafts of the "Educational Administrator's Report Card" and the "Educational

Administrator's Evaluation Comment Sheet." Both these forms are to be completed by persons working with or under the supervision of the administrator being evaluated. Both documents incorporate references to the support of student learning outcomes and assessment. At the time of the team visit, these forms were still in draft and had not yet received Board of Trustees' approval.

The team believes that the College's educational administrators have gone beyond what is required in the standards. While administrators are not directly involved in the production of student learning outcomes, they nonetheless supervise others who do, including instructors, counselors and librarians. Their evaluation procedures provide evidence that educational administrators are held accountable for supporting student learning outcomes assessment.

Conclusions

The team concludes that the assessment of SLOs is insufficiently explicit to meet the standard as a component of faculty evaluations. The College has shown, however, that support of SLO assessment is a component of the educational administrators' evaluations, though the evaluation forms were not yet approved by the Board of Trustees at the time of the visit.

The team concludes that the College has partially satisfied Recommendation 7.

Recommendation 8 (to be met by October 15, 2012):

In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College develop a plan to provide equitable access to appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students who are taking classes at the Vacaville and Vallejo Centers and online. Increased funding and staffing for the libraries at the two centers should be a priority. This plan should also include a regular evaluation of the services. (Standards II.B.3.a; II.C.1)

Findings and Analysis

As a result of this recommendation, the Virtual Student Services Subcommittee of the Student Services Committee prepared a “Plan to Provide Equitable Services to Center and Online Students.” This plan summarizes previous efforts at planning for services to students away from the Fairfield campus and points to future planning efforts. As noted previously in this report, Solano Community College is nearing the end of its existing strategic plan and, with the pending approval of a new Mission Statement, will begin the development of a new strategic plan at the beginning of 2013. This was verified through interviews with the Director of Research and Planning, the Student Services Committee and other College personnel.

Solano Community College’s 2010-2013 Strategic Plan includes numerous references to the provision of equitable access to appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students who are taking classes either online or at locations other than the main campus (Strategic Plan: Strategic Goals 2.3 and 2.4). The Strategic Plan includes reference to assessment strategies to determine whether the objectives are being met. The team was able to confirm that student services at the centers have been assessed on a regular basis. The college found that it was not generating enough useful data from those assessments and has a plan to implement revised assessment strategies.

The College has recognized weaknesses in its assessment of student services at the centers and is actively pursuing means to improve its assessment strategies. This was confirmed during our interviews with personnel from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. Prior to the 2011 Comprehensive Report and Visit, the college made organizational changes to assure that the service needs of students at the two centers have representation in appropriate governance structures. This was confirmed during a meeting with the Student Services Council. During our visit we interviewed numerous faculty, staff and administrators who are passionately committed to assuring that all of Solano Community College’s have equitable access to student services. Others whom we interviewed confirmed that commitment

Since the Comprehensive Visit in October, 2011, Solano Community College has implemented a number of activities to provide equitable access to students at its centers. Those activities

include continual training for the Student Services Generalists at the centers including cross-training during extended temporary assignments at the Fairfield campus. Most recently the college has implemented Virtual Student Services at the two centers thus providing face-to-face contacts between students and student service personnel via video conference. The Team was able to verify this during its meetings with the Student Services Council and with Center Deans (via video conference system used for advising).

In response to this recommendation and other observations by the 2011 Evaluation Team, Solano Community College undertook to expand and improve library services at its two centers. The vehicle for this expansion was a Strategic Proposal for Library Services and Facilities Expansion which the Team reviewed. As a result the space for the two libraries has been expanded and reconfigured. The hours of operations of the two center libraries were changed to better mesh with students' schedules, and funds were budgeted to supplement library holdings at the Centers. Textbooks for each course offered at a Center are now available on reserve at that Center's library. This was further verified during our meeting with the Center Deans.

The changes in the library have been reflected in other changes at the centers. Tutoring support has been improved with the trial implementation of an innovated "Embedded Tutoring program" which is described in greater detail in our Finding and Analysis for Recommendation 6 (above). As with the library changes, the Embedded Tutoring program was introduced through the Strategic Proposal process.

Conclusions

Solano Community College has been responsive to Recommendation 8. Since receiving the recommendations from the 2011 Evaluation Team, the college has notably expanded its services to students at its two centers. Before that visit the college had developed strategies to assure that student services for students at the centers would have a clear voice in the college's decision-making processes. In addition, the provision of equitable services for students at the centers is part of the college's strategic plan. Within the context of its strategic plan, the college has recognized the weaknesses in its current processes for evaluating student services at the centers and is in the process of improving those evaluation processes.

In response to this recommendation, Solano Community College undertook strategic initiatives to improve its library services and to improve tutoring at the Vacaville and Vallejo Centers.

The Team concludes that Solano Community College has responded fully to Recommendation 8 and now meets Standards II.B.3; II.B.3.a; and II.C.1.

Recommendation 9:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College develop a clear, written code of ethics for all its personnel. (Standard III.A.1.d)

Findings and Analysis

Soon after receiving the Commission's Action Letter in February, 2012, Solano Community College began work to develop a single code of ethics for all its personnel. An ad hoc committee which included representatives of all constituent groups had an initial draft of a Code of Ethics ready for review by the middle of the spring semester. The draft Code of Ethics was then shared with, and discussed by various constituent groups. This was verified by review of the minutes of the Code of Ethics Committee, the Superintendent/President's Cabinet, the Student Services Council and numerous emails. At the end of the spring semester the draft Code of Ethics was distributed to the entire college community via email. No further action was taken then because of the approaching end of the semester. However, concerns were raised that the document had not been appropriately vetted by the various constituent groups during the spring semester.

In the fall of 2012 a "reconstituted Code of Ethics Committee" reconvened. The reconstituted committee had an expanded and mostly new membership. The reconstituted committee developed a different and significantly longer document which it describes as a "Code of Professional Conduct." According to the College's October 15, 2012 Report to the Commission the code was continuing to be revised. During its visit, the Team found that the Code of Ethics developed in the spring and the Code of Conduct developed this fall continue to be discussed and compared. The Team understands from its meetings with various individuals and groups that there will be a third committee made up of individuals appointed by various constituencies. That committee will be charged with developing a consensus document to be presented to the Board of Trustees for review and final approval in the Spring of 2013.

Conclusions

Solano Community College has put a good deal of effort into developing a Code of Ethics. However, it appears that the process has bogged down. We conclude that the college needs to find a way out of the apparent impasse and set a clear deadline for approval of a Code of Ethics by the Board of Trustees. We conclude that Solano Community College does not have "a clear, written code of ethics for its personnel." We conclude that Solano Community College is working diligently to develop a code of ethics but has not yet completed the process at the time of our visit.