

ACCJC Follow-up Report

**Ohlone College
600 Mission Boulevard
Fremont, CA 94539**

**A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges**

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited Ohlone
College on April 29, 2009**

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Introduction and Overview

A peer evaluation team representing ACCJC conducted a comprehensive visit for reaccreditation to Ohlone College in March 2008. At its meeting of June 4-6, 2008, the Commission acted to place the Ohlone College on status of Warning, with Follow-up Reports and Visits within a year. The Commission divided the recommendations assigned to the college between those dealing directly with governance and roles and responsibilities for decision making among college constituencies, focusing on the Board of Trustees, and those dealing with program review, integrated planning, and employee evaluations. The former set of recommendations was assigned to a Follow-up Report (due by October 15) and Visit in November 2008 and the latter set assigned to a Follow-up Report (due by March 15) and Visit in April 2009. The Commission acted to accept the Follow-up Report from October, maintaining the status of Warning. While this report focuses on the recommendations dealing with program review, integrated planning, and employee evaluation, the evaluation team also revisited the recommendations dealing with governance.

The evaluation team found that the College had prepared well for the visit, both in preparing a comprehensive report, with complete, on-line documentation, and in scheduling meetings between team members and individuals and groups from the College, as requested by the evaluation team. The evaluation team found that the College, under leadership from a new president, had engaged all constituencies in developing the Follow-up Report, including the Board of Trustees. The evaluation team met with ten individuals, including immediate past and present presidents of the Board of Trustees, as well as the College Council, which now functions as the primary body for participatory governance.

While the interviews focused on the recommendations to which the College responded in its March 2009 Follow-up Report, the evaluation team also pursued information regarding the recommendations dealing with governance. Using the College Follow-up Report from October 2008 and the report of the evaluation team from November 2008 as background, the present evaluation team confirmed that the College has resolved the deficiencies cited in the recommendations dealing with governance. The evaluation team confirmed that the changes and progress cited in the November 2008 report of the evaluation team have remained in place and, in fact, matured into institutionalized policies and practices, including the College's policy and practice for institutional decision making. Both the immediate past and present Board presidents expressed commitment to the re-defined practices and policies relating to the Board of Trustees and its role as policy maker. The college president and other administrators reported that instances of trustees attempting to act unilaterally to affect operations has diminished significantly, with the entire Board no longer reticent to remind individual trustees of their appropriate roles when the temptation to micromanage arises. The present evaluation team concurs with the conclusions of the November 2008 evaluation team, noting additional progress on an institutional decision making model.

College Responses to Team Recommendations from the March 2009 Follow-up Report:

Standard I, Recommendation 1

The team recommends that the College establish a regular assessment and review process for the Mission and Vision statement to meet Standard I.A.3 and do similarly for its planning processes (including program review) to meet Standard I.A.6.

Observation and Analysis

The College has engaged in significant work related to this recommendation. In particular, through the President's Task Force on Planning Improvement, the College has integrated the annual assessment and revision (as needed) of the College's Mission statement into its five-year planning cycle. The development of an evaluation rubric for the Mission statement, based on the accreditation standards as a foundational part of this review process, is particularly noteworthy. The review and modification of the Mission statement is referenced in the graphics that illustrate the planning process, in the outline that describes the planning process, in the timelines for the strategic planning process, and supported by a rubric that provides the lens through which the Mission statement is evaluated. A current assessment of the College community indicates that strong support for the current Mission statement (81%).

In addition, the College is in the process of implementing an Evaluation and Planning Oversight team and has established, through its Task Force on Planning Improvement, a very effective process for the ongoing assessment and review of college planning processes. This process includes the utilization of ACCJC/WASC Planning and Program Rubric at the continuous improvement level as the basis for the assessment and improvement of its planning processes. The visiting team believes that this group will be critical to the success as the College rolls out and refines the excellent structures and processes that have been put in place.

Conclusion

The College has successfully resolved the deficiency.

Standard I, Recommendation 2 and Standard 3, Recommendation 4

The team recommends that the College improve its program review process by enhancing the nature and use of data to meet (2) Standard I.B.5 and (4) Standard III.D.1.d) and by codifying the links between program review, budget decision-making, facilities planning, and information technology decisions that support student learning outcomes. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4)

Observation and Analysis

The College has engaged in significant work related to these recommendations. In particular, through the President's Task Force on Planning Improvement, the College has evaluated and enhanced its planning processes in a variety of ways. In addition to the incorporation of the

review of the Mission discussed previously, the College's planning processes have been strengthened by enhancing access to data, by documenting/strengthening links between the different planning processes at the College, and by documenting/strengthening links between planning and budget allocations.

Expanded Data

The availability and use of data in the planning processes at the College has increased substantially, and plans are in place to ensure that this continues in the future. In particular, although no new data is currently provided to support the program review process, the program review process has been modified to help faculty and staff analyze and use the data more effectively. This improvement could be strengthened, however, if further modifications to the program review process link the data analysis more explicitly to the program improvement objectives.

Additional data sources have been developed to inform the College's budget allocation, planning and decision-making processes. In particular, the Ohlone Finance Department has developed searchable expenditure reports that are organized by activity center code instead of object code. In addition, the Information Technology Department, in partnership with the Student Development and Academic Affairs Deans and Directors, has created a robust enrollment planning and management tool. This tool, which is being utilized to support schedule development and analysis, will be enhanced next fall by the development of a component that links FTEF with full-time and adjunct faculty dollar costs.

These new resources have had a profound impact on the College and will, when fully developed, greatly enhance the data available for all levels of planning at the College, including program review. In particular, these tools provide ready access to information for every member of the College community. This access has enhanced employees' sense of empowerment and engagement with the planning and decision-making processes at the College. In addition, the new budget analysis resource will more precisely analyze and project the actual budgetary impact of full time and adjunct faculty resources so will provide information relevant to program-based assessment and planning and will directly link faculty resource allocations to the budget analysis and planning process. Similarly, enhanced enrollment planning and monitoring will inform both the strategic and annual planning processes due to its ability to provide real time as well as archived data in a searchable format.

The College also developed and used a comprehensive environmental scan to inform the formation of its new Strategic Plan. The breadth of this scan is impressive. It contains data about the College's student and employee populations, key attributes of the community served by the College, and statewide issues that are relevant to the College's future. This quantitative data is complemented by perception data from the internal and external community. This comprehensive scan, along with the set of planning implications/questions generated by the scan, supported college-wide dialogue that ensures the College's planning process is grounded in an understanding of the internal and external challenges that are facing the College. This excellent resource, combined with the assessment of progress made on the previous Strategic Plan and the review of college-wide planning implications from the Program Review process provides an

excellent foundation for the generation of the College's new Strategic Plan. Furthermore, interviews with the college staff indicate the environmental scan is being utilized across the institution to inform grant development, reports to the board, and decision-making and planning at the program/area level.

Enhanced Planning

The College's planning processes also have been strengthened by clarifying and strengthening the relationship between the various components of the planning process, and by linking planning more closely with budget allocations. The Task Force on Planning has analyzed and clearly represented the College's Strategic Planning process, and its relationship to other planning processes, through clear graphics, a detailed Strategic Planning Process Outline, and a Comprehensive Outline of Plans that integrates the College's different planning processes and illustrates their relationship to the college-wide goals. This outstanding analysis, however, would be strengthened by the completion of a similar analysis and representation of the functions and relationships between the committees and groups that have responsibility for various components of the planning and budget allocation processes. This analysis, along with its broad dissemination to the College, will be critical to the College's future success, due to the increasing complexity of its planning and decision-making structures.

The College has also revised its program review process to enhance the link between program and services review, planning and budget allocations. A key component to this linkage is the adoption of the CurricuNet Program Review Module, which is being pilot-tested this year by six programs. This change provides the infrastructure for a strong link between Program Review and College-wide planning and budget allocation on both the macro and micro level through its generation of Program Improvement Objectives (PIOs). Each program's PIOs include links to College-wide goals and objectives, specify an action plan, and identify the resources needed to implement the action plan.

The CurricuNet Program Review Module has been implemented to compile all PIOs into a searchable data base. This allows the College to collate, analyze and utilize the PIOs in a variety of ways. In particular, the PIOs are reviewed by a Task Force of the College Council to identify any college-wide planning implications with regard to priorities in the existing goals and objectives or the need to dialogue about new goals and objectives. In addition, the PIOs are also reviewed to inform annual budget allocation decisions. Deans and directors are using the PIOs as the basis of their dialogue with the Vice President of Administrative Services and the Dean of Financial Services when they meet to plan program/department level budgets. Various groups are also using the PIOs as a guide for the expenditure of existing resources and for grant development. Furthermore, a budget analysis team, with representatives from Human Resources, Information Technology, Campus Facilities, Business Services and College Council, will examine PIOs that have budget implications. Using the rubric developed for resource allocation prioritization in the annual planning cycle, this group will identify the top priorities for possible budget allocation and report their recommendations to the College Council for consideration and approval.

Conclusion

The College has established an impressive and integrated planning and data infrastructure that moves it to the level of sustainability with respect to Program Review and Planning. Therefore the College has resolved the deficiencies.

Recommendation 3. The team recommends that the College continue its planning agenda to put in place appropriate and systematic employee performance evaluation procedures. (IIIA.1 .b)

The College has made a concerted effort to improve its evaluation processes. In particular, an evaluation tracking tool has been developed and implemented. In addition, a process for notifying managers and supervisors of when evaluations are due and overdue is in place. This includes a mechanism that facilitates vice-presidential intervention when evaluations are overdue by more than three months. In addition, training materials to support the evaluation process have been developed and disseminated via formal manager and supervisor trainings and in one-on-one meetings with those who were not able to attend. As a result, the self-study team was able to validate that only six evaluations were not up-to-date, and it was clear that these had not been received for valid reasons that were beyond the control of the institution.

The development of a new managerial performance evaluation tool, however, has been negatively impacted by two resignations in the HR administrative ranks. A 360 degree evaluation process has been proposed, pilot-tested, and presented to the College for adoption. The implementation of this new process is still under consideration. In the interim, the College is using the old process.

Conclusion

The College has successfully resolved the deficiency.