

Abstract of the Report

This self-study demonstrates that Ohlone College meets the standards for reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Accrediting Commission of the Junior and Community Colleges. Of the 130 standards examined, Planning Agendas for addressing 19 areas where improvement was found to be needed to meet the standards. In addition, 21 Planning Agendas have been developed to improve beyond meeting the standards. In accordance with the ACCJC/WASC Self Study Manual, this Abstract provides a summative assessment of how well the institution is meeting the standards as a whole based on the themes that pervade the standards.

Institutional Commitments

Ohlone College encourages and supports full participation by the college community in planning, achieving and assessing the college mission, vision, values and goals. The Mission Statement is reviewed regularly and revised as needed. After considerable dialogue during 2006, the Board of Trustees approved a revision to the college mission statement. The Mission Statement now reads as follows:

The mission of Ohlone College is to serve the community by offering instruction for basic skills, career entry, university transfer, economic development, and personal enrichment for all who can benefit from our instruction in an environment where student learning success is highly valued, supported, and continually assessed.

The college demonstrates ongoing commitment to its mission and to the accreditation standards and themes. This is most evident in the emergence of the Learning College Model as the philosophical core of the college strategic plan. The college vision, values, and strategic goals derive directly from the mission within the context of commitment to student learning. As defined by the college President, a Learning College:

- Focuses on the individual and develops a college for and about the individual learner;
- Advocates that more options for students are better;
- Encourages and supports experimentation and innovation;
- Engages in collaborative learning; learners are active, not passive vessels being filled;
- Everyone at the institution is a facilitator of student success; and documentation;
- Feedback, assessment and adjustment are ongoing quality processes.

The District has made a significant commitment to its mission and the Learning College Model by creating the Newark Center for Health Sciences and Technology. The construction of this exceptional facility was made possible by a local bond measure passed in 2002. The new campus will open in January 2008 and will embody the mission, values, and goals of the District. It has been built and equipped to promote innovation in teaching and learning. The learning spaces are designed for collaborative and holistic learning methods. A culture of experimentation and innovation has developed for the new center based on the new directions on the Fremont Campus, as well as a robust planning process for the new facility and its teaching and learning vision. The new center is discussed throughout the Self Study, in an Ohlone Story, and in the Substantive Change Proposal for the new center.

There are clear District policies regarding participation in decision making at the college. The College Council is the lead group for shared governance discussion on strategic and budget planning. The administration and Board rely primarily on the faculty in academic and curriculum matters through the Faculty Senate and Curriculum Committee and associated sub-committees. The Associated Students of Ohlone College serves to involve students in the life of the college and the shared governance process.

The District has made a firm commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability. The Board of Trustees has adopted a policy to follow the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards in all new construction. This has been manifest directly in the construction of the Newark Center for Health Science and Technology. The new Student Services Building is also being constructed according to LEED standards. Environmental stewardship and sustainability are key components of the college values and strategic goals. In the Self Study, a Planning Agenda under Standard III.B is identified to increase the overall District waste diversion rate to 75% in five years and will increase recycling efforts throughout the District.

Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement

Evaluation, planning and improvement take place within the context of the college strategic plan. The strategic plan was developed through a robust process of shared governance and links directly to the educational, facilities and land use master planning of the District. The cornerstone of the planning and assessment process is the comprehensive system of Program and Services Review, which is referred to throughout the Self Study report. Program and Services Review involves all instructional programs and all of the college's service departments. All program reviews emphasize linkage with the college strategic goals and the support of student learning.

The strategic plan of the college does not sit on a shelf to be brought out only to show compliance with accreditation or other standards. The strategic goals of the college are the framework for all college planning and activity. The college's Annual Reports and the Presidents bi-annual State of the College Speeches are purposefully structured around the strategic goals and objectives. As the shared governance body, the College Council serves as the Strategic Planning Committee and regularly assesses progress and makes revisions as needed. Most recently the Council proposed the addition of an eighth strategic goal relating to facilities and capital planning, which was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. The objectives of this goal will be directed by a Facilities Committee, which will report to the Council on a regular basis.

The institution supports collaboration across the college in evaluation, planning and improvement. Program and Services review is an institutionalized process that involves both academic and service departments. The strategic planning process has involved all constituency groups and the Board of Trustees has engaged with the college community in developing, approving, assessing and revising the strategic planning goals and objectives.

Concerted efforts are made to provide valid and reliable data to inform evaluation, planning and improvement efforts. An established, active and effective Office of Institutional Research coordinates the generation and analysis of program and institutional data. The college President created an Institutional Research and Assessment Team to help guide the creation and use of data at the institution. A Planning Agenda under Standard I has been identified to institutionalize this group as a formal college committee.

The ACCJC/WASC "Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness" assessment tool provides an excellent framework to assess a college's level of implementation in three important accreditation areas: Program Review, Planning and Student Learning Outcomes. The levels of implementation include Awareness, Development, Proficiency, and Sustainability. Because the Rubric was received as this Self Study was being finished, it was not possible to integrate it fully into the self assessment process. However, a Planning Agenda has been developed under Standard I to incorporate the Rubric into college planning and evaluation processes as an ongoing tool to assess institutional effectiveness.

Most of the Fremont Campus facilities were constructed between 1971 and 1974. The college does well to keep these buildings operational. The District is committed to developing facilities to support and facilitate student learning. A number of important improvements have been accomplished, and are in process of being accomplished, to support the college mission for student access and success. State bond funding allowed for construction of a new Instructional Computing Building, now named Hyman Hall,

which opened in 2002, as well as a new we completed and opened the new state-of-the-art Child Development Center in 2004. In March of 2002 the voters of the District passed a \$150 million bond measure to construct a new campus in Newark, named the Newark Center for Health Science and Technology, which will open in January 2008. The local bond measure also provides for a new Student Services Building on the Fremont Campus that is now under construction and scheduled to open in spring of 2009. Other improvements to the Fremont Campus have also been funded by the local bond. Further, state bond funding

Although the bond funding has helped a great deal, there is still a sizable gap of \$250 million in capital improvement needs. These needs have been prioritized by the college community and the Board of Trustees. A Planning Agenda under Standard III.B has been identified to develop the frontage property on the Fremont Campus to provide ongoing lease revenues to address needed capital improvements in an ongoing and systematic manner. The development of the frontage property has been on the college agenda for the past two decades but is now near actual implementation.

Since the 2001 site visit, the college has made significant advancements in the availability of computing and technology resources to facilitate learning and assist student development and administrative services departments to support learning. It is now important that the planning for technology become more intentional and strategic. A Planning Agenda under Standard III.C calls for development of a five-year Technology Master Plan that integrates with educational, fiscal and facilities master planning. This plan will provide direction for a sustainable technology infrastructure to facilitate the teaching and learning process and support student development and administrative services.

Although the college budget is dominated by ongoing fixed personnel and utilities costs, strides have been made to more intentionally link budget resources to improvements in support of student learning. The College Council proposed and the President approved earmarking \$800,000 from one-time state funds to be available over a four-year period to fund improvement plans that emerge from the Program and Services Review process. In 2006-07, the Council developed and completed a process awarding \$200,000 to program and service areas completing review in 2005-06. The same will be done in 2007-08 for programs and services reviewed in 2006-07. To enhance dialogue and involvement in the budgeting process several, Planning Agendas are proposed under Standard III.D to improve information on the budget and strategies that will encourage wider participation in the shared governance process related to resource allocation.

Student Learning Outcomes

Considerable attention is given in the Self Study to the college's efforts related to the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes. There is an overview in the "Introduction" section and a detailed discussion in the section on "Responses to Recommendations from the Most Recent Comprehensive Evaluation." Three of the Ohlone Stories showcase the development of student learning outcomes and assessment strategies and how those efforts have integrated with the college values and strategic goals, along with the accreditation standards and themes. These Stories include: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment, CurricUNET Development and Implementation, and General Education Improvements.

The Learning College Model is embedded in the college's mission and goals, and has student success and achievement at its core. The faculty and staff have embraced the focus on student learning as the nucleus of all college endeavors, at the course, program and college levels. The Curriculum Committee's course development and review process has been constructed to guide faculty in the integration of student learning outcomes and assessment in all college courses. The Faculty Senate revised the Instructional Program and Discipline Review process to direct development of program level student learning outcomes and assessment strategies. At the completion of the 2007-08 Instructional Program and Discipline review cycle, all programs and disciplines will have established student learning outcomes and

plans for instituting ongoing assessment. The college as a whole actively generates data related to student achievement and success and uses the data to drive evaluation, planning and improvement activities.

Although much progress has been made, there is still work to be done, especially in the area of assessment of outcomes at the program and General Education levels. Planning Agendas under Standard II.A have been identified for improvements in the area of outcomes assessment. The Faculty Senate and Curriculum Committee have created a Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee and the District has authorized reassigned time for a faculty member to serve as Chair. The committee will be an active leadership body, which will engage the college in ongoing development, review and assessment of student learning outcomes.

Online learning, both fully online and hybrid approaches, has grown significantly at the college since the last accreditation site visit. The Self Study presents a separate assessment of distance learning using the standards from the ACCJC Distance Learning Manual. The distance learning program at Ohlone is integrated into the overall instructional system. The Academic Deans, Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee, and Distance Learning Committee provide direct oversight and quality assurance for distance learning. Under the Distance Learning section of the Self Study, Planning Agendas for improvement are presented in the areas of faculty and course evaluation, as well as ongoing research on retention in online classes. A resource website to offer faculty more tools/assistance with online teaching is also proposed.

Student development and library and learning resource services provide essential support for student learning and success. Under Standard II.B, a system of student development learning outcomes and assessment strategies is described. Two of the Planning Agendas in Standard II.B focus on support services for students at the Newark Center for Health Sciences and Technology. Also planned is the development of a system for student records to be electronically created and stored. Under Standard II.C, Planning Agendas are identified to improve the library book collection and to achieve long-term maintenance and capital improvements. The library and learning resources needs of the Newark Center are also addressed. A Planning Agenda is also proposed to increase student mastery of Information Competency Standards. This is defined by the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges, and measured through systematic data collection, and analyzed to track continued progress.

Support of the Learning College Model and student learning outcomes and assessment has been increased by a five-year federal Title III funding supporting a comprehensive program to strengthen the institution through measurable improvement in student learning and achievement. The planning for the Title III proposal was directly integrated into the strategic planning of the college, as the goals of Title III project were to be pursued whether funded or not. The Learning College Model is promoted strongly by the Title III activities. The college is in the third year of the Title III project and the most recent project evaluation demonstrates good achievement of the measurable outcomes of the project.

Organization

The college organizes itself well to achieve its mission and to be effective in support of student learning and success. The commitment to shared institutional governance is strong as evidenced by an active College Council. Shared governance in academic matters is led by an active and effective Faculty Senate and its strong Curriculum Committee. The college President meets regularly with a group consisting of the leadership of the Faculty Senate, College Council, the Associated Students of Ohlone College, and the three collective bargaining units. These college leaders, as well as a Student Trustee, also sit at the table of the Board of Trustees meetings as an Extended Board.

The Self Study finds the college to have demonstrated effectiveness in recruiting and retaining well qualified faculty, administrators and staff to achieve the mission of the college and support student learning. The review under Standard II.A finds a complete and effective system of faculty evaluation, but proposes Planning Agendas for improving the evaluation process for classified and management staff. Another Planning Agenda under Standard II.A calls for all administrators and managers to participate in

training to update their knowledge and understanding of collective bargaining processes and effective labor relations practices. Another exciting Planning Agenda aims to create new ways for the college to engage diversity and culture in core operations and structure.

The Staff Development Committee provides an active program of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, including the bi-annual Learning College Week before the start of the fall and spring semesters and the newly established Classified Staff Flex Program. The Innovation and Technology Center (ITC) is becoming a nexus for many of these development activities. Instituted through the Title III Project, the ITC is open to all part-time and full-time faculty and staff members and provides online and one-on-one training to groups or individuals who want to integrate a variety of web/multimedia presentations, communication and collaboration technologies into their courses. The ITC also provides assistance on online course planning, instructional design and development, pedagogy, and best practices for online teaching/learning, research of discipline-specific web resources, as well as utilization of various educational software tools. Planning Agendas under Standard II.A proposes improvement of the selection of training opportunities for all employees and to revise the evaluation process for fixed flex and floating flex workshops.

Dialogue

Self reflective dialogue on the college mission and institutional effectiveness is active at the college. The College Council, Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee and its subcommittees (General Education, Distance Learning, Cultural Diversity, Information Competency), and the Associated Students of Ohlone College all provide venues for dialogue. The administration and Faculty Senate recently agreed to establish a Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee with reassigned time for a faculty coordinator to ensure continuing dialogue about and attention to student learning.

Dialogue is integrated into the evaluation, planning and improvement processes of the institution. The entire college community gathered in 2004 for dialogue that resulted in the current strategic goals of the institution. In 2007 the full college community gathered again to assess progress on the goals and suggest improvements. The results of this assessment have been directed to the various college committees for attention. The Program and Services Review process involves all college programs and services and generates considerable dialogue focused on improvement.

The college is committed to dialogue that is informed by quantitative and qualitative data. The Office of Institutional Research provides considerable data to support the strategic planning and assessment activities of the college and the Program and Services Review process. With input from the President's Institutional Research and Assessment Team, the Office has developed an Annual Data Scan focused on student success and achievement. The Data Scan will inform college dialogue and is being distributed to appropriate college committees and work groups for use in improvement planning.

An interesting development over the past two years has been an increase in the use of electronic collaboration tools to foster dialogue and cooperative work without increasing the number of meetings required. Groups such as the Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee, Self Study Learning and Assessment Teams, and others, as well as individual faculty and administrators have explored the use of Weblogs, Wikis, Google-Docs, and other tools. Although still in the experimental stages, these new approaches hold great promise for increasing dialogue and collaboration between all college constituencies, including students.

Although the college community welcomes and supports dialogue from all constituents, survey findings show adjunct faculty do not have an awareness of, or sense of involvement, in the shared governance and collaborative planning processes. Although this is not unusual in higher education, given the nature of adjunct work, a Planning Agenda is proposed under Standard V to increase adjunct faculty involvement in the college community, including awareness of, and access to, the shared governance work of the College Council and Faculty Senate.

Institutional Integrity

The Self Study demonstrates that the District takes responsibility for and makes great effort to be honest, truthful, clear, and understandable in the way it is represented to all stake-holders, internal and external. The college website provides transparent access to the planning, evaluation and improvement activities of the institution, including live video streaming and video archiving of all Board of Trustees meetings. The District and its faculty have documented commitment to academic freedom and honesty, and faculty provide for open inquiry in the learning process. The diversity of the student body is significant and reflects the demographics of the community. The college faculty and staff are dedicated to student equity. The college demonstrates commitment to equity and diversity in hiring practices.

The accreditation Self Study process is an excellent example of the institutional integrity of the college. Through the Accreditation Self Study Review Site, the development of the Self Study has been available for college community and general public review and comment. Drafts of the various sections of the study have been continually updated and all college-wide sources of evidence have been made available.