Ohlone College
Program Review Report

• Program Description and Scope:
  1. Program Review Title: Research and Planning
  3. Review Type: President's Office
  4. Program/Departments: Institutional Research (66004)
  5. Authority Code: 54-Dean, Institutional Research and Planning
  6. External Regulations: Yes, No X
  7. Provide a brief narrative that describes the services provided.

The Research Office captures and analyzes data, produces reports, does assessments, and helps produce college plans. The office also supports the college by providing data and data interpretation to various constituent groups in order to enable their assessment, analysis, and planning. For example, the Research Office was instrumental in the creation of the Environmental Scan and the Strategic Plan 2011-2015, campus satisfaction surveys, program review data, and annual reports to the California Community College’s Chancellor’s Office (CCCCCO) and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

In support of research, the office produces and updates myriad data sets and posts them on the Research and Planning website for ready access by all constituents. These data sets range from departmental enrollments and retention/success rates to college demographics to comparisons to other community colleges. This research can then be used to inform program review, curricular offerings, department or collegewide planning, and a host of other reports or analyses. For instance, the environmental scan has been incorporated into several college plans, including the Strategic Plan and the Educational Master Plan (EMP). Department-specific data sheets are included in the analysis of virtually all instructional program reviews. Staffing comparisons have been used for both staff and budget planning.

Additionally, research is employed to analyze efficiency of student services programs such as Orientation and Welcome Day; is instrumental in assessing college goals and objectives;
provides the basis for reporting progress within the Basic Skills Initiative; informs constituents within the College Council and the Board of Trustees of the state of the college in several key areas; and assesses the effectiveness of placement testing. In the past year the Environmental Scan was also updated, and data was provided for several grant applications.

Regarding planning, the office produced the first draft of the Strategic Plan, along with the original Environmental Scan, and a recent update, and the college goals and objectives. Over the course of the last two years, process assessment has been completed for all the major planning processes, from the Educational Master Plan and the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) to the PIO prioritization process and the Technology Plan. Staff planning—including staffing levels and compensation—has been supported by the work of the Research and Planning Office.

8. Describe how the program specifically serves students, faculty, staff, or other.

Ohlone is a college that strives to make data-based decisions, and as such, the college relies upon the Research and Planning Office to provide much of the data necessary for good planning and wise decisions. Ultimately, all of this planning and all of the decisions have an impact on all constituents—students, staff, faculty, and administrators, as well as the community at large served by the college.

Every department, both instructional and non-instructional, is tasked with completing an annual program review. These evaluations become a basis for departmental planning. These plans are designed to affect student learning or to impact students in other positive ways; the plans include program improvements and addressing broader college goals; the plans become a basis for resource requests and allocation. Significantly, these plans are built upon data—data often provided by the Research and Planning Office. This is also the data used for assessing program improvement objectives (PIOs), student learning outcomes (SLOs), and other assessments that contribute to the ongoing planning cycle.
On a collegewide level, master plans such as the Educational Master Plan, the Facilities Master Plan, or the Strategic Plan draw upon the data and analysis provided in the Environmental Scan. Surveys of students, staff, and faculty administered every other year become a basis for self-reflection on levels of satisfaction with programs and services the college provides.

Finally, the findings of the Research and Planning Office validate the subjective sense that Ohlone is more than just another college; the data confirms that Ohlone is an exceptionally good college, and that affirmation bolsters the spirit on campus—a particularly welcome service in such difficult and discouraging economic times.

9. Describe how the program or service needs are addressed (how the program/service accomplishes what it's supposed to do.) How are current technologies applied?

The office currently maintains a website that is the repository for essential data—demographics, success indicators, comparisons to peers, surveys, and the like. But as the demand for more data increases, so to does the need to update and maintain what is already available. Because the office serves so many constituent groups within the college, and because each constituent group has such varied data needs, the Research and Planning Office must avail itself of myriad resources. Accessing data from both internal and external sources is only possible by utilizing technology, and the office accesses various technological resources.

Internal data is extracted from Colleague/Datatel using complex programming syntax that is not user friendly. Currently, faculty and staff are dependent upon the Research and Planning Office to produce much of the data necessary for program review. However, it is expected that a new product will be implemented to allow faculty and staff to query the database, produce their own data sets, and consistently update data for writing and assessing program reviews. Although that product is now available to some end users, there is not yet a cohort of capable and confident users who can then train other faculty and staff.
External data is gathered from dozens of resources—census bureau, Employment Development office, Chancellor’s Office, UC/CSU sites, CalPass, just to name a few. Each site is individually accessed and collating data from multiple sites can be tedious. But, again, a new technology is now available that can streamline and facilitate data gathering, and can also enable the production of reports that others outside the office can readily access, customize, and use to meet individual or departmental planning needs. This data service provided by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc (EMSI) is in place and should enable more efficient work within the Research and Planning Office.

With the implementation of these two new technologies, it is expected that the Research and Planning Office can better meet the data and analysis needs of the college without the more expensive need of additional staff.

10. Discuss the impact of the program on the college and/or other programs. Highlight any services, reports or functions supplied, in whole or in part, by this service area that supports state or federal compliance mandates for the College.

The impact of the Research and Planning Office is significant, essential, and campuswide. As stated, planning is data driven. Numerous college plans—from program reviews to the Educational Master Plan—cite the work of the research office. Accreditation reports and self-assessments, from college goals and objectives to student learning outcomes and program improvement objectives, are based upon confirming data gathered by the Research and Planning Office. The office is instrumental in supplying data or analysis for reports to the CCCCO and the ACCJC. Confirmation of compliance to Title 5 and the California Education Code are often validated by the data mining efforts of the office.

In this age of educational accountability, colleges are mandated to justify their raison d’etre and confirm their success, not with subjective claims but with replicable data. Knowing how and where to gather that data, as well as knowing what to do with it once it is gathered, is the essential work of the Research and
Planning Office.

11. Discuss the impact of the program on the community and the impact of the community on the program.

The research office is, in some ways, an interface between the college and its broader communities. The Environmental Scan informs all constituents of various characteristics, trends, and changes, both within and without the college. Through the Environmental Scan all communities—students, employees, and those within the district—can better know and understand one another. Additionally, the office seeks to be responsive to questions that come from all constituent groups. It is not uncommon to receive research requests from organizations within the community as well as the regular requests from faculty, staff, and student organizations. In responding to such requests, the office is furthering the work of all of these groups and impacting their success.

- **College Mission**
  1. **Mission Statement**
     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.

  2. **Vision Statement**
     Ohlone College will be known throughout California for our inclusiveness, innovation and superior rates of student success.

  3. **Core Values, Goals & Objectives:**
     - **College Core Values**
       - We maintain high standards in our constant pursuit of excellence.
       - We promote team work and open communication.
       - We practice innovation and actively encourage risk-taking and entrepreneurship.
       - We demonstrate stewardship for our human, financial, physical and environmental resources.

     - **College Goals/Objectives**
       1. Through innovative programs and services, improve
student learning and achievement.
5. By spring 2013, increase to 600 the number of students transferring to UC and CSU.
6. By spring 2013, the number of students receiving associate degrees to a rate at or above the peer group average.
7. By spring 2013, increase the number of students receiving certificates of accomplishment and certificates of achievement to a rate at or above the peer group average.

2. Support the economic vitality of the community through educational programs and services that respond to identified employment needs.
   2. Within the context of the CTE Strategic Plan, by 2012, identify needs of local employers and create responses through our existing programs, contract education, and new program development.

3. Promote continuous, needs-based, learning and professional development opportunities for all district personnel.
   4. By 2015, develop a customer service training program for all front-line departments (Student Services, Administrative Services, and Human Resources)

8. Engage all members of the college community in active, continual institutional improvement.
   1. By 2011, create benchmarks for learning, achievement, and institutional practices.
   4. By 2012, revise and update the Research and Planning website so data is more accessible to the community for planning and decision-making.
   5. By 2013, integrate specific area plans into the strategic plan.
   6. By 2015, structure processes that promote informed college-wide discussion leading to integrated, evidence-based decisions.

4. Briefly describe how the program supports the college mission, vision selected college values.

The college mission states that student success will be highly valued, supported, and continually assessed. The Research and Planning Office is instrumental in that assessment, both in terms of gathering the data that is relevant to student success and the analysis of that data to interpret the effectiveness of the college in promoting student success.

The office also compares the college's level of student success
to peer and neighboring colleges to determine if our levels of success are, in fact, superior, as stated in the college vision statement.

The research office consistently strives to meet the highest of standards to ensure that the data produced is accurate, relevant, and contributes to student success. Through various venues--College Council, President's Staff, Faculty Senate, Deans' meetings, and the college website--the office shares the results of its work and consistently is open to feedback from all constituents. Innovation is highly valued--witness the implementation of two new technologies just this year alone--as a way to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the office; and, as an additional benefit, these technologies are making better use of resources, particularly human resources.

5. Briefly describe how the program supports selected college goals.

The Research and Planning Office has created six of its own goals for 2011-2012, each of which is designed to support the broader college goals.

Goal #1 – Effectiveness
Become more timely in updating reports and analyses, taking advantage of newly-available resources. Supports strategic plan goal #8.

Goal #2 – Staff
Effectively realize an annual assessment cycle that evaluates both the individual and corporate needs of current staff and the future staffing needs of the college. Supports president’s goals #2 and #4; supports strategic plan goal #3.

Goal #3 – Visibility
Increase the awareness among the college community of the resources provided by the office so that all levels of staff and the Board recognize the usefulness of research and consistently integrate data in discussions, planning, and advocacy. Supports president’s goal #5; supports strategic plan goal #8.

Goal #4 – Transfer
Actively participate in and provide data and resources to support new programs designed to foster student transfer. Supports president’s goal #5; supports strategic plan goal #1

Goal #5 – Completions
Assess the work of the Completions Project pilot program and assist in institutionalizing a sustainable completions project. Supports strategic plan goal #1.

Goal #6 – CTE
Integrate research and analysis of the district economy and employment with college CTE
6. Briefly describe how the program supports selected college objectives.

Objectives #6-8 for Goal #1 of the Strategic Plan are specifically addressed by the participation in the work of the completions project. This workgroup is tasked with increasing the number of students who are aware of and complete academic programs, both degrees and certificates.

Objective #2, Goal #2 is specifically addressed through the implementation of the EMSI software. This software has the capability of identifying industries, occupations, and job openings, by zip code, which will allow district-specific information to be available to all faculty, staff, and advisory committees working with CTE programs. The software also tracks completions for all colleges and universities, allowing the college to match employment needs and opportunities with academic programs and to compare our productivity with that of other neighboring colleges and universities.

Objective #4, Goal #3 is supported by the regular administration of satisfaction surveys to students, faculty, and staff. Through this feedback the college is able to evaluate satisfaction levels with customer services provided by various offices across the campuses that interact with both both students and college staff.

Objective #1 of Goal #8 is integral to the regular work of the Research and Planning Office, which is tasked with constant assessment and evaluation of college activities. Establishing appropriate benchmarks is vital to the analysis of college success, and the office regularly compares the college to various benchmarks and peer colleges as a part of its everyday work. The results of that benchmarking and analysis supports Objective #6 of Goal #8, as well.

Objective #4 of Goal #8 is a dynamic process, as the research website is continually updated, all with the goal of making the site more user friendly and engaging so students and staff will reference the data there as they make decisions.

Likewise, Objective #5 of Goal #8 is an ongoing process. College plans are constantly in a state of revision and updating,
as is the data that supports those plans. All of the collegewide plans are used to inform the Strategic Plan, which is formally updated every five years but is also re-evaluated and revised on an annual basis as objectives are met or revised to concur with the changing needs of the college.

- **Student Learning Impacts**
  1. **Student Learning Impact** -

     **Students will have success rates that are exceptional because collegewide decisions that affect their education are based on verifiable data.**

     a. *Enter assessment results for "Student Learning Impacts" and analyze student success.*

     The most broadly based measure of student success and achievement is the ARCC, and on that measure the college has been above both peer and statewide averages for the past two years on all seven of the performance indicators.

   b. *Future Action*

- **Program Achievement**
  1. **List area-specific outcomes.**

     By having access to current and relevant data, collegewide planning can be responsive to student, staff, community, and curricular needs and can support an education and educational successes that exceed statewide and peer college norms. From the Strategic Plan to departmentally-specific program reviews, the college can identify, assess, and address characteristics and needs of various constituent groups, changes within those groups, changes that affect how education can be better served, and changes within the community at large—all based on replicable data rather than anecdotal musings.

2. *Identify internal and/or external benchmarks and regulations.*

   In its annual Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges report, Ohlone is already benchmarked against the 112 colleges in
the California Community Colleges system as well as against those colleges identified as “peers.” Additionally, the college uses the 21 colleges in the Bay 10 and like-sized single college districts across the state for comparative analysis. Of course the assessment of college programs and services against the standards of the ACCJC represent broader criteria against which the college is measured.

The Research and Planning Office is involved in addressing the data needs to respond to inquiries about comparisons and to provide evidence to support contentions for both the internal/external benchmarks and regulations. An internal standard against which college success is measured is the college’s Strategic Plan, with its specific goals and objectives identified to improve or maintain college achievement across divisions, both instructional and non-instructional.

3. Enter assessment results for area-specific outcomes and analyze trends.

The most broadly based assessment for the California Community Colleges system is the ARCC report, a legislatively mandated annual review of college performance based on seven success indicators. For the past two years (2011 and 2012), Ohlone has placed above both statewide and peer group averages in all seven areas. Only one other college from within the 112 college system has also achieved this level of success. In addition, Ohlone has placed among the top three of its peers on five of the seven performance indicators.

This represents a consistent trend of improvement within the college over the past six years that the ARCC report has been issued. It is, of course, presumptuous to credit the Research and Planning Office with undue significance in prompting this trend, but it is reasonable to recognize that changes were made throughout the college to further promote student success, and some of those changes were precipitated by data and analysis that came from the
research office.

Other examples of the Research and Planning Office’s contributions to collegewide planning that were followed by positive outcomes could be cited as well, acknowledging the small contributions of the office to the greater task of promoting collegewide excellence: budget and staffing plans that have kept the college financially viable in difficult economic times; evidence gathering, data analysis, and planning incorporated into ACCJC reports that have resulted in the reaffirmation of accreditation; research supporting the writing and assessment of departmental program reviews, program improvement objectives, and student learning outcomes, all vital processes for maintaining on-going planning and educational success.

4. **Analyze program budget trends and expenditures. Comment on how the program can best use budget resources.**

The budget for Research and Planning is bare bones--except for staff it has enough conference expenses for the annual RP Group conference and the annual fee for the survey instrument. Last year the PIO was approved and the budget was increased to allow subscription to the EMSI software. Although that was a one-time PIO expenditure, the cost of maintaining the license has currently been included in the annual budget. It may be in the future that the capability of the software will allow budget reductions in staffing levels, but we’re not quite there yet.

5. **Analyze the program's current use of staff, equipment, technology, facilities, and/or other resources. Comment on how the program can best use these resources.**

The addition of two new software technologies holds promise for the future in two ways: data gathering should be quicker and more efficient because multiple sites will no longer have to be accessed to get external data, and internal data can be made more readily available for access by those outside the research office. As the potential within these technologies is implemented, staff can work more effectively, others may be able to do their own research, and cost savings may result as staff needs are reduced.

6. **Describe any additional notable program achievements (optional).**
7. Additional Program Table Data

8. Future Action

Current levels of achievement indicators maintained.

- Program Analysis

After assessing student learning outcomes/impacts, student/program achievement, and the status of previous program improvement objectives (PIOs), analyze the data and any identified trends, and summarize you findings. Use these data and trends to prioritize, revise, or develop new PIOs

1. Describe program achievements and successes.

The Research and Planning Office has been an integral part of most college planning. The office produced and updated the Environmental Scan; gave voice to the Strategic Plan; produced data integral to departmental program reviews, the Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, staff and budget planning processes, self-study and substantive change reports for ACCJC, Basic Skills Initiative, Board reports, and various grants; directed process assessment; helped develop and gave oversight to the Program Review module; regularly administered satisfaction surveys of students, faculty, and staff, as well as producing numerous other surveys and evaluations.

Additionally the office was instrumental in the five year recalculation of contact hours and FTES in response to reporting discrepancies, took the lead in the completions pilot project, and participated in four site visits on behalf of ACCJC.

2. According to the evidence, what are the areas needing improvement?

The office is constantly under the gun to update data so that the website is current. The hope is that once the two new data-gathering tools--EMSI and Informer--are implemented, some of this work of producing updates will be more automated and will make less demands on the time of the researcher. The difficulty will be finding the time to write the programs that will automate these systems, given the additional administrative assignment for the researcher.

- Program Improvement Objectives:

1. Objective:
Provide more extensive and timely access to data for planning, program review, and general research to facilitate quicker response to changes in labor markets, demography, and educational demand.

With the ability to consolidate and search multiple data sources external to the college, the collection of data will be streamlined, saving the college hundreds of hours of manual data gathering and assembling. Software is available from Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. that is already tied into and searches major databases, including census, labor markets, economic development, most colleges and universities, and, most importantly, California community colleges. Educational and economic data are available for local areas by zip code, which would allow the creation of an even more focused environmental scan. This would allow departments to individually analyze local employment trends, evaluate how the department can best respond to these trends, identify other community colleges with similar programs, and track the impact of recent graduates of all similar area programs on the currently available employment opportunities. Projections from such data would also benefit program review and program planning and allow the department to be responsive not only to changes in the job market but to other area programs that may already address the changes. For instance, before starting a new program in, say, dental assisting (because the employment trend is that dental assisting is an emerging area of employment and 300 new dental assistants will be hired each year), a report could be generated to show that within the Bay 10 colleges with dental assisting programs already graduate 400 students a year. Additionally, the software itself would do the work of support staff within the office forestalling the need to hire additional staff to keep pace with the current workload demands at a cost much lower than a salary and benefits.

**Action Plan**

**Year 1:**
Continue regular training sessions to master the software, then add and train additional licensees who could benefit from the research capabilities of EMSI.

**Staffing**

**Year 1:**
No additional staff is necessary; in fact, the implementation of the software may free up hundreds of hours of current staff time by automating manual processes.

**Technology (Include items that fit under IT budget codes)**

**Year 1:**
Annual license/maintenance fee of $14,700.

**Year 2:**
Annual license/maintenance fee of $14,700.

**Year 3:**
Annual license/maintenance fee of $14,700.

d. Other (Include other resources needed)
   Year 1:

   e. Assessment Plan: List Assessment Strategies
      Year 1:
      As a part of the program review process—particularly for departments offering vocational degrees and certificates—solicit feedback on the relevance and use of the data provided by the new software. Similarly, as part of the satisfaction surveys completed by faculty and staff during spring semesters, include questions about the relevance and use of the data for planning and assessment. It would also be possible to determine if significant amounts of staff time were saved by finding and collecting data electronically rather than manually.

   f. Which college goal(s) does this program improvement objective work to achieve? Clearly describe how your PIO will help achieve one or more of the college goals and objectives, has impact beyond the particular department, and contributes to student learning/success.
      1. Through innovative programs and services, improve student learning and achievement.
         Rationale:
         The ability to access labor market and employment trends in real time will enable vocational departments to better address current economic needs with programs and services, and students will ultimately benefit from being enrolled in programs that are responsive to emerging economic and employment trends.

      2. Support the economic vitality of the community through educational programs and services that respond to identified employment needs.
         Rationale:
         The immediate access to emerging employment opportunities and the ability to revise programs in response to most recent data and trends will not only benefit current students, but also members of the community. Data can be shared with the One Stop for use by its clients, and community members may begin to look to the college as a resource for both information
about emerging occupations and for the educational opportunities to train or re-train for those occupations.

4. Use human, fiscal, technological, and physical resources responsibly, effectively, and efficiently to maximize student learning and achievement.

Rationale:

Not only would the technology be exponentially more efficient and effective than the current manual data gathering—both in terms of time required and number of resources available—but it would also allow a reorganization of staff within the office, making better use of current employees.

2. PIO Assessment

a. Enter assessment results with analysis.

The EMSI software has been purchased. There has been a single training session for the researcher, with the promise of more to come as needed. Although the software has not yet been incorporated into the research cycle nor have the capabilities of the software been realized, the ability to implement the PIO is currently present, and the work of implementation is started, but in its infancy.

The training session revealed that the software is even more powerful and useful than originally understood, so it is expected that results will be forthcoming, and assessing those results will be possible.

b. Describe how PIO achieved one or more of the college goals and objectives, had an impact beyond the particular department, and contributed to student success/learning.

Although not yet achieved, it is apparent that the software will significantly support the CTE goals set forth as a part of the office goals, but an additional impact will be the ability of other departments--contract education, community education, workforce development, and the One Stop Career Center--to avail themselves of the data available through the software. The subscription to the software included five licenses, enabling others on campus beyond the research office to regularly access the data and reports produced by EMSI.

c. Analyze the impact of reallocation or addition of resources. If
money or resource was not used, give rationale.

The PIO funding that allowed the subscription to EMSI will, as stated above, have significant impact on the Research and Planning Office as well as other departments, enabling all to save time and staff resources (including money) in compiling and analyzing data necessary for good decisions about academic programs, student and community needs, future planning, and program assessment.

d. Future Action
   Current level of focus maintained. Describe.

   It is important that this allocation become institutionalized as the PIO award was a one-time funding and will expire after one year.

   - Outside Review Results 03/13/2012
     1. List each team members name and title.
        None.
     2. Discuss key feedback provided by team and how it was incorporated into the report.
        None.

   - Attached Files