

Abstract of the Report



Abstract

At the time of the last accreditation visit, Fullerton College was one of the first colleges to be reviewed under the new standards. The college chose to write its 2005 self study around themes based on its core values and created a narrative designed “to provide a more in-depth analysis of the campus, its various operations, its people, and the issues they care about most.” This format and the college’s “dependency on tradition and oral history” presented a challenge to the visiting team. Nevertheless, accreditation was reaffirmed, and the college was commended on its comprehensive approach to program review, the work of its Curriculum Committee, the institution’s high number of transfers, and the love and enthusiasm for the college shown by faculty, staff, students, and administrators. The college received six recommendations from the previous visiting team and has made significant progress in meeting those recommendations, as documented in the college’s 2008 Midterm Report.

Institutional Commitments to student learning and success are visible in numerous efforts throughout the college. The college mission, vision, and core values remain central to college planning, budgeting, curriculum development, and improvement of student learning outcomes (SLOs). Ongoing assessment of SLOs and periodic program review ensures continuous sustainable improvement in courses and programs and guides institutional efforts to support student learning. An annual review of the mission ensures its alignment with college goals, helps establish priorities, and provides the impetus for evaluating how well all aspects of college operations serve its mission. In addition, the college offers a wide number of extracurricular activities, such as seminars, workshops, whalewatching trips, weekend research experiences, athletic programs, international movie nights, art exhibitions, performances, and theatre and music festivals, that expose students to new experiences and diverse ways of thinking. Collegewide, the One Book, One College program, the college diversity festival, job and career fairs,

club rush, and similar events promote awareness of people and opportunities beyond the classroom.

Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement emerge from the college’s “culture of inquiry” and the systematic use of institutional research data to inform college planning, program review, and decision-making. The college adopted a new planning calendar that strengthens efforts to incorporate program review and SLO assessment with planning and budgeting. College strategic goals align with district strategic goals and form the basis for annual review and reformulation of division unit objectives. Unit objectives link to institutional planning and undergo annual assessment for state of progress and revision, if appropriate. The college program review process has undergone revision to improve the dissemination and discussion of program reviews collegewide. These revisions to program review ensure that trends identified through institutional research data provide a basis for planning and goal setting at the program, division, and college level. Through a bond measure, the college is in the final stages of completing construction on facilities under the 1999 Educational Master Plan and is collaborating in the creation of a new districtwide educational master plan. One outcome of the self study is identification of the need to provide sufficient financial resources to meet the total cost of ownership of buildings, especially their maintenance. The college also acknowledges a need to improve technology planning and provide a consistent source of funding to carry out the plan.

Work on ***Student Learning Outcomes*** and their assessment continues, albeit at a modest pace. The Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee, and SLO Committee have adopted formal mechanisms for reporting of course SLOs and reporting of SLO assessment plans for courses. While nearly all courses have identified SLOs, progress towards assessment of SLOs has been slower among academic departments. Some divisions, such as Mathematics, Fine Arts, Humanities, and Natural Sciences, have begun assessment in earnest. SLO assessment in

other divisions remains in progress. Identification of academic program SLOs also remain in progress. On the positive side, all student services programs have established a regular cycle of SLO assessment.

The **Organization** of Fullerton College supports formal mechanisms by which various constituents may bring forward ideas, plans and concerns, especially those that impact student learning. The President's Advisory Council (PAC) serves as the principal advisory body on campus with representatives from classified staff, faculty, administrators, and students. Each of these constituents maintain its own representative body: the Classified Senate, the Faculty Senate, the Deans' Council, President's Staff, and Associated Students. As one or more of these bodies identify issues that require attention at the college level, they may request that item to be placed on the PAC agenda. Recent examples include discussions of the college planning calendar, SLO assessment, program review, the college smoking policy, strategic visioning, accreditation, and the college centennial. Directly or indirectly, the focus of these discussions is oriented towards evaluating the effectiveness of college programs and supporting efforts to improve student learning and success.

Dialogue takes many forms at the college. Committee meetings provide the most direct means for exchanging and discussing information and issues. In Fall 2010, the college president initiated a series of monthly campus forums for frank and open exchange of ideas and issues. Meeting minutes may be emailed to constituents and posted on the appropriate page of the college website. The President's Weekly, campus mail, and annual publications from the Public Information Office and the Director of Institutional Research, such as the Annual Report, the College Fact Book, and the Annual Environmental Scan, help to disseminate vital college information. Periodic Strategic Conversations, Chancellor's Coffees, Student Success Summits, and Fall and Spring Convocation also provide important opportunities for talking about and discussing the college and how it works. Some constituents communicate through group

discussion boards on the district's information portal, MyGateway, or via public forums, such as PBWorks. Email constitutes the second most direct means for exchanging information and engaging in meaningful dialogue. The accreditation team held four town halls in April 2010, a flex event in August 2010, a manager's meeting in September 2010, and a campuswide town hall in October 2010 during which frank and useful dialogue about the college was exchanged. The accreditation website served as a central location for storing accreditation-related information and for campus constituents to access drafts of the self study throughout its yearlong preparation.

Institutional Integrity is reflected in the high standards by which the college conducts its business, in the manner with which it presents itself to students and the public, and in its commitment to student success. College and board policies detail expected standards of ethical behavior of the board, student conduct and discipline, and behaviors with regard to conduct of faculty and staff in the workplace. The district and college agreed upon language for an academic freedom policy, and the policy was adopted in 2008. The district has a long-standing policy on academic honesty. These policies are prominent in the college catalog, the college website, and various other locations. These policies are also regularly reviewed to ensure that they reflect current institutional needs. A web advisory committee was formed to address concerns of the Student Equity Committee. As a result, the college website underwent significant revision in 2010 to provide a more modern look and feel for students. Reductions in on-campus parking and other issues related to construction at the college have strained relations with the local community. The college president recently formed a Community Advisory Group to improve community relations and solicit public input on college affairs. Issues of diversity, though much improved, remain a concern among some groups at the college. Disparities remain in the ethnic composition of students and the faculty who teach them. The college will continue to work on solutions to these challenges.

