

Follow-up Report

Submitted by:

Los Medanos College

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Submitted to:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Fall 2009

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CERTIFICATION OF THE FOLLOW- UP REPORT

Date: October 15, 2009

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Los Medanos College
2700 East Leland Road
Pittsburg, CA 94565

This Institutional Follow-up Report is submitted for the purpose of assisting in the determination of the institution's accreditation status.

We certify that there was broad participation by the campus community, and we believe the Follow-up Report reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

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Follow-Up Report

Response to Team Recommendations and the Commission Action Letter

Recommendation Identified by the Commission:

Los Medanos College received one recommendation by the Commission, which required an immediate response (in addition to the one District recommendation that applies to all three colleges). The letter from the Commission to the college dated February 3, 2009 stated:

“Although the college has made significant strides in developing institutional and program SLOs, the team found that approximately 75% of the college’s courses do not have student learning outcomes as part of the course outline of record. Therefore, the team encourages the college to accomplish what it set out to do in meeting its timeline for reaching proficiency in its course level SLOs by 2012. Furthermore, the team recommends that that process be implemented so that by 2012 the college will have developed and implemented methods for assessing those SLOs and use the results of those assessments to improve student learning in all of its courses.

With regard to Recommendation 1, the Commission asks that Los Medanos College analyze its timeline for full implementation by the Commission’s 2012 deadline and determine whether it needs to take any action to increase the rate of institutional progress.”

Resolution of the Recommendation:

To address the recommendation from the Commission, the college president met with the academic managers in February 2009. He determined that a task force should be convened to address the recommendation.

The recommendation was discussed and next steps were developed in collaboration with the Shared Governance Council (R1.1: meeting minutes); the Academic Senate (R1.2: AS meeting minutes); the Curriculum Committee (R1.3: CC minutes); and the Department Chairs (R1.4: Chair meeting notes).

The President’s Office informed all the employees via the LMC E-Newsletter, dated March 17, 2009, that a taskforce was being convened to address the recommendation of the Commission (R1.5: LMC E-Newsletter).

The Accreditation Response Taskforce, comprised of key college leaders (faculty and administrators), was charged with overseeing the development of the plan to address the Commission's recommendation, to meet the Commission's timeline and to meet the deadline for this report. Specifically, the two main assignments of the taskforce were:

1. To develop a plan to update all course outlines with student learning outcomes by January 29, 2010.
2. To develop a plan to determine how the assessment cycle will be implemented by every program/unit on campus by the mid-term report (due on October 15, 2011).

The Accreditation Response Taskforce meet once or twice a week between March 26 and May 20, 2009 and developed a plan of action to address both tasks.

Progress on Task #1:

- At the March 3, 2009 Department Chair meeting, the college president discussed the Commission's report and set January 29, 2010 as the date by which all of the active courses at LMC needed to be updated with SLOs. The department chairs were asked for suggestions on how to achieve the goal – details of the suggestions are in the meeting minutes (R1.4).
- The Office of Instruction prioritized the updating process for all the course outlines by department, based on how many sections of the course are offered during an academic year.
- Each department /program chair was sent a form with this prioritized list of department course outlines in a table format and was asked to fill in the name of the faculty member (action agent) who would be responsible to update the course outline with SLOs, along with the proposed date of completion. Departments were also asked to indicate on the form whether they needed assistance in completing the task. Faculty could either attend "Camp Course Outline" – a faculty-led professional development activity which focuses on SLOs -- or request individual coaching. They were asked to return the form with the signature of the action agent to the Office of Instruction by April 30, 2009. Every department/program completed and returned this form (R1.6: Update plan form).
- A Course Outline of Record (COOR) update gauge was developed and posted on the college intranet, as suggested by the department chairs (R1.7: web page gauge). This gauge enables the entire college to monitor the course outline update progress by department. Course outlines that are both current – that is, revised within the past five years -- and include SLOs are in the blue section of the bar chart; and those that are not up-to-date and/or do not have SLOs are in the red section of the bar chart. The departments can clearly see the number of courses in the red and blue sections. In the interest of transparency, anyone can click on the PDF file on this web page to learn which courses fall into which category. An automated email reminder is being sent to

the action agent three months before the due date to submit the course outline updated with SLOs (R1.8: sample e-mail reminder). The action agent and department chair will also receive periodic reminders until the deadline which was determined by the department. If the deadline is missed, more frequent reminders will be sent via email to the action agent, the department chair and the dean until the action agent submits the revised course outline to the Office of Instruction.

- The Chair of the Curriculum Committee and the Chair of the Teaching Learning Project (TLP) have served as the principal LMC coaches to train faculty on how to write measurable and assessable SLOs in their course outlines. Course outline workshops called “Camp Course Outline” were offered on Fridays for full-time and adjunct faculty during the spring 2009 semester (R1.9: Camp COOR flier). The original coaches then trained three additional faculty to serve as coaches. The coaches also provided individual help to faculty who could not attend Camp Course Outline. These weekly camps and individual coaching sessions continued throughout the summer, including several during the August FLEX period.
- A number of out-of-date course outlines have recently been inactivated by the Curriculum Committee. In addition, course outlines with SLOs and assessment information are coming in to the Office of Instruction. The course outlines will go through content review and technical review, prior to being forwarded to the Curriculum Committee for review and approval during the 2009-10 academic year. The Curriculum Committee will review and approve all course outlines by April 2010.

Progress on Task #2:

- Los Medanos College has been conducting systematic program review for many years. The most recent comprehensive program review was conducted in fall 2005. In the subsequent fall semesters, departments have conducted an annual “program review update.” This process now includes a report of the assessment of the SLOs at the program level (R1.10: program review update form). The program-level SLOs are identified, assessed, reported on and improvements are made during a two year assessment cycle. Institutional-level SLOs have also been identified and are being assessed.
- LMC is now developing a systematic approach to assessing course-level SLOs. The task force has developed a three semester cycle for the assessment of all SLOs in each course (R1.11: Task force document). During the first semester, the planning phase, the department will participate in professional development on assessment. It will select the course to be assessed, review the course outline of record, review the CSLOs, the assessment instruments, and the criteria for determining proficiency in the assessment. All the faculty teaching the course during the following semester will collaborate to complete an assessment planning template and select a lead for this assessment. In the next semester, the assessment phase, the faculty will gather the student data from the course being assessed, assess the level of proficiency of the students for each CSLO, based upon the criteria, and upload this data into

a new software system called “CLASS” (Course Level Assessment Software System) that the college IT department is creating. During the third semester, the evaluation phase, the faculty involved in the assessment will evaluate the results of the data, report the results to the college, and then implement any changes deemed necessary to improve teaching and learning in the course, thus closing the loop on this assessment cycle.

- The development of course-level SLOs and the plan for their assessment was the focus of All College Day on August 14, 2009. All LMC faculty and academic managers attended the session, which was led by the college president.
- The college IT staff is nearing completion of an assessment software program called “CLASS” (R1.12: CLASS description). This software program will provide for the gathering of course-level assessment data. It will also enable the college to aggregate the data at the program level and at the institutional level. This software will download the SLOs from the course outlines in Curricunet and student information from Datatel. This software was alpha tested in July-August 2009 by faculty from each of the five institutional level SLOs – career technical education, developmental education, general education, library and learning resources and student services. It is being beta tested during the fall 2009 semester by additional faculty from each of the five areas (R1.13: Alpha, beta test participants). Many of the faculty who beta test the assessment program during fall 2009 will also serve as assessment coaches for other faculty members.
- During spring 2010, the college will pilot course-level assessment across all departments (R1.14: Courses for spring assessment). At least one course per course prefix will be selected for assessment. The result will be that about 60 courses will be assessed during spring 2010. Courses that will be selected for assessment will be those courses that have the most sections and that have more full-time faculty teaching them. Subsequently, during fall 2010 15 percent of the courses of the college will be assessed. This rate of 15 percent will continue until LMC has evaluated 100 percent of its courses, which will occur during spring 2013. From fall 2013 onwards, the college will assess 10 percent of the courses every semester, so that every course is assessed at least once every five years, in line with the requirement to update the course outline of record within five years.
- Since professional development of faculty is integral to a good assessment model, ongoing development activities will be provided during each of the three phases (three semesters) of the course-level SLO assessment cycle, including training on the assessment automation software. During the first semester, the assessment coaches will guide the faculty with planning for assessment and completing a planning template with their assessment criteria, after clearly defining the level of proficiency for each CSLO. During the second semester, the assessment coaches will guide the faculty in conducting the actual assessment and inputting the data into the “CLASS” software program. During the third semester, the assessment coaches will guide faculty in evaluating the results, reporting the results to the college and using the data to make changes in the course to improve teaching and learning. Adjunct faculty will be included in the staff development since they teach a large percentage of the courses at the college.

- The software program “CLASS” will provide assessment results for each the section of the course, provide aggregated data for all sections of the course, provide aggregated data for all courses within the program, and provide aggregated data, where there is alignment, for all programs at the institutional-level SLOs.

In summary, Los Medanos College has developed a plan to reach proficiency in course-level SLOs by 2012. Methods have been developed to assess those SLOs and use the results to improve student learning in all courses. Specific actions, as detailed above, have been taken to increase the rate of institutional progress in the development and assessment of course-level SLOs. Specifically:

- LMC has 721 course outlines of record. As of May 11, 2009, 213 course outlines were current and included SLOs (R1.15: Course outline inventory). Many more outlines are being reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee this semester. A plan has been developed, and is being implemented, to have all outlines updated and approved, complete with SLOs, by April 2010.
- “CLASS” software has been developed and the design has been alpha-tested. The software is being beta-tested in fall 2009 by faculty from all five ISLO areas. Using CLASS, a plan has been developed for the regular assessment of course-level SLOs in all curricular areas, beginning during the spring 2010 semester.

Evidence

- R1.1: Shared Governance Council minutes
- R1.2: Academic Senate minutes
- R1.3: Curriculum Committee minutes
- R1.4: Department Chair meeting notes
- R1.5: E-newsletter
- R1.6: COOR update plan form
- R1.7: Webpage gauge
- R1.8: COOR update e-mail reminder
- R1.9: Camp COOR flier
- R1.10: Program Review update template
- R1.11: Task Force assessment plan document
- R1.12: CLASS description
- R1.13: Alpha, beta test participant list
- R1.14: Couses designated for spring 2010 assessment
- R1.15: COOR update inventory