

Los Medanos College

Required Follow-up Report

Submitted by:

Los Medanos College

2700 East Leland Road

Pittsburg, CA 94565

Submitted to:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Fall 2009

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.

Dr. Helen Benjamin, Chancellor, Contra Costa Community College District

Sheila A. Grilli, President, CCCC CD Governing Board

Peter Garcia, President, Los Medanos College

Michael Norris, President, LMC Academic Senate

Linda Kohler, President, LMC Classified Senate

Deshawn Woolridge, President, LMC Associated Students

Richard Livingston, Accreditation Liaison Officer

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Follow-Up Report

Statement on Report Preparation

Upon receipt of the ACCJC's action letter, the college president formed an Accreditation Response Taskforce, composed of the Academic Senate president, the Curriculum Committee chair, the faculty "leads" from the Teaching Learning Project and the instructional deans. It was charged with developing a plan to update all course outlines (including student learning outcomes) and a plan to assess course-level student learning outcomes. The accreditation liaison officer was designated to compile and write this report.

The taskforce met regularly during the spring and early fall semesters in order to complete its two charges. It communicated its progress regularly to the entire college community, through department chair meetings, Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee meetings, two college assemblies, All College Day (August 14, 2009) and the college intranet.

Early in the fall 2009 semester, an almost final version of this report was discussed and endorsed by the Shared Governance Council, composed of leaders from the college's four constituent groups. The entire August 31, 2009 college assembly was devoted to LMC's assessment plan and valuable feedback was obtained from the college community. A draft of this report was placed on the college intranet in order to facilitate further review and input.

The response to the District recommendation was written by the vice chancellor of districtwide administrative services and approved by the Chancellor's Cabinet.

The report was approved by the Governing Board of the Contra Costa Community College District at its September 30, 2009 meeting.

Peter Garcia,

President, Los Medanos College

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 first met with the vice president and senior dean of instruction/accreditation liaison officer in February 2009. The president determined that a task force should be convened to address the recommendation.

The recommendation was then 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 – the Academic Senate president, the Curriculum Committee chair, the faculty “leads” from the Teaching Learning Project (LMC’s assessment oversight group) and the instructional deans -- 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 required mid-term report (due on October 15, 2011).

The Accreditation Response Taskforce met once or twice a week between March 26 and May 20, 2009 – for a total of at least 18 hours -- and developed a plan of action to address both tasks. It finished its work early in the fall 2009 semester. As the plan evolved, it was regularly communicated to the college community.

Analysis of the Results:

Progress on Task Number One:

- 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 that focuses on SLOs and assessment, which was offered for six hours on most Fridays and weekly during the summer -- or request individual coaching. They were asked to return the form with the name of each 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 instructional deans will also work with faculty to complete the updates and the college president has indicated that he will get involved to ensure completion of the process, if necessary.

- 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 and into the fall, including several during the August FLEX period.
- A number of out-of-date course outlines have recently been inactivated by the Curriculum Committee – 56 at the first meeting of the fall '09 semester. 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. For example, at the first meeting this fall the committee approved five new courses and 24 updated existing courses – all with student learning outcomes stipulated. The Curriculum Committee will review and approve all course outlines by April 2010.

Progress on Task Number Two:

- 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 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; and review the course SLOs, the assessment instruments and the criteria for determining proficiency in the assessment. 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 CSLOs, 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 has created. 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, and included presentations by the Academic Senate president, Curriculum Committee chair, senior dean of instruction and the dean of occupational education. A follow-up College Assembly was held on August 31, 2009 in order to provide additional information to the college community on the plan for course-level assessment. Members of the community provided feedback on the plan to the task force, which is currently considering the input.
- The college IT staff is nearing completion of an assessment software program called “CLASS” (R1.12: CLASS description and screen print out). This software program provides 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 (the major curriculum management software program being used statewide, which is being implemented at LMC) 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 has been 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 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 professional 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” has the capability to provide assessment results for each 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.
- The college will receive additional resources from the District’s revised allocation model – see next section of this report. The college president has announced his intention to provide adequate faculty, classified and management support for the assessment effort. He is currently considering hiring a dean of instructional research, planning and assessment to oversee LMC’s various assessment initiatives.

Additional Plans:

In summary, Los Medanos College has developed a plan to reach proficiency in institutional, program and course-level SLOs by 2012, as required by the ACCJC. 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 and other courses are being inactivated. 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 with the spring 2010 semester pilot.

Evidence – Recommendation 1

- 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 and screen printout
- R1.13: Alpha, beta test participant list
- R1.14: Courses designated for spring 2010 assessment
- R1.15: COOR update inventory

District Recommendation 1

Recommendation Identified by the Commission:

The team recommends that in order to improve its resource allocation process, the District should expedite development of a financial allocation model, including the following (Standards III.C.1, III.D.1a, III.D.2a, III.D.3, IV.B.3c):

- a) the model as a whole;**
- b) funding for adjunct faculty in a way that will support the District and college intentions to increase student enrollment; and**
- c) technology funding.**

Resolution of the Recommendation:

In response to the team's recommendation to expedite development of a financial allocation model, the District began a modification of its allocation process using the Chancellor's Cabinet as the task force to work with the District finance department. The visiting team strongly suggested that an overall fiscal resource review and allocation process be formalized by each college and linked into the District process and that the District improve its resource allocation process.

For many years, the District has determined the level of funding for each of the colleges through the use of separate classified, adjunct faculty and operating funding formulas. Formulas were not used for the allocation of management, full-time faculty positions, District Office and Districtwide services. Additions and reductions for all personnel categories were determined by the Chancellor's Cabinet.

Realizing that more consistency, equity and transparency were needed in the allocation formulas, District leadership began to review and revise the budget policies and procedures including funding formulas for the 2005-06 academic year. In 2006, SB 361 was passed by the state legislature, providing a base allocation for each college and center, as well as per FTES funding by credit, non-credit, and CDCP FTES (Career Development College Placement). Following the implementation of SB 361 in 2007, the formulas for college operations and classified staff, other than what was covered in the original Business Procedure 18.03, were codified (Exhibit 1a). The District codified college operations (Business Procedure 18.02) and other operational staff (Business Procedure 18.03) (Exhibits 1b-1D). Not since the late 1990s had the District undertaken a comprehensive review of the allocation formulas.

With the change in leadership of the finance area at the District Office, work on the allocation formulas resumed in the fall of 2008. The following areas were identified as problems because the allocation model was:

- difficult to understand due to the number of formulas;

- not transparent;
- “patriarchal” in approach, with the District bearing all responsibility;
- not funding colleges appropriately in adjunct faculty allocation; and
- lacking in management and maintenance and operations funding formulas.

In renewed efforts to develop an improved allocation model, the Chancellor’s Cabinet took into consideration areas addressed in the accreditation standards:

- technology support (Standard III.C.1);
- integration of financial planning that supports institutional planning (Standard III.D.1a);
- appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services (Standard III.D.2a);
- assessment of the effective use of financial resources and use of the results as a basis for improvement (Standard III.D.3); and
- fair distribution of resources that support effective college operations and the strategic directions of the District and the colleges (Standard IV.B.3c).

The Chancellor’s Cabinet reviewed various principles and fundamentals for allocation models and chose the following guiding principles for development of a model (Exhibits 2a-2d). It should:

1. be simple and easy to understand;
2. be fair;
3. be predictable;
4. be consistent;
5. use quantitative, verifiable factors;
6. minimize internal system conflict;
7. be efficient to administer;
8. provide for financial stability;
9. protect the integrity of base funding;
10. provide for appropriate reserves;
11. be responsive to planning processes, goals and objectives;
12. recognize cost pressures;
13. use efficiently District resources and provide sensible use of public funds;
14. be flexible enough to allow for decisions to be made at the local level;
15. allow for colleges to initiate, implement, and be responsible for new program initiatives;
16. provide transparency for District Office and Districtwide expenditures in support of college operations;
17. match resources with service levels using objective standards or measures;
18. provide adequate and sufficient to sustain operations;
19. not adversely impact any college; and

20. recognize individual contributions of the colleges and Districtwide services to the overall mission of all the communities that the District serves.

After reviewing a presentation and concepts on how other multi-college districts allocate resources, the Chancellor's Cabinet chose a "College First" model that links a whole model to revenues, with an emphasis on a clear delineation between college and District roles. This model was selected as most appropriate based on the autonomous culture of the colleges and historical funding patterns (Exhibit 2d). Further, this model allows for the financial decisions at the college level to meet student and community needs, while taking advantage of the centralization of services where an economy of scale can be achieved.

After modeling the SB 361 allocation funding (Exhibits 2a, 2b, 2d, 3) for all three colleges for fiscal years 2007-08 and 2008-09, it became clear in May 2009 that adopting a pure SB 361 model would not meet the principles adopted by the Chancellor's Cabinet, in particular the principle of not having an adverse impact on any college. Variations of SB 361 (Exhibit 4) are under exploration, with the intent that a revenue-driven SB 361 model to allocate growth, coupled with considerations of the student population and historical funding patterns, would best serve all three colleges. Using SB 361 as the metric would acknowledge any subsidies or shortages for all the colleges.

During April 2009, budget forums were conducted throughout the District where the concept of SB 361 funding and a College First model were presented. The budget forums were held at all the colleges and centers, and the District Office. All employees were invited to attend the forums; participation ranged from approximately 45 participants at Contra Costa College to 70 participants at Los Medanos College. On April 29, 2009, the Governing Board's annual study session on the budget focused on "Considerations for a New Allocation Model" (Exhibits 5a, 5b).

The Chancellor's Cabinet developed a strategy to complete work on the model as a whole (District Recommendation 1a) during 2009, with an implementation date of fiscal year 2010-11 (Exhibit 3). During 2009-10, the current allocation formulas will be adjusted to better fund the colleges by creating management, maintenance and operations formulas, in addition to addressing a phased-in approach for stable technology funding. The adjunct faculty formula documentation and issues will be addressed through:

1. reflecting the actual cost of adjunct faculty payroll hours per FTEF from 540 hours per FTEF to 605 hours for CCC, 589 hours for LMC, and 571 hours for DVC;
2. adjusting FTES/FTEF productivity assumptions to match targets; and
3. formalizing the elements for calculating the adjunct faculty formula noted in Business Procedure 18.02. (Exhibits 6a-6d).

A presentation of the allocation model was given to the District Governance Council(DGC) on August 25, 2009 (Exhibits 7a, 7b). It included a discussion about the progress on the allocation formula to date in a paper on "Revenue Allocation in Multi College Districts"

and a paper called “Allocation Model – August 18, 2009.” The information contained in the “Allocation Model” provided the DGC with the background on the work to date, as well as the principles developed by the Cabinet for creating a new allocation model. Dates were set at the September 1, 2009, DGC meeting for expanded meetings during October and November 2009 to provide input on the Allocation Model (Exhibits 8a, 8b).

Analysis of the Results:

The District has made considerable progress in response to the visiting team’s recommendation to expedite development of a financial allocation model to address the model as a whole (District Recommendation 1a), funding for adjunct faculty in a way that will support the District and college intentions to increase student enrollment (District Recommendation 1b); and funding for technology (District Recommendation 1c).

The District has developed a strategy to implement the whole model in 2010-11. The whole model will link the following elements with the revenues received for apportionment funding:

- classified funding formula;
- adjunct faculty funding formula;
- operating funding formula;
- management funding formula;
- buildings and grounds funding formula;
- technology funding formula; and
- full-time faculty funding.

During 2009-10, the District will provide an adjunct faculty formula more equitable for funding the colleges, implement a management formula and address maintenance and operations funding. The adjunct faculty formula has been reworked to adjust hours per FTEF and productivity assumptions (Exhibits 6a-6d). The elements of the formula have also been documented in the proposed revisions to Business Procedure 18.02 (Exhibit 9).

The District is implementing a phased-in approach to stabilizing funding for Districtwide technology. A multi-year budget (Exhibit 10) was created to identify all technology-projected costs that will be implemented over several years by adding money each year to the budget. The first phase of this approach began with the added allocation of \$982,133 in the unrestricted general fund in budget year 2009-10 which includes \$276,285 of all Microsoft licensure costs, Datatel Colleague hardware maintenance fees, Wide Area Network (WAN) frame relay costs and an additional portion of the Datatel Colleague software licensure costs. These costs had previously been covered with one-time funding. The budget reduction noted between fiscal years 2008-09 and 2009-10 is the result of one-time funding for hardware replacement resulting in server virtualization in 2008-09. Total annual funding projections across the multi-year technology budget fluctuate based on planned needs for replacements and upgrades.

Additional Plans:

The Chancellor’s Cabinet will continue to work to condense the various funding formulas into one formula based upon revenue received by the District. The expectation is that new policies and procedures reflecting a one-formula allocation model based upon revenues received will be approved through the shared governance process during the current academic year and in place for fiscal year 2010-11.

The following planning agenda has been approved by the Chancellor’s Cabinet.

Time Period	Process
Fall 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore and dialogue appropriate centralized services.• Begin to build assumptions and develop a new allocation model, based on revenue received, that best reflects the culture of Contra Costa Community College District.• Develop assumptions for appropriate expenditures for District Office/Districtwide and college size.• Test assumptions against established principles for new formula.
Winter 2009-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vet proposed allocation model through accepted shared governance processes.
Spring 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write appropriate policies and procedures and initiate the shared governance approval process for District policies and procedures.
Summer 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit for Governing Board Approval
Fiscal Year 2010-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement new allocation model Districtwide.

Evidence -- District Recommendation 1

- 1a. Business Procedures 18.02 and 18.03
- 1b. New Allocation Guidelines for College Operation-Allocations and Classified Staffing
- 1c. August 21, 2007, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Notes
- 1d. September 18, 2007, District Governance Council Minutes

- 2a. February 24, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary
- 2b. March 16, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary
- 2c. Considerations for a New Allocation Model
- 2d. May 12, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary

3. April 14, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary

4. Other Allocation Models

- 5a. 2008-2009 Budget Forums held throughout the District
- 5b. Study Session on 2008-2009 District Budget

- 6a. June 4, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary
- 6b. June 16, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary
- 6c. July 14, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda, Meeting Summary and C/AC Allocation Background and Recommendations
- 6d. July 28, 2009, Chancellor's Cabinet Agenda and Meeting Summary

- 7a. August 25, 2009, District Governance Council Agenda, with attachments
- 7b. August 25, 2009, District Governance Council draft Minutes

- 8a. September 1, 2009, District Governance Council Agenda
- 8b. September 1, 2009, District Governance Council draft Minutes

9. August 11, 2009, Cabinet Agenda and Business Procedure 18.02

10. Information Technology Multi-Year Budget