

Follow-Up Visit Report

Woodland Community College
2300 East Gibson Road
Woodland, CA 95776

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission
for Community and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited

Woodland Community College
on

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By

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Introduction and Overview

In March 2008, a team representing the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Woodland Community College, part of the Yuba Community College District, as part of the institution's application for candidacy and initial accreditation. At its June 2008 meeting, the Commission acted to grant both candidacy and initial accreditation to Woodland Community College. The Commission required that Woodland College submit a Follow Up Report in March 2009 on five recommendations provided by the 2008 visiting team.

A two member accreditation team visited Woodland Community College (WCC) on April 17, 2009 for the purpose of conducting a follow-up visit on the five recommendations cited in the Commission's June 2008 action letter.

The two member team received the follow-up progress report several weeks prior to the April 2009 visit. Team members found it to be complete and thorough; addressing all the recommendations included in the Commission's action letter. The team confirmed that the follow-up report was compiled through broad participation by the entire campus community including faculty, staff, students, and administration.

During the visit the accreditation team held meetings with 17 college staff members and students. These meetings were collegial and all participants provided open, honest, and candid responses to questions and requests for information. The visiting team examined documents and evidence in support of the follow-up report.

The college is undergoing a significant evolution and changes as it moves from being a college center to an accredited college. Two key administrative positions were added since the comprehensive visit, vice president for academic and student services and director of research, planning, and student success. Many functions and operations were managed by the district or Yuba College while WCC was a college center. The college continues to develop, implement and improve plans, models, and governance structures of its own. In this evolution there is ample evidence to demonstrate that the college is focused on improving institutional effectiveness. There is clearly excitement and energy within the college community as the college evolves its identity and culture.

The college is commended for providing a comprehensive follow-up report that thoroughly addressed all the Commission's recommendations. In addition, the report provided strong documentation and evidence to support the college's assertions contained in the report. The college employees are commended for working collegially, collaboratively, and cooperatively to address the Commission's recommendations. The college employees are commended for their willingness to dialogue openly and honestly about complex issues and concerns in an effort to improve institutional effectiveness.

Discussion of the Institution's Responses to the Commission's Recommendations

Recommendation 1. In order to meet the standards and strengthen effectiveness, the team recommends that the college provide evidence that it assesses progress toward achieving its goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. When fully implemented, this cycle of planning, evaluation and program improvement should result in the creation of a culture of research and evidence that supports all of the college's decision-making processes. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1, II.A.2, II.B.3, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.6, III.B.1, III.B.2, III.C.2, III.D.1, III.D.2g, and III.D.3)

Observations and analysis of the evidence: The college's Long Range Planning Model is linked to the college's Institutional Effectiveness Model and the Continuous Improvement Cycle. The college reports that it is in the early phases of using its goals and decision-making to improve institutional effectiveness in an ongoing cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. There is considerable evidence to demonstrate that the college is fully engaged in dialogue and action to support the college's progress. The following documents and evidence support an ongoing cycle of activities designed to improve institutional effectiveness.

- Strategic Plan
- Research Agenda
- Student Learning Outcomes Implementation Timeline
- Budget Process Timeline
- Program Review Templates and Procedures
- Five Year Fiscal Plan and Allocation Model
- Staffing Plan
- Instructional Equipment Request Process
- Basic Skills Initiative

The college is well on its way to creating an Educational Master Plan (EMP) with a targeted completion date of fall 2009. Internal and external data are currently being gathered to support the plan.

The college completed an assessment of its status regarding the ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness. The team was able to verify that the college is at the following levels of implementation for program review, planning, and student learning outcomes.

- Program Review – sustainable continuous quality improvement level for academic and student services program review, development level for administrative program review
- Planning – proficiency
- Student Learning Outcomes - proficiency

The college has made considerable progress toward building toward a culture of research and evidence. Based on a commitment to research and evidence, the college created and has filled a management position (director of research, planning, and student success) to provide leadership

to support planning, research, and institutional effectiveness. This position will facilitate and help advance the college's efforts to integrate data, assessment, and evaluation into decision-making.

Conclusion: The college has made significant progress toward developing and implementing practices, models, processes, and structures that support the improvement of institutional effectiveness and that facilitate an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and reevaluation. The many systems that are utilized provide for the linkage of outcomes and results to planning and resource allocation. The team concluded that the college has met the requirements of this recommendation.

Recommendation 2. In order to meet the standards and strengthen effectiveness, the team recommends the college extend program review to all areas of the Institutional Effectiveness Model to ensure that strategic actions are integrated into planning and resource allocation. (Standard I.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.2.e, and II.A.2.f)

Observations and analysis of the evidence: The WCC College Council completed a review of the progress toward strategic goals along with the Long Range Planning Model link to the Institutional Effectiveness Model and the Continuous Improvement Cycle. Academic and student services program review processes are well-developed and fully operational. The college is in the process of developing and implementing annual reviews to other areas of the Institutional Effectiveness Model (Administrative Services, SLOs, Public Information Office, planning, and decision-making). An "Administrative Services Review Handbook" was provided to the team during the visit along with a communication (email) indicating the need to finalize the handbook in order to complete some Administrative program reviews this year. However, no evidence was provided as to which program reviews would be completed or when they would be completed. SLOs have been incorporated into the program review template. There is evidence that the outcomes and results of program reviews are being used for decision-making and resource allocation. For example, equipment and personnel needs identified through the program review process have been linked to resource allocation decisions.

Conclusion: The college has fully implemented program review for academic programs and student services and has utilized results and outcomes of review for planning and resource allocation. The development and implementation of program review processes are underway for other functions and operations of the college. The team concluded that the college has partially met the requirements of this recommendation and should fully meet the requirements of the recommendation by 2011.

Recommendation 3. In order to meet the standards and strengthen effectiveness, the team recommends the college initiate meaningful, timely, and inclusive dialogue to identify, develop, and implement student learning outcomes for all courses, programs, and services. The results of this dialogue should link student learning outcomes to planning, resource allocation, and systematic assessment to ensure institutional effectiveness. (Standards I.B.1, I.B.4, I.B.7, II.A.1c, II.A.2a, II.A.2b, II.A.2e, II.A.2f, II.A.2g, II.A.2i, II.A.3, II.A.6, II.A.6a, II.B.1, II.B.4, II.C.1a, II.C.2, III.A.1b, III.A.1c, IV.A.1, IV.A.2b, and IV.B.1b)

Observations and analysis of the evidence: The college has created a variety of opportunities for college employees to discuss and have meaningful dialogue about student learning outcomes. This inclusive dialogue has translated to considerable action that has moved the college along in developing and implementing SLOs at the course, program, and degree level.

There is substantial evidence that the institution is conducting meaningful and inclusive dialogue. In August 2008, the college offered a flex day session that provided an introduction to SLOs. During Spring 2009 the SLO Committee sponsored two workshops that focused on identifying, incorporating, and assessing SLOs. Part-time faculty members are also offered SLO training. The College Council engages in discussions of SLOs implementation and its relationship to college planning. SLOs are included as a goal in the college's Strategic Plan, thus providing for a continuous dialogue. Academic programs and student services programs have developed SLOs that are included in their respective program review processes. The Academic Senate engages in discussions about SLOs during their regular meetings. Presentations have been made by the SLO Committee at monthly faculty meetings. SLOs are required for all new course proposals, thus ensuring dialogue at Curriculum Committee meetings. The SLO Committee has delivered presentations at Student Services Division meetings to assist with incorporating SLOs into these programs. The SLO Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis and archives the results of these meetings on the college website.

The college developed an SLO timeline such that "sustainable continuous quality improvement" level should be reached by 2011. By fall 2009, every course will have SLOs incorporated into the course syllabus. Degree level and program level SLOs have been developed and strategies for assessing these SLOs are being developed. The college has incorporated SLOs into its Institutional Effectiveness, Continuous Improvement, and Long Range Planning Models, thus providing links to planning and resource allocation.

Conclusion: The college has implemented considerable activities, events, and structures that provide for meaningful and inclusive dialogue about SLOs. Strategies and models are in place to provide for a connection between SLOs and planning / resource allocation. Some aspects of SLOs development and implementation are in progress (e.g., assessment), but it is clear that the dialogue has contributed to the substantial progress that has been made. The college is on track to reach the "sustainable continuous quality improvement" level by 2011. The team concluded that the college has partially met the requirements of this recommendation.

Recommendation 4. In order to meet the standards and strengthen effectiveness, the team recommends the college make a concerted effort to increase the overall knowledge and skills necessary for developing and implementing shared decision-making processes (e.g. planning, resource allocation models, assessment, institutional effectiveness) through targeted professional development activities, along with increased communication throughout the college community. (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.C, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.3.d, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.1.c, III.A.5, III.A.5.b, III.A.6, III.B.2, III.B.2.b, III.C.1.c, III.C.2, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.c, III.D.1.d, III.D.2.b, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.2.b, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a, IV.B.2.b, and IV.B.3.g)

Observations and analysis of the evidence: The college has delivered a number of activities designed to increase employees' knowledge and skills related to shared decision-making processes. During the fall 2008, the YCCD chancellor met twice with the WCC College Council and senior administrators to discuss and dialogue about respective roles in shared decision-making. Also in the fall 2008, the chancellor facilitated a workshop for college employees on shared decision-making and its relationship to institutional effectiveness. In January 2009 a staff development workshop for college employees was facilitated by the statewide Academic Senate and the Community College League of California.

Academic Senate members and WCC administrators participate regularly in respective professional organizations, meetings, conferences, and workshops. These activities provide considerable opportunity for ongoing professional development related to shared decision-making processes. The classified staff members reported they believe they have opportunities to participate and that they are encouraged to participate. This wide participation of classified staff members provides ongoing opportunities for continued understanding of shared decision-making processes. The challenge in a small college is having enough personnel (and time) to adequately participate in the numerous committees and work groups.

The college continues to work deliberately at improving communication throughout the college community. There is strong participation from all constituencies across college committees and other work groups. It is expected that representatives from constituent groups report back to their constituencies regarding actions and decisions that flow from various committees. Additionally, participation of students is a challenge. The college clearly makes efforts to include students in committees and work groups. However, the team recognizes that most community college students have multiple demands in their lives that make it difficult to participate one hundred percent of the time in all participatory governance activities. A Communication Resource Committee has been implemented to "ensure" effective methods for college wide communication. The Committee conducted a communications survey and the results identified gaps in communication. These results are being used to develop strategies for improving communication. It was reported by several employees during site visit interviews that there is still a need for improved communication.

Conclusion: The college has implemented a number of strategies, activities, and events designed to improve employees' knowledge and skills related to shared decision-making processes and to improve college wide communication. However, there are still concerns that communication needs improvement. The team concluded that the college has partially met the requirements of this recommendation, but it is expected that the college will fully meet this requirement by the 2011 mid-term review.

Recommendation 5. In order to meet the standards and strengthen effectiveness, the team recommends the College and the District work cooperatively to develop and implement strategies that will lead to increasing the diversity of the faculty. (Standards III.A.4, III.A.4.a, and III.A.4.b)

Observations and analysis of the evidence: The YCCD Diversity Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 25, 2009. This plan is aligned with the district's Strategic Directions and the college's Strategic Plan. The WCC Diversity Committee participated in the development of the district's plan. The development of the plan was inclusive of employee and student input and included consultation both via the Diversity Committee as well as an open forum. The college is already organizing the next fall forum to continue the momentum. The college is committed to recognizing and broadening diversity to all areas, including disabled students. From a learning and awareness perspective, the college will soon be placing books about diversity and teaching into the reserve section of the library. Aligned with the diversity aspect is that employees who are bilingual receive compensation for their abilities.

The YCCD Diversity Plan identifies 19 possible action strategies for increasing the diversity of the faculty. Additionally, the plan also includes the intent to develop and implement an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan with the goal of improving employment participation rates for underrepresented groups. WCC has provided to the district human resources department suggested media outlets for advertising to improve recruitment efforts for diverse applicants.

WCC added seven new full-time faculty members in fall 2008. Of these seven, three were from historically underrepresented groups. Additionally, the college hired its first Hispanic instructor. The diversity of part-time faculty remained relatively unchanged from fall 2007 to fall 2008.

Conclusion: Through strong collaboration and planning, the district and college have implemented a number of strategies and activities designed to increase the diversity of applicant pools for faculty positions and ultimately, to increase the diversity of faculty that are employed. With the most recent hiring of full-time faculty positions, the college has demonstrated progress toward increasing the diversity of faculty. However, overall diversity among part-time and full-time faculty still remains a challenge. The college is encouraged to continue its good work in addressing the challenge. The team concluded that the college has satisfactorily met the requirements of this recommendation.

Overall, the college has satisfactorily addressed the requirements of all the recommendations by making significant progress in addressing the recommendations. However, it should be noted that many items are in various stages of development and implementation, and therefore, not completed. The college is encouraged to continue its good work toward fully meeting the requirements of the recommendations so that the recommendations are fully addressed.