Program Review: Setting a Standard

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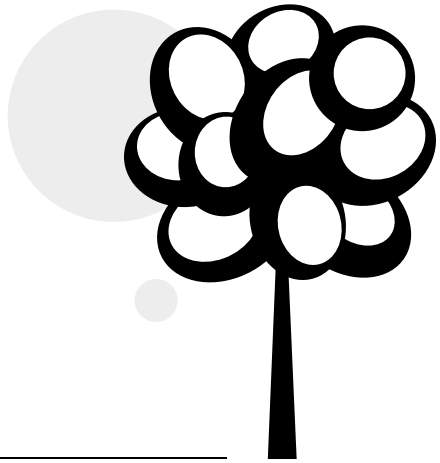

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

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Abstract

This paper responds to Resolution 9.05 Fall 2007, calling for an update of the Academic Senate's 1996 paper Program Review: Developing a Faculty Driven Process in the light of recent accreditation changes and other emerging issues. This paper has been written to expand on the best elements of the 1996 paper and to stand on its own without requiring that readers also review the earlier paper. Program review has evolved substantially since the development of that paper. Individuals and institutions engage in program review for a variety of reasons. This paper seeks to set a standard for program review in California community colleges based on the authority of local academic senates and their commitment to educational excellence, and also in light of external requirements. The Academic Senate continues to argue that program review must be a faculty-led process, motivated by professionalism and the desire to make community college programs relevant, effective, and exemplary.

Introduction

Faculty-driven program review is essential to the integrity of the college community and its educational programs, and this is even truer today than it was in 1996. The opening paragraph of the 1996 paper eloquently captures the reasons.

> As a result of its desire to see the quality and educational effectiveness of community colleges maintained, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (Academic Senate) has had a long-standing commitment to faculty-based program review mechanisms. As public support for funding colleges and universities diminishes and fiscal resources become increasingly constrained, planning and effective use of the sparse educational dollars is paramount. Additionally, standards of accreditation, general and categorical accountability, and community educational needs further motivate colleges to strive for sound educational practices that support the integrity of the college and its programs and services. (ASCCC, 1996, p.1)

The 1996 *Program Review* paper was written in the early days of what is now a well-established and ongoing process. Its recommendations emerged from research into sample program review processes from several California community colleges, examination of available literature, and conversations with the Research and Planning Group (RP), university colleagues, and the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Its overall conclusion was that a single model policy was not appropriate for the diverse characteristics of the 110 California community colleges, but that the self-study validation method used in accreditation must be the fundamental component of any local process. The 1996 paper has been updated with research from the literature published since that time and with examples of program review from a variety of California community colleges that have had their accreditation reaffirmed or have been removed from accreditation sanctions based on their efforts to develop or refine their program review processes. This information has been presented at numerous venues throughout the state including Academic Senate plenary sessions, Accreditation, SLO, and Curriculum Institutes, as well as the Student Success Conferences. These examples provide models for local senates to examine and evaluate with regard to their own practices and to accept, reject, or modify in light of their own local needs and resources. These examples are not suggested as the one best method or the most effective practice. For program review to be effective and to offer its potential power and positive effect, the process must be faculty-driven and based upon the local institutional context and values.

Background

Establishing comprehensive collegiate educational programs based upon continuous improvement of all institutional programs has been the intent of the Legislature for a long time. Please note the excerpt from the Education Code below with the most relevant section emphasized for this paper.

> California Education Code §66050. It is the intent of the Legislature that public institutions of higher education in California shall provide a collegiate experience which gives each student the skills of communication and problem solving, the ideas and principles underlying the major areas of modern knowledge, the ability to consider ethical issues thoughtfully, the understanding that learning is a continuous lifelong process, and the knowledge of democracy necessary for good citizenship. The Legislature further intends that an undergraduate education prepare students to think critically and independently, and to have the flexibility to adapt to changing economic and social conditions, new workforce needs, and demands of a multicultural society. **It is also the intent of the Legislature that the segments of higher education recognize that quality teaching is the core ingredient of the undergraduate educational experience. The segments of higher education are encouraged to improve the quality of undergraduate education as a central priority of California's public colleges and universities.**

In an effort to create a broad, deep, and high quality academic experience, all public colleges and universities in California have been required to examine and improve their efforts. Though program review has attracted much more attention in the last few years, program review is not new. "Processes for program review" is one of the items enumerated in Title 5 §53200, which summarizes primary areas of academic senate authority. Program review has been an integral part of the Accreditation Standards for the last two decades. The fact that the Academic Senate saw the need for a paper on Program Review in the mid-1990s indicates that the faculty has been considering the role of program review in local quality assurance processes for many years. Nevertheless, several colleges have struggled with implementing meaningful program review resulting in accreditation sanctions.

Local faculty and administrators have expressed varying degrees of interest in program review. As fiscal constraints have increased and as program review or some similar process became a primary mechanism to determine program expansion, continuation, or termination, a range of perspectives regarding the purpose and application of program review developed. Many departments across the state found themselves writing program reviews to justify the continuation of their programs. Some faculty perceived that the program review process was a survival of the fittest contest, both divisive and punitive in nature, and that perception eclipsed the nobler, but less prevailing perspectives that regarded program review as an opportunity to promote educational excellence and improve instruction and services to students. For this very reason, the 1998 Academic Senate paper Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective recommended that local senates participate in the creation of a program discontinuance policy that is separate and distinct from the program review process.

Both faculty and external agencies have increasingly expressed an interest in developing effective program review processes. Early concerns included the separation of program review from program elimination, the collective bargaining implications in program review and elimination, the appropriate criteria for program review, the need for information/workshops on program review, and the extent to which program review should include student, administrative, and ancillary services, as well as instructional programs, and the role of local academic senates in program review. Program review must be linked to overall educational planning and resource allocation to meet the accreditation standards, yet colleges struggle with this linkage. However, if colleges do not link budgeting and planning to the major outcome of education—learning—they risk failing in their overall mission. This process of linkage is either weakened or empowered by the health of the campus governance processes.

The 1996 paper noted legislative attempts to impose external accountability measures on Career Technical Education (CTE) programs and somewhat prophetically wrote: "this legislation minimally should put faculty and college administrators on notice of the Legislature's and the public's interest in accountability" (ASCCC, 1996, p. 2). Colleges have faced substantial challenges from the ACCJC 2002 Accreditation Standards and the accountability requirements that began with Assembly Bill (AB) 1417. The 2002 Accreditation Standards focused on institutional effectiveness and continuous self-evaluation and improvement including an emphasis on course, program, and institutional student learning outcomes. Reports showed that some colleges have not been conducting regular program review, even though the Academic Senate and good practice have encouraged the development of a rigorous self-study process for local programs. While external requirements for accountability are not the primary reason to undertake these important institutional tasks, without them, colleges sometimes fail to address issues through healthy collegial methods. AB1417, passed in 2004, required the California Community College System to develop a process of both college and system accountability measures; it is best known to community college faculty through the annual Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC) report. A robust program review process is one mechanism available to local colleges to improve student success. For their part, local academic senates have established in principle that program review is a central part of the "academic and professional matters" that are subject to collegial consultation under the Title 5 regulations. Just as the original program review processes should have been developed in consultation with local academic senates, so must any ongoing changes.

The tenor of early faculty discussions on the 2002 Accreditation Standards seemed to suggest that student learning outcomes had become the ACCJC's primary concern. While it is clear the ACCJC does place substantial importance on SLOs, the Commission has identified several areas that appear to be especially difficult for colleges to meet. As summarized in a February 2008 Rostrum article on the accreditation "two-year rule" and primary areas of deficiency resulting in accreditation sanctions, these areas are Program Review, Planning and Budgeting Processes, and Governance. The article notes, "if colleges have not completed program review, have only spotty reviews, or have a review process that lacks objective data and analyses (thus ultimately failing to evaluate the program's effectiveness), the institution will most likely see a recommendation" (Fulks, 2008, p. 15). Thus, the ACCJC has become a major source of renewed interest in conducting effective program review. Nevertheless, accreditation should never be the major motivation for investing in the program review process. Rather, program review represents the best process to ensure quality programs and weave the faculty 10 +1 responsibilities into the fabric of the college.

In order to clarify accreditation program review expectations, the ACCJC has distributed a rubric indicating increasingly sophisticated levels of program review processes; the Commission expects colleges to be at the highest level, "Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement." Please refer to the ACCJC rubric in Appendix A called A Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness—Part I: Program Review. As defined in the rubric, colleges must adopt a robust Program Review process and implement an evaluation and improvement of the review process itself: "The institution reviews and refines its program review processes to improve institutional effectiveness" (ACCJC, 2007, p.1).

In addition to setting high standards for program review processes, the accreditation standards link this process to budgeting and planning. This link makes the work of program review and data collection and analysis a powerful tool in addressing the college mission and planning as supported by budgeting. Standard I.B.6 states that "The institution assures effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes by systematically reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle including institutional and other research efforts" (ACCJC, 2008, p. 16). Again, in Standard III.D. on Financial Resources the standards state, "Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services" (ACCJC, 2008, p. 29). These same standards of good practice were urged by the Academic Senate in Program Review: Developing a Faculty Driven Process, stating, "A multitude of budget and governance discussions have yielded a common axiom, 'Planning should drive the budget; the budget shouldn't drive the planning'" (ASCCC, 1996, p. 8). While the ACCJC has required colleges to provide evidence of that linkage and has reiterated that requirement in recommendations given to colleges over the last five years, linking program review to planning and budgeting has been an important recommendation of Academic Senate papers since prior to the adoption of the 2002 Accreditation Standards.

In addition to institutional accreditation, program-specific accreditation may be required for additional areas such as nursing or engineering. In addition, vocational programs (career technical education) are required to complete program review every two years if they receive Perkins funding. Vocational programs have federally mandated accountability measures that must be included in program review and reported annually.

Another indirect motivator for conducting effective program review is the Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC), the offspring of AB 1417, passed in 2004, which "required the Board of Governors for the California Community Colleges to recommend to the Legislature and Governor a workable structure (framework) for annual evaluation of community college performance in meeting statewide educational outcome priorities" (CCCCO, 2009, p.1). Like the accreditation process, ARCC reports are intended to provide data that provide insight into institutional performance and trends in several key indicators over time. Unlike accreditation self studies and Commission responses, which are discursive and remain a peer-review process, ARCC reports focus on quantitative data with very little interpretive analysis or qualitative consideration and no explicit judgment from the Chancellor's Office about how an institution is performing. It is essential that faculty understand the important and growing role of accountability, yet these requirements are secondary in nature compared to the important role in using program review as an effective method of reviewing and improving institutional practices.

In this atmosphere of heightened concern over measurable educational quality, establishing, maintaining, and enhancing a robust program review process is more crucial than ever.

The Role of Local Academic Senates

The involvement of the local academic senate as the representative of the faculty is critical to the successful development, implementation, and maintenance of a program review process. While the initial role of the local academic senate is delineated in regulation, academic senates have a tremendous opportunity to develop a collegial, supportive, student-centered, faculty-driven, academically relevant process for the more general evaluation and planning of the college's educational programs and services. The 2002 Accreditation Standards clearly demand that colleges foster broad dialog, but rely on faculty expertise in developing and reviewing programs. This is particularly true because of the nature of student learning outcomes for programs (ACCJC, 2008, p 18). In Standard IV.A.2 on Leadership and Governance, it is equally clear that the collaborative work of all constituencies with clearly defined decision-making roles is important, "The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in the decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which the individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning and special-purpose bodies" (ACCJC, 2008, p. 31). While accreditation standards highlight these practices, broad participation has always been considered an important aspect in all local senate practices. Senates need to be proactive in describing the lines of communication and decision-making pathways that connect program review to budget, planning, enrollment management, and other important institutional functions. In addition, local academic senates should see their role as an opportunity to define and refine program review in order to eliminate ineffective characteristics and advocate for and support of verified good practices in order to improve. Administrators and boards of trustees need the professional expertise and judgment inherent in the collective wisdom of the faculty represented by the local academic senate. The local academic senate guidance must be central to the most important processes for determining how well the students' educational and support needs are being met on a college campus.

A question and answer document, developed by past Academic Senate presidents Jim Locke and Bill Scroggins (and central to the 1996 paper) suggested some standard language for the goals of a local program review process.

> *The program review process shall promote professionalism, enhance performance, and be effective in yielding a genuinely useful and substantive process for determining program effectiveness,*
>
> *the program review process shall provide 1) an articulation of clear, relevant criteria upon which reviews will be based; 2) the establishment of reasonable and timely intervals; 3) the establishment of the specific purposes for which program reviews are conducted and articulation of those purposes to everyone involved,*
>
> *the principal purposes of the review process are to recognize and acknowledge good performance, to enhance satisfactory performance and help programs which are performing satisfactorily further their own growth, and to identify weak performance and assist programs in achieving needed improvement,*

one of the purposes of the program review process is not that of providing a mechanism or justification for program elimination;

a program's students, administrators, faculty and their colleagues shall all contribute to the program review, but the program's faculty shall play a central role in the program review process and, together with appropriate administrators, assume principal responsibility for the effectiveness of the process;

the procedures of the program review process shall foster a joint and cooperative exercise of responsibility by the faculty, administration, and governing board and shall reflect faculty and administrator expertise and authority in evaluating professional work as well as the governing board's legal and public responsibility for the process;

the program review process shall provide an ongoing and thorough review of the relevance and responsiveness of vocational education programs, consideration of the relationship between other similar programs throughout the state, and the appropriate balance between vocational and general educational programs. (Scroggins and Locke, 1994, p.1)

The adopted process should represent the informed and collective wisdom of the faculty and its execution should involve not only department faculty but also students, administrative and support staff, and in some cases the public participants on program advisory committees.

The Purposes of Program Review

Program review is the process through which constituencies (not only faculty) on a campus take stock of their successes and shortcomings and seek to identify ways in which they can meet their goals more effectively. It is important to note here that the task of identifying evidence-based successful practices, and sharing these practices college-wide, is far more important than the negative perspective of trying to ferret out ineffective practices. Program review should model a miniature accreditation self-study process within a designated area of the campus. In essence, it provides a model and practice that generates and analyzes evidence about specific programs. Eventually this work should guide the larger work of the institution, providing the basis for the educational master plan and the accreditation self-study as well as guiding planning and budgeting decisions. The review should be a candid self-evaluation supported by evidence, including both qualitative and quantitative data. It should honestly document the positive aspects of the program and establish a process to review and improve the less effective aspects of a program. A well developed program review process will be both descriptive and evaluative, directed toward improving teaching and learning, producing a foundation for action, and based upon well-considered academic values and effective practices.

The literature reveals the common assertion that in order for the program review process to be successful, it should serve as a mechanism for the assessment of performance, acknowledge accomplishments and academic excellence, improve the quality of instruction and services, update programs and services, and foster self-study and renewal (Allen, 2004; Nichols, 1995; Walvoord, 2004; Wergin & Swingmen, 2000). To be truly effective it must be cyclical, recursive, and iterative. Further, it should provide for the identification of weak performance and assist programs in achieving needed improvement. Finally, program review should also be seen as an integral component of campus planning that will lead to better utilization of existing resources. A major function of program review should be to monitor and pursue the effective congruence between the mission and priorities of the college and the actual practices in the program or service under review.

It is essential that program review be a meaningful process that contributes to the overall quality of the program and the college without creating unsustainable workload or data requirements. The purpose of program review can be stated clearly in the types of questions it seeks to answer. Examples of these questions might include:

Do instructional, student service, and administrative activities sustain a vital, effective, and relevant role consistent with the program goals and the college mission?

Is curriculum sufficiently rigorous, offering the high quality education promised to the public and consistent with Title 5 regulations?

Are instructional program curriculum, student support services, and administrative services adequately aligned to produce the appropriate student learning outcomes expected by transfer institutions, employers, and other external entities depending on this training and education?

Do quantitative and qualitative evidence support the college's assumptions about the effectiveness of its teaching and service?

Are the human, physical, and technological resources adequate to sustain the program?

What are the most effective ways to examine the program to determine its effectiveness?

What does the program do to contribute to teaching and learning?

How will changes to the program effect students?

Where will this program be—and what will it need to do as it anticipates its needs—two, five, or ten years into the future?

Important functions of program review include meeting extrinsic accountability mandates and demonstrating a systematic planning process. While these functions should occur because of program review, they should not serve as the primary function of the review. Neither faculty nor staff is best motivated by statutory regulations and threats of external accountability, but rather by the desire to see students succeed. Overemphasis on external criteria results in program review being perceived as a time-consuming process for an externally mandated product with little positive effect on the program's activities or relevance maintaining academic excellence. Consider the important factor that within the last decade the turnover of California community college administrators has been very high. Many expect college administrative positions to turn over in four years or less. Consider that this time period is not even the six-year accreditation cycle. If colleges depend on administrators to connect program review with the college mission, planning, and budgeting, they can expect the target to change with the hiring of each new administrator. Long-term faculty and staff represent the more constant, informed, and qualified source of intellectual capital to evaluate and improve existing programs. This further emphasizes the important role of the local academic senate in defining and describing the linkages between program review and local decision making, while acknowledging that external scrutiny is a fact. It is essential that faculty are able to both describe and document what they do and why they do it. This process needs to be beneficial to a college's work while providing external accountability as a secondary goal.

The Scope of Program Review

Because Title 5 refers to program review processes under instructional programs, it has often been incorrectly limited to instructional programs.

> **§51022. Instructional Programs**
>
> (a) Within six months of the formation of a community college district, the governing board shall adopt and carry out its policies for the establishment, modification, or discontinuance of courses or programs. Such policies shall incorporate statutory responsibilities regarding vocational or occupational training program review as specified in section 78016 of the Education Code.

Perhaps because it appears as one of the "academic and professional matters" enumerated in Title 5 §53200, faculty sometimes think that program review is limited to instructional program review, but it is clear that an effective program review process must develop tools to evaluate and improve student support services and administrative services as well. In order to drive institutional effectiveness, the involvement of instructional, student service and administrative programs or units is required. While an effective program review process will involve faculty in evaluating the courses they teach, it will also evaluate the library, counseling and other student support services provided by their college, in addition to the functions within administrative services. Accreditation Standard II.B. and II.C. refer to evaluation of student service programs the library services and indicate the importance of the program review process for these services and their relationship to good practices in other college activities and programs. Standard III makes it clear that the self-evaluative, self-improvement process (program review) is also expected in the administrative units involved areas of human resources, facilities, technology, and finance and budgeting,

It should be noted that program review and accountability reporting for Career Technical Education programs receiving Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) funding is much more prescribed. The data required is mandated by federal regulations and funding can be jeopardized if accountability measures are not met. The California Community College Chancellor's Office has prepared a guide, The Instructional Program Improvement Resource Guide, to assist in meeting these mandates. (Available at *http://www.cccco.edu/Portals/4/EWD/CTE/Resources/faq/pirg-full_doc.pdf.*

Finally and unfortunately, some program review processes have served the purpose of justifying program and/or personnel elimination. The process by which programs and services are reduced or eliminated should be clearly defined, as well as separate and distinct from program review. Colleges which have conflated program review and program discontinuation should review Program Discontinuance, a Faculty Perspective (ASCCC, 1998). Additionally, individual faculty and staff evaluations should remain separate and distinct from the program review process, following peer review procedures developed by the collective bargaining agents in consultation with the academic senate. Unfortunately, Accreditation Standard IIIA.1.c states that, "Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes." This creates difficulty for some colleges in keeping this separation clear. It is important to note that this standard does not only speak to faculty, but to all responsible for student success and that it does not

delineate how this process should occur. (Please refer to the December 2007 Rostrum article, Accreditation and Faculty Evaluations pages 2-3, which provides more information on this specific topic.)

Local faculty involvement with well-developed pathways for decision-making is essential. Understanding and directing the purpose of program review through well thought out goals or guidelines can provide a strong foundation to contribute to the overall health and well being of the institution.

The essential role of program review and its potential impact on a campus would suggest that in developing new program review processes or reviewing existing processes, the participants should discuss purposes, goals, and guidelines for program review. Goals or purposes describe what the process should achieve and guidelines provide a set of standards to keep the process on track. These goals, purposes and/or guidelines can later form the core instrument to create an evaluation of the program review process resulting in adjustments or improvements to the process to retain consistency or make the process more workable. Appendix B includes samples of goals, purposes and guidelines for program review from a variety of colleges.

Defining a "Program"

After addressing the reasons and processes for conducting program review, the next step is to document the institution's definition of a program. The answer to this question is more complex than one might think. Because the purpose of program review is to promote educational excellence and better serve students, no function of the college should be exempt from the process. The effectiveness of the ancillary and administrative units, as well as instruction and student services programs, all have an impact on the academic integrity of the programs and institutional effectiveness. ACCJC standards require that each college program measure its effectiveness by assessing its student learning outcomes. However, what precisely constitutes a program? California community colleges are not the only ones that struggle with this issue. A review of the literature reveals references to program review, department assessment, unit reviews and a variety of other discussions that document the difficulty in separating academic departments and disciplines into programs. Whatever the college constituents decide, this definition should reflect the college governance and budgeting structures but more importantly should make logical units of review to meet the goals and purposes of program review at a college. The definition should be narrow enough to create manageable and realistic programs. The definition may need to vary for instructional, student service, and administrative programs. Below are some of potential concepts for identifying or defining programs:

- Title 5 §55000(g) defines an **educational program** as "an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education"
- disciplines, such as natural sciences, or even more broadly, as science
- departments, such as Early Childhood Education, Counseling, etc.
- academic majors or areas of emphasis, such as humanities
- student pathways such as career technical education (CTE) , basic skills, transfer. Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) or Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)
- planning and goal setting processes (planning units), possibly relating to divisions such as career technical education
- college budget processes (cost centers)
- student service pathways that end in a specific outcome
- administrative services defined by administrative reporting structures
- governance structures, such as board of trustee processes or divisions underneath a particular dean or administrator

Obviously the configuration and definition of a program will vary with the size and structure of a college. The ACCJC does not define programs for colleges because program review drives governance, budgeting, and planning. If the ACCJC defined programs, this would put it in control of governance, planning, and budget, a role that is inappropriate for the accrediting commission. If any outside agency tried to define programs, the likelihood is that it would be counterproductive, working against a college's culture, organizational, and governance structures. The dangers with mandated program definitions include oversimplification

and homogenization. For instance, defining a standard program could result in a situation where some colleges have only a single faculty member or a program composed of only part-time faculty members because the definition is too narrow. In other situations, such as dictating programs that encompass career technical education, the institutional configuration to the mandated definition could create massive and unwieldy structures. This discussion is an essential local discussion. During these discussions, colleges need to consider the way that programs relate to and depend on other programs.

What does this mean for faculty organized by independent academic departments which may or may not offer certificates or degrees? What about programs that cross disciplinary boundaries, like nursing and other career and technical areas that require prerequisites from other disciplines as part of their program. Should program review include the student pathway through the degree or certificate, particularly if those classes serve predominantly CTE programs (e.g. Anatomy and Physiology overview in biology for Radiologic Technology)? Who is actually in which program? Consider a basic skills "program." English faculty educate basic skills students and so do reading and math faculty: where or who is the program? Is the program determined by the courses or the learning outcomes? Noncredit faculty have begun to develop programs as a result of the availability of enhanced "career development and college preparation" (CDCP) funding, and those newly developed programs should be included in the appropriate program review cycle. While it makes sense to organize program review processes in a way that takes advantage of the organization of faculty, the organizational units of the college should not dictate the program review process. Discussion of these parameters is essential.

What follows is a variety of college examples for defining programs. None of these is suggested as universally appropriate models. These examples represent a variety of strategies and have been adapted to align with the local college mission and culture. One potential definition comes from Skyline College as adapted from Cosumnes River College's: "A program is a cohesive group of courses or activities that support a common set of outcomes;" Skyline is still working through how that definition will manifest itself in terms of assessment. Cabrillo has broadly defined programs as general education (GE) , basic skills, and CTE. Yet another potential way to define the programs for program review is to look at the outcomes or student learning outcomes that are the result of a completed program. As stated above, the Accrediting Commission is clear about its insistence that institutions should be measuring outcomes at the course, program, and institutional level. Because assessment of those program outcomes provides the information for the self-evaluation, those outcomes need to make sense in relation to the campus organization and the courses that are included in the program. In reviewing the program to see if students are successfully completing the outcomes, the current campus organization may be challenged. For instance, would political science faculty expect different student outcomes from a student whose major was political science from the student that took only one political science course for a general education requirement?

Bakersfield College Biology Program

Beginning in 2002-2003, the Bakersfield College biology department, which was organized as a single academic program by discipline, began examining the program and curriculum using student learning outcomes. This "outcomes perspective" guided faculty to conclude that the biology department really served three significant pathways which were programs of study contributing to different outcomes.

Biology major outcomes

- pre- and co- requisites included college-level-reading, transfer-level math, chemistry, physics,
- biology course requirements emphasized core global and organismal biological concepts with less content focused on humans
- the goal, unit load and course sophistication was heavy, appropriate to transfer biology

Conclusions:

Few students could complete the Biology AA degree and GE requirements prior to transfer, particularly in light of the number of units that can be transferred.

Historically this was the main emphasis of the biology department to make biologists. But this pathway was intensive and the number of students was shrinking.

Pre—allied health outcomes

- pre-requisites included pre-transfer-level math and a brief chemistry course
- included intensive human biology courses (anatomy, physiology, microbiology) focused on core human biological concepts with far less organismal and global emphasis
- the goal of the pathway was a vocational program and eventual external certification

Conclusions:

Many students went this pathway.

Too many students never actually completed the vocational program.

The human biology courses are not transferable as Biology degree electives.

These students had nothing to show for the course success except a transcript, they had completed no degree.

General education outcomes

- prerequisites only college-level reading
- served as the only science portion for many student's general education briefly touching all core biological concepts human, organismal, and global
- the goal was a liberal studies degree primarily in education or transfer in another area of emphasis

Conclusions:

The biology portion of this pathway was easily accomplished by students seeking transfer and GE requirements only.

Many of these were headed towards K-12 education majors.

It was essential they had a grasp of scientific thinking as well as a global understanding of biology.

- the liberal studies degree with an area of emphasis represented the greatest number of single degrees awarded at Bakersfield college

The outcomes of these pathways prompted the biology department to re-evaluate the degrees awarded. In fact, the majority of students taking biology were pre-allied health, followed by the next largest number of students which were only taking a single course for general education and this was distantly followed by a handful of Biology majors, most of which never completed any degree. The outcomes and expectations for students taking only one course to meet a general education science requirement differed significantly from expectations for pre-allied health students and biology majors. It was evident that a single set of outcomes and a single degree for all students taking biology was not reasonable. The intensity, breadth, focus and depth of study varied significantly. The Biology Associate of Science degree was reframed to be a degree which students could reach through various pathways determined by the area of emphasis. The old Biology degree was modified into two degree pathways: a Biology Associate of Science degree with an emphasis in Human Biology (the pre-allied health track) or a Biology Associate of Science Degree with an emphasis in Biology (for majors). The course requirements for these degrees differed significantly due to the different student goals. The program assessments were different because the final outcomes were very specialized to assess the student pathway and terminal goal. Data was used to improve all three biology pathways.

Next the biology department began to reconsider these program pathways in order to more effectively organize the curriculum. All the pre-allied health courses were rewritten integrating anatomy and physiology and creating a capstone course in Pathophysiology. The program and service to students was redesigned based on data from relevant program assessments and the needs of students along the pathway. The new degree, emphasizing human biology, allowed students a milestone after completion of the pre-allied health pathway (2 or more years of intensive education) and prior to completion of additional specific allied health degrees such as nursing, radiology, etc. Achieving the Biology AS degree with emphasis in Human Biology enabled students waiting to get into programs the opportunity to get better and higher paying jobs because they now had a degree indicating their ability to complete a program in contrast to a transcript that simply indicated they had taken a lot of biology courses. The capstone course provided a means of remediation for those students who did not make the cut-off formula for the nursing program and for those struggling in the nursing program to get a refresher.

The number of biology degrees awarded increased ten-fold as seen in the table below. Students expressed extreme satisfaction in graduating and being awarded a degree for completing an educational pathway which truly represented an accomplishment and completion of a course of study.

Old Biology Program Required: Courses in Chemistry, Math, Biology Target: Only Transfer as a Biology Major					**New Biology Program** Emphasis in Biology Required: Courses in Chemistry, Math, Biology Target: Only Transfer as a Biology Major **Emphasis in Human Biology** Required: One course in Chemistry, One course in Math, Biology courses related to the Human Biology Target: Students seeking multiple local Allied Health Pathways including transfer in Allied Health areas					
Award Program	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Biology	9	10	7	5	12	18	46	58	56	87

Other colleges such as College of Marin have redefined programs based on outcomes across disciplinary lines related to student pathways. Appendix C includes three images which schematize curricular relationships at College of the Marin as it defined instructional programs for program review. The images represent: 1) the foundational status of basic skills courses, 2) the evolution of defining the major courses within different pathways, and 3) the aligning of course outcomes within programs and determining where the majority of transfer students are served. While this view of programs may not fit other colleges, it enabled Marin to respond to accreditation recommendations to revise and complete program review. This same conversation is especially helpful when considering student service program definitions.

Conducting program review in student services is good practice, essential to overall institutional health, and required by the accreditation standards. In student services, the financial aid office is part of the collection of services necessary for many students to attain their academic goals, and thus student service "programs" make an essential contribution to student success. While some students will visit the financial aid office on

campus, others will seek to obtain the forms they need via an Internet connection, and thus the quality of technology services of the college have an impact on the ability of the student to attain his or her educational goal. Administrative support units should be reviewed to determine their contribution and potential for improvement. Examining how services could be improved is integral to all instructional, student service, and administrative programs at a college. Here again, the definition of the program becomes an essential discussion. How will a college define it with regard to student services and administrative units?

When considering the library, does the college include the research essay assessment under the library program or as integrated into the writing courses that require library services? Is "counseling" one program or are DSPS and EOPS separate programs with different expected outcomes? Where are the tutoring services and success center programs reviewed; are they independent or are they reviewed in integration with the courses they support?

Is General Education a "Program?"

These discussions require meaningful local dialog. This leads to a discussion about the general education "program." If colleges choose to define a program as a department or discipline, it will create a challenge when assessing the courses within the academic department that are predominantly general education. This is why Cabrillo College has chosen to identify all the disciplinary general education courses as a single program. The Cabrillo College academic senate created and approved a single assessment strategy that is applied to all courses in their general education program. This task required a good understanding of the definition of general education programs in both Title 5 and the accreditation standards. This should not be confused with the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) or California State University breadth, which represent a collection of coursework that fits University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) general education philosophies. Because the California community college mission is so broad, colleges must determine their local institutional general education philosophy with regard to all of their student populations and their institutional goals. This should include a careful review of transfer to UC and CSU campuses, private colleges and universities, career technical education, economic development, lifelong learning, basic skills, and other student pathways.

Some colleges have interpreted both the accreditation standards and Title 5 general education references as defining a program with specific skills and learning outcomes. In Standard II.A.3 it is clear that a carefully considered philosophy of general education with associated learning outcomes must be clearly stated in the catalog and that the logic for placing courses in general education must be based on the ability of the course to contribute to the general education outcomes (ACCJC II.A.3, 2008, p 19).

Standard II.A.3.a-c

General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:

a.) An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and social sciences.

b.) A capability to be a productive individual and life long learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

c) A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally. (ACCJC, 2008, pp.19-20)

And while some may consider this a tall order for a general education program, a review of the Title 5 requirements for general education outcomes holds California community colleges to the same high standards with similarly framed expectations.

Title 5 §55061.

Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education

(a) The governing board of a community college district shall adopt a policy, which states its specific philosophy on General Education. In developing this policy governing boards shall consider the following policy of the Board of Governors:

The awarding of an Associate Degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It is to symbolize a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding. In addition to these accomplishments, the student shall possess sufficient depth in some field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest.

Central to an Associate Degree, General Education is designed to introduce students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world. It reflects the conviction of colleges that those who receive their degrees must possess in common certain basic principles, concepts and methodologies both unique to and shared by the various disciplines. College educated persons must be able to use this knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. Most importantly, General Education should lead to better self-understanding.

In establishing or modifying a general education program, ways shall be sought to create coherence and integration among the separate requirements. It is also desirable that general education programs involve students actively in examining values inherent in proposed solutions to major social problems.

Other colleges do not consider general education a program, but rather a collection of courses within a variety of programs (e.g., general biology, history, psychology). The difficulty with this organization is that the coherence and integration of general education is then hard to describe, assess, and improve. Both Title 5 and the Accreditation Standards provide direction as to the content and learning outcomes and skills that California community colleges are expected to address in the general education program. Identifying and recognizing general education as a single program reduces the separate and unrelated assessments and review that would occur if each discipline looked at student outcomes separately. However, faculty at each college should carefully consider this choice. While the discussions are not easy or simple, they have been very rewarding and unifying at the colleges where dialog has been broad, deep, and transparent.

The necessity for all units on a college campus to collaborate and contribute to students' goals is affected by the skill with which institutions organize units and define programs. When considering overall institutional effectiveness it is logical that administrative units should also be involved in program review and connected to student service and instructional program review. In connecting program review to budgeting and planning the process of program review becomes the lifeline for funding and growth. Program review is a process vital to all programs or units within the college whether instructional, student service, or administrative, with all contributing to the way an institution functions and as an indicator of institutional health and well being.

Defining the Mission of the Program to Guide Program Review

In the same way that community colleges define their mission and their role within their communities, so programs within a college will be able to conduct program review more effectively if a mission guides them. After programs are defined, particularly if they are defined differently from the college's organizational structure, it is important for the members involved in the program to discuss their mission. This mission statement does not have to be extensive, but the program's mission will help to guide program review and justify the resource and staffing requests submitted. If a program requests an increase in faculty or equipment to support a course that does not contribute to that program's mission, how high should that request be ranked on the overall institutional priority list? Just as the college's mission should align with the statewide community college mission as defined in Education Code §66010.4, so the program's mission should align with the college's locally defined mission. This discussion need not be exhaustive and participants should recognize that with regular program review, refinement of the mission is an integral discussion as part of the process.

Program Review Components

It is essential to define the process that will be used to keep the program review process faculty-driven, on a timeline, and provided with the resources to meet its goals and purposes. As in all governance structures, the committee participants and levels of authority must be clearly indicated. Appendix D provides links to various community college program review sites which include explanations of committee members and methods of governance. They differ substantially depending on the local college culture and organization. However, effective practice requires broad participation, including faculty, staff, student, administration and, where appropriate, outside agencies such as advisory committee members.

As stated previously, program review is the process through which a constituency takes stock of its strengths and weaknesses and seeks to identify ways in which it can improve. An effective process is likely to make its practitioners proud and humble in turn, as they discover the things they do well and the areas that can be improved. Many processes and activities of a college should be correlated or coordinated with the program review process. These include alignment of program review, curriculum processes, budget processes, student equity analysis, mission review and educational planning, and accreditation planning. The potential to decrease the duplication of effort and effectively coordinate human, fiscal, analytical, and temporal resources could be optimized if these activities are all part of one process.

It might even be argued that program review processes are the most important area for local senates, since program review is likely to involve and potentially integrate several academic and professional matters items, including curriculum (Title 5 §53200(c)(1, 2)), program development (§53200(c)(4)), and policies regarding student preparation and success (§53200(c)(5)). All resource policies and practices—human, physical, technology, and financial—should be scrutinized as a part of program review.

When program review processes are locally developed and compatible with local college structures and processes that are mindful of local student populations, program review can become an internal process that helps define and strengthen the college. Many colleges have created templates for programs to complete in order to simplify the program review process. In these templates, the institutional research department fills in data for programs undergoing review. The appropriate faculty and staff complete other components. Because the various entities of an institution have different organizational structures, some colleges have created different templates for instructional, student service and administrative programs. An example of an instructional program review template from Bakersfield College is included in Appendix E and sample program review templates from Santa Monica College on Instructional Programs, Occupational Programs, Student Support Services Programs, and Administrative Services are included in Appendix F. Additional templates for instruction, student services, and administration are available online and their web links are included in Appendix D. However, because the template will guide the work and processes of program review, it is essential that colleges use these examples only for discussion. Each college should create templates that reflect the college's values, mission, organization, and culture as well providing adequate opportunity to address unique program goals.

Program review templates may include:

- a description of the program
- an explanation of how the program meets its mission
- information on faculty, staff, and departmental resources
- curriculum (courses offered, enrollment and number of sections, student success—grades, program review timeline)
- information on facilities
- a summary of program activities
- student demographics (gender and ethnicity, age, declared educational goals)
- student achievement data (certificates, degrees, employment, time to completion)
- student learning outcomes data
- grades
- withdrawal rates
- needs assessment
- requests for additional funding based on budget data
- an assessment of present and projected staffing needs
- summary of equipment
- verification of the program's values and effectiveness
- student surveys
- employer surveys

Determining the components of the program review report will serve as an indicator of what the institution values. Some program review processes include a history of the program and a summary of how the program supports the overall institutional missions and goals. Conclusions and requests for augmentation should include both quantitative and qualitative data that describe how the requests will improve the program and contribute to overall institutional effectiveness.

Evidence-based Program Review

An observer from a foreign land might guess that all the discussion focused on outcomes assessment over the past several years is an indication that faculty have only recently paid attention to the quality of their programs. Senior faculty would argue that what has changed is a shift from tacit and often informal program evaluation to explicit and documented program review processes. The research capacity of many colleges has grown substantially over the past several years, prompted in a large part by enhanced data computing capacity which has led to increased demands for data production and evaluation.

Whatever components are included, data should be a necessary part of the review process. This requirement for data and evidence supporting the review are part of the accountability requirements from external agencies. There are requirements from both the federal government and the California Legislature to include particular types of data. Critical thinking based on analysis of evidence has always been an integral part of the work faculty expect from students; a reasoned student thesis with evidence for conclusions is a major criterion in higher education. In the same way, program review must provide support for the conclusions and requests derived from the review.

Using the Data

Good practice (and ACCJC accreditation standards) expects program review processes to be ongoing and systemic with evidence that the data are used for improvements (ACCJC, 2008, p.15). Data should not just be collected, but rather subjected to thorough analysis resulting in programmatic improvement. Documenting improvement and using data to support assertions are important. It is not adequate to have a plan to conduct program review or to review only selected programs. As the ACCJC rubric in Appendix G indicates, the standards for program review are not desirable or ambitious goals for colleges to hope to reach: they are the minimum level to achieve accreditation.

Identifying Criteria and Determining Research Needs

Proposing a universal set of criteria for program review is not practical given the diverse characteristics of local colleges. Community colleges are designed to meet the educational needs of local communities. As communities differ drastically across the state, so do their colleges. As local academic senates develop program review processes, their research needs and methodologies must be considered. Most program review processes include both quantitative and qualitative components; these components should not be considered mutually exclusive of each other. Local senates should note that some criteria (e.g., meeting safety regulations or maintaining external program certification) are more pressing than others.

Quantitative Evidence

Quantitative factors have great value in the context of a comprehensive program review process. Items such as access, enrollment, successful course completion, grades, persistence, transfer, certificate and degree completion, and other student outcome factors draw a numerical picture for further analysis. However, excessive preoccupation with quantitative measures, particularly productivity measures, will have the effect

of skewing the program review processes away from a program's concerns over educational quality or student success. Such preoccupation could lead to the failure to consider important factors such as (1) the comprehensiveness of the college mission and the curriculum that supports it, (2) the program's educational philosophy and how program components express that philosophy, and/or (3) the educational needs of the community and how the programs support those needs.

Particular care should be taken to avoid the dilemma that the simplest way to improve most student productivity measures is to simply restrict enrollment. This may be appropriate for selective institutions such as the University of California but is completely inappropriate for open-access institutions like the California community colleges. Quantitative measures should be included that reflect improved service to previously under-represented groups of students.

It is important to emphasize that quantitative data should not be presented without a narrative explanation nor should it be used for comparison among a college's programs. Such use would tend to promote the use of program review for program reduction or program elimination and would completely disregard the qualitative value of a program. Rather, trends in data over a period of time within the program itself may be most useful for the program faculty to identify their needs and design the necessary intervention or support.

Qualitative Evidence

Program review presents an opportunity for discussion of educational philosophy and the contributions of each program to the development of the whole student. General education is usually dedicated to some notion that in addition to technical skills and competencies, education should be concerned with contributing to the development of generally educated persons. Although it may seem difficult to measure abilities such as the capacity for ethical reasoning and critical thinking which are central to preparing students for life-long learning and effective citizenship, the student learning outcomes movement has helped to make these skills more recognizable. Such qualities are not easy to quantify but are reflected in the spirit that animates classroom discussion, the values that are modeled in pedagogy, and the habits of mind of graduates. It is not uncommon for program review processes to neglect the examination of such crucial qualitative dimensions. However, many colleges have created innovative and observable ways to measure these previously considered subjective outcomes. For instance, faculty trying to establish that students have an appreciation for literature have documented reading for pleasure and reading non-assigned materials as an observable characteristic of students demonstrating appreciation. A student exhibits effective citizenship by his or her participation in community activities, voting or writing editorials, or contributing time and money to causes. Greater or equal attention should be given to qualitative aspects of programs.

Additionally, when conducting program review, faculty should keep in mind the importance of assessing the learning environment, the impact of class size on student success and the ability of the program to meet the students' needs. The breadth of the curriculum and the teaching and learning process should be taken into consideration. Student satisfaction and the quality of the program as perceived by them and the quality of the program as perceived by the articulating universities, or employing businesses and industry, is a crucial factor in evaluating the program for effectiveness in serving the students and community. Local academic senates should further develop the possible qualitative factors to be assessed.

Data Required by the U.S. Department of Education

Since the publication of the previous Academic Senate paper on program review, important changes have occurred in higher education. The foremost changes have been the collection of federally mandated accountability data by every college throughout the United States. Verification that these data are reported, analyzed, and integrated into institutional improvement falls to the regional Accrediting Commissions. The federal government requires programs to report two kinds of evidence: student achievement data (what a student attains in their educational endeavor such as a certificate or degree) and student learning data (evidence of what the student has learned and can do). While student learning outcomes are determined locally, other specific data have been identified by the U.S. Department of Education as mandatory. These data include:

- course completion
- retention term to term
- progression to the next course
- program completion
- degree and certificate completion
- transfer rates
- scores on required licensure exams

The U.S. Department of Education defines the following steps to improve programs:

1. Documenting program results
2. Analyzing key performance indicators by a variety of comparisons
3. Identifying direct or root causes of differences
4. Selecting the best solutions to impact desired program performance
5. Pilot testing those solutions, evaluating impact, and then implementing tested solutions found to have significant impact (CCCCO, Spring 2003, p.5)

The federal government, in an attempt to control diploma mills and illegitimate online degrees, has required reporting on any courses that have enrollment increases of over 10%. In the same vein, substantive change applications are required to monitor online and program changes. The federal government is especially concerned about substantive changes in degrees where 50% or more of the classes for a degree are available online or at an off campus site. This is considered a substantive program change and requires an application to the accreditors verifying the integrity of the program subsequent to the change.

Colleges have traditionally identified other data in addition to the mandated data that is relevant to the activity in courses and programs. Recent discussions and negotiations with the U.S. Department of Education resulted in the federally mandated quantitative data for program and institutional reports based on student achievement data, as reported above. On the other hand, national regional accreditation leaders successfully

won the right of local institutions to define and measure their own student learning outcomes until 2012; colleges retain autonomy, but their work needs to be validated by the accrediting bodies. If colleges fail to do the work or show the value of locally described student learning outcomes, the federal government might begin to mandate outcomes and data as well.

Learning Outcomes Assessment Data

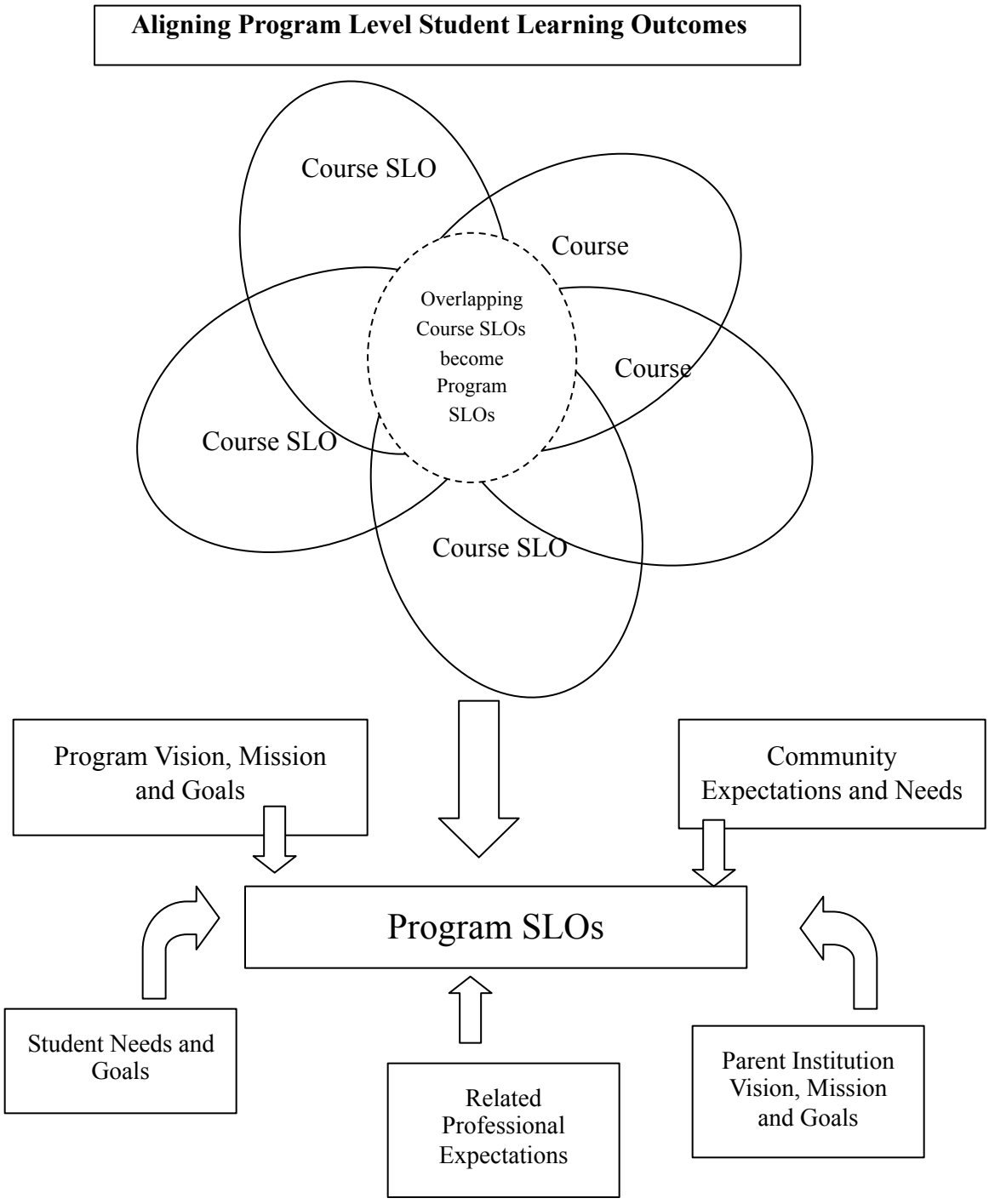
After defining a program and writing a mission statement for the program, program stakeholders should develop locally appropriate student learning outcomes for the program. These outcomes should guide the assessment process and the process should be focused on what the students have learned and can do with that learning. The outcomes assessed should yield relevant information that can be used to monitor and improve the overall program outcomes. It is not necessary to create an excessive number of outcomes. Each outcome must be assessed within the accreditation cycle. This can easily be accomplished by integrating the assessment of one or two student learning outcomes per year as a part of the normal annual departmental reports. How will participants determine the programmatic outcomes?

Some colleges have started with the institutional outcomes and worked down through programs to courses. This top-down approach is organized and forces alignment throughout the institution. Other colleges have begun at the course level and worked up to program and institutional outcomes. This can take longer if faculty are not trained and provided opportunity to investigate their course outcomes in light of the larger context. However, this process guarantees that all faculty are educated about the process, understand learning outcomes and assessment, and see a connection from the ground up. It also provides faculty the opportunity to learn how to embed assessment in their courses incorporating the efforts as part of their workload, in contrast to a top down additional workload responsibility. Only faculty can change or improve learning outcomes; taking responsibility for the outcomes guarantees an engaged faculty member. Other colleges have started from the program level and worked out to institutional and down to course outcomes. Because accreditors evaluate institutions, not courses, they are looking for a process that impacts the whole institution. For this reason, as colleges approach the work of student learning outcomes, they must look at a process that works college-wide, is cyclical, and, most importantly, is sustainable while affecting institutional effectiveness.

Program review provides an opportunity to align courses and services with program outcomes and overall program outcomes with institutional learning outcomes. The process identifies the learning environment, content, and pedagogy that contributes to successful learning. Ideally, a local assessment process should include procedures for assessing student learning in instructional, student support, and administrative services.

Figure 1 describes some of the components that should be considered in developing the program student learning outcomes. Expectations for instructional program learning outcomes assessments are delineated in Accreditation Standard II.A.2.a (ACCJC, 2008 p.18). Developing program learning outcomes includes the important basic components of good inquiry, along with valid and reliable methods of data collection and analysis. Faculty with an interest in reviewing assessment issues will want to review any of several senate papers addressing these issues including Agents of Change: Examining The Role of Student Learning

Outcomes and Assessment Coordinators in California Community Colleges (ASCCC, 2007), Working with the 2002 Accreditation Standards: The Faculty's Role (ASCCC, 2005), The 2002 Accreditation Standards: Implementation (ASCCC, 2004b), and Faculty Role in Accreditation (ASCCC, 1996). The figure represents an example of determining instructional student program outcomes.



Locally Determined and Organized Data for Program Review

Data for programs will differ based upon the work done; instructional, student service, and administrative data requirements will vary. Some colleges organize the data into small discrete areas, while other colleges review exhaustive additional data.

The instructional program data required varies with the college's organization, structure and purposes for program review, and availability of data. One college organizes their instructional program review data into four areas:

Enrollment Data and Analysis
Success Data and Analysis
Delivery Method Data and Analysis
Demographic Data and Analysis

One researcher at Fullerton College clusters the types of service program data into four main areas representative of their identified key program performance indicators:

1. Program Demand: internal and external demands for service - using data such as work requests, trouble tickets, information requests, committee services and meetings, etc.
2. Program Resources: fiscal and human resources required by the program including full and part-time staff and all fiscal support including salaries, benefits, supplies, equipment and other costs.
3. Program Efficiency: information reflecting the relationship between the resources committed to the program, service or activity, and the use of those resources, as indicated in ratios of demand-to-costs and to demand-outcomes-costs.
4. Program Outcomes: input indicating the satisfaction of clients of operations and student services and timely and effective completion of the demanded services.

An example of other types of data required and supplied by the research department for Riverside Community College District is in Appendix H. In addition, the links to college program review websites in Appendix D will provide another rich source of how colleges collect, organize, and evaluate data.

One area that colleges have struggled with includes the use of data with regard to individual faculty members. As stated at the beginning of this paper, the process of evaluating faculty should be distinct and separate from the program review process. Faculty are likely to be especially aware of the Accreditation Standard which states, "Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes" (III.A.1.c). If the goal of program review is continuing program improvement, it is self-defeating to attempt to correlate the evaluation that takes place in a single term with long-term improvement. Early interpretations of this standard misunderstood the Commission's intent to be that the evaluation procedures for individual faculty members—including tenured faculty—would be based on review of their outcomes (i.e., statistics for student retention, success, and persistence). As the Accrediting Commission's senior staff have engaged in ongoing dialogue with faculty groups, they have clarified that the intent of the standard is

that faculty be involved in developing and assessing the outcomes that they wish their students to achieve. A clear description of faculty expectations for student learning is important because students are unlikely to make progress toward a goal which faculty have not clearly identified. A robust program review process allows faculty to articulate student-learning outcomes not only for the classes they teach, but also for services necessary for students to progress toward their goals. The ACCJC has also provided a rubric for institutions to assess their progress in developing and assessing student learning outcomes. This rubric is available in Appendix G; the ACCJC has indicated that all colleges need to be at the "Proficient" level by 2012.

Collecting the Data

If local senates have not established a good working relationship with the college's researcher, this is the time to begin one. Defining the data that provides the information necessary, without homogenizing the process, helps to make the process meaningful. Learning-centered conversations with researchers are essential. Institutional support necessary for the successful implementation of a program review process includes research support—both qualitative and quantitative research. Faculty scheduled for program review should influence the research agenda. For small colleges with limited research facilities, faculty should have access to whatever staff person(s) serve the research function of the college. In commenting on program review, George Boggs, then-president of Palomar Community College and subsequently Chair of the Commission on Research for the California Association of Community Colleges stated,

> One of the most basic and important types of institutional research for a community college to do is program evaluation. In its most basic form, an evaluation is a study, based upon objectives of the activity or program to be assessed, that provides useful information about the degree to which the objectives have been met. Program evaluation is simply a matter of asking useful questions, and then making valid conclusions based upon the data. The current emphasis on documenting student outcomes is, in fact, a call to conduct more and better program evaluation. (Boggs, 1988, p.1)

Because program review processes will almost certainly have a quantitative aspect, some faculty may wish to review Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) data as part of their program review process. Faculty teaching basic skills and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses may wish to look at the ARCC data for "Improvement Rates for ESL and Credit Basic Skills Courses." Because such faculty will likely be looking in detail at their local data, they may discover that the data reported to the Chancellor's Office is not appropriate in terms of the intended metrics. In fact, many colleges are currently discovering this to be the case. A vigorous local program review process can help the system as a whole collect more accurate data and use that data to improve system analysis and performance as a whole.

> Obviously, this collection and review of the data represent what could be a time intensive and difficult task. Some colleges have created readily accessible websites to provide college and district data. In addition, the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) has a variety of data available both for individual colleges and statewide data. There are links to research websites and the CCCCO interactive Data Mart, which allows live data queries from the field. (The Data Mart link is *http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions/TechResearchInfo/MIS/DataMartandReports/tabid/282/Default.aspx*.)

Increasingly colleges have complained that organizing and keeping the data have grown to unmanageable levels. Many colleges have templates that are used and stored as either paper or electronic spreadsheet or databases. Other colleges have invested in software that both collects program review data and allows for varying levels of review, much like curriculum management systems. (For more information the online program review websites which characterize the many examples of data submission, review, and storage found in Appendix D). Whatever method a college uses, it is important to look into the future and determine what this task will require and whether a homegrown or commercially available software package will be necessary. However, before making a decision, colleges should be realistic about the other institutional functions program review must link up with and whether software compatibility will be an issue.

Linkages between Program Review and Other College Processes

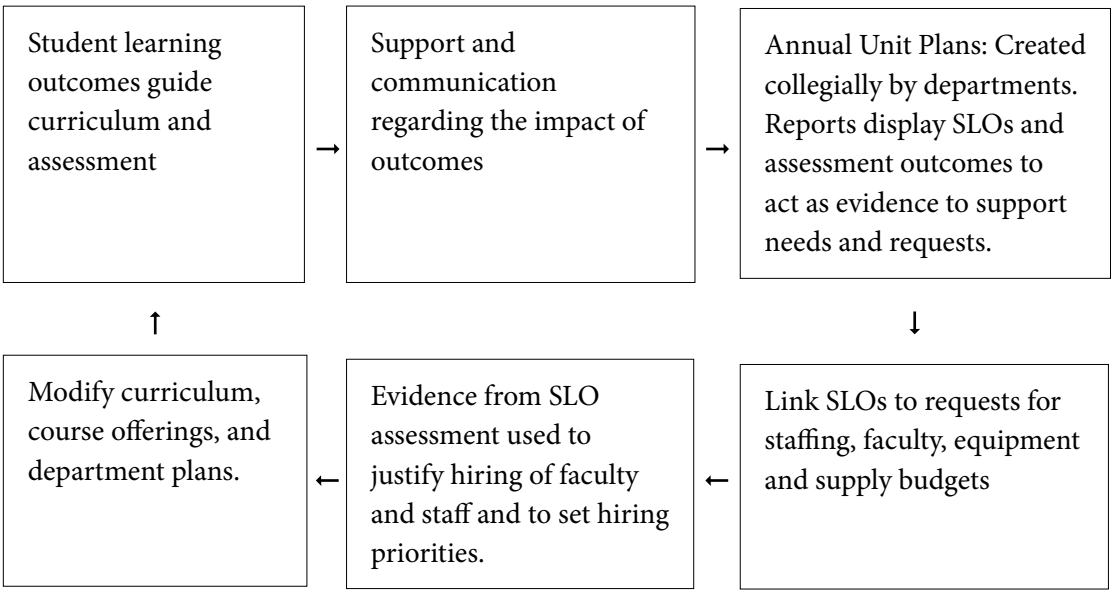
Program review can be an excellent reflective process that lends itself as a focal point to provide information for other tasks that must be completed. In fact, some institutions have noted significant redundancies in program review, outcomes assessment reporting, and periodic accreditation reviews. Several institutions have revised their program review governance processes to make the workload for faculty and administration more effective. Thoroughly reviewing these processes and aligning reporting provides a considerable potential time savings, increases the efficiency of the reporting, and the effectiveness of the processes contributing to the final product.

Linking to Curriculum Review

One of those processes which form an important foundation for program review and can be incorporated into the program review process is curriculum review. Curriculum represents the heart and soul of the instructional programs and is another area of primary responsibility for academic senates (Title 5 §53200(c)(1)). The scrutiny necessary to ensure the integrity of the curriculum requires faculty expertise and provides the content for programs. "Curriculum" here might mean the structure of the individual course, of academic programs (certificate or degree) and the curriculum of the institution as a whole, including review of general education requirements and outcomes. The integrity of the curriculum should be respected both within and outside of the college. Business and industry, transfer institutions, community members, students, and the college itself all benefit from the academic integrity that results from educationally sound curriculum processes. Whether the issue is the arrangement of the overall curriculum process or the approval of a particular course revision, the local academic senate plays a primary role.

Unless a college already has an effective system for updating course outlines, aligning this review process with program review can provide a timetable for insuring that this important work is accomplished. A program review process is almost certainly incomplete if the curriculum has not been reviewed for several years. By creating curriculum review timelines that ensure the entire curriculum is updated prior to program review, the task is simplified and benefits both processes. If one focus of the program review process is the need to introduce new curriculum or enhance and validate the quality of existing curriculum, the coordination of the program review and curriculum processes facilitates a more effective approach to meeting program and student needs. Special attention should be given to programs that must meet external agency standards, curriculum frameworks, or legislative acts, as the standards already established by external bodies can be useful sources of information and perspective for local curriculum and program review committees seeking to improve their own processes. Such programs are likely to include some of the certificate granting and/or licensing vocational education programs. The Academic Senate has a number of position papers on curricular process, including The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide (ASCCC, 2008). Figure 2 below graphically displays the relationship between curriculum review, program review, and student learning outcomes assessment.

Figure 2
Linkage of Curriculum Review, Program Review and Student Learning Outcomes



Linking to Budget Processes

A multitude of budget and governance discussions have yielded the truism, "Planning should drive the budget; the budget shouldn't drive planning." This message was reinforced in the 2001 Academic Senate paper The Faculty Role in Planning and Budget. However, in the context of many California community colleges, this statement is often made as college administrators announce sudden fiscal constraints and the need to eliminate courses, programs, or services, often for budgetary realities beyond their control. Despite a college's stated mission, master planning, college goals, or department objectives, a decrease in funding often leads to reprioritization on the fly. Planning on the basis of budgeting is anathema to all that program review (and accreditation standards) support with regard to good practice.

The "planning-by-budget" phenomenon may be exacerbated by fiscal constraints imposed by the state, combined with the reality of college political processes in which contracts are negotiated, projects are pursued, and efforts are made to maintain a positive image in the community. At times, even a relatively sophisticated institution with complex planning processes, stable funding, and the best of intentions, may be faced with having to make cuts due to factors beyond the control of the college. In this context, the establishment of legitimate goals and the linkage of program review with the budgetary process is essential.

The basic recommendations of the 2001 Senate paper The Faculty Role in Planning and Budget are very simple: (1) Planning should begin at the classroom (or student service) level; (2) Discipline and/or department plans (especially as articulated through longer term program planning) should aggregate to create division and area plans; (3) Divisional or area plans should be collected together until overall planning priorities can be established; and (4) Only once institutional priorities have been established from the ground up can the budget process begin to establish what initiatives can be funded in any given fiscal period. It should be

apparent that only an institution with a healthy program review process is in the position to plan and budget wisely (remembering that programs are not exclusively instructional programs).

As with program review, local academic senates have responsibility for collegial consultation on the budget process. In light of the similar roles of local academic senates on program review and the development of the budget process, a great opportunity exists to coordinate the two processes; recommendations developed through program review can be considered when resources are prioritized. This coordination alone stands to ensure instruction and services provided to students are actually affected by the recommendations developed in the program review process. In light of the Accrediting Commission's observation that inadequate program review and budgetary processes are two of the most likely causes of institutional sanction, local senates and administrative leaders have a special need to seek coordination of these two processes. If these processes are in place and working smoothly, colleges will also find it easier to meet their Title 5 obligation to assemble Educational Master Plans and Facilities Master Plans.

Linking to Educational Planning & Unit Plans

Community college educational planning requires that the college set priorities from among its many missions. See, for example, Title 5 §51008, "Comprehensive Plan. (a) The governing board of a community college district shall establish policies for, and approve, comprehensive or master plans which include academic master plans and long range master plans for facilities. The content of such plans shall be locally determined, except that the plans shall also address planning requirements specified by the Board of Governors." Many colleges have adopted a practice of creating unit plans on an annual basis for every department. The initial production of a unit plan requires some work, but thereafter, each year the unit plan is updated with new data and analyses. The unit plans are usually a briefer and less comprehensive version of the program review template. Faculty discover that this practice of regular updating results in a simpler and more focused program review which may occur every 3-6 years. Appendix C contains examples from sample colleges displaying how unit plans and then program review are linked to curriculum review, the Educational and Facilities Master Plans, budgeting practices and other college processes.

In creating the Educational Master Plan colleges must integrate the needs of all programs. While most colleges probably place significant emphasis on primary areas like basic skills, preparing students for transfer, and career and technical education (CTE), how these areas are balanced is a matter for local discussion. Will a college create a nursing program to enhance its CTE prospectus or will it invest in an honors program to better promote transfer? A college that has a robust program review process is in the best position to know with assurance what it already does well (and could perhaps expand upon at modest cost) and where it needs to strengthen current commitments (and thus might be hesitant to expand on an insecure foundation). Program review is thus an essential component of aligning college planning and mission review.

Short-term adjustments in resource allocations are frequently made using immediate enrollment data; a college sees enrollments decreasing in course A and wait lists growing in course B so it offers fewer of A and more of B. Program review asks why these changes are occurring, and what is to be done. For example, at one southern California district, overall enrollment increased by 50% from 1998 to 2008, while basic skills enrollments increased 300%, or six times as fast. Presumably such a district should give detailed consideration to the resources allocated to basic skills course sections and the student services especially valuable to that

student population. This would meet near-term needs. Realizing that the college was serving a dramatic increase in basic skills students, the college might reconsider its mission statement to see whether it captures the commitment the college is prepared to make, since a commitment to meeting the needs of such a rapidly expanding number of basic skills students will make expanding other programs difficult.

Program review contributes to the search for the answers for these questions. It does so by evaluating program quality and by weighing enrollment and outcome information against the context in which the college exists (e.g. the role of the program in transfer patterns, or in preparation for the job market). Educational planning, scarce resources, and growing student populations compel colleges to focus on difficult questions; which program or service deserves additional staff, equipment, or budgets? Which programs or services are organized in such a way that they must be reconstructed to more effectively meet student needs? Which programs and services, as determined through an appropriate and separate process, are not needed and by their presence, are preventing the development of other needed programs and services?

While there is a tendency to be reticent to pose some of these questions, faculty must ask such questions. Many of them present the perfect opportunity for fruitful collaboration with the college researcher. Colleges cannot afford to be lacking in the knowledge and expertise of the faculty on these important planning issues.

The process described here links program review to the accomplishment and continued refinement of a college's mission and mission statement, and it is the college's mission statement that should drive planning and the allocation of resources. This is not confusion about whether mission drives planning or planning drives mission, but a recognition of the way in which ongoing institutional dialog relies on a planning process to keep its mission statement grounded in the resources it possesses and the reasonable commitments it can make.

Linking to Accreditation Process

Program review processes assure educational quality and help programs to evaluate and improve their services. It is no wonder that accreditors emphasize this process as a good indicator of institutional effectiveness and integrity:

> Accreditation as a system of voluntary, non-governmental self-regulation and peer review is unique to American educational institutions. It is a system by which an institution evaluates itself in accordance with standards of good practice regarding goals and objectives; the appropriateness, sufficiency, and utilization of resources; the usefulness, integrity, and effectiveness of its processes; and the extent to which it is achieving its intended outcomes. It is a process by which accreditors provide students, the public, and each other with the assurances of institutional integrity, quality, and effectiveness. Accreditation is intended to encourage institutions to plan for institutional improvement in quality and effectiveness. (ACCJC, 2008, p. 4)

Not surprisingly then, program review is also a critical element in the way a college prepares for an accreditation visit. At an ill-prepared college, hands are thrown in the air 18 months (with luck) before a visiting team arrives. The college has to quickly take stock of what it does in the areas surveyed by the

standards. By contrast, a college with a robust program review process already has the elements in place to generate a candid and constructive self-study. Because its instructional and student service programs take program review seriously, it already knows where it stands with regard to the requirements regarding instruction and student service programs in Standard II. Because it takes seriously the work of faculty, staff, students, and administrators in conducting program review, it has already been thinking about how to balance needs for human, physical and technological resources with the financial resources available to meet local needs. The fact that it has involved all of these groups in meaningful institutional evaluation and improvement is evidence that the leadership and governance processes of the institution are alive, and the fruit of all this self-reflection informs the ongoing development of the college's articulation of its mission. A college with a robust program review process cannot be assured that it will never receive a recommendation or sanction from the Commission, but it can be confident that it has an institutional structure to meet recommendations quickly. A community college with a robust program review process probably won't achieve perfect student learning outcomes, but it might discover its own perfect process.

"Accreditation provides assurance of the institutional integrity, quality, and effectiveness… More importantly, accreditation is the system by which the internal community of an institution evaluates itself and plans for improvement in quality and effectiveness" (ACCJC/WASC, 1990, p. 1). The purposes of program review and accreditation may be similar, notwithstanding the general nature of accreditation and the specific nature of program review. However, a constitutional difference between accreditation and program review is the locus of control over the standards and the validation process. In the accrediting processes, the Commission defines the standards; in the college's program review process, the college defines the standards, which may well exceed or be more prescriptive than the Commission's requirements.

The faculty role and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports, is yet another of the areas in which local academic senates must be collegially consulted (Title 5 §53200(c) (7)). As local academic senates plan program review processes, many of the general principles and processes can be transferred from the accreditation model and modified to more specifically address the program under review. If timelines are coordinated with institutional accrediting processes, programs can take advantage of the overall climate in the institutional reflection focused on self-study and improvement. This positive climate alone would be a sharp contrast with the negative climate many faculty once associated with program review and accreditation.

Finally, as the institution develops goals in response to the accreditation process, program improvement or support could be incorporated in or coordinated with the developed goals. The institutional goals will be placed in an overall and legitimate context faculty are likely to support. This type of comprehensive acknowledgment of goals lays a strong foundation for the second cycle of program review whereby the goals are seen as legitimate and reservations regarding the legitimacy of the planning process become irrelevant.

Linking to Student Equity

The commonly used quantitative program review measures regarding ethnicity and student populations in combination with the accreditation standards requirement to consider diverse institutional student populations are consistent with the indicators recommended in the student equity regulations (Title 5 §54200, Student Equity Plans). Program review provides an ideal opportunity for faculty to examine whether

all students are being equally well served; the goal of more equitably serving students can thus be furthered. For example, a department may identify that it has a 75% student success rate; if further analysis reveals that of the 25% who were unsuccessful, a disproportionate number were women, perhaps the department faculty would want to examine whether their pedagogy and curriculum are linked to these inequitable outcomes. It should go without saying that disparate outcomes by ethnicity should bear especially close scrutiny and planning on how to reduce and eliminate such disparities. Opportunities for collaboration with the campus Basic Skills Initiative should also be carefully considered. Just as colleges and the state have seen a disproportionate increase in basic skills students over the past several years, so the number of traditionally underserved students is increasing dramatically on many campuses, and attention to the success of different student groups should certainly be a part of any comprehensive program review process.

Local academic senates are also to be collegially consulted on "standards and policies regarding student preparation and success" (Title 5 §53200(c) (5). Because student equity is an issue of student success, program review processes should also be coordinated with student equity processes.

Linking to Basic Skills Initiatives

The Basic Skills Initiative has been fueled by widespread dialog and discussion. From 70-98% of first time California community college students assess into a basic skills course in reading, mathematics, English, or ESL. No department can perform a thorough program review without looking at the data regarding students with basic skills needs. How many students in transferable general education courses have inadequate reading, writing or computational skills? How do programs discern and achieve these basic skills needs? Do institutions support student success centers to assist students in all disciplines? Do programs cooperate to develop interdisciplinary learning communities which have generally higher success rates? Do matriculation services adequately help students to reach academic goals and achieve the basic skills needs? These issues cross over every program in the college. More information on basic skills can be accessed at the Basic Skills Initiative website at www.cccbsi.org and in the numerous papers on basic skills produced since the last program review paper on basic skills including The State of Basic Skills Instruction in California Community Colleges (ASCCC, 2000), Survey of Effective Practices in Basic Skills (ASCCC, 2003), Issues in Basic Skills Assessment and Placement in the California Community Colleges (ASCCC, 2004), and the Report on the System's Current Programs in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Basic Skills (CCCCO, 2008).

Other Linkages

Other links can easily be connected to program review processes. Linkage to enrollment management policies is essential. If the policies for enrollment do not reflect the conclusions of program review processes, student success in the programs will be greatly hampered.

Faculty at many colleges participated in the grant-funded Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum Project (IMPAC), and while funding for the project has expired, the need for faculty to consult with their colleagues at receiving transfer institutions could be scheduled to take place as part of instructional program review for those disciplines which seek to prepare students for transfer. In addition, discussions with other community colleges and professional organizations provides an opportunity to review our own programs and compare them with the work of others.

Yet another linkage an effective program review process can document is the need for California community colleges to make meaningful progress toward the AB1725 goal of 75% of instruction provided by full-time faculty. This goal is crucial not only in the classroom, but equally because a vigorous program review process cannot be carried out at an institution in which most classes are taught by part-time faculty and the full-time faculty are stretched so thin that individual faculty members find themselves wearing multiple faculty leadership hats just to keep the institution functioning. As suggested earlier, an effective program review process can help an institution focus on its major priorities and avoid duplication of effort and investment of energy into projects that are finally abandoned as infeasible or inconsistent with the college's mission. Focusing and economizing faculty energies should not result in fewer faculty to do the college's work. Rather, it should allow faculty to focus on their primary duties to teach and serve students while devoting attention to improving the circumstances in which teaching and serving students takes place.

Considerations When Reviewing a Local Model

Essential to the development, implementation, and periodic revision of a program review process are the underlying assumptions upon which it is based. These assumptions should be identified and delineated in the program review process itself. Some of the more common issues and assumptions are discussed in this section in an attempt to promote greater deliberation at the local level.

Goals

Almost every piece of literature and program review process reviewed identified the need to link program review with the college mission, the college master plan, and the department goals and objectives. Inherent in this assumption is that the mission, master plan, goals, and objectives are viewed as valuable by the faculty. This value would depend upon the process by which the district, college, and departments arrived at such missions, plans, goals, and objectives. Not only program review but institutional planning and educational program development are also academic and professional matters on which local academic senates must be collegially consulted (Title 5 §53200(c)(10)). If the program review process is one in which faculty are consulted collegially, thereby ensuring a respect for the goals by the faculty, the assumption could serve the process well. If, however, the faculty are not consulted collegially, this linkage to program review should not be used until legitimate missions, master plans, goals and objectives are developed.

Adoption of a Program Review Process

The question of which programs and services will be reviewed should be addressed in the college's program review assumptions. If the purpose of the process is to promote educational excellence and better serve students, no function of the college should be exempt. The productiveness of ancillary units and administration of the academic divisions, instruction, student services, the executive offices, and the governing board all have an impact on the academic integrity of the programs and on the college's ability to serve students. As stated earlier, as local academic senates address this issue, it may be necessary to define the term "program" or answer the question of whether the process is an instructional/services program review process or an institutional program review process. An administrative/institutional review process would include the review of all programs and services, including units not commonly perceived as programs. This perspective is also consistent with defining programs as they are defined in the college budget processes (cost centers) and in the planning and goal setting process (planning units).

Processes for Validating the Submitted Program Reviews

After the program review process has been determined, and the study submitted what happens to it? What are the components of the validation process, review of documents, program visits, review of data/survey results? Many colleges provide an opportunity to present the program self-study to the program committee as a whole. While this creates a great appreciation for the depth and breadth of programs throughout the college, large colleges with many programs may have difficulty scheduling to allow equal opportunity to all programs. Does the entire program review committee review every self-study or do they divide into teams and tackle the work within specified areas? Do those validating the study visit the program facility and faculty? While all of these practices contribute to healthy and vibrant cross-campus appreciation, the challenge of time and scheduling is an issue.

Ultimately how should colleges validate the program self-study? Some colleges use rubrics to assess the self-study. Other colleges score the components of the self-study and conclude with a final assessment. Other colleges have a loose validation through simple acceptance of the self-study. This stage of the program review requires a clear understanding by the program review committee and the programs undergoing review about how their work will be judged. Did they provide adequate evidence? Did they create an adequate plan to address improvement? Does their forecast of future needs exhibit analysis and thought? Some colleges create a summary of the program review committee's reflections. Somehow the work of the program will need to be boiled down into recommendations sent to other committees that can bring those recommendations to fruition.

What happens after the validation stage? What is the flow of the self-study report and recommendations? What happens with the results? If the program justified an increased budget, how does the program review committee communicate that recommendation? Another consideration must be whether the program review committee prioritizes the recommendations. Every college needs resources, but which are most important? Which needs should be attended to first and who decides this? Because the program review committee has the luxury of reviewing studies from across the college, these committees often create a list of recommendations based upon institutional priorities. Other colleges simply validate the recommendations and send them on to the appropriate committees for follow-up. Nonetheless, this important phase of validating the self-study and forwarding the recommendations for action is a key function of the program review committee. This is an important link that determines whether the self-study process is effective and whether it will be considered a valuable activity.

Institutional Support

A fundamental assumption necessary for the successful development and implementation of a program review process is the commitment of the institution to provide adequate institutional resources. Irrespective of the model used, faculty leadership in self-study and review will require institutional support for time, materials, and staff. Historical models that designated administrative deans to assume a leadership role may

not have had to address the issue raised in this assumption because most administrative deans have budgets, materials, and clerical staff support. If the institution is willing to support program review while it is under the leadership of an administrative dean, its "inability" to do so for processes under faculty leadership is suspect. A delineated budget should be available for program review. Faculty should resist any attempt to sacrifice the integrity of the program review process in order to economize.

Fairness and Credibility

In developing local program review processes, local academic senates will have the responsibility to develop a process that is perceived to be fair and credible so that recommendations emerging from program review are taken seriously. The credibility of the program review evaluators and the review should be established. Failure to do so could undermine the necessity for faculty to respect the process, invest their time, utilize program review to its fullest potential, or pursue endeavors arising from the product of the process.

There must be trust that the purposes and goals of the process are truly dedicated to supporting and nurturing departments instead of undermining them, reducing the faculty, or pursuing a cheaper approach to delivering instruction or services. A good measure of confidence has to do with whether faculty feel the process is confidential, that data on individuals will only be reviewed by appropriate parties, and that some data will not be made public unless it is aggregated to protect students or faculty and used to focus on improvement rather than to penalize individuals. A fair process should include a rebuttal or minority report if necessary. A fair process does not favor a particular program or create unfair expectations. Transparency is another important component of fairness. When the process is clear and visible, participants are more likely to consider it a fair process. Local academic senate processes and guidelines will ensure that these types of concerns are adequately addressed in the development and implementation of the program review process.

A credible program review process shows up in the fabric of the institution. The administration of the college (and district, especially in multi-college districts) must support the process of program review. Administrations must be willing to help enact the changes that are recommended as a result of the process. As program review links to budgeting, each program should be generating data that illustrate the value of program review. When program review links to hiring practices, the important human resources support for programs is accomplished. College constituencies need to see that the work from program review creates tangible changes. If fiscal or other restraints preclude some changes, they should be presented at the outset and perceived to be genuine by the faculty, thereby further defining for future reference the range of options available to the faculty. While it seems financial difficulties are perennial, faculty should not hesitate to identify the support that would improve programs and services. The identification of constraints can assist faculty in preparing realistic recommendations that affect day-to-day operations.

Perhaps the most effective way to communicate that a process is fair and credible is to allow all participants and constituencies an opportunity to regularly evaluate the process.

Evaluation of the Program Review Process

It is important that program review is well-constructed and effective in its linkage to other decision-making at the college. There is no doubt that conducting an adequate program review self-study creates a well-founded program positioned to gather data, analyze, advocate and report concerning strengths and weaknesses in the program; but this requires time, effort, and expertise. Evaluating the process provides valuable input for making the process more efficient and effective.

The evaluation instrument for the process itself should be developed before the process is begun. If colleges already have a program review process and do not evaluate it, they should consider the following potential methods of incorporating it into the process rather than laying it on top of the process. ACCJC standards require that the program review process be evaluated and improved on a regular basis (Standard I.B).

First, the evaluation should be based upon the goals, purposes, and guidelines that were used to fashion the process. The evaluation process should include several groups:

- the programs going through the process
- the program review committee
- the local senate
- local governance committees that should link to program review (budget, planning, enrollment management, curriculum, Basic Skills Initiative, SLO, etc.)
- other constituencies that understand and are affected by the program review process

The evaluations need not be time consuming or cumbersome but they should ask the relevant questions to the appropriate participants and constituencies. The evaluation should be embedded into the regularly scheduled program review process and annual governance review processes. Potential participants, instruments, and questions are suggested in the following table. This evaluation must be tailored to each campus culture and values.

Potential Program Review Evaluation Plan		
Program Review Evaluation Participants	Possible Questions to Ask	Timeline
Program Review Committee	Use your particular college's purpose, goals or guidelines to create questions that evaluate the success of fulfilling those purposes and maintaining those guideline (e.g., How does program review help to improve teaching and learning)? In every case ask: What are the positive outcomes of the program review process? and How can we improve the program review process?	This should occur annually in conjunction with the collected feedback from the groups below as a focus group. Agreed upon changes should be incorporated into process change proposals to go through the governance process.
Programs undergoing review	How easy or difficult was the program review process? (One could compare it to the last cycle.) How easy was it to access data? Was the process useful? How? How widespread was participation within the program?	The evaluation of the program review process for programs undergoing review should be part of the submission of the program review. In other words, as the program submits its report, it also submits comments on the process as an addenda to the self-study.
Local senate	How effective is program review as a means to address campus needs and improvement? Is program review linked to budgeting? Is program review linked to planning? What are the positive outcomes of the program review process? How can we improve the program review process? How can we improve the use of program review recommendations? Is program review linked to college decision-making? Is program review evidence-based? Is program review a valued process on our campus?	Annually included as part of an overall evaluation of all committee processes on campus

Potential Program Review Evaluation Plan		
Program Review Evaluation Participants	Possible Questions to Ask	Timeline
Main college governance committees: Curriculum, Budgeting, Planning, Enrollment Management, etc.	How effective is program review as a means to address campus needs and improvement? Is program review linked to budgeting? Is program review linked to planning? How do the recommendations from program review inform this committee's decisions? With regard to this committee's responsibilities, are the program review recommendations useful? What are the positive outcomes of the program review process? How can we to improve the program review process? How can we improve the use of program review recommendations?	Annually included as part of an overall evaluation of all committee processes on campus.
Other committees linked to the results of program review: Basic Skills, Student Equity, etc.	Do the recommendations from program review influence and inform this committee's decisions? How are the program review recommendations linked to this committee's responsibilities? With regard to this committee's responsibilities, are the program review recommendations useful? What are the positive outcomes of the program review process? How can we improve the program review process? How can we improve the use of program review recommendations?	Annually included as part of an overall evaluation of all committee processes on campus
Other constituencies on the campus	If a program needs staffing, budget changes or structural changes, what process is used? Is program review linked to college decision-making? Is program review evidence-based? Is program review perceived as a valued process on the campus?	Either every year or every two years as part of an institution-wide evaluation instrument

Conclusion

Program review could be one of the most powerful and effective tools to shape and reshape a college. When it is linked to budgeting, planning, and other processes to carry out its recommendations, program review can contribute to fair and transparent institutional processes. The program review self-study allows for the people with the greatest level of expertise in a particular program to examine and scrutinize the program for effectiveness in serving students and achieving educational excellence. There are many models and many factors to be considered in the development and implementation of a comprehensive program review process. A deliberative and well-planned process that is faculty driven and respected throughout the college can and will result in meaningful evaluation from which vital information can be derived for the maintenance and improvement of the integrity of the college community and its educational programs. Though adopting a well conceived and comprehensive approach to program review, local academic senates can structure their authority over academic and professional matters to set a high standard for instructional and institutional excellence.

Recommendations

- The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges should continue to update and train faculty about effective practices in program review, Title 5 regulations, federally mandated reporting, and accreditation expectations for program review.
- Local senates should evaluate their current program review processes to access their effectiveness based upon regulations, accreditation expectations and effective practices in order to improve existing processes.
- Local senates should work with college governance committees to assure the integration of program review recommendations and institutional decision-making.
- Local senates should create a timeline and accountability mechanism to assure that all instructional, student service and administrative services are regularly reviewed.

Appendix A: ACCJC Rubric for Program Review

Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness: Program Review

Levels of Implementation	Characteristics of Institutional Effectiveness in Program Review (Sample institutional behaviors)
Awareness	There is preliminary investigative dialogue at the institution or within some departments about what data or process should be used for program review. There is recognition of existing practices and models in program review that make use of institutional research. There is exploration of program review models by various departments or individuals. The college is implementing pilot program review models in a few programs/operational units.
Development	Program review is embedded in practice across the institution using qualitative and quantitative data to improve program effectiveness. Dialogue about the results of program review is evident within the program as part of discussion of program effectiveness. Leadership groups throughout the institution accept responsibility for program review framework development (Senate, Admin. Etc.) Appropriate resources are allocated to conducting program review of meaningful quality. Development of a framework for linking results of program review to planning for improvement. Development of a framework to align results of program review to resource allocation.
Proficiency	Program review processes are in place and implemented regularly. Results of all program review are integrated into institution- wide planning for improvement and informed decision-making. The program review framework is established and implemented. Dialogue about the results of all program reviews is evident throughout the institution as part of discussion of institutional effectiveness. Results of program review are clearly and consistently linked to institutional planning processes and resource allocation processes; college can demonstrate or provide specific examples. The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its program review processes in supporting and improving student achievement and student learning outcomes.
Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement	Program review processes are ongoing, systematic and used to assess and improve student learning and achievement. The institution reviews and refines its program review processes to improve institutional effectiveness. The results of program review are used to continually refine and improve program practices resulting in appropriate improvements in student achievement and learning.

Appendix B: Sample Program Review Guidelines

Irvine Valley College Program Review Purposes

A. Program review is an opportunity for self-study, self-renewal and recognition of the excellence of educational and support programs, and an opportunity to identify the need for improvement. Program review involves self-scrutiny by all college entities to determine how well each program is achieving objectives and advancing the mission, vision, goals and institutional learning outcomes of the college.

B. A program may be defined as a certificate or degree program, a coherent educational experience such as tutoring or orientation program, a co-curricular learning program or an academic discipline. [1]

C. Plans for improvement that result from program review shall be integrated with the college strategic plan in order to pursue the congruence between the mission, vision, and goals of the college, including the institutional core learning outcomes as well as degree, certificate, program, and course learning outcomes.

[1] Beno, Barbara, Accreditation Notes, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (Gabriella, Wendy. 2006, Irvine Valley College, p.1)

Riverside Community College District Program Review Goals

Extrinsic

- Resource allocation
- Improvement of student learning through the provision of systematic feedback

Intrinsic

- Strengthening programs through self-improvement and self-determination
- Strengthening the bonds within the college community and fostering cooperation between units
- Generating continuous and ongoing dialogue about how student learning can be enhanced through program and service improvements
- Evaluating the unit's contribution to achieving the district goals and strategic initiatives

(Kauffman, Kristina & Torres, David, 2008, Riverside Community College District, p. 2)

West Los Angeles Program Review

1. Develop systematic information about the college to foster communication and understanding.

2. Improve the college through a process of self review.

3. Support student success and progression through the college curriculum by assuring proper placement, retention, completion, transfer, graduation, participation in campus programs and the use of campus resources in the attainment of a quality student life experience.

4. Provide an assessment of effective application of college mission and goals

5. Integrate the self-assessment findings into the college planning process.

6. Support college functions of accreditation, matriculation, student equity and Faculty Position Identification and Prioritization (FPIP).

7. Foster an appreciation of the value of college programs. (WLAC, 2006, p.1)

UC Berkeley Program Review Guidelines

- Maintaining a review process that is faculty-driven.
- Developing the potential of the program review process to promote key campus objectives within a decentralized organizational culture.
- Creating a structure for the departmental self-study that is flexible and responsive to the individual needs of the department undertaking self-investigation.
- Reaffirming the importance of statistical data in developing unit self-studies and providing better centralized support to departments in preparation and interpretation of such data.
- Assuring that units address student learning outcomes in discipline-specific ways.
- Creating better integration between external and internal reviews.
- Maintaining a program review process that is distinct from professional or specialized accreditation.
- Making the Dean's role in program review more prominent, especially as a means of promoting departmental follow-up and accountability. (UC Berkeley, 2003, p.1)

UCLA Academic Program Review Goals

Academic Program Review Goals

The primary goal of the Academic Program Reviews is to maintain and strengthen the quality of UCLA's undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Reviews are intended to be helpful and supportive in:

(a) recognizing strengths and achievements,

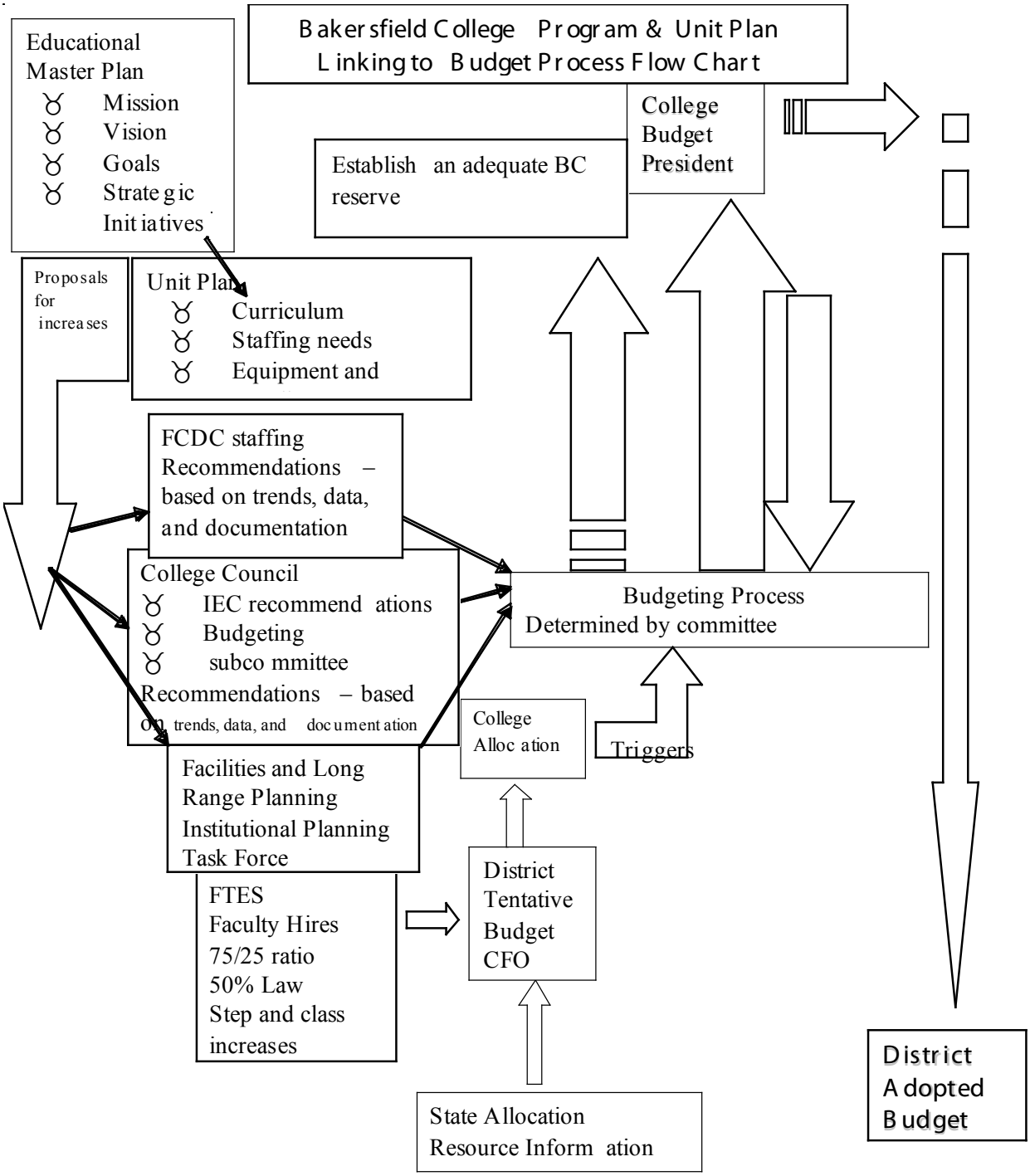
(b) promoting goal setting and planning, and

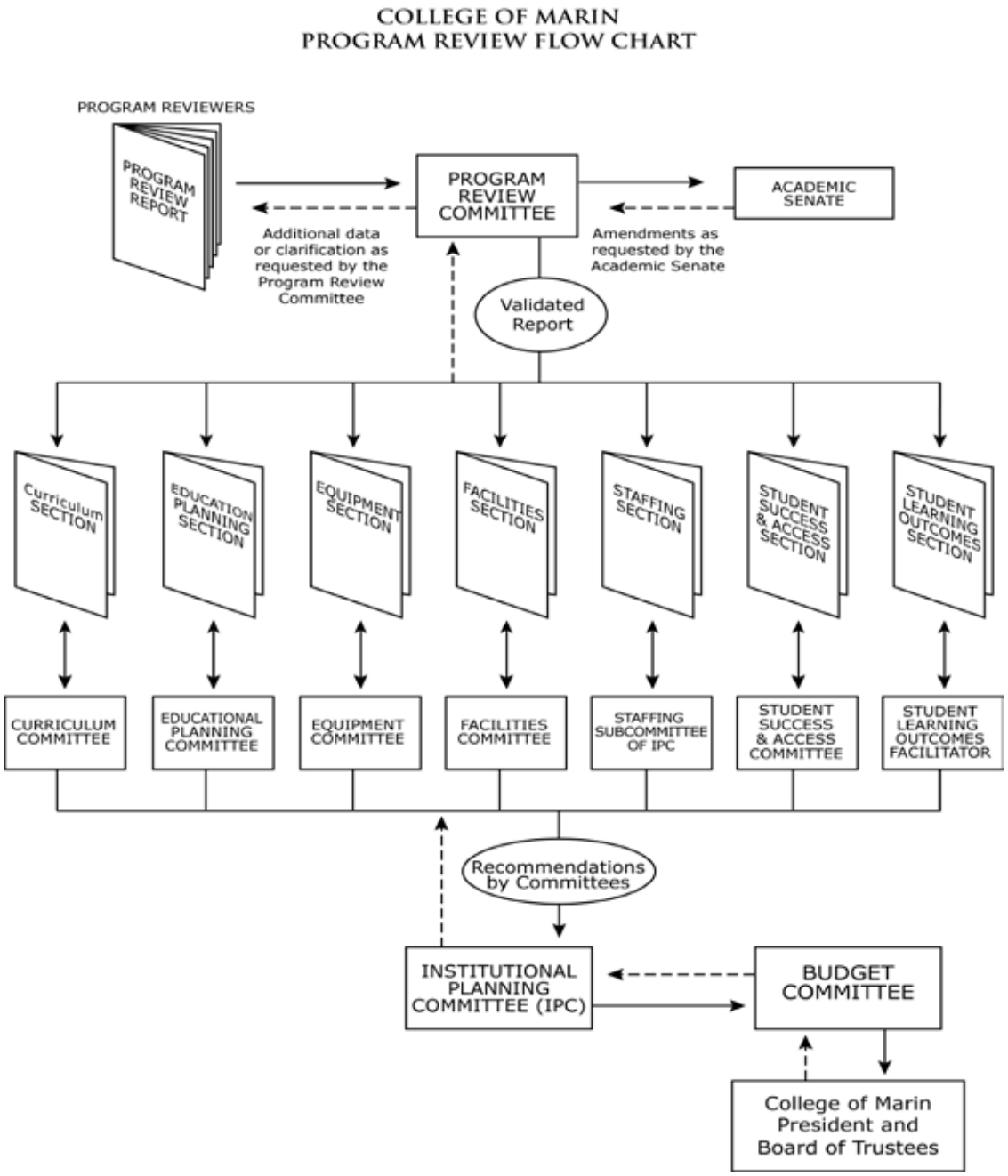
(c) identifying areas in need of attention.

Reviews should primarily seek perspectives useful to the units whose programs are under review and to their respective academic deans. They should also give Senate agencies and senior administrators an informed overview of the strengths, problems, and needs of academic units. (UCLA, 2008, p.1)

Appendix C: Visual Guides to Program Review

The following diagrams from Bakersfield College and College of Marin provide visual schema for program review processes.





The College of Marin has also analyzed its curriculum and how it supports its transfer mission with varying degrees of detail. In each case, the crucial role of basic skill preparation is recognized.

Appendix D: Online Resources

Links to Sample Program Documents

Cerritos College: *http://cms.cerritos.edu/program-review/program-review-index*

Coastline Community College: *http://programreview.coastline.edu/_goals/goallist.cfm*

Cosumnes River College Program Review Website, Program Review Template: *http://research.crc.losrios.edu/Program%20Review%202005.htm* and sample program reports: *http://research.crc.losrios.edu/APR-Completed%20Profs.htm*

Fresno City College: *http://blackboard.fresnocitycollege.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=community&url=/bin/common/course.pl?course_id=_3981_1*

Irvine Valley College: h*ttp://www.ivc.edu/PROGRAMREVIEW/pages/documents.aspx* (when the website links request a login, just hit cancel)

Los Angeles City College: *http://www.lacitycollege.edu/prgd/programreview.html*

Los Angeles Trade Tech College: *http://success.mentorlounge.net/*

Pierce College: *http://info.piercecollege.edu/offices/preview/*

Porterville College: *http://www.pc.cc.ca.us/research/Program%20Review.htm*

Riverside Community College District: *http://www.rcc.edu/administration/academicaffairs/effectiveness/review.cfm* and a PowerPoint at: *http://www.academic.rcc.edu/ir/Research/Torres/Program%20Review%20Final%20(DT%20edit%203-13).ppt*

San Diego Mesa College: *http://www.sdmesa.edu/instruction/prog-rev/index.cfm*

The SD Mesa Program Review Handbook is an excellent example and comprehensive document: *http://www.sdmesa.edu/instruction/prog-rev/pdf/handbook.pdf*

Sample College Research Websites for Data

Bakersfield College: *http://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/irp/IRP_Home.asp*

Chaffey College: *http://www.chaffey.edu/research/*

Mt San Antonio College: *http://www.mtsac.edu/about/facts/ethnicity.html* and an explanation of the role of the research department: *http://www.mtsac.edu/administration/research/pdf/ResearchNewsV1FINALMay2008.pdf*

San Diego Community College District Institutional Research and Planning: *http://research.sdccd.edu/pages/1.asp*

Skyline College: *http://www.smccd.net/accounts/skypro/home.html*

Valuable Statewide Data Sources

Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC): *http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions/TechResearchInfo/ResearchandPlanning/ARCC/tabid/292/Default.aspx*

California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) Data Mart, providing statewide and institutional data at the statewide, district, college, and top code level: *http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions/TechResearchInfo/MIS/DataMartandReports/tabid/282/Default.aspx*

California Community College Chancellor's Office: *http://www.cccco.edu/*

Appendix E: Bakersfield College Unit Plan Templates

1. Mission of Unit

- Include how the mission of the Unit relates to the Institutional mission.
- Include how Unit mission supports:
  - Institutional Level Outcomes (ILO),
  - General Education Outcomes (GE), or
  - Strategic Initiatives (SI).

2. Brief Program Description

- Summarize Past Year (See examples of charts below)
  - Recap of last year's priorities
  - Accomplishments by students, faculty, or program
  - Complete Chart A1 to show program level outcomes and assessment plan
  - Complete Chart A2 to show which courses emphasize the program level outcomes (if relevant)
  - Complete Chart A3 to show results and decisions related to student learning outcomes or annual unit outcomes
  - Complete Chart B (if relevant) to show summary of course level outcomes and assessment
  - Incorporate Unit Trend Data that highlights any accomplishment

4. Priorities and Resource Needs for This Year: 1-Year Plan

- Description of unit priorities, unit goals, and related outcome
- Budget data from last year's budget to see spending trends
- Resources needed and how unit will measure success for each priority
- Incorporate Unit Trend Data that supports the priorities and resource needs

5. Future Development Strategies and Innovations: 5-Year Plan

- Prioritized ideas and related project proposal, time line and responsibility for each idea
- Incorporate Unit Trend Data that supports the longer term plan

6. Unit Trend Data: Use data to support as many aspects of unit plan as possible

Chart A1 Program Level Outcomes and Assessment Plan

SLO/AUO #	Description	Assessment Plan for SLO/ AUO
#1	State SLO or AUO #1	State program assessment for SLO/AUO #1

#2	State SLO or AUO #2	State program assessment for SLO/AUO #2
#3	State SLO or AUO #3	State program assessment for SLO/AUO #3

*Note AOU = Administrative Unit Outcome

Chart A2 Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) or Admin Unit Outcomes (AUO)

SLO/AUO #	Course #1	Course #2	Course #3	Course #4	Course #5	Course #6	Course #7	Course #8
#1								
#2								
#3								

[a] Write the Program Courses and mark progress of ***program-level*** SLO as

I = Introduced; D = Developed and practiced with feedback; M = mastered and measured
Note: For more than 8 courses, copy table above to create additional table(s).

Chart A3 Results and Decisions

SLO/AUO #	Result of Assessment	Actions Taken
#1		
#2		
#3		

Chart B: Course Level Outcomes and Assessment Summary

Course Outcomes	Analysis of Results/ Decisions
1. What is the total number of courses offered in the unit?	
2. For how many courses have SLOs been developed?	
3. For how many courses have faculty analyzed the results of the assessments?	
4. For how many of these courses has the unit used the results to implement change or strengthen what is working well?	

Appendix F: Program Review Models from Santa Monica College

Santa Monica College Instructional Program Review

The Self-evaluation Process for Instructional Programs

The suggested topics are meant to serve as guidelines for the self-evaluation process and the preparation of the report. The report may expand upon or exclude some of the topics below, at the discretion of the program staff.

Program Description and Goals

Describe the program or service under review, emphasizing the program goals, the program's impact on student success, if appropriate, and how the program supports the broader college mission.

1. Goals might include transfer, occupational certificates, developmental skills, general education, prerequisites for a major, personal interest, or skills development.
2. Discuss how the goals and Institutional Learning Outcomes of the College (see Vision, Mission, Goals, and ILOs) are integrated into the program.
3. Discuss how the program evaluates its effectiveness in meeting SMC's institutional mission.
4. Discuss who your students are using available data. Compare data on student characteristics with program goals. Comment on whether or not the match is appropriate.
5. If the program goals have changed since the last self evaluation explain how and why they have changed.
6. Summarize program and/or course modifications made since the program's last self-evaluation. Show how the changes responded to changing demographics, technologies, requirements at transfer institutions or other relevant factors.
7. Respond to the commendations and recommendations from the Executive Summary of the previous program review.
8. Describe notable achievements since your last self-evaluation.

Curriculum - Course and Program Content

Review program SLOs, course outlines, course SLOs, prerequisites, co-requisites and advisories for all active courses. A copy of each revised/updated outline and SLOs must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee. (Course outlines must follow the current Curriculum Committee formatting requirements.)

1. Describe how the department engages all members in the discussion, review, and revision of curriculum.

2. Discuss the appropriateness of course designs as they relate to program goals and SLOs, and identify important issues or problems. For example:
   - How the number, type, depth and breadth of the courses support program SLOs and goals.
   - How courses in the program articulate with or complement each other.
   - The appropriateness of the prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories in terms of course content and the student learning outcomes and goals of the program.
   - If appropriate, how transfer and articulation agreements serve the needs of students usually enrolled in the courses.
   - How courses in the program interact with other programs on campus; (for example: cross-listing, overlapping content or shared resources).
   - The size of classes, the quantity and distribution of course sections (day/evening, distance ed) and other features of the program. Discuss whether these appropriately meet student demands as well as the goals of the program.

Instructional Improvement

Discuss how teaching effectiveness is evaluated.

1. What activities has your department engaged in to improve the teaching and learning environment?
2. How and when has your department assessed SLOs, and how have you responded to the results?
3. How does the department ensure that SLOs are assessed consistently across different sections of the same course?
4. What program or course changes have been made based on the result of the assessed outcomes?
5. How closely aligned are syllabi to course outlines of record?
6. Explain any unusual patterns in grading and retention in terms of student characteristics and program goals and discuss planned responses or changes.

Instructional Environment

1. Discuss the instructional environment, including the program's relationship and involvement among full and part-time faculty and access to instructional and administrative support services.
2. Describe the number and type of staff and faculty with regard to educational preparation, currency in field, and workload and how they support program goals.
3. Discuss departmental engagement in institutional efforts and activities (ex. committee participation).
4. Discuss facilities and equipment assigned to the program and how they support program goals.

Program Effectiveness

Describe how the program evaluates the effectiveness and impact on students.

1. Compare data on student characteristics with program goals. Note any disproportionate impact, patterns or trends and discuss program recommendations to address these.

2. Discuss how program SLOs relate to the program goals or achievement outcomes.
3. Comment on student transfer or job placement rates, if possible.
4. Discuss what happens after students complete courses or the program. Address completion rates and whether students are successful in meeting their goals.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Present any conclusions and recommendations resulting from the self-evaluation process, referencing the specific topics above. Include information on how the program engages all program members in the self evaluation dialogue and how everyone participates in the program review process.

1. Summarize your areas of strength and areas that need improvement.
2. Identify strategies for the future. Discuss any projected changes and anticipate how the changes may affect staffing, facilities, equipment, and other operational areas.

Sources of Information

Instructional programs may refer to the following sources of information in the self-evaluation process:

1. Program goals statements.
2. The Executive Summary from the program's previous Program Review.
3. Reports from Institutional Research such as enrollment, retention and evaluation reports. Please note, SMC's department of institutional research has compiled data from recent semesters and sessions and posted it online. To access this source and to request data go to: *http://www.smc.edu/research/research*
4. Results of any research projects undertaken by the program to examine any relevant area of interest.

Santa Monica College Occupational Program Review Model

The Self-evaluation Process for Occupational Programs

Process for—2, 4, 6 year cycles

The suggested topics are meant to serve as guidelines for the self-evaluation process and the preparation of the report. The report may expand upon or exclude some of the topics below, at the discretion of the program staff.

Program Description and Goals

Describe the program or service under review, emphasizing the program goals, the program's impact on student success, if appropriate, and how the program supports the broader college mission.

1. Goals might include career training or upgrading, transfer, occupational certificates, personal interest, or skills development.

2. Discuss how the goals and Institutional Learning Outcomes of the College (see Vision, Mission, Goals, and ILOs) are integrated into the program.
3. Discuss how the program evaluates its effectiveness in meeting SMC's institutional mission and ILOs.
4. Discuss who your students are using available data. Compare data on student characteristics with program goals. Comment on whether or not the match is appropriate.
5. If the program goals have changed since the last self evaluation explain how and why they have changed.
6. Summarize program and/or course modifications made since the program's last self-evaluation. Show how the changes responded to changing demographics, technologies, industry demands, requirements at transfer institutions or other relevant factors.
7. Respond to the commendations and recommendations from the Executive Summary of the previous program review.
8. Describe notable achievements since your last self-evaluation.

Curriculum - Course and Program Content

Review program SLOs, course outlines, course SLOs, prerequisites, co-requisites and advisories for all active courses. A copy of each revised/updated outline and SLOs must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee. (Course outlines must follow the current Curriculum Committee formatting requirements.)

1. Describe how the department engages all members in the discussion, review, and revision of curriculum.
2. Discuss the appropriateness of course designs as they relate to program goals and SLOs, and identify important issues or problems. For example:
   - How the number, type, depth and breadth of the courses support program SLOs and goals.
   - How courses in the program articulate with or complement each other.
   - The appropriateness of the prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories in terms of course content and the student learning outcomes and goals of the program.
   - If appropriate, how transfer and articulation agreements serve the needs of students usually enrolled in the courses.
   - How the majors or occupational certificates are designed to meet the needs of students and employers.
   - How courses in the program interact with other programs on campus; (for example: cross-listing, overlapping content or shared resources).
   - The size of classes, the quantity and distribution of course sections (day/evening, distance ed) and other features of the program. Discuss whether these appropriately meet student demands as well as the goals of the program.

Instructional Improvement

Discuss how teaching effectiveness is evaluated.

1. What activities has your department engaged in to improve the teaching and learning environment?
2. How and when has your department assessed SLOs, and how have you responded to the results?
3. How does the department ensure that SLOs are assessed consistently across different sections of the same course?
4. What program or course changes have been made based on the result of the assessed outcomes?
5. How closely aligned are syllabi to course outlines of record?
6. Explain any unusual patterns in grading and retention in terms of student characteristics and program goals and discuss planned responses or changes.
7. Describe faculty activities, training or professional development to remain current with industry trends.

Instructional Environment

1. 1. Discuss the instructional environment, including the program's relationship and involvement among full and part-time faculty and access to instructional and administrative support services.
2. 2 Describe the number and type of staff and faculty with regard to educational preparation, currency in field, and workload and how they support program goals.
3. 3. Discuss departmental engagement in institutional efforts and activities (ex. committee participation).
4. 4. Discuss facilities and equipment assigned to the program and how they support program goals.
5. 5. Describe any changes in licensure requirements, legislative requirements, CCCCO mandates, etc. and the impact on the program.

Program Effectiveness

Describe how the program evaluates the effectiveness and impact on students.

1. Compare data on student characteristics with program goals. Note any disproportionate impact, patterns or trends and discuss program recommendations to address these.
2. Discuss how program SLOs relate to the program goals or achievement outcomes.
3. Comment on student transfer or job placement rates, if possible.
4. Discuss what happens after students complete courses or the program. Address completion rates and whether students are successful in meeting their goals.

Advisory Boards

An occupational program is required to have an active advisory board. Describe the advisory board membership, how often it meets, its role and involvement with the program, and how the program responds to advisory board recommendations (give examples).

Attach minutes from each meeting since the last program review.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Present any conclusions and recommendations resulting from the self-evaluation process, referencing the specific topics above. Include information on how the program engages all program members in the self evaluation dialogue and how everyone participates in the program review process.

1. Summarize your areas of strength and areas that need improvement.
2. Identify strategies for the future. Discuss any projected changes and anticipate how the changes may affect staffing, facilities, equipment, and other operational areas.

Sources of Information

Instructional programs may refer to the following sources of information in the self-evaluation process:

1. Program goals statements.
2. The Executive Summary from the program's previous Program Review.
3. Reports from Institutional Research such as enrollment, retention and evaluation reports. Please note, SMC's department of institutional research has compiled data from recent semesters and sessions and posted it online. To access this source and to request data go to: *http://www.smc.edu/research/research*
4. Results of any research projects undertaken by the program to examine any relevant area of interest.

Process to be followed in years 2 & 4

Program Description and Goals

Briefly describe the program and the program goals. Indicate any changes in the program and/or the employment market and how the program has responded.

Curriculum

Discuss any changes made in the program curriculum, program SLOs or course SLOs and what influenced the changes.

Instructional Improvement

Discuss any significant changes and/or responses the program has made in the last 2 years such as:

1. Significant changes in student and/or enrollment data.
2. VTEA funding applied for or received and how it was used to improve the program. Include information on any differences between program data and VTEA core indicator data and how it is being addressed.
3. Results and response to any SLO assessments in the last 2 years.

Instructional Environment

Discuss any changes in the instructional environment in the last 2 years.

Program Effectiveness

Discuss any new evaluation processes, data, or changes made in the last 2 years.

Advisory Boards

Discuss any new recommendations from the advisory board and the program response. Attach minutes from all advisory board meetings since the last review.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Present any conclusions and recommendations based on information gathered or activities engaged in the last 2 years. Include information on industry trends and any plans to respond.

Santa Monica College Student Support Services Program Review Model

The Self-evaluation Process for Student Support Services

The suggested topics are meant to serve as guidelines for the self-evaluation process and the preparation of the report. The report may expand upon or exclude some of the topics below, at the discretion of the program staff. Student Support Services programs with instructional elements must incorporate pertinent topics from Appendix E Instructional Programs

Program Description, Goals and SLOs

Describe the program or service under review, emphasizing the program goals, the program's impact on student success, if appropriate, and how the program supports the broader college mission.

1. Goals might include a specific or focused area of student support (ex.admissions, financial aid), a combination of support elements for a specific target population, state or federally mandated activities or other activities directed at providing support to students.
2. Discuss how the goals and Institutional Learning Outcomes of the College (see Vision, Mission, Goals, and ILOs) are integrated into the program.
3. Discuss how the program evaluates its effectiveness in meeting SMC's institutional mission.
4. Discuss who your students are using available data. Compare data on student characteristics with program goals. Comment on whether or not the match is appropriate.
5. If the program goals have changed since the last self evaluation explain how and why they have changed.
6. Summarize program modifications made since the program's last self-evaluation. Show how the changes responded to changing demographics, technologies, external requirements, or other relevant factors.
7. Describe how the department engages all members in the discussion, review, assessment and revision of program SLOs.
8. Respond to the commendations and recommendations from the Executive Summary of the previous program review.
9. Describe notable achievements since your last self-evaluation.

Program Improvement

Discuss how the program addresses program improvement.

1. What activities has your program engaged in to improve the student support services and environment?
2. How and when has your program assessed SLOs, and how have you responded to the results?
3. How does the program ensure that SLOs are assessed consistently?
4. What program changes have been made based on the result of the assessed outcomes?
5. Explain any unusual patterns in student success and retention in terms of student characteristics and program goals and discuss planned responses or changes.

Program Environment

1. Discuss the program environment, including the relationship among program staff and students and involvement with other programs or support areas
2. Describe the number and type of staff and faculty with regard to educational preparation, currency in field, and workload and how they support program goals.
3. Discuss program engagement in institutional efforts and activities (ex. committee participation).
4. Discuss facilities and equipment assigned to the program and how they support program goals.

5. Describe how the scheduled hours of availability meet student demand and indicate the specific hours the program operates.
6. Describe the influences that external factors, such as state laws, changing demographics, and the characteristics of the students served have on the structure and services and how the program addresses these factors.
7. Describe the interactions between this program and other programs on campus and any particular influences these have on the ability of the program to meet its goals.

Program Effectiveness

Describe how the program evaluates the effectiveness and impact on students.

1. Compare data on student characteristics with program goals. Note any disproportionate impact, patterns or trends and discuss program recommendations to address these.
2. Discuss how program SLOs relate to the program goals or achievement outcomes.
3. Discuss what happens after students participate in program activities. Address whether students are successful in meeting their goals.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Present any conclusions and recommendations resulting from the self-evaluation process, referencing the specific topics above. Include information on how the program engages all program members in the self evaluation dialogue and how everyone participates in the program review process.

1. Summarize your areas of strength and areas that need improvement.
2. Identify strategies for the future. Discuss any projected changes and anticipate how the changes may affect staffing, facilities, equipment, and other operational areas.

Sources of Information

Student Service programs may refer to the following sources of information in the self-evaluation process:

1. Program goals statements.
2. The Executive Summary from the program's previous Program Review.
3. Reports from Institutional Research such as enrollment, retention and evaluation reports. Please note, SMC's department of institutional research has compiled data from recent semesters and sessions and posted it online. To access this source and to request data go to: http://www.smc.edu/research/research
4. Results of any research projects undertaken by the program to examine any relevant area of interest.

Santa Monica College Administrative Support Services Program Review Models

The Self-evaluation Process for Administrative Support Services

The suggested topics are meant to serve as guidelines for the self-evaluation process and the preparation of the report. The report may expand upon or exclude some of the topics below, at the discretion of the unit staff.

Program Description, Goals and SLOs

Describe the service under review, emphasizing the unit's goals, its impact on student success, if appropriate, and how the unit supports the broader college mission.

1. Goals might include delivery of a specific service, state or federally mandated monitoring, or other activities directed at providing support to the institution or to students.
2. Discuss how the goals and Institutional Learning Outcomes of the College (see Vision, Mission, Goals, and ILOs) are integrated into the unit.
3. Discuss how the unit evaluates its effectiveness in meeting SMC's institutional mission.
4. If the unit's goals have changed since the last self evaluation, explain how and why they have changed.
5. Summarize modifications made since the program's last self-evaluation. Show how the changes responded to changing needs, technologies, external requirements, or other relevant factors.
6. Describe how the unit engages all members in the discussion, review, assessment and revision of unit program SLOs.
7. Respond to the commendations and recommendations from the Executive Summary of the previous program review.
8. Describe notable achievements since your last self-evaluation.

Program Improvement

Discuss how the unit addresses improvement.

1. What activities has your unit engaged in to improve the administrative support service and environment?
2. How and when has your unit assessed SLOs, and how have you responded to the results?
3. What changes have been made based on the result of the assessed outcomes?

Program Environment

1. Discuss the unit's environment, including the relationship among staff and engagement with other units or support areas

2. Discuss unit engagement in institutional efforts and activities (ex. committee participation).
3. Discuss facilities, staff, and equipment assigned to the unit and how they support unit goals.
4. If the unit operates during other than normal business hours, describe how the scheduled hours meet the needs other units/programs/students and indicate the specific hours the unit operates.
5. Describe the influences that external factors, such as state laws, changing demographics, and the characteristics of the students served have on the structure and services and how the unit addresses these factors.
6. Describe the interactions between this unit and other units/programs on campus and any particular influences these have on the ability of the unit to meet its goals.

Program Effectiveness

Describe how the program evaluates unit effectiveness and its impact on the institution and student success.

1. Discuss how program SLOs relate to the unit goals or achievement outcomes.
2. Discuss how the unit contributes to student success and the ability of students to meet their goals.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Present any conclusions and recommendations resulting from the self-evaluation process, referencing the specific topics above. Include information on how the unit engages all unit members in the self evaluation dialogue and how everyone participates in the program review process.

1. Summarize your areas of strength and areas that need improvement.
2. Identify strategies for the future. Discuss any projected changes and anticipate how the changes may affect staffing, facilities, equipment, and other operational areas.

Sources of Information

Administrative units may refer to the following sources of information in the self-evaluation process:

1. Program goals statements.
2. The Executive Summary from the program's previous Program Review.
3. Reports from Institutional Research, and state and federal sources.
4. Results of any research projects undertaken by the unit to examine any relevant area of interest.

Appendix G: ACCJC Rubric for Student Learning Outcomes

Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness: Student Learning Outcomes

Levels of Implementation	Characteristics of Institutional Effectiveness in Student Learning Outcomes (Sample institutional behaviors)
Awareness	There is preliminary, investigative dialogue about student learning outcomes.
	There is recognition of existing practices such as course objectives and how they relate to student learning outcomes.
	There is exploration of models, definitions, and issues taking place by a few people.
	Pilot projects and efforts may be in progress.
	The college has discussed whether to define student learning outcomes at the level of some courses or programs or degrees; where to begin.
Development	College has established an institutional framework for definition of student learning outcomes (where to start), how to extend, and timeline.
	College has established authentic assessment strategies for assessing student learning outcomes as appropriate to intended course, program, and degree learning outcomes.
	Existing organizational structures (e.g. Senate, Curriculum Committee) are supporting strategies for student learning outcomes definition and assessment.
	Leadership groups (e.g. Academic Senate and administration), have accepted responsibility for student learning outcomes implementation.
	Appropriate resources are being allocated to support student learning outcomes and assessment.
	Faculty and staff are fully engaged in student learning outcomes development.
Proficiency	Student learning outcomes and authentic assessment are in place for courses, programs and degrees.
	Results of assessment are being used for improvement and further alignment of institution-wide practices.
	There is widespread institutional dialogue about the results.
	Decision-making includes dialogue on the results of assessment and is purposefully directed toward improving student learning.
	Appropriate resources continue to be allocated and fine-tuned.
	Comprehensive assessment reports exist and are completed on a regular basis.
	Course student learning outcomes are aligned with degree student learning outcomes.
	Students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled.
Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement	• Student learning outcomes and assessment are ongoing, systematic and used for continuous quality improvement.
	• Dialogue about student learning is ongoing, pervasive and robust.
	• Evaluation and fine-tuning of organizational structures to support student learning is ongoing.
	• Student learning improvement is a visible priority in all practices and structures across the college.
	• Learning outcomes are specifically linked to program reviews.

Appendix H: Riverside City College District Data Collection

RCCD District Strategic Initiatives 2005—2010

Program review and assessment are the cornerstone of academic planning. The district has recommended strategic initiatives that embrace the following concepts:

- Increase Student Access
- Increase Course Retention
- Increase Successful Course Completion
- Increase Student Term-to-Term Persistence
- Improve Student Learning Outcomes
- Increase the Number of Awards, Certificates and Transfers
- Improve the Quality of the Student Experience
- Develop a Comprehensive Enrollment Management Program

Program review provides a means through which units set goals and objectives that support the district's strategic initiatives, through focusing on the student as learner.

Data to be provided by Institutional Research for Instructional Program Review

Data will be sorted by fall/spring for four years and available in March of the year the discipline begins its review.

1. Demographic information (ethnicity, gender, age group, enrollment status
2. Course Enrollments by time of day offered for each term
3. Counts of sections offered by term
4. Student Retention by course by term.
5. Student Success rates (two measures) by term
6. FTES generated by course and term
7. Weekly Student Contact Hours by course and term
8. Full-Time Equivalent Faculty by course and term
9. Percentages of student enrollments taught by Full-Time and Part-Time faculty for course and term
10. Class enrollment by course and term
11. Grade point averages and grade distributions by course and term
12. Student success rates (two measures) by Demographics by term
13. Degrees and certificates awarded, if applicable

Additional information available upon request.

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