2013 Follow-Up Report, Recommendation 2
Draft, Nov. 21

Recommendation 2 – Systematic Evaluation and Planning (2012): In order to increase effectiveness and improve its compliance with the Standard, the college should develop and implement a formal, organized process that is regularly evaluated for assuring quality of data and assessment definitions, interpretation, and application that builds upon the established governance and planning system. This will further college efforts to develop a process where decisions are based on a culture of evidence that results in cohesive planning, evaluation, improvement and re-evaluation. (Standard I.B.3; IV.A.1).

West has been doing program review since 1999, steadily improving its process over time. The process is now fully online, with significant data prepopulated for the authors—division chairs, deans and program managers. It feeds directly into resource allocation through a process that is grounded in West’s well-established structures of participatory governance. Improvements for the 2012-2013 cycle focus on fuller data collection and analysis, especially in assessing the effects of resource allocations; more robust validation and prioritization, both guided by rubrics; and the evaluation of these changes at the end of the 2012-2013 fiscal and academic year.

In 2010-11, program goals were already explicitly linked to institutional goals and program assessment results, and action plans were linked explicitly to program goals. Programs indicated for each action whether it would require additional resources, and the resource request was supposed to follow from that indication, though the resource request itself did not point back to the action. Finally, programs were asked to list other programs on which each resource request has an impact.

Some participants lacked a thorough understanding of the process and its purposes, or perceived program review more as a mechanism for justifying resource requests than as a process to facilitate program and ultimately institutional improvements, some of which might require additional resources. For example, some program goals in the 2010-11 set, despite instructions in the Guides to the contrary, were merely resource requests: “Hire 4 new Custodians”; “Hire a Full Time Dance Instructor” (even though the handbook pointed out that Obtaining a new faculty member was not a goal, but rather a resource request in support of an action plan that was aligned with a program goal); “Electronic Resources – Two (2) Desktops”; and “Create classified positions which support Distance Learning” are just a few examples. That perception of program review might be based in part on the title of Part 2 in 2010-11: “Linking Planning to Budget.”

Overall, the quality of the submitted documents was uneven, as the evaluation team noted.

In the spring of 2012, the Planning Committee and the Program Review Committee began revising the program review instrument to elicit evaluation of the effect of resource allocations, to tie actions and measurable outcomes to all goals (and vice versa—goals to all actions). Validations will be done by teams, using a rubric, and cross-divisional validations will be piloted in 6 programs or divisions.

This draft is not much more than the entries on the Corrective Action Matrix. It needs to be refined for the next draft.
The PIE Committee also laid plans for committees to evaluate progress towards the goals of the Educational Master Plan, Technology Master Plan, Student Services Plan, and Facilities Master Plan, using the results of Program Review.

Additions to the 2012-13 Program Review instrument:

i. Assessment of progress on division/department goals

ii. Evaluation of the effects of resources requested/received over the past two years

iii. Response to recommendations from the prior program review (a requirement that had applied only to non-instructional programs in 2010-11)

iv. Table of course outcomes, assessment methods, summaries of results, planned actions, and whether or not the planned actions will require additional resources

v. A similar table of program outcomes

vi. Separate assessment plans for course and program outcomes

vii. Documentation of faculty dialogue regarding SLO assessment results and improvement plans

viii. A new module on challenges and goals related to facilities, and how the facilities goals relate to the Educational Master Plan and the program’s overall goals

ix. A new module on the likely implications of budgetary reductions and of program termination

x. Assessment of the impact of improvements in CTE programs

xi. Measurable results at the planning goal level

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