



***Assessment and Evaluation of Planning Process and Cycles;
Responses to Fall 2007 Staff Survey***

Fall 2008

Using the Fall 2007 Staff Survey, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning assessed the Colleges' planning cycles and processes. The means of the seventy-five questions that assess planning cycles were analyzed. Questions were also analyzed using the number of non-responses. The Staff Survey was distributed to faculty and Staff in Fall 2007. The original deadline for survey submission was in December 2007. Due to the low number of responses, the deadline for submission was extended until Feb 2008. A total of 143 surveys were returned: 10 administrative, 43 classified, 42 full-time faculty, and 29 part-time faculty. Respondents were asked to note their agreement or disagreement with a series of questions, and Means were calculated for the seventy-five questions. To aid in analysis, each question was assigned themes. Questions could fit into more than one theme, as many questions assessed multiple aspects of planning cycles.

Themes

Each question was assigned one or more themes. Many questions assessed more than one aspect of planning. A question such as, "There is wide-spread dialogue about the results of SLO assessment," was assigned to both the SLO and Dialogue themes. There are 13 themes:

Student Learning Outcomes	24 questions	Dialogue	9 questions
Budget/Finance	19 questions	Institutional Integrity	6 questions
Planning	26 questions	Technology	3 questions
Evaluation	16 questions	Research	3 questions
Program Review - Instruction	11 questions	Library	1 question
Program Review Student Services	11 questions	Administration	1 question
		Facilities	1 question

Analysis of Means

The survey asked respondents to indicate their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements. The answer choices ranged from Strongly Disagree (value = 1) to Strongly Agree (value = 5). Means were calculated for each of the seventy-five questions. Based on the mean, questions were determined to have a low (2.97 - 3.34), medium (3.35 - 3.61), or high mean (3.62 - 4.15). Since themes are not equally represented (there are many questions dealing with SLO's and planning, while there are only a few for Technology and Research) the number of mentions is not necessarily the best way to analyze relative strength or weakness of a theme. Noting that limitation, themes will be analyzed for overall distribution among the categories low, medium, high. Not all 13 themes will be discussed in this Brief.

Student Learning Outcomes: 17 out of the 25 questions about SLO's had means that were in the low category. Seven were medium and 1 was high. With more than half of the questions in the Low category, SLO planning and assessment is an area in which the College needs to expend more effort. Since the SLO plan was in its early stages when this survey was deployed, it is expected that these variables will improve in the near future. This survey does provide valuable base-line data for the assessment of our SLO planning and implementation.

Budget: Nine of the nineteen questions dealing with budget were in the low category, six were medium and four were high. Problematic areas seem to deal with general budget processes such as guidelines and procedures being defined and followed, staff input into the budget process, and realistic short-ranged and long-ranged fiscal planning. Less problematic areas of the budget, deal with the College's efficient management of fiscal resources, budget being linked to Program Review, and fiscal resources being integrated to institutional planning. Based upon this analysis, budget is an area that needs greater coordination and articulation. It should be noted that many aspects of Budget are both college and district responsibilities, thus this analysis is an evaluation of both. This survey did not distinguish which entity it was evaluating.

Planning: The 5 questions in the Low category that deal with planning, also have ties to SLO planning and assessment. This reflects the newness of the SLO plan and the fact that we are in the early stages of implementation. Planning questions that had medium and high means, dealt with the integration of planning with other planning cycles and the overall effectiveness of planning, which seems to be a stronger function when the SLO process is removed.

Evaluation: Generally, evaluation questions were scored in the medium and high range. Few, if any, questions dealt with evaluation alone. Many questions paired evaluation with planning, program review, or research, which makes it difficult to assess evaluation directly.

However, evaluation is not a structured part of most of the planning cycles. This analysis does not necessarily reveal a need to improve evaluation since it is not a systematic part of our planning cycle, however, evaluation does need to be an area of focus.

Program Review (both Instruction and Student Services): Both program review processes were scored as medium to high. Areas of improvement are: using the results of Program Review to improve student learning, dialogue about the results of Program Review, using results of Program Review for institutional-wide decision-making, and linking Program Review with resources allocation.

Table 1: Themes by Low, Medium, High Mean

Theme	Low Means	Medium Means	High Means	Total
SLO	17	7	1	25
Budget	9	6	4	19
Planning	5	7	11	23
Evaluation	1	7	8	16
Dialogue	2	4	2	8
Program Review- Student Services	1	6	4	11
Program Review-Instruction	0	6	5	11
Research	0	1	2	3
Institutional Integrity	0	1	5	6
Library	0	1	1	2
Technology	0	0	3	3
Facilities	0	0	1	1
Administration	0	0	1	1

Institutional Integrity: These questions dealt with overall planning such as, “LPC Organizes key processes to support student learning,” “LPC programs and services are aligned with the Mission Statement,” and “LPC employees understand institutional goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.” Most employees feel that LPC does a good job at these aspects of planning.

Technology: While there were only three questions dealing with Technology and Planning, all three were rated as high. Staff feels there is a connection between Program Review and technology support in the classroom, technology planning is integrated with institutional planning, and that the planning process includes regular and systematic updating of technology to meet infrastructure needs.

Non-Responses: Missing/Don’t Know

Another unit of analysis is to assess any patterns in the non-responses (missing or don’t know). If a high number of staff declined to

respond to a question that may be an indicator of weakness in that thematic area. Using the same themes in the Means analysis, each question was placed into a low, medium, or high non-responses category. Low had a 0-19% non-repose rate, Medium had a 20-39% non-response rate and High had a 40-56% non-response rate. This Brief will limit it’s analysis to those themes with a high non-response rate.

Student Learning Outcomes: 17 of the 25 questions dealing with SLO’s had a non-response rate of higher than 40%. Since SLO’s also had a large number of low means, this theme needs more attention in the future. Since the SLO plan is new and in the beginning stages of implementation, we expect improvement in these numbers. Nonetheless, SLO planning, assessment and communication of the SLO plan needs to be a focus of the College.

Budget: Eight of the 19 questions regarding budget were in the High non-response category. Since Budget also had a large number of questions with Low means, this should be an area of focus for the College. Not only does the College need to work on processes and procedures, it also needs to work to communicate budget processes to the Staff.

Conclusion

SLO, Budget Process, and certain aspects of Planning and Evaluation need further attention and evaluation. Program Review (both Instruction and Student Services), Institutional Integrity, and Technology seem to be areas of strength.