FOCUSED MID-TERM REPORT

Orange Coast College
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A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission
for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Orange Coast College on Thursday, March 25, 2010.

James M. Meznek, Ph.D., Chair
Focused Mid-Term Report Visiting Team Roster
Orange Coast College
March 25, 2010

Dr. James M. Meznek (Chair)
Chancellor
Ventura County Community College District

Mr. Michael Carley
Director, Institutional Research
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Summary of the Focused Mid-Term Report

INSTITUTION: Orange Coast College

DATE OF VISIT: March 25, 2010

TEAM CHAIR: James M. Meznek, Chancellor
Ventura County Community College District

Introduction:

A comprehensive visit was conducted at Orange Coast College in spring 2007. During its meeting June 6-8, 2007, the Commission reaffirmed accreditation, based on a comprehensive evaluation, with a requirement that the college complete a Progress Report. The report was followed by a visit from Commission representatives.

The visiting team, Dr. James Meznek and Dr. Rachel Rosenthal, conducted a follow-up site visit on April 15, 2008. The team met with college representatives on the Orange Coast College campus and district representatives at the district office. The purpose of the team visit was to verify the contents of the college’s first Progress Report and provide assistance regarding concerns raised by the Commission.

As a result of its visit, the team verified the content of the college’s 2008 Progress Report and provided recommendations to assist the institution in resolving the concerns raised by the Commission the previous year.

The Commission, in its action letter of June 30, 2008, placed the college on Warning and requested a report demonstrating resolution of the recommendations below by March 1, 2009.

A second report was called for by the Commission upon the recommendation of the April 2008 site visit team. The team, Dr. James Meznek and Mr. Michael Carley, met with district and college representatives at the district office on April 16, 2009.

The team concluded that the 2007 team’s district recommendations and Commission concerns had been fully addressed. Significant progress was also validated pertaining to a majority of college recommendations. However, greater progress was found to be necessary in the areas of student learning outcome (SLO) assessment and planning.

A Focused Mid-Term Report was authorized by the Commission at the recommendation of the April 16, 2009 site visit team.

The March 25, 2010 site visit team found that the college was well prepared for the visit, arranged for meetings with individuals agreed upon with the team chair, and provided appropriate documents for review by team members. Over the course of the meeting, the team met with the following individuals:
College Recommendation #1: SLOs and Assessment. Dennis Harkins, President; Melinda Nish, Vice President, Instruction and ALO; Rich Pagel, Vice President, Administrative Services; Kate Mueller, Acting Co-Vice President, Student Services and Dean of Students; Sheri Sterner, Dean, Institutional Research and Library Services; Vinta Oviatt, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Coordinator (Faculty/Librarian); Georgie Monahan, Program Review Coordinator, (Faculty/Speech-Communications); Irene Heavern, Curriculum Committee Chair, (Faculty/English)

College Recommendation #2: Program Review. Dennis Harkins, President; Melinda Nish, Vice President, Instruction and ALO; Rich Pagel, Vice President, Administrative Services; Kate Mueller, Acting Co-Vice President, Student Services and Dean of Students; Kristin Clark, Acting Co-Vice President, Student Services and Dean of Enrollment Services; Sheri Sterner, Dean, Institutional Research and Library Services; Vinta Oviatt, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Coordinator (Faculty/Librarian); Georgie Monahan, Program Review Coordinator, (Faculty/Speech-Communications); Eduardo Arismendi-Pardi, Academic Senate President (Faculty/Math)

College Recommendation #3: Planning. Dennis Harkins, President; Melinda Nish, Vice President, Instruction and ALO; Rich Pagel, Vice President, Administrative Services; Kate Mueller, Acting Co-Vice President, Student Services and Dean of Students; Kristin Clark, Acting Co-Vice President, Student Services and Dean of Enrollment Services; Sheri Sterner, Dean, Institutional Research and Library Services; Craig Oberlin, Director, Institutional Information Technology; Eduardo Arismendi-Pardi, Academic Senate President (Faculty/Math); Tom Dowling, Senate Transparency Committee Chair, (Faculty/Art)

College Recommendation #1: The team recommends that the college accelerate its efforts to identify measurable student learning outcomes for every course, instructional program, and student support program and incorporate student learning assessments into course and program improvements. (Standards I.B, I.B.1, II.A.1.A, II.A.1.C, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.B, II.A.2.E, II.A.2.F, II.A.2.i, II.A.3, II.B.4, II.C.2)

The 2010 team verified Orange Coast College’s Focused Mid-Term Report assertion that the institution is functioning at full proficiency in the development and implementation of instructional course and program student learning outcomes (CSLOs, PSLOs). Evidence reviewed by the team indicates 100 percent completion and use of course and program SLOs as of spring semester 2009 within the academic divisional wing of the college. All college course outlines of record also contain student learning outcomes.

The team noted that the student services, president’s office and administrative service divisional wings of Orange Coast College prepared program student learning outcomes. PSLOs were placed into effect for the bookstore, CalWORKS, children’s center, enrollment center, EOPs/CARE, financial aid, international student center, matriculation, scholarship, health services, community relations, institutional research, staff development, information technology, CEO’s office, bursar’s office, budget and financial operations, public safety, facilities, maintenance and operations, personnel and CBO’s office.
The team found that Orange Coast College integrated an assessment template into all of its review processes. Evidence at the time of the visit verified that approximately 90 percent of all of courses offered during the fall 2009 semester were assessed for their effectiveness. The team noted evidence documenting an ongoing cycle of assessment and analysis resulting in activity modifications and course/program improvements.

The team noted that the college incorporated SLO assessment information with other sources of data for the purposes of ongoing institutional improvement and planning. Academic courses and programs modified through the use of SLO assessment information include speech, psychology, marketing, theater, business, dental assisting, as well as other areas.

The team believes that the college has moved to the proficiency stage in the assessment and use of student learning outcomes information. SLO assessment information has been broadly used for the improvement and alignment of institution-wide practices, process, programs and services.

**College Recommendation #2:** The team recommends that the college strengthen the content of its program reviews to include a comprehensive and meaningful analysis of data with particular emphasis on student enrollment, program completion, retention, success, and achievement of student learning outcomes and make improvement to its programs based on the results of the enhanced program review process. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.1, II.B.3.c, II.B.4, II.C.2)

The 2010 team found that Orange Coast College has substantively addressed the previous team’s recommendations. Since the 2009 visit, the college employed a Program Review Coordinator who prepared and implemented an institutional assessment plan as well as a summary document for 2008-2009 program reviews. A set of uniform guidelines were also created and distributed for constituent use. In addition, a College Council was created and coordinates institutional planning activities informed through the use of program review information and Budget Committee data.

Campus-wide in-service training on the practice of program review has been implemented. Strengthened program review is taking place across the college within its four organizational wings or divisions.

A full three-year cycle of program review was nearing completion at the time of the 2010 team visit. Student learning outcome assessment information and other relevant information was incorporated into these reviews. Evidence was identified by the team that documented improvements in institutional practices and/or course or program modifications through the use of student learning outcome assessment information and other sources of data.

Modifications in academic practice based on assessment information have been implemented in disciplines including speech, psychology, theater, dance, business and other areas. A review of the college’s three-year program review process was underway at the time of the 2010 site visit. Results from this activity will be incorporated into strengthened program review practices in fall 2010.
The team concurs with the Focused Mid-Term Report... "now that SLO assessments have been fully implemented, formal ongoing evaluations of the program review processes have taken place, and the college is in full proficiency for institutional effectiveness and should attain sustainable level..." The team noted; however, that an analysis of the institution's three-year process must be completed and its findings assessed.

**College Recommendation #3:** The team recommends that the college broaden the focus of its academic, student services, and administrative planning and budgeting processes for human, physical, technological, and financial resources beyond an annual basis to encompass a longer-term framework. Plans, accompanied by budget allocations, must be developed for the replacement of equipment and technology, repair and maintenance of buildings and facilities, and the hiring of instructional and non-instructional personnel. The transparency of the college's planning and budgeting processes must be enhanced, with the instructional stakeholders made more aware of the procedures and criteria employed. The process should draw upon findings and recommendations contained in the program review and be filtered through the college's planning committee structure. (Standard I.A.4, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.C.1, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.c, III.A.6, II.D.1.c, III.D.3, IV.A.1)

The 2008 team confirmed that Orange Coast College had accomplished varying degrees of progress in meeting the recommendation. At the time, instructional areas implemented the most comprehensive and long-range planning process. The team found that partial progress had been made by the college with regard to Human Resources planning. Only minimal progress had been made in the areas of information technology and facilities planning.

The 2009 team noted that Orange Coast College worked aggressively to strengthen its planning processes. The institution broadened its planning activities and moved beyond an annual to a three-year focus. Information Technology continued to remain outside the college’s planning process. SLO assessment needed to be completed to inform Program Review and Planning.

The 2010 site visit team identified substantive college achievement in addressing 2009 team recommendations. Orange Coast College has worked in a focused manner to strengthen and clarify all its planning activities.

The 2010 site team noted that all divisional wing plans incorporate program review information, student learning outcomes, and other relevant data. The planning cycle has been extended to cover a three-year period of time, augmented by annual review.

The college’s academic master plan and institutional student learning outcomes are reflected in divisional wing plans. Moreover, the facilities master plan, information technology strategic plan, and staff development and human resource needs have been integrated into the institution’s strategic planning activities.

The team observed that college coordination for planning has been modified. A broad based College Council was instituted and the former Planning and Budget Committee reorganized as the Campus Budget committee. Evidence points to planning leading budget decision making.
The team observed that the college developed a new College Council Strategic Master Planning schematic which, with a Strategic Master Planning flow chart, improves employee understanding of planning activities. The continued use of the college portal to maintain minutes, records, and related planning documents further provides employees with access to and an understanding of college planning activities. A Transparency Committee, as a subcommittee of the Senate, was also created to review and disseminate information regarding planning, accreditation, program review, SLOs, and their assessment to constituents.

The team believes that Orange Coast College is planning at a “proficiency” level. Modifications to planning structure and practices will need assessment.

2010 Team Conclusion:

The 2010 site visit team concludes that Orange Coast College has successfully addressed Recommendations 1-3 developed as an outcome of its previous visit. The college is functioning at the “proficiency” level on the ACCJC rubric in the creation implementation and assessment SLOs. Student learning outcomes assessment information and other data is currently being used within program and course reviews for purposes of quality assurance.

Planning at the college is comprehensive; the integration of an information technology plan into the overall planning process has been completed. Evidence validates the use of program reviews and SLO assessment information for planning purposes. The team noted that planning has been used to inform and direct campus fiscal and budgetary decisions. Planning is occurring at “proficiency” level performance.

Because many of the institution’s planning activities are newly adopted, the team believes that further assessment of the process should continue. Planning at the college remains complex; however, its processes and outcomes are transparent to constituents.

The team anticipates that Orange Coast College will be operating at a “sustainable quality” level of performance on the ACCJC rubric in all areas of the previous teams recommendations prior to 2012.

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