



**ACCREDITING  
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for COMMUNITY and  
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February 3, 2009

Dr. Ed Gould  
Superintendent/President  
Imperial Valley College  
P. O. Box 158  
Imperial, CA 92251

2009 FEB 5 PM 1 28

IVC  
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Dear President Gould:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 7-9, 2009, reviewed the Progress Report submitted by Imperial Valley College and the report of the evaluation team which visited on Monday, December 1, 2008.

The Commission also considered the testimony of President Ed Gould. The Commission took action to accept the report, **continue the Warning status**, and require that Imperial Valley College complete a Follow-Up Report.

The Commission requires that a Follow-Up Report be submitted by **October 15, 2009** as directed by the Commission in its Action Letter of January 31, 2008. The Follow-Up Report must demonstrate the institution's resolution of the recommendations noted below:

**Recommendation 2:** The team recommends that college develop student learning outcomes by describing how student learning outcomes will be extended throughout the institution; developing a specific timeline for development that includes establishment of authentic assessment strategies for assessing student learning outcomes in courses, programs, and degrees, describing how resource allocation will be tied to student learning outcomes; and developing a plan for how faculty and staff will become fully engaged in student learning outcomes development. The institution must also demonstrate its effectiveness by providing evidence of achievement in student learning outcomes and evidence of institutional and program performance. (II.A, IVA, IB, II.B.4, I.B.5, II.C, III.A.1.c)

With regard to Recommendation 2, the Commission requires that institutions now demonstrate that they are at the Development Level on its Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness Part III – Student Learning Outcomes. Full compliance with the standards on student learning outcomes is required by 2012 when institutions are required to be performing at the Proficiency Level on the Rubric.

**Recommendation 4:** The team recommends that the college identify and assess Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Outcomes for all Student Services Areas to include categorically funded state and federal programs. (II.B.4)

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Imperial Valley College  
February 3, 2009  
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With regard to Recommendation 1, 5, and 6 below, the Commission notes that these three recommendations were only partially met at the time of the report and visit. The three recommendations are linked as they all relate to the restructuring and realignment of the college's planning processes. Imperial Valley College has recognized that its program review process required a major revamping to add relevant student outcome and achievement data, and the new program review process and planning documents are scheduled for completion in spring 2009. Thus it is expected that Imperial Valley College will have completely resolved the following recommendations by the time of the **October 2009** Follow-Up Report:

**Recommendation 1:** The team recommends the college take action to incorporate program review and comprehensive master planning (educational, facilities, technology, & resource plans) with systematic planning and budgeting processes to effectively align college resources with priority college goals. (I.B.3, II.A.2.a, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.C.2, III.D.1, III.D.1.a, IV.A, IV.A.6.)

**Recommendation 5:** The team recommends the college develop a process to assess, review and modify the Technology Plan as the educational needs and programs develop in order to support a college master plan. It is also recommended that the plan be aligned with college budgeting processes and staffing. (III.C.2)(III.C.1)(III.C.1.a)(III.C.1.2)(III.D.1.a)(II.B.)(I.B.3)

**Recommendation 6:** To enhance the effectiveness of the governance and decision-making processes, the team recommends that the college define in writing the roles of the committees and the decision making structures and processes; that the college develop a process to evaluate them and use the results of evaluation for improvement. (IV.A.2, IV.A.5)

I also wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions out of compliance with standards or on sanction are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation. Imperial Valley College must correct the deficiencies noted by the time of the report of **October 2009**.

Enclosed is a **final copy** of the evaluation team report. Please discard any earlier versions you may have. The Commission requires that you give the report and this letter appropriate dissemination to your college staff and to those who were signatories of your college report. This group should include campus leadership and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that all reports be made available to students and the public. Placing copies in the college library can accomplish this. Should you want the report electronically to place on your web site or for some other purpose, please contact Commission staff. The Progress Report will become part of the accreditation history of the college and should be used in preparing for the next comprehensive evaluation.

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Imperial Valley College  
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On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational programs and services. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness and quality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara A. Beno".

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/tl

cc: Ms. Kathy Berry, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Board President  
Dr. Marie Smith, Team Chair  
Evaluation Team Members

**Accrediting Commission for Community College**  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

***PREPARATION OF A FOLLOW-UP REPORT***

A **Follow-Up Report** is a report requested by the Commission for special purposes. It can occur at any time in the 6-year accreditation cycle. A Follow-Up Report requires that the institution provide information, evidence, and analysis regarding the resolution of the issues to which it was directed by the Commission's Action Letter. The institution's report will be reviewed by the Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and the institution will be notified as to what action, if any, it must take next.

**Follow-Up Report Format**

The following format for the report should be used:

1. Cover Sheet  
Include the date of submission, the name and address of the institution, and a notation that this is a Follow-Up Report.
2. Table of Contents
3. Statement on Report Preparation  
The statement, signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the institution, describes the process of report preparation and identifies those who were involved in its preparation, review, and approval.
4. Response to Team Recommendations and the Commission Action Letter  
Each recommendation identified by the Commission in its action letter should be identified and discussed. The report should describe the resolution of each recommendation, analyze the results achieved to date, provide evidence of the results, and indicate what additional plans the institution has developed.
5. The **Follow-Up Report** must be reviewed by the Governing Board prior to its submission

The institution is required to send **three copies** of its report to the Commission **plus an electronic version**. The hard copies of the report should be sent to the Commission's mailing address at 10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949. The electronic version of the report should be transmitted to [\*\*accjc@accjc.org\*\*](mailto:accjc@accjc.org).

FEB 03 2009

## **PROGRESS REPORT**

**Imperial Valley College**

P.O. Box 158  
Imperial, California 92251

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

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team  
Visiting the college on December 1, 2008

Dr. Marie B. Smith, Chair  
Dr. Kimberlee Messina

## **Introduction**

At its January, 2008 meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges acted to place Imperial Valley College on warning as a result of the review of its comprehensive self-study and visit in October 2007. The college was asked to correct the deficiencies noted and report their activities in two progress reports. Recommendations 1, 3, 5 and 6 were to be resolved by October 2008, and all remaining recommendations (2 and 4) were to be resolved by October 2009. A two person team of Dr. Marie B. Smith and Dr. Kimberlee Messina visited the college on behalf of the Commission on December 1, 2008 to determine the evidence of the college's resolution of the four recommendations required by October 2008.

The college prepared a report describing the approach and activities employed to address the recommendations. Support documents and evidence were supplied on line as well as on site in a team room. The college was prepared for the visit and demonstrated professionalism in its dealings with the team. During the day, the team met with the president, all vice presidents, dean of technology services, dean of admissions, academic senate president, various faculty involved in planning, the SLO coordinator, the president's executive assistant and the president of the Board of Trustees. It was evident that the college had been earnestly at work to address the recommendations and was eager to report their progress. The team saw evidence that Imperial Valley College is attempting to transform college processes from their former informality to a comprehensive integrated planning system, thus improving the college and addressing accreditation concerns. The individuals and groups interviewed during the visit uniformly expressed their willingness to engage in this effort. The team commends the college for its enthusiastic commitment to improve college effectiveness and urges them to continue those efforts to their complete conclusion.

The following report describes the findings and the conclusions reached by the team on the college's resolution of Recommendations 1, 3, 5 and 6.

**Recommendation 1:** The team recommends the college take action to incorporate program review and comprehensive planning (educational, facilities, technology, & resource plans) with systemic planning and budgeting processes to effectively align college resources with priority college goals. (I.B.3, II.A.2.a, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.C.2, III.D.1, III.D.1.a, IV.A, IV.A.6)

## **Findings**

The first actions taken by the college were to appoint a Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator and to create a Program Review Committee which was charged to create interim goals and objectives for the 2008-09 year. The recommendations involving Student Learning Outcomes were not part of this progress report and will be discussed at the end of this report only as team observations.

In the spring 2008 semester, three ad-hoc committees were formed (Accreditation Steering Committee, Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Educational Master Plan and Program Review Committee) to begin to redesign the planning process, first by creating a pilot plan that was to guide the college in the 2008-09 academic year. The president invited the entire college to submit “strategies” that should be undertaken, and out of that effort came three institutional goals that are the foundation of this pilot Educational Master Plan: student success and student learning outcomes, student retention and institutional effectiveness. As part of the review to respond to Recommendation 6 (committee structure and process review), the college later designated the Ed Master Plan and Program Review Committee (EMP/PRC) and the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) as standing shared governance committees of the college. Also as part of the revamped planning process there were changes in function for the College Council and Budget and Planning Committees. The team found evidence that these committees are actively engaged in changing how planning is done at IVC and those involved believe that the committees and processes being developed will improve the institution.

The team reviewed the interim Educational Master Plan and found that it included the newly adopted Technology Plan (see Recommendation 5 below), facilities plans, some educational plans and resource allocation plans as well as early decisions based upon the first set of program reviews. The newly created, but not yet fully adopted, planning process was also described in the plan. Evaluation of the plan is mentioned as a future activity.

Although Recommendation 1 only called for the incorporation of Program Review data in the planning process, the college chose to go further, starting in March 2008, by redesigning the entire program review process, including new forms. The team found evidence that program review is being done throughout the college, using this new model, and is following the new timelines (an annual review by all departments and programs and a comprehensive review every three years by one-third of the units). This year’s annual reviews were due on December 1 and the comprehensive reviews will be due in January 2009. These first set of reviews contained some data but not the full complement of data that the college expects in subsequent submissions. The initial results of this spring and summer’s program reviews were used to set priorities for spending in the interim master planning process this fall. The reviews received in December and January will be used in the new planning process during the spring semester.

One primary reason for this overhaul was that the previous program review templates did not utilize departmental student success and achievement data; that deficit was rectified by the inclusion of this data for use of the faculty in preparing the report. The team found that while the process included more discipline-level data, the process could be further be improved by providing college-wide data on the same measures for comparison and/or setting benchmarks for departmental improvement. It was also noted that not all program reviews referenced the provided data to create future goals and/or objectives. The college recognizes this need for more robust data and plans to include such in the next iteration of this new process. Using the ACCJC rubric for program review, the team believes the college is at the developmental level of this

process because of the newly designed process and the understanding that the use of program review data is yet to happen in the permanent planning process in the spring of 2009. Since program review at the continuous quality improvement level is an expectation of accrediting standards, the college's current level is of concern.

### **Conclusions**

The college has partially satisfied Recommendation 1 by creating an interim Educational Master Plan which includes some program review data; technology, facilities and educational plans; and also provides a pilot process to use these plans in an aligned fashion to decide resource allocations for the college. These pilot processes are intended to support the college's planning through the current academic year, while simultaneously the college is preparing to use the newly adopted process to make decisions in spring 2009 for the next academic year (2009-10). The college's pilot is the foundation for the new process. For example, the ad-hoc committees are now standing committees and the flow of information through the institution is likely to be similar to the pilot format now in place. The college is prepared to use the current structures and procedures as they move into the next semester, gather more data and adopt a fuller set of goals and objectives by spring 2009.

The timing of these college decisions is important to note in terms of its ability to meet the recommendation as stated. The college has made an earnest attempt to address this recommendation of creating an integrated and fully aligned planning process which includes a new program review template, between March and October 2008. But, because the college decided to create a new program review process and implement an interim, pilot planning process, the timeline did not allow for the full alignment of resources and goals. In order to fully satisfy the recommendation, the college must complete its full review and planning cycle, and make decisions based on that data. Because the planning and budget cycle will not be complete until spring 2009, the college is not able to completely satisfy the portion of the recommendation that would provide evidence of alignment of college resources with priority college goals.

**Recommendation 3:** The team recommends that college publications, including the general college catalog, be reviewed to ensure that information important to students is readily available. The college's Sexual Harassment Policy needs to be explicitly noted, the policy for accepting transfer credit and the description of the availability of financial aid both need to be located so as to be more visible to current and prospective students. (II.B.2.a, II.B.2.c)

### **Findings**

The college has revised its printed schedule, as well as its on line publications, including the schedule and the catalog. The college's Sexual Harassment policy is explicitly noted, as well as clear information regarding transfer credit and financial aid. The college's printed catalog for 2009-2010 has also been revised to incorporate these changes.

## **Conclusions**

The college has satisfied this recommendation.

**Recommendation 5:** The team recommends the college develop a process to assess, review and modify the Technology Plan as the educational needs and programs develop in order to support a college master plan. It is also recommended that the plan be aligned with college budgeting processes and staffing. (I.B.3, II.B, III.C.1, III.C.1.a, III.C.1.2, III.C.2, III.D.1.a)

## **Findings**

The college has revised its technology plan to reflect a three year planning cycle which will be aligned with the college's new planning process. The plan now reflects the current vision of the college's planning process: to serve instruction, to support expansion, and to maintain day-to-day college operations. The plan will be annually reviewed and assessed by the newly revised Technology Council, with input from administration, instruction, student services, the president's office and also will utilize data from program review documents from all areas of the college. This review will be communicated to the college's planning committees. With this new structure, and attention to technology needs within the planning process, the college has *structurally* addressed the portion of the recommendation calling for alignment with college budgeting and staffing. The first program review and assessment cycle is scheduled for spring, 2009 to provide data for budget development and educational master planning that will occur during that semester.

## **Conclusions**

In response to Recommendation 5 the college has developed a process to assess, review and modify the Technology Plan as the educational needs and programs develop in order to support a college master plan. However, the college has yet to complete a planning cycle that includes program review and resource allocation. Although the Technology Council intends to demonstrate alignment of the Technology Plan with the college's budget and staffing processes, *it* will not be completely able to do so until spring, 2009. Therefore, the college has partially met this recommendation by creating an appropriate process for identifying and addressing technology needs within a master planning process. What is yet to happen is the *actual* alignment of those requests and needs with college budget and staffing as is proposed for the spring semester, 2009.

**Recommendation 6:** To enhance the effectiveness of the governance and decision-making processes, the team recommends that the college define in writing the roles of the committees and the decision making structures and processes; that the college develops a process to evaluate them and use the results of the evaluation for improvement. (IV.A.2, IV.A.5)

## **Findings**

To address this recommendation, the college initiated a formal review of existing committee structures and functions. The result was a written document describing the role of each committee and its composition. The college found the activity useful in that it forced a serious look at committees that had become dormant or superfluous. The president's office has the responsibility of maintaining the current membership lists of the committees and calling for replacements which are appointed by the Faculty Senate for faculty and the collective bargaining group for classified appointments.

The progress report contained two somewhat different diagrams of the college's committee structure: one to describe the planning process and the second to specifically address Recommendation 6. The central two committees created to address the Recommendation 1 (the Educational Master Planning/Program Review Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee) were not included in the formal description of college committees, shown in the Recommendation 6 narrative. When asked about the discrepancy, it was explained that the response to recommendation 6 contained the old committee structure and the other one (for Recommendation 1) was just approved by the Board of Trustees on October 15 to support the new planning process. If indeed these additional committees prove to be integral to the new process, the changed structure should be recognized in the formal committee listings.

The college informally evaluated the former structure to create the current one. It is the intent of the college to formally evaluate the present structure (including the October 15<sup>th</sup> additions) at the end of this academic year (May 2009). Thus, the college has not yet been able to neither evaluate nor modify the current structure or processes to improve effectiveness because of the recency of its creation.

## **Conclusions**

The college has successfully met the first part of the recommendation by creating a written document describing committee roles and composition. Because the college has added committees and changed the roles and responsibilities of others to support the new planning process, there has not been sufficient time to evaluate these new structures nor make changes for improvements based on the evaluative results. The college intends to do this evaluation at the end of the current academic year. Thus, the college has only partially satisfied this recommendation by the October 2008 report and visit.

## **Observations Regarding Recommendations 2 and 4 (Student Learning Outcomes)**

These two recommendations regarding the creation of Student Learning Outcomes, their assessment, and their use in resource allocation are not due to be reviewed until October 2009. However, the team was provided the opportunity to meet with the SLO coordinator and later, the Vice President of Instruction, to discuss the college's progress on these recommendations. The team noted that the college had begun to address the matter of SLO development by requesting that a single SLO be developed for each course. The SLO coordinator reported that over 60 percent of the courses had at least one SLO described (or more) and 50% of those had undergone assessment. The college must be mindful of the necessity of having all course, programs and degree SLOs completed and authentic assessment in place by 2012. The college has devoted resources to this effort demonstrated by the creation of the coordinator position and the development time given to faculty for training. It is the opinion of the team that the college is currently at the developmental level of the ACCJC student learning outcomes rubric.

The team also noted the necessity for the college to be able to meet all portions of Recommendation 2 by October 2009. In addition to the elements of creating, assessing SLOs, the college must demonstrate, with evidence, that it has tied resource allocations to SLOs and also must show how SLO achievement improves institutional and program performance. In the opinion of the team, the master planning process now in development should be able to provide that evidence with the inclusion of program review data that, by design, will also include SLO data. The team urges the college to keep the requirements of this recommendation clearly in mind as it implements its new planning processes.

### **Summary**

The college has embarked upon an ambitious effort to institute integrated master planning to improve the institution and satisfy accreditation recommendations. Three of the four recommendations that were to be resolved by October 2008 are inter-related. The complete resolution of Recommendation 1 (Planning) would have also completely satisfied Recommendations 5 and 6. As the time of the visit, however, the college was only able to satisfy portions of each one, because of the inability to complete a true planning cycle until May of 2009. In short, the team agrees with the conclusions reached college's current interim Educational Master Plan that it is an "incomplete one". The interim plan provided a framework to make needed changes to the planning process, but now there needs to be "a greater unification of goals, objectives, strategies and data when generating program reviews". In addition, the program reviews must "be used and used wisely in determining the priorities of the college". And, there must be a process created for evaluating the planning process as a whole. When all of these elements are in place, and the college aligns resource decisions with planning data, the recommendations will be fully satisfied.