

**FOLLOW-UP VISIT REPORT
TO
MT. SAN JACINTO COLLEGE**

**1499 North State Street
San Jacinto, CA 92583**

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

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited
Mt. San Jacinto College
On October 25, 2010**

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Introduction

In October 2008, Mt. San Jacinto College submitted an institutional midterm report focused on all seven recommendations in the 2005 Evaluation Report. The midterm report included the action plans established by the institution. In a February 2009 letter, the ACCJC confirmed it accepted the midterm report, but required Mt. San Jacinto College to prepare a follow-up report to focus on four recommendations that needed further review and improvement. The Follow-Up Report was completed in October 2009, accepted by the ACCJC in January 2010 with the requirement that an additional follow-up report was requested by the ACCJC to focus on one remaining recommendation.

A follow-up visit was conducted on October 25, 2010 to validate the Follow-Up Report prepared by the College and to determine if the institution has demonstrated that it has resolved the remaining recommendation since the October 2008 midterm report.

The visiting team received the Mt. San Jacinto College Follow-Up Report in time for the visit. The College was prepared for the visit and was enthusiastic to share their accomplishments since the last Follow-Up Visit Report. Meetings with individuals and groups at the College were arranged as agreed to with the team chair prior to the visit. The team was cordially welcomed and provided with comfortable hospitality.

During the visiting team's one day visit, 45 faculties, staff, and one Trustee were interviewed. Unfortunately, no students were able to make the interviews. The team met with the Chairs, Co-chairs and available members of the four standards teams, representatives of the College Council, representatives of the Budget Committee, and representatives of the Institutional Planning Council, the Superintendent/President, the Accreditation Liaison Officer and the President of the Board of Trustees. In an effort to assess the College's culture and intensity of institutional effectiveness behind the Follow-Up Report's affirmation, the team asked 55 prepared questions gleaned from the Follow-up Report prior to the visit.

The meeting with the College President confirmed the Follow-Up Report's description of the process and the participation of the College community in the development of the Follow-up Report. The President described the process in place for assessment of Institutional Effectiveness, including Program Review, the process for setting priorities for improvement based on data, the process for incorporating priorities into governance, the decision making and resource allocation and finally, the methodology for assessing overall institutional effectiveness and progress toward meeting goals.

During the visit additional interviews were scheduled with selected members of the Accreditation Steering Committee, Institutional Planning Committee, College Council, Budget Development and Accreditation Standard Committee. A list of committees and individuals who met with the visiting team follows at the end of this report.

All College members interviewed were able to discuss the Integrated Institutional Planning Schematic (process) of the institution. More importantly, they all heartily embraced the process because they believed in it and practiced it. All agreed that significant work has been

accomplished by the College for integrated planning to thrive. At the beginning of the visit day, the visiting team posed a question to the faculty and staff interviewees: what is their definition of institutional effectiveness and student success. A most refreshing answer came from a faculty member: "...reaching the goals and needs of students by effective, efficient use of resources and assessing how effective we've been." Others answered, "...everything is informing and influencing student success," "...degrees, certificates and transfers..." "...achieving the mission of the college..." and finally, "...organizational efficiency." The response for a definition of student success was "...preparing students for the future..." From the knowledge of planning and program review, the participation of the faculty and staff in planning and from the enthusiasm exhibited by faculty and staff, it was obvious to the visiting team that they fully believe and have achieved Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement level of the ACCJC Rubric for evaluating institutional effectiveness. Evidence reviewed for Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement for Program Review and Student Learning Outcomes include "Annual Program Review Update" that is used to refresh data on Instructional, Student Services and Administration units replacing the multi-year program review cycle. The visiting team reviewed "DLOs and SLOs student learning outcomes and assessments for courses in Anthropology as well as the "Annual Program Review Update for Anthropology" to validate that department learning outcomes and student learning outcomes are discussed in program review results and are used to affirm or make changes/improvements. Evidence reviewed for Planning included "Strategic Plan", "Educational Master Plan Supplement 2009", "Educational Master Plan Student Services Compendium 2009", "Integrated Institutional Planning Schematic", "Budget Change Proposal", and "Prioritization Allocation Rubric".

The team reviewed evidence prepared for the visit and confirmed that much work has been accomplished on meeting the ACCJC recommendations. The team's attention for this Follow-Up Visit Report was focused on the one recommendation continually appearing in midterm and follow-up reports since the 2005 Evaluation Team Report. The recommendation included four sub-points around aspects of institutional effectiveness.

Below is the Commission's specific recommendation followed by the team's assessment of Mt. San Jacinto College's demonstration of its resolution of the Commission's recommendation.

Recommendation 2

The team recommends that the College develop policies, procedures, and regular practices to ensure that:

- 2.1 the various programs and services of the College engage in regular assessment of institutional effectiveness, including program review;**
- 2.2 the College set priorities for implementing plans for improvement that are based in analysis of research data;**
- 2.3 the College incorporate established priorities into the governance, decision making, and resource distribution processes;**
- 2.4 the College develop and employ a methodology for assessing overall institutional effectiveness and progress toward meeting goals expressed through plans for improvements; and that the College report regularly to internal constituencies and the Board on this progress.**

(Standards I.B., II A. 1. and 2., II.B.3.a., II B. 4., II.C.1.e. and II.C.2.; III.A.6., III.B.2.b., III.C.1. and 2., III.D.1.a., IV.A.1, 2, 3, B.2.b., and the Preamble to the Standards.)

Recommendation 2.1 Various programs and services of the College engage in regular assessment of institutional effectiveness, including program review:

Findings:

The college has made great progress on the assessment of their instructional programs, services and administrative units at the College. Although several programs and services still need to complete the assessment process, the visiting team expects that all assessments will be complete by the 2012 ACCJC deadline for assessment of SLOs. Review of the documents, “Institutional Assessment Council Goals”, “ Assessment Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes”, “Master Plan 2004-2009 Goal Update/Preliminary Completion Report, July 22, 2010”, “Program Reviews - Instruction, Student Services and Administration”, “SLO Implementation and Review Process”, “Student Services Unit Achievement Report”, “Instructional Unit Plans”, “Math SLO and Assessment Results” confirmed that program review and assessment were occurring, not only in the academic units, but also in all the support units in Business and Student Services, and that program review was the building block for all planning and resource allocation. Classified staff were knowledgeable about student learning outcomes, institutional outcomes and assessment.

Discussions with various individuals and committees confirmed that assessment has become institutionalized and part of the culture at the college. The faculty and staff stated that the Institutional Planning and Assessment Calendar provide a systematic approach that they consistently adhere to and it helps them stay on target.

The creation of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness by combining Accreditation, Research, Planning, Grants and Student Learning Outcome and Assessment efforts in one geographical location has resulted in a collaborative, synergistic and holistic approach to planning and institutional effectiveness practices. Review of the documents, “Integrated Institutional Planning Schematic”, the new “Associate Dean of Research and Planning Job Description”, and “Research Committee Meeting Agendas/Minutes” as well as explanation and description from the Accreditation Liaison Officer, the Director of Research and the President indicated there were more requests and analysis of data from faculty and staff, and more foot traffic into the new consolidated offices asking for assistance from those offices and functions. Discussions from groups and individuals interviewed confirmed there was more collaboration and effort resulting in transparency, openness and a significant increase in requesting and using data.

Documentation provided in the team room and via electronic links provided evidence for completed program reviews and annual updates. The budget process and a newly developed “Prioritization Allocation Rubric” provide evidence that program review, assessment and planning inform and provide the basis of budget allocations at the college.

Recommendation 2.2 Set priorities for implementing plans for improvement that are based in analysis of research data:

Findings:

It is clear that the college is fully engaged in the Program Review and assessment processes, and this practice has become an integral part of the assessment of institutional effectiveness.

The College has become a data driven community as evidenced in "Program Reviews - Instruction, Student Services and Administration", "Instructional Unit Plans", "Educational Master Plan" and to "Prioritization Allocation Rubric". The Director of Research and the newly appointed Assessment Coordinator provide data from many sources to assist the faculty, staff, and administration with the planning and budgeting process. The visiting team confirmed from the above evidence that program review data is used in unit plans and that budget allocations are based on unit plans as well as institutional plans.

Review of the documents, "Integrated Institutional Planning Schematic", "Student Learning outcomes and Assessment Lifecycle", "Prioritization Allocation Rubric" (formerly the "Balanced Scorecard") provides evidence that the College has set priorities for implementing plans for improvement that are based in analysis of research data. The various teams discussed these processes in depth with the team evaluators and confirmed that the college uses a wide range of data to plan and to prioritize.

The "Prioritization Allocation Rubric" (PAR) is an excellent tool that provides a map for planning and alignment of department goals with institutional goals. This alignment was further evidenced by the allocation of resources using PAR. The implementation of this tool has reinforced the need for and use of data and research from many sources to plan for institutional improvements.

Recommendation 2.3 Incorporate established priorities into the governance, decision-making, and resource distribution processes:

Findings:

Integrated planning throughout the college has become the culture at Mt. San Jacinto College. The use of a variety of tools and procedures ensures that priorities are set through the establishment of institutional and department goals. The Board of Trustees takes part in the annual establishment of goals and direction for the college as evidenced in "Board of Trustees Agenda/Minutes for March, 2010". The minutes state there was discussion and approval of institutional goals and reviews of evaluation and assessment of outcomes relative to progress on goals.

The process of Program and Services Review drives the planning process, which in turn drives the budget, and allocation process. The use of the Prioritization Allocation Rubric ensures that decision making and resource distribution are based on data and need rather than "whim". All of this is summarized in the Annual Program Review Reports and will soon be incorporated in the "Annual Master Planning Accountability Report". This document will be distributed to the college community by the Institutional Planning Committee.

Institutional effectiveness results and student success outcomes are communicated to the college community and shared governance groups via newsletters and Master Plan Progress Reports, as well as individual committee reports.

The various college shared governance committees and employee groups as well as evidence documents, such as "Program Reviews - Instruction, Student Services and Administration", "Instructional Unit Plans", "Educational Master Plan", "Budget Change Proposal" and "Prioritization Allocation Rubric" confirmed that the College does incorporate established priorities (goals, data, outcomes, etc.) into the governance, decision making and resource distribution process.

Recommendation 2.4 Develop and employ a methodology for assessing overall institutional effectiveness and progress toward meeting goals expressed through plans for improvements; and report regularly to internal constituencies and the Board on this progress:

Findings:

As confirmed by evidence presented to the evaluation team members and responses from the various faculty, staff and administrators interviewed, the College has a variety of methods for assessing institutional effectiveness and progress meeting established goals and implementing improvements.

Resources are committed and used to ensure the assessment and planning for achievement of institutional and unit plans and goals are a high priority throughout the college.

The recently re-established Institutional Planning Committee and the Budget Development Committee are charged with assessing and recommending improvements to the process and priorities for college allocations. Assessing the effectiveness of the allocation process and the achievement of College goals and improvements, (institutional effectiveness) is a primary responsibility of both of these committees.

The College Master Plan and newly developed Facility Master Plan help ensure that the goals and institutional priorities are linked with the goals and priorities of all College divisions and units.

The College Council provides the leadership for annual planning and includes representation from all college functional areas.

Assessment of overall institutional effectiveness and achievement of stated goals and improvement clearly involves all segments of the College and the Board.

Conclusion:

As stated in the College Follow-Up Report and reported by various individuals and groups during the site visit, the College has met all aspects of this recommendation. It has made

considerable progress in resolving the remaining recommendation since the October 2008 midterm report.

It is clear that the College has made great progress with the implementation of its systematic and integrated planning, program review, formulation of SLOs, measurement and assessment of outcomes and a culture of evidence. The team found the College faculty and staff knowledgeable, enthusiastic and very optimistic over the planning processes and the culture of collaboration that have occurred over the last two years. They fully recognize and state that the processes are always a work-in-process, to be continually refined and improved to ultimately improve student learning.

The faculty and staff interviewed had a very good understanding of institutional effectiveness, how the planning processes, program review and student learning outcomes are all a significant part in achieving student success. It was very refreshing to hear faculty and staff state that parochial interests were being replaced with strong support and enthusiasm for achieving the College mission and, institutional and unit goals, because they saw, used and experienced the processes in place.

The visiting team confirms the deficiencies referenced in Recommendation 2 in the Commission's letter to the College dated January 29, 2010 have been fully resolved.

Commendation:

The entire college, students, faculty, staff, leadership and Board of Trustees, are to be commended for a most improved and effective integrated institutional systemic planning environment and a culture of collaboration, enthusiasm and optimism.

Meetings were held with the following:

College President

Accreditation Liaison Officer

Standard Chairs and Co-Chairs

Budget Committee

Accreditation Steering Committee

College Council

Institutional Planning Council

Board of Trustee President