91% and Climbing... Thanks to Everyone!
By: The SLO Team (Chris, Chelvi, Janet and Kaysa)

This past year we have made significant progress in the number and quality of our SLO assessments — 91% and climbing. Thanks goes to our Faculty, Department Faculty Leads, Deans, Associate Deans, and Admins, and of course, our wonderful team of Facilitators. Our facilitators have worked tirelessly throughout the semester keeping us updated on each Division’s progress, attending meetings, undergoing specialized training, and providing help and guidance to faculty and deans.

We are clearly at the Proficiency level as outline by the ACCJC’s SLO rubric and have an abundance of information and evidence to share with the Accrediting team when they visit us in the fall. Our next challenge is to move to the final level of Sustainability by Fall 2014 in order to fully meet accreditation standards. Given the quality and quantity of the work that has been done thus far and the dedication being demonstrated across campus, our success is assured.

Thank you all and have a wonderful summer.


Moving from Compliance to Intentionality
By: Dr. Francisco Arce, VPAA

Many of you have mentioned the work you are doing on Student Learning Outcomes and assessment to bring your programs into compliance with the Standards for Accreditation required by the recent visiting ACCJC team and the Commission action letter of February 2013. It is true that we have moved quickly to bring ourselves into compliance with the accreditation standards. This effort is commendable, and I believe we will meet the accreditation proficiency requirements by next fall.

The next step is to think about how the College will move from the current compliance response to one focused on continually improving student learning and student success. By fall 2014 the college must prove it is at a sustainable level of assessment performance to meet the Standards for Accreditation. This translates into doing course, program, certificate, and degree assessment on a regular basis to improve student performance and success.

The assumption is that assessment results will be used to identify aspects of the course or instruction that can be improved. The majority already do some sort of self-assessment; however, the difference here is that now we must prove it to the public and it must be systematic and deep-rooted in the instructional program.

The application of the now 10 year old accreditation standards raises the bar and we must prove we are in a continual process of self-evaluation to improve student learning and instruction. I believe we are up for the challenge as you have proven in the last several months. In the long run it is expected this will result in a better and more successful learning experience for students.

TracDat to replace CurricUNET
By: Bob Klier, Associate Dean AA

TracDat is coming to El Camino College and Compton Center! A group of faculty, staff, and administrators along with SLO Facilitators and Coordinators selected Nuventive’s TracDat system as the new software tool we will use to manage SLOs and PLOs. In order to replace the CurricUNET SLO Module, we will be implementing the TracDat software during the summer and offering trainings to faculty and staff during Fall 2013.

TracDat has a proven track record going back to 1998. It is currently used in higher education institutions around the world, including many colleges and universities here in California. If used to its full capability, TracDat will help faculty document the decisions made and the actions taken after analyzing SLO assessments. It will also serve as a reminder of teaching strategies and action plans developed in response to any identified gaps in student learning. Ultimately, TracDat will provide a way to document a program’s successes and how well the college is meeting its goals.

When successfully incorporated into institutional objectives, assessment can help us focus our collective attention,...
SLO Assessment “Greatest Hits” — A few (of many) success stories

As instructors we are the “guardians of the learning opportunity.” As such, it is important to continually reflect on our teaching, assess student learning, and evolve as educators. Here are some examples of the ways in which your colleagues have taking what they have learned from the SLO process and applied it to their courses and programs. If you have a “greatest hit” to share, please email it to jyoung@elcamino.edu so we can feature you in the next newsletter.

The Math for Teachers Program noticed that students had a difficult time explaining mathematical concepts, making connections between mathematical ideas, and explaining their reasoning in a clear and concise fashion. To address this, faculty restructured the class hours for the courses to 2 hours of lecture and 2 hours of lab in order to increase student contact hours. The program anticipates that more in-class time will result in increased mathematical understanding as well as an improvement in the ways in which students explain mathematical concepts by written and oral means.

Faculty assessed the English 80 SLO and recognized that, over the past few semesters, up to 50% of incoming were not successful in college level courses. To address this issue, faculty formed a task force to pilot a course using an online worksite with an instructional aide providing guidance. They also applied for a grant that will allow them to get assistance in more accurately determining the appropriate assessment tool to re-assess this student learning outcome. The department is currently conducting a comprehensive assessment of English 1A and we look forward to those results.

The Childhood Education Departments assessed one of their PLOs and determined that students need to demonstrate more creativity and imagination when developing play-based lesson plans. Based on this information, faculty addressed these issues in their four curriculum classes. They emphasized the importance of providing children with creative and imaginative activities, provided examples, and conducted activities to spur students’ own creative processes. Based on this intervention, the scores for the student teachers in this area have improved.

SLO assessment results are also being used for improving teaching and student learning in the Compton Center. The English Department observed that students who start in English C have low pass rates compared to those directly placed into English A. To improve student learning and provide better access to the Writing Center, a coordinator was hired. Faculty also shared teaching strategies at a Flex Day workshop.

The Automotive Technology Department conducts safety training for all of their courses. The safety exam contains information that specifically targets the concepts and rational of working safely in the Automotive Shop Area. In their SLO report, faculty noted that updated, interactive media that covers safety practices in today’s automotive industry proved extremely useful in helping students develop sound safety practices.

The Biology Department assessed the proficiency of microscope use with their students. They noted the need for high-quality microscopes that would allow students make adjustments to view the details of the specimens. They determined that a service agreement that would provide regular cleaning and adjustment of the microscopes would be beneficial.

In an Art class, the instructor determined that some students were struggling with their ability to manipulate drawing materials, tools and processes. In order to improve student learning, the instructor determined that handouts that show a more comprehensive breakdown of the steps of value and chiaroscuro as they apply to the cone, cylinder, cube and sphere, may help student understanding.

In a badminton class in the PE Department, faculty emphasized the fact that the high serve is necessary skill. Although their data indicate that the current strategies are effective, they recommended that a videotape of each team member performing the high serve would provide feedback that would enhance student success.

The Business Department conducted SLO assessments and determined that inviting guest speakers and panels of professionals currently working in related fields would enhance student learning and allow students to gain insights and a better understanding of the skills and attributes of people who are successful in business.

TracDat to replace CurricUNET
Continued...

...examine our assumptions, and create a shared culture dedicated to improving student success. TracDat is not assessment, nor does it mandate how we assess; it is simply the reliable and easy-to-use tool that will help us organize and manage our SLO process. It features an attractive interface, email notifications about needed assessments, clear and understandable reports, and much more.

TracDat implementation is already proceeding and demonstrations have been made to several campus groups. To help kick off the Fall 2013 semester, Flex Day will feature a keynote address and breakout sessions on SLOs by David Marshall of the Institute for Evidence-Based Change. The SLO team will have a schedule of TracDat trainings, and we will be available throughout the year to assist with TracDat and SLOs.

EL CAMINO COLLEGE
16007 Crenshaw Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90506
Phone: 310-660-3593
E-mail: slo@elcamino.edu
For more information, visit our website www.elcamino.edu/academics/slo

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