Achieving Proficiency in SLOs
By Jenny Simon, SLO Assessment Coordinator

The ACCJC (Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges) has mandated that all of its member colleges achieve "proficiency" in SLOs and assessments by the end of Fall 2012 (according to the "Rubric for Institutional Effectiveness: SLOs"). How close is El Camino College to achieving proficiency? I would argue that we are either very close or have already achieved it. Here are the standards and how El Camino College has met them:
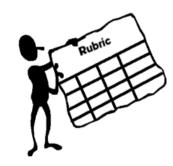
"SLOs and authentic assessment are in place for courses, programs and de-

grees." ECC has identified SLOs and assessment methods for 99% of its courses, 100% of its programs / degrees, and 6 Core Competencies for its General Education program.

"Results of assessment are being used for improvement and further alignment of institution-wide practices." AND "Decision-making includes dialogue on the results of assessment and is purposefully directed toward improving student learning." These are certainly true statements—faculty and staff are not only engaging in assessment, but

also using results of these assessments to make decisions about improving their programs. This is evident not only in the Assessment Reports submitted for each assessed SLO, but also in recent program reviews, which include SLOs, assessment results, and improvements made as a result.

"There is widespread institutional dialogue

CurricUNET Update; Four-Year Timelines Due; New SLO Leaders

At the end of Spring 2011, Jenny Simon will step down as SLO coordinator. **Kelly Holt, (HSA),** and **Kaysa Laureao-Ribas (Math)** will take over as the new co-coordinators.

The CurricUNET SLO Module was put on hiatus starting in March due to interface issues. The SLO

module is now being reconfigured for more consistency between modules in CurricUNET and is set to go live by August of this year.

Starting in Fall 2011, SLOs will be assessed on a four-year cycle. This means all program— and course-level SLOs need

to be assessed at least once every four years. Programs have been asked to submit their **four-year timelines** by the end of May. If your program has not done so, please contact your division facilitator or ALC representative for more information.

Achieving Proficiency in SLOs (cont.)

about the results." SLOs and their assessments have become an integral part of conversations about improving student learning throughout the campus. This is evident in meeting minutes, various types of reports, as well as the college's engagement in assessing its institutional core competencies.

"… it is notable to see that over 95% of students are aware of and value SLOs and related activities.".

"Appropriate resources continue to be allocated and fine-tuned. " The college has made allocating resources for SLOs and assessments a high priority. For example, it allocates resources for the college SLO Coordinator, as well as at least one facilitator for each division. ECC has also purchased CurricUNET as its online database to submit, store, and keep track of its SLOs and assessment reports.

"Comprehensive assessment reports exist and are com- **pleted on a regular basis."** For each SLO that is assessed, a report including the SLO, assessment method, data, and recommended changes is submitted. By the end of this semester, it is projected that at least 50% of all courses at ECC will have been assessed (with 88% of all programs). (CEC is projected that 49% of its courses will be assessed by the end of Spring 2011). The college is now requiring that all SLOs (course- and program-level, and all core competencies) be assessed at least once every four years to align with the four-year program review cycle.

"Course student learning outcomes are aligned with degree student learning outcomes." About a year ago, the college engaged in an activity in which it "mapped" all core competencies to each course and program. These maps can be found on the SLO website

(www.elcamino.edu/academics/slo) .

"Students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled." According to the recent campus climate survey, results indicate that "Over 90% of students agreed with the statements ... that involved student publishing, explaining, and relating course content to SLOs. While no large performance gaps were noted, it is notable to see that over 95% of students are aware of and value SLOs and related activities."

ECC has also achieved at least one standard in the "Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement" category of the rubric: **"Learning outcomes are specifically linked to program reviews."** SLOs and their assessment have become part of ECC's program review template; each program is asked to include its SLOs, assessment methods, results, and recommendations for improvement.

SLO Successes Apparent in Program Reviews

SLOs very recently have become an integral part of the program review process. Now, programs are asked to: a) list each course– and program-level SLO in the discipline; b) provide a timeline for the four-year cycle for course and program level SLO assessments; c) describe the assessment results and explain the recommended/implemented changes resulting from course and program level SLO assessment; d) based on the ACCJC Rubric for Student Learning Outcomes, determine and discuss the program's level of

SLO/assessment implementation: Awareness; Development; Proficiency; or Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement.

Most recent program reviews have indicated that the programs are mostly at "proficiency" or above in SLO implementation.

There are now some good examples of program reviews in which decisions have been made based on the assessment of SLOs. For example, the Reading department continually assesses SLOs in its courses,

and as a result, has noted a low level of success in the course that is three levels below transfer. The department is currently considering options to improve outcomes for students placing into this course, including an accelerated curriculum as well as a tutor-staffed reading lab. The Music program has used its SLO assessment data to request an increase in support for more listening/burning stations in the Music Library to increase access to class musical examples and assigned listening.

Spring 2011 SLO Success Stories by Division

Industry and Tech: Adjunct faculty in the division are exceedingly willing to participate in SLOs and their assessment One incident in particular, involving Ray Lewis, SLO Facilitator, Industry and Tech, and an adjunct Administration of Justice instructor, Mark Arnold, who is also a Presiding Judge in Torrance shows how much adjuncts (as well as Ray himself) are willing to go the extra mile. Ray Lewis relates that Judge Arnold was "... conducting a murder trial, with witnesses, def and jury waiting, recessed to talk to me in chambers, and together on his office computer, completed his SLO statements and assessment plan.

Fine Arts: The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges will be featuring the Art Department's Program SLO Assessment from 2009 in its October issue of their newsletter *Perspectives* as an example of a successful collaborative assessment process.

Behavioral and Social Sciences: Child Development faculty view the benefits of assessing SLOs as twofold. For students, SLOs provide a clear description of what they will learn in a course and program and how it will be measured as well as providing them with language to communicate their learning with others. For faculty, SLO assessments are tools to continually evaluate and improve teaching content and methods. As a result of their efforts, Child Development faculty members are leading the Behavioral and Social Sciences Division in achieving the intended objectives of the SLO process.

Humanities: In the linked classes, Matt Cheung, Jennifer Annick and Kristi Daniel-DiGregorio were able to use SLOs as a starting point for a joint project. The students have to do service learning which incorporates the SLOs of all three classes. In English 84 they have to read,

comprehend main ideas of college level texts, in English A they must write at college level and in HD 10 they have to work interdependently and set goals. The Service Learning project utilizes a lot of the HD 10 SLOs. After that, they have to write reflections and do a research project. The writing aspect covers the objectives from English A and they have to use the skills from 84 to do research properly.

Natural Sciences: After reflecting on a SLO statement that they wrote, the biology department decided to make changes in their labs so that students "participate in the scientific process" more so than before. In the future, more tasks and activities will have student propose hypotheses, design an experiment or perform an investigation, and analyze the data that they collect.

ECC's Second Core Competency Assessment Underway

With ECC's first core competency assessment in "Communication and Comprehension" completed last semester, the second one is now underway in "Critical, Creative, and Analytical Thinking." The Core Competency is as follows:
Critical, Creative, and Analytical Thinking: Students solve problems, make judgments and reach decisions using critical, creative and analytical skills.

The assessment of this core competency involves three types of data: student survey data; faculty survey data; and grade data

from courses aligned with this core competency.

The Office of Institutional Research conducted a random selection of 19 sections from both the Torrance and Compton campuses. The instructors of these course sections were asked to participate in administering the student survey as well as taking the follow-up faculty survey.

The student survey asked students to rate themselves from beginner (1) to advanced (5) in six skills related to the core competency. Some of these skills include: ability to create a solution or approach to a problem,

apply theory to analyze data or solve a problem, and draw a conclusion based on evidence or information.

The faculty survey asked the faculty member to rate the same students that took the student survey in the same skills (though the instructor was allowed to choose not to rate the students in certain skills based on their knowledge of the students' abilities.)

Grade data of the same students' "Critical, Creative, and Analytical Thinking" courses will be compiled by Institutional Research.

EL CAMINO COLLEGE

Be sure to visit ECC's SLO Website at

www.elcamino.edu/academics/slo

to download forms, find out about deadlines, and find some useful resources to help you in your work.

Upcoming Deadlines to Keep in Mind

Ongoing

Starting in Fall 2011, all course- and program-level SLOs need to be assessed **every four years**, in alignment with the program review cycle.

This means that approximately 25% of all course SLOs should be assessed annually, in addition to program-level SLOs. Please submit assessment reports on CurricUNET by the **third week of the semester following assessment**.

Fri., May 24, 2011

4-year SLO Assessment cycle planning grids are due.

SLOs by the Numbers

Division	*Number of Courses with an SLO (% of Total Number of Courses)*	*Programs with an SLO (% of Total Number of Programs)*	*Courses Assessed (% of Total Number of Courses)*	*Programs Assessed (% of Total Number of Programs)*
Behavioral and Social Sciences	128 (100% of 128 courses)	9 (100% of 9 programs)	49 (38% of 128 courses)	9 (100% of 9 programs)
Business	87 (91% of 96)	7 (100% of 7)	14 (15% of 96)	2 (29% of 7)
Fine Arts	224 (100% of 224)	9 (100% of 9)	57 (25% of 224 courses)	9 (100% of 9)
Health Sciences and Athletics	190 (100% of 190)	10 (100% of 10)	101 (53% of 190)	10 (100% of 10)
Humanities	135 (100% of 135)	6 (100% of 6)	43 (32% of 135)	6 (100% of 6)
Industry and Tech	237 (98% of 242)	15 (100% of 15)	74 (31% of 242)	9 (60% of 15)
Library and Learning Resources	---	1 (100% of 1)	---	1 (100% of 1)
Mathematics	37 (100% of 37)	6 (100% of 6)	34 (92% of 37)	6 (100% of 6)
Natural Sciences	81 (100% of 81)	7 (100% of 7)	42 (58% of 81)	7 (100% of 7)
Student and Community Advancement	---	19 (100% of 19)	---	19 (100% of 19)
TOTAL	**1117 (99% of 1126 courses)**	**88 (100% of 88 programs)**	**414 (37% of 1126 courses)**	**78 (88% of 89 programs)**