

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

A FOCUSED INTERIM REPORT

Lane Community College

April 30, 2007

Prepared by

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*A Confidential Report Prepared
for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*

Introduction

Lane Community College

The evaluator visited Lane Community College in Eugene Oregon, on April 29, 2007. This focused interim visit was for reviewing recommendation 2 given by the evaluation committee during the comprehensive evaluation conducted October 6-8, 2004.

Lane Community College was founded in 1964 by a vote of local citizens, and the main campus opened in 1968. The college was a successor to the Eugene Technical-Vocational School that was founded in 1938. The college is a member of the League for Innovation in the Community College, and in 2000 was selected by the league as one of 12 Vanguard Learning Colleges in North America for its outstanding record of achievement and innovation in improving learning. The institution is guided by the following mission statement.

Lane's mission is to be a learning-centered community college that provides affordable, quality, lifelong educational opportunities that include: professional technical and lower division college transfer programs; employee skill upgrading, business development and career enhancement; foundational academic, language and life skills development; lifelong personal development and enrichment; and cultural and community services.

In response to the recommendation made during the 2004 Comprehensive Evaluation, a Focused Interim Report was prepared by the institution and sent to the evaluator. The report provided an update on the institution's efforts in addressing the following recommendation:

The assessment of program and course outcomes is inconsistent across the college. The committee recommends that Lane Community College evaluate the effectiveness of the educational program in terms of the change it brings about in students and make improvements in the programs as dictated by the assessment process. (Policy 2.2)

During the visit conducted on April 30, 2007, the administration, faculty, and staff were of great assistance to the evaluator and provided helpful clarifications to the written document.

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Focused Interim Visit, April 30, 2007

Background

After reviewing the written report prepared by the institution, the evaluator discussed the visit with Sonya Christian, Vice President, and the Accreditation Liaison Officer. The content of the report was discussed and an interview schedule was set up for the in-person visit. During the visit, the evaluator had the opportunity to interview the following administration, faculty, and staff.

Sonya Christian	Vice President Instruction and Student Services	Katie Morrison-Graham	Anatomy & Physiology Faculty
Sarah Ulerick	Assessment Team Chair	Ely Vandegrift	Biology Faculty
Mary Brau	Assessment Team	Dave Keebler	Advanced Technologies Chair
Craig Taylor	Director of Institutional Research, Assessment & Planning	Doug Weiss	Electronics Faculty
		Dale Schaper	Electronics Faculty
		Paul Croker	Automotive Technology Faculty
Susan Carkin	Language, Literature & Communication Chair	Dan Timberlake	Counseling Chair
Kate Sullivan	Composition	Kate Barry	Women's Program Chair
Coordinator		Mary Parthemer	TRIO Program Chair
Cathy Lindsley	Chair English as Second Language & Academic Learning Skills	Jerry DeLeon	Associate Director for Counseling
		Shirley Lukacs	Academic Advisor
Adrienne Mews	Academic Learning Skills Faculty	Andrea Newton	Cooperative Education Chair
Peg Allison	Division Chair for Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management, Center for Meeting & Learning and Foodservices	Tamara Pinkas	Cooperative Education Faculty
		Julia Munkvold	Family & Health Careers Faculty
		Mark Williams	Business & CIT Chair
Don Mc Nair	Math Chair	Sheila Broderick	History Faculty
Jean Cassidy	Math Faculty	Barb DeFilippo	Psychology Faculty
Stephen Selph	Math Faculty		
Kyle Hammon	Science Chair	Mary Spilde	President

Analysis of 2004 Recommendation

Recommendation: Assessment and program improvement

2. *The assessment of program and course outcomes is inconsistent across the college. The committee recommends that Lane Community College evaluate the effectiveness of the educational program in terms of the change it brings about in students and make improvements in the programs as dictated by the assessment process. (Policy 2.2)*

—NWCCU Comprehensive Evaluation, Lane Community College, October 6-8, 2004

Institutional Report: The evaluator found the Focused Interim Report prepared by officials at Lane Community College to be comprehensive and very helpful in conducting the onsite visit. The report accurately describes the conditions that existed at the time of the full evaluation and the efforts that the institution has engaged in since the evaluation took place.

Evaluator Analysis: Before 2004, the institutional effort in outcomes assessment, in the instructional area, was focused mostly in the Career and Technical Education area and on course assessments. Since the Focused Interim Visit in 2004, the institution has focused on refining and implementing a college-wide outcomes assessment program. A major refocus and emphasis began in 2005 to engage the instructional chairs, faculty, and staff. in the development of an institutional approach.

The institution engaged in a lengthy discussion in an effort to define what constitutes a program. In the Career and Technical Education area, these “programs” center naturally around certificates and degrees. In the general education area, different approaches may be taken in identifying programs. Although this process will continue to evolve at Lane, a solid approach has been established.

The Lane approach includes setting of goals and objectives for each program, identifying and selecting assessment tools and instruments, the administration of the assessments, and then applying results to adjust and improve the programs. According to the Focused Interim Report:

Assessment tools include both direct assessments of learning in cognitive, affective and kinesthetic outcomes (externally validated exams, licensure exams, common exams or embedded questions, capstone projects, juried performances, portfolios of student work) and indirect assessments (exit interviews, surveys of alumni, surveys of employers). Student learning outcomes assessment provides data about learning in:

- General education in transfer degrees and the Oregon Transfer Module.
- Career technical certificates and degrees.
- Non-credit career training and pre-licensing curricula.
- Developmental course sequences key to student success.

- Other sequences of instruction.

Lane identifies and publishes expected learning outcomes for each of its degree and certificate programs. Through regular and systematic assessment, Lane will continue to demonstrate that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes.

The evaluator found Lane's approach to the evaluation of general education to be consistent and fully implemented across the institution. Lane has identified four "core abilities" for their general education program.

1. Communicate effectively
2. Think critically and solve problems effectively
3. Increase understanding of the relationship between self and community, including self-awareness, personal responsibility, and the development of cultural competence
4. Explore academic disciplines

Each discipline has or is in the process of mapping their curriculum to the four core abilities. As a result, in many areas, common outcomes have been established and a rubric has been developed to measure effectiveness. In several areas, the goals and objectives have been measured and the data used in making significant changes in the curriculum. Administrators and faculty are excited and engaged in the overall process. The results are being shared and posted to the campus Website.

In talking with faculty, the evaluator found in both Career and Technical program areas and in the general education disciplines, that there was an awareness of the assessment program and that they were engaged in program improvement. Faculty were aware how course assessment interchanges with program assessment to provide a foundation for improvement.

Student Services.--The evaluator found that the student services area was fully engaged with the outcomes assessment approach, and felt they were a full partner in the process. Because of the assessment efforts, they had been able to apply the process to improve retention during a time when students were losing financial aid.

Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The institution is commended for aggressively responding to the recommendation of the 2004 accreditation report to ensure that the outcomes assessment process was consistently applied across campus. Faculty and staff have been fully engaged in the process.
2. The institution is commended for successfully implementing a "cultural shift" across campus regarding the assessment process. This approach has not only engaged the instructional programs but the student services area as well.

The institution is commended for establishing an effective approach to map the identified general education core abilities with the various disciplines and instructional programs across campus.