

Monterey Peninsula College

Response to ACCJC Recommendations Concerning SLOs

October, 2012

A Note About the Preparation of this Report

This report was prepared by the MPC SLO Committee. The Committee consists of the Academic Senate President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, a representative from Administrative Services, and faculty representatives from Student Services and Academic Affairs. The report was read and approved by the Academic Senate, as well as the advisory groups, which include the Academic Affairs Advisory Group, the Student Services Advisory Group, and the Administrative Services Advisory Group. The College Council approved the report and recommended that the Superintendent/President present it to the Board of Trustees.

Executive Summary

Monterey Peninsula College has addressed the three recommendations from the site visit conducted in March 2010 and has gained proficiency in its SLO processes. The institution responded to Recommendation #1 by continuing to assess student learning for both the assignment of student grades and to use as information about program quality in an on-going program review process. The college's program review process emphasizes dialog about the assessment results during its Program Reflections, a biannual event that occurs each semester during flex days. The conclusions arrived at through the Program Reflection dialog form the rationale for both budget-dependent and non-budget dependent Action Plans articulated annually in the Program Review Annual Update. These Action Plans and Annual Updates inform the institution's planning and resource allocation process. All of the processes are linked through specific questions on the forms that departments and divisions complete as documentation. All forms used for all types of resource allocation, from new faculty requests to travel reimbursement, now mention student learning and/or the Program Reflections process.

Program Reflections is the centerpiece of the process. It is here that faculty and staff engage in dialog about student attainment of student learning outcomes and plan for future improvements. The forms filled out during Program Reflections events, as well as the Action Plans in the Program Review Annual Updates, stand as evidence that MPC personnel participate in this process.

In addition to these accomplishments, MPC faculty members now include SLOs on all of their syllabi, thereby responding to Recommendation #2. If faculty members fail to include an SLO on their syllabi, Academic Affairs personnel contact them and urge them to take action to rectify the omission. The institution has also responded to the intent of Recommendation #3. The Academic Senate has recommended to the faculty union that a question or phrase about participating in program review be included in the faculty evaluation language.

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Introduction

As a result of its 2010 accreditation visit, Monterey Peninsula College received three recommendations relevant to student learning outcomes:

1. In order to meet the Commission's 2012 deadline and building upon the progress made in identifying student learning outcomes for nearly all courses, program, certificates and degrees, the team recommends that the college complete the process of assessment to guide improvement of student learning (IIA.1 and IIA.2).
2. In order to meet the Commission's 2012 deadline, the team recommends the college completes the process of identifying course level student learning outcomes and ensures student information is clear, that SLOs are described, and that students receive syllabi reflective of the identified student learning outcomes (IIA.2 and IIA.6).
3. In order to meet the Commission's 2012 deadline, the team recommends the college take appropriate steps to ensure that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes, and that this standard is achieved by the 2012 deadline established by the ACCJC (IIIA.1c).

This report responds to the three SLO recommendations holistically. It first reviews the developmental work on SLOs at MPC up to the time of the accreditation visit in 2010, and then explains how the institution responded to the recommendations. The report concludes with brief, focused responses to each of the recommendations.

Prologue: SLO Development Leading up to the 2010 Accreditation Visit

To understand the decisions the institution has made recently, one must understand the rationale that went into the philosophical framework at the beginning. Standard IB of the 2009 MPC Institutional Self Study is the prime source for this section and contains supporting evidence. If the reader has recently reviewed this material and is intimately familiar with it, then skipping to the next section is recommended. But if, like for most of us, this material resides in the foggy reaches of the memory, then please read on.

The Early Years

Development of the MPC SLO process began in 1999 with task forces, workshops and off-campus retreats. A variety of faculty members held leadership positions and dialog ensued in appropriate shared governance committees. SLOs were developed for many of MPC's majors, as well as the GE program. Many of these still appear in the (now electronic) pages of the MPC catalog.

2007: Establishment of MPC's SLO Philosophy

The year 2007 was a pivotal year in SLO development at MPC. A new president had recently arrived and faculty and staff became more aware that MPC would soon conduct a self study addressing the new (to MPC) 2002 standards. A small committee of faculty members was formed and charged with articulating the value and use of SLOs for the MPC community. Committee members, who had diverse views of their own on the topic, represented a campus atmosphere that ranged from skeptical to militantly opposed to anything resembling SLOs. The objections were rational and well articulated. One long-tenured and well respected faculty member published on the topic in a faculty union newsletter, titling his piece "Exposing the Big Lies About SLOs"

(http://legacy.cta.org/media/publications/advocate/archives/2008/0608_cca_05.htm). Many of these perspectives were represented on the small SLO committee, making it seem at times like it was held

together by duct tape and dental floss. But out of this committee came a document entitled “Articulating Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for MPC” (http://www.mpcfakulty.net/senate/SLOs/SLOs_for_MPC11-28-07.pdf) that set the tone and philosophy for SLOs at MPC that has been followed to the present day (see box).

The document was somewhat cathartic in that, it straightforwardly dealt with many of the objections that faculty had towards SLOs. It stated emphatically that faculty would not be evaluated based on student attainment of outcomes. It re-emphasized ACCJC literature stating that qualitative assessments of student learning were just as viable, acceptable, and valuable as quantitative assessments. It asserted faculty primacy in establishing SLOs and determining appropriate assessments. Finally, it defined the need for a faculty SLO coordinator position to shepherd the process to fruition.

At an all-campus general assembly early in 2008, two faculty committee members with widely recognized differing views on SLOs stood in front of their colleagues and, in a statement of core values on the SLO issue, stated in unison that they believed in faculty talking to one another as professionals about teaching and student learning. Everything from this point on that MPC has implemented with its SLO processes has been based on this core belief that the value is in the dialog.

Philosophy of SLOs for MPC

We hope that SLOs can provide a formal framework for faculty to converse, as professionals, about teaching, learning, pedagogy, and curricula. Professional teachers talking to each other about teaching and student learning is a primary characteristic of a vibrant academic institution. We hope that the result of these conversations is more insightful pedagogy that improves student learning in MPC courses.

From: [Articulating Student Learning Outcomes \(SLOs\) for MPC](#), 2007, page 10

Finally, it is important to note what this document did not do. The document was focused on instructional SLOs. It did not address student services or administrative functions. As noted in the self study, student services had also written SLOs for most of their service areas and were implementing assessments and engaging in dialog about the results. In addition, the report did not make a strong procedural connection between SLOs and MPC’s program review process or the planning and resource allocation process. It is in this area that much of the subsequent effort has taken place.

2008-2009: Establishment of SLOs, General Education Outcomes (GEOs), and the Reflections Framework

With the establishment of the guiding philosophy that the value is in the dialog, the institution engaged in the work of writing SLOs for its courses and programs. As noted in the Accreditation Evaluation Report, MPC completed the effort of identifying SLOs for nearly all its courses, programs, certificates, and degrees.

In 2009, the institution began its effort on General Education Outcomes (GEOs). MPC students use one of three general education patterns: CSU, IGETC, or the MPC AA degree pattern. Whereas differences occur, these patterns are mostly similar in that all require classes in broad categories such as English composition, math, natural science, social sciences, and the humanities. MPC recognized that the same courses tended to fill the requirements for the various areas in each of the patterns. In an effort to keep its processes as simple as possible, MPC developed a series of course-level SLOs that each of the courses within a general education area (like Humanities or Natural Science) would share. Faculty that taught courses within a GE area were consulted and a General Education Outcome (GEO) was collaboratively developed that could be shared between all of the courses within a GE area. Each instructor that teaches a GE course then evaluates student attainment of the GEO during their normal SLO assessment efforts.

The main goal of the GEO plan was to establish transfer program SLOs. The rationale is that all transfer students take general education courses to complete requirements at MPC. Those students who receive transfer degrees complete GE courses in one of three patterns: MPC, IGETC, or CSU. Thus, the general education outcomes are a common, evaluable outcome for all of these students. The CTE programs have more discipline-specific program-level SLOs.

This philosophy was established in 2009 before the accreditation visit and explained in the Accreditation Self Study. Its implementation was completed shortly after the visit in the fall of 2010.

For three semesters, from spring 2008 to spring 2009, MPC asked instructors to fill out the SLO Assessment form. These forms, as explained in the Accreditation Self Study, asked basic questions about student attainment of course SLOs and what the instructor might do to improve learning. Examples of these efforts are provided on the Academic Senate SLO web-site (<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/slo.htm>). In fall 2009, MPC began an effort to improve the process by emphasizing the dialog about student learning within departments or groups and creating a more direct connection with the program review and planning and resource allocation processes. In addition, the college started to regularly allocate a couple of hours during each semester's flex days for all faculty members to engage in dialog about student learning with colleagues and complete "Instructor Reflections" and "Program Reflections" forms. These forms were used as the basis, or rationale, for action plans in the annual updates to each division's program review. The "Instructor Reflections" form was intended for individual faculty members to use as they reviewed their assessments and prepared for the conversation with their program colleagues. The "Program Reflections" form records the dialog about student learning among program colleagues.

Spring 2010: A Summary of the State of Affairs at the Time of the Accreditation Visit

At the time of the accreditation visit, MPC had developed its course and program SLOs, articulated the value of SLOs for the institution (dialog amongst professionals is a primary characteristic of a vibrant academic institution), knew what it wanted to get out of the SLO process (productive dialog that leads to plans to improve student learning), and recognized what it wanted to avoid with the SLO process (evaluation of faculty based on student performance and quantitative summaries of student learning that diminish nuance, subtlety, or individuality in assessment). The institution had a clear vision on how to connect the SLO process with program review and its planning and resource allocation processes.

At this juncture, MPC needed to complete the following:

- Execute its processes to realize its plans and visions;
- Put a few more pieces of the puzzle in place; and
- Clearly explain the process to MPC personnel and provide time for them to engage in the process.

The Accreditation Visit

The visiting team recognized many of the achievements of MPC's SLO process, such as developing SLOs for nearly all of its courses and programs, developing a framework for the assessment process, and initial efforts to fit the framework into the program review and planning and resource allocation processes. It commended the institution in eight areas, including its "comprehensive and rigorous planning and resource allocation process."

The visiting team also recognized some weaknesses related to SLOs, which resulted in the three recommendations related to SLOs. They recognized that MPC needs to:

1. Complete the process of assessment to guide improvement of student learning (Rec 1);
2. Ensure that students receive clear information about SLOs by putting them onto course syllabi (Rec 2);
3. Address the issue of SLOs in evaluations (Rec 3).

After the Visit: Improving the SLO Process in Response to the Accreditation Recommendations

Fall 2010, Implementation of the GEO Plan:

At the first meeting of the Fall 2010 semester, the Academic Senate addressed Recommendation #2 and recommended that all faculty members include their course SLOs on all Syllabi (<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/9-2-10/Minutes9-2-10.doc>). Academic Senate representatives informed faculty in their divisions. The Academic Senate President informed the campus community of this requirement through his presentation at the following flex day (<http://prezi.com/akay6h7zs8kf/flexdays11/>), and by asking division chairs at Academic Affairs Advisory Group meetings to help inform both full-time and adjunct faculty. Later that semester, the Office of Academic Affairs began checking to ensure that SLOs were clearly identified on all syllabi. Faculty that forgot to include their SLOs on their syllabi received reminder notes from the Office of Academic Affairs during the semester and sterner letters in subsequent semesters. Today, it is widely recognized that faculty are required to include the SLO on all of their syllabi in order to provide clear information to students about what they are expected to be able to do by the end of the semester.

Early in the spring 2010 semester, the institution began implementing the final steps in formalizing the use the GEOs as the program-level SLOs for all of the transfer programs. The goal was to record these GEOs as the program-level SLOs in CurricUNet, the institution's curriculum software, for each of the transfer programs. After approval of the plan by the Academic Senate, presentations were given to the Academic Affairs Advisory Group explaining the process, and e-mail messages were sent to each department chair in charge of a transfer program asking for acknowledgement and approval. Positive responses were received from about half of the department chairs. Departments that did not respond were contacted again in 2012; the institution is currently in process of placing the appropriate GEO into CurricUNet for these remaining transfer programs. Details of the process are explained in the PowerPoint used during presentations to the Academic Senate and the Academic Affairs Advisory Group (<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/SLOs/GEOsSLOsProgramsExample.pdf>). The important new information in this presentation was the implementation process. Although reviewed in the presentation and PowerPoint slides, the rationale and philosophy of the GEOs were agreed upon in 2009 and described in the 2010 Institutional Self Study.

Fall 2010, Connecting SLOs to Program Review

At the time of the visit, MPC had a vision of how to connect the SLO process to program review and the planning and resource allocation process. The college's SLO committee had designed "Program Reflections" forms to help faculty refer to dialog as they created action plans as part of their departments' Program Review Annual Report. The Action Plan process has been well established at MPC for many years. As explained in the Accreditation Self Study, departments and divisions develop lists of specific things they need to do or need to obtain in order to improve student learning at MPC. These are called budget-dependent and non-budget-dependent action items. These lists of action items are vetted and prioritized at the division level before being submitted to one the three advisory groups. At the advisory groups, budget-dependent items are prioritized across all divisions and submitted to the College Council where they are incorporated into the budget for submittal to the Superintendent/President who presents it to the Board of Trustees. (Note: because of the budget crisis affecting all California Community Colleges, the 2010-2011 action plans never actually made it to the College Council. Instead of determining how to spend new money, the College Council was required to drive the process in reverse and reduce spending.)

At the time of the visit, this connection was a vision. In Fall 2010, the institution took steps to codify this connection by adjusting language on the Program Reflections form and the Program Review Annual Report that each division submits to their vice president for discussion at the advisory groups. In addition, the Academic Affairs Annual Report form stipulated that the Program Reflections forms from both the Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 semesters should be included as supporting documentation in the Annual Report for each division.

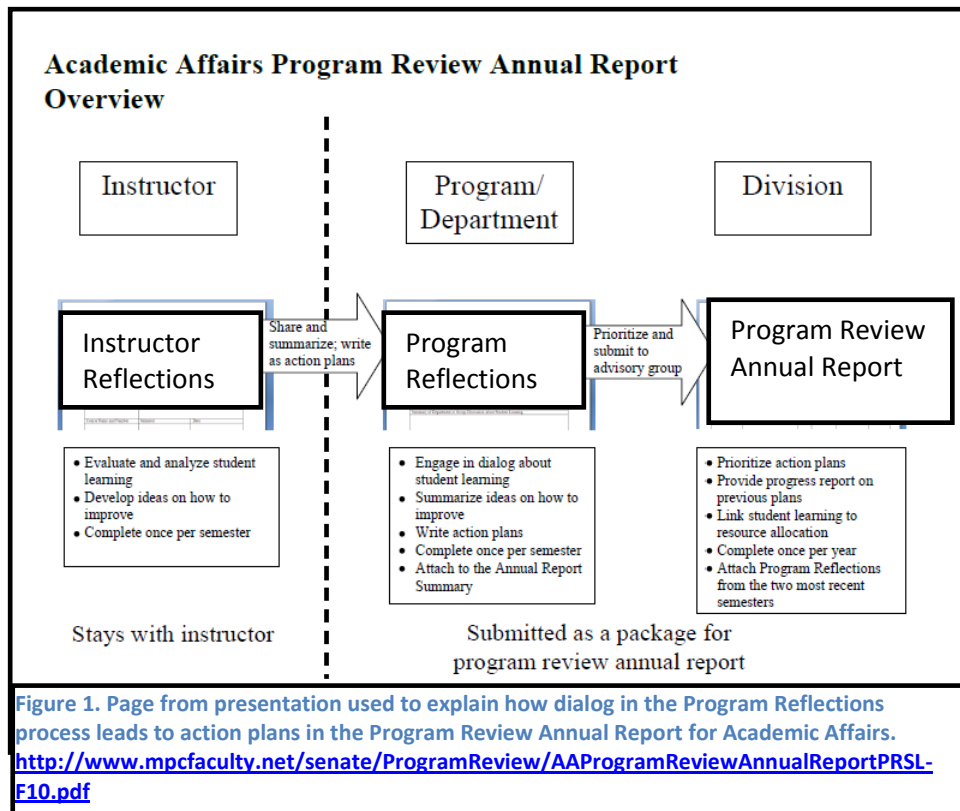


Figure 1 shows the relationship between the Instructor Reflections, the Program Reflections, and the Program Review Annual Report in Academic Affairs. This image is taken from a presentation that was shown at various shared governance meetings to explain to faculty and staff the relationship between these documents and the importance of this connection. All of the pertinent forms can be viewed in this pdf document (fig 1).

Figure 2 shows the Academic Affairs Program Review – Annual Report Form. The circles show phrases that demonstrate how this form was revised in Fall 2010 to codify the connection to the Program Reflections SLO process. The forms that MPC divisions complete every six years during their more comprehensive program review were already tied into the Program Reflections process at the time of the accreditation visit.

Examples of completed 2010-2011 Program Reflection documents have been collated into a single document. These forms show how MPC departments and divisions used the Program Reflections dialog to discuss ways to improve teaching and student. <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>

This Program Reflections dialog led to action plans as part of the program review annual report in Spring 2011. These annual reports are also collated into a single document. <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>

Review of these documents show the kind of dialog that divisions and departments had in 2010-2011 and how they directly led to requests in the resource allocation process. No new money was allocated, of course, because the institution was undergoing budget reduction rather than expansion at the time. The

Academic Affairs Program Review – Annual Report Form -- Summary

Date:

Program:

Prepared by:

1. Select one of the abbreviations that best describes the status of each action plan item described in your most recent program review: "C" means completed; "IP", in progress; "D", deleted; "A", added; "NM", no money.
2. For those items that are specifically described in your department's Program Reflections on Student Learning forms, check the box under PRSL (Program Reflections on Student Learning).
3. For those items that address one or more of the institutional goals, check the box under Goals.
4. Please provide rationale for additions and deletions, referring to the Program Reflections on Student Learning form as appropriate.
5. List in order of priority.
6. Attach the two most recent Program Reflections on Student Learning from each department or area.

Budget-Dependent Items

Status (C,IP,D,A, NM))	Action Item	Supports		Timeline	Person(s) Assigned	Amount
		Goals	PRSL			

Rationale for Additions or Deletions (refer to your Program Reflections form as appropriate):

Figure 2. Portion of the Academic Affairs Program Review Annual Update form from 2010-2011. Circles show additions that codify connection to the Program Reflections process.
<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/ProgramReview/AAProgramReviewAnnualReportPRSL-F10.pdf>

annual updates do, however, continue to inform decisions regarding the reallocation of resources as the institution continues to operate under tight fiscal constraints.

Spring 2011, Institutional SLOs

The Academic Senate discussed institutional SLOs at its March 3 meeting. It considered the difficulty in articulating a truly institutional outcome when so many students attend the college for so many different reasons. It decided that for a student to attain a variety of institutional outcomes, the student would have to engage with a variety of disciplines through a multi-semester tenure at the college. In making this decision, the Academic Senate recognized that some cohorts of students (i.e., those that stay for only a short time, or those that engage with only a single discipline, were sadly excluded from this definition of institutional outcomes.

With this in mind, the Academic Senate decided that the already-established GEOs would appropriately serve as the institutional outcomes as well. It noted that an assessment process was already in place for the GEOs (i.e., the program reflections SLO framework), and that no new processes would need to be established to assess them. It realized that these outcomes, representing a wide swath of MPC's curriculum, could reasonably be attained by students taking a wide variety of courses as they pursue their general education requirements over a number of semesters. Furthermore, student attainment of these outcomes could reasonably be assessed using processes already in place at MPC.

Reference: March 3 Academic Senate minutes: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/3-3-11/Minutes3-3-11.doc>

Spring 2011, Administration of SLO Processes

During Spring 2011, the Academic Senate and faculty were very active in developing and defining the SLO process at MPC. The question arose as to the administration of the process and keeping track of participation. The Academic Senate decided that whereas it is a faculty role to lead the development of SLO processes, it is not a faculty role to ensure that each and every faculty member participates in a satisfactory way. For this reason, the Academic Senate recommended to the institution that the

Administration take the lead role in administering the SLO process including the Program Reflections, Program Review Annual Updates, and other related activities.

Reference: March 3 Academic Senate minutes: <http://www.mpcfacyty.net/senate/3-3-11/Minutes3-3-11.doc>

Spring 2011, SLOs in Evaluations

Tying SLOs and their assessments to performance evaluations has been perhaps the most contentious issue surrounding SLOs at Monterey Peninsula College. Virtually all members of the college recognize that there are too many factors affecting student performance to assign all of the accountability for student learning on faculty and others directly responsible for student learning, including students' attendance, level of interest, academic skills, level of maturity, and stresses related to home and work life. The institution approached this issue following what it believed to be the intent of this particular standard: that all faculty members should be involved in the assessment of the quality of their programs and the development of plans to improve student learning. Because a large component in the quality of any community college program is the degree of student learning, the SLO process "lives" in program review. It is within the program review process, including the Program Reflections, the annual program review updates, and the comprehensive program review self-studies completed every six years, where these types of quality improvement activities take place.

To ensure that faculty members participate in program review's evaluative and improvement activities in a beneficial manner, the Academic Senate recommended to the faculty union that there should be a clause or question about participating in program review in the faculty evaluation process. The exact wording of the recommendation is shown in the box to the right. The rationale for this recommendation is that the institution believes that evaluation of program quality and the associated efforts to plan improvement is an integral part of any program. It wanted faculty members to participate fully in this process and to recognize these activities as an essential duty of all faculty members. This approach addresses the intent of the accreditation standard which is to ensure that all faculty and staff are engaged in evaluating and improving student learning. At MPC, this effort happens within the program review process, so evaluating faculty on their participatory role in program review achieves this goal. It is expected that faculty evaluations will retain all of the aspects that they have historically contained. These include in-class peer review and self-evaluations on topics such as the efficacy of assignments, pedagogy, assessments, and related topics, many of which also address the intent of this standard.

From the Academic Senate to the Faculty Union:

Recommendations on SLOs in evaluations

Recommend to our faculty union that when it comes time to negotiate or discuss faculty evaluation, that there be a clause or question about participating in program review. Since SLOs "live" in program review, and since program review means evaluating the effectiveness of our programs and then using the results for improvement, then participating in program review means that we are participating in this SLO process
From: Academic Senate [Notes](#) and [Minutes](#), March 3, 2011:

<http://www.mpcfacyty.net/senate/3-3-11/Notes3-3-11.htm> and
<http://www.mpcfacyty.net/senate/3-3-11/Minutes3-3-11.doc>

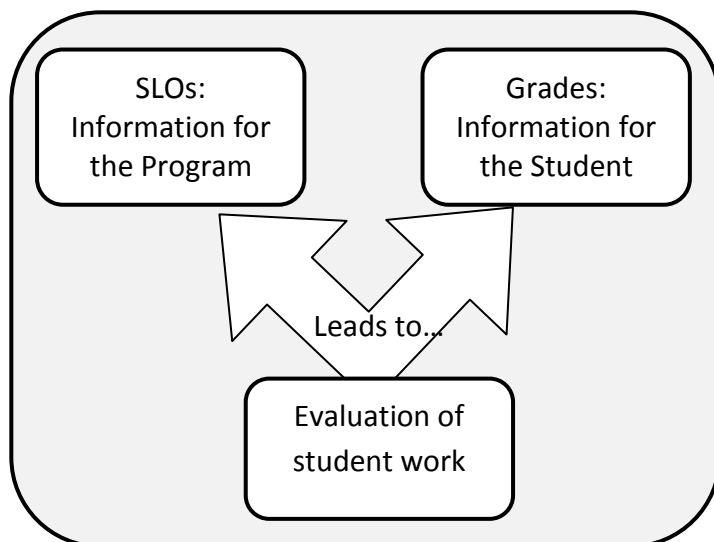


Figure 3. A diagram from the SLO section of the faculty handbook is an example of informational material used to inform MPC faculty and staff about SLO issues and processes. This particular image shows how a single assessment could provide both grades for the student and valuable information about student learning for the program. <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/FacultyHandbook/FacultyHandbookSLOs.pdf>

Spring 2011, SLOs in the Faculty Handbook
 In May 2011 the Academic Senate developed and approved an SLO section for the Faculty Handbook. This section was designed to help educate faculty on the value and utility of SLOs. A couple of images were used to help convey this information. The image to the left, for example, shows that evaluation of student work can be used to both assign grades to the student and to glean information about student learning when assessing the quality of programs. MPC has encouraged instructors to use their normal assessment of student work for both grading purposes and for their SLO work. The new section of the Faculty Handbook also explains the GEO process and how the Program Reflections tie into planning and resource allocation. The Faculty Handbook is given to all new faculty members as they arrive at MPC. During their 2-day orientation meetings, many MPC processes and procedures are reviewed, including SLOs, GEOs, Program Reflections,

and how to integrate SLOs onto all course syllabi.

The complete Faculty Handbook is available on the Academic Affairs website.

<http://mympc.mpc.edu/academics/AcademicAffairs/Faculty%20Handbook/Faculty%20Handbook%202011-2012.pdf>

Fall 2011, Revitalization of the SLO Committee

In Fall 2011, with the introduction of an interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, the SLO Committee was revitalized. The goals of the SLO for the SLO Committee for the 2011-2012 academic year were fourfold:

1. Develop a plan to write this report;
2. Write this report;
3. Develop stronger connections between the Program Reflections process and all of the ways that the institution allocates resources;
4. Critically evaluate the program review processes in all three areas of the college and propose ways to standardize them.

Fall 2011, Begin efforts to create an Educational Master Plan

At the request of the President/Superintendent, the institution began work on formulating an Educational Master Plan (EMP), a document that would provide a basis for all types of planning for the institution. Figure 4 shows the relationship between the EMP and all other planning documents, as well as to the Program Reflections and Program Review Annual Updates. To formulate the EMP, all areas of the institution were asked to review their recent Program Reflections documents and summarize their program's mission, scope, and direction. Through this review process, the Program Reflections process provides the basis for the Institution's premier multi-year planning document and forms a connection between learning in the classroom and institutional planning. For example, the 2012 EMP includes the Math Department's prioritized request for two additional full-time Math instructors. It also includes the

Earth Science Department's continued prioritized need for sustained field trip funds and adequate equipment and supplies to support Marina Education Center students.

<http://www.mpc.edu/academics/EducationMasterPlan2012/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

The Vice President of Academic Affairs presented the need to formulate an EMP at the October 20, 2011 Academic Senate meeting. The Academic Senate responded by appointing faculty members to the task force to write the EMP. <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/10-20-11/Minutes10-20-11.doc>

The EMP is in development as of this writing.

<http://www.mpc.edu/academics/EducationMasterPlan2012/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

INTEGRATED MASTER PLAN

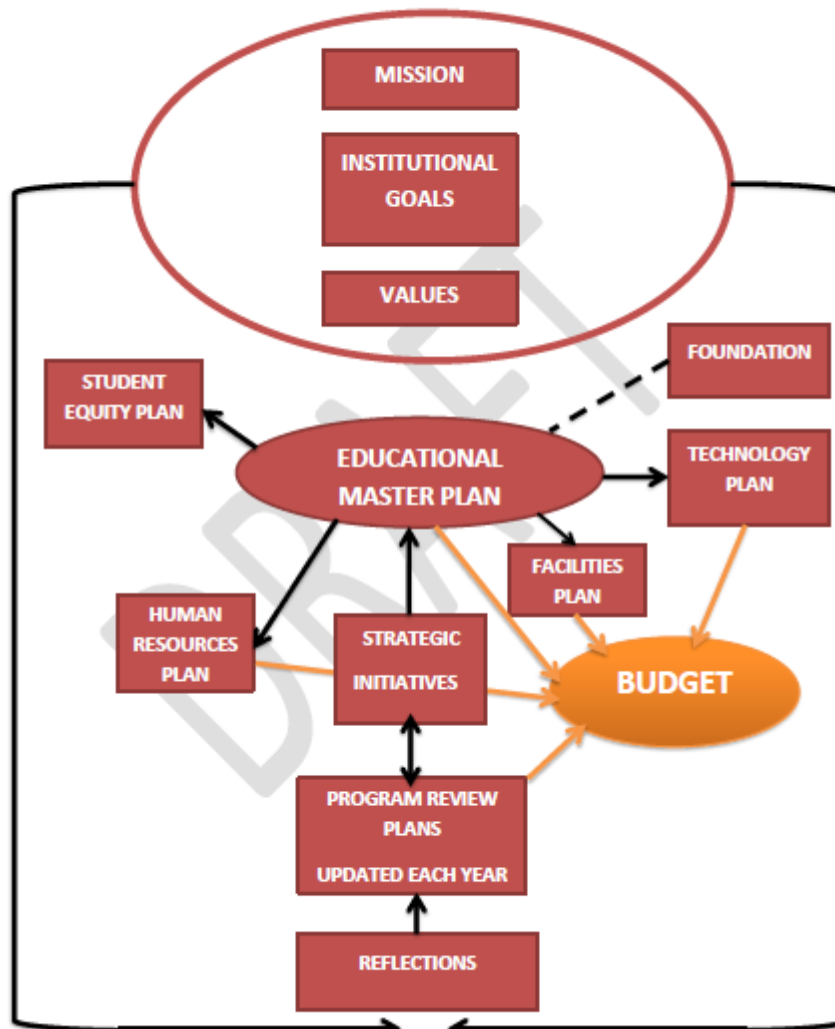


Figure 4. This chart shows the relationship between the Educational Master Plan (EMP) and all of the other plans that MPC currently uses. It also shows Program Reflections (referred to as “reflections” here) and the Program Review Annual Updates as feeding into the EMP.

Fall 2011 – Spring 2012, Connecting all types of budget dependent and non-dependent resource allocation to student learning and the Program Reflections Process

As detailed in previous sections, the Program Reflections process is well connected to the action plan and program review processes. The program review process, including the annual action plans, is the primary way in which college funds are allocated. The college does employ, however, other processes which, before the 2011-2012 academic year, were not as connected or informed by the program reflections process and SLOs. These processes included:

- Faculty Position Requests
- Classified Position Requests
- MPC Foundation Grant Proposals
- Travel Reimbursement Requests
- Grant Application Pre-Approvals
- Emergency Instructional Equipment Requests

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the institution made several changes to the forms that guide these requests or proposals. Several examples of these types of changes are shown in figure 5 on the next page. The changes are highlighted by red circles. In general, when making any of these types of resource requests, MPC personnel must now relate the allocation of funds to student learning and/or discussions related to student learning. The Academic Senate reviewed these changes on March 1, and supported them.

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/3-1-12/Minutes3-1-12.pdf>

All of the revised forms are available in a single document at

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/RevisedForms/SLOAllFormsHighlight.pdf>

As an example, new wording in the classified position request form now reads, “If the position is new or revised, explain how this position supports student learning.” Similar changes were made in all of the documents.

Figure 5. Revised resource allocation documents

C. Rationale for the Position

1. Description of need. Please include information on the effects on the program, your division, the college, and the community of filling the position versus not filling it.

2. If this position is new or modified, is it addressed in MPC planning documents, such as the college's Educational Master Plan, the Division's most recent Program Review, the Department's Program Review Update and Action Plan, and/or the Division's and/or Department's Program Reflections?
 Yes (Please cite below.) No (Please explain)

1. Faculty Position Requests

3. Annual cost of the proposal, and source of funds: _____

4. Justification/rationale for this position and consequences of not filling the position. _____

5. If the position is new or revised, explain how this position supports student learning. _____

2. Classified Position Requests

Reverse this sheet, and use the table for tracking the progress of

Describe the project; program; event; and/or equipment (*attach all relevant documentation to support the funding costs – i.e. conference registration information, air travel expenses, etc.*):

Describe how it will benefit student learning at MPC:

3. Foundation Grant Proposals

Figure 5. These screen-grabs of district forms show how student learning and program reflections have been more tightly integrated into all resource allocation processes. Circles show the added or revised language. Please view the complete version of all the forms at:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/RevisedForms/SLOAllFormsHighlight.pdf>

Also see the revised travel request form at:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senateAccredResponse2012/RevisedForms/SLOTTravel-ConferenceFormHighlight.pdf>

Summary of Responses to the Three SLO Recommendations

1. Through ongoing dialog and the program reflections process, MPC has completed the process of assessment to guide improvement of student learning. MPC continues to assess of student learning. The institution has formalized its dialog about assessment results by providing time—usually two hours—during the flex days that begin each semester since Spring 2010. The results of this dialog, referred to as Program Reflections, are well integrated into the program review process. The Program Reflections provide the rationale for budget dependent and non-dependent resource allocation requests, both through the action plan process of program review, and through a variety of other resource allocation processes such as Foundation grant proposals, classified position requests, and travel reimbursement requests. The action plans are presented annually to shared governance groups in inform resource allocation decisions. Program, GE, and institutional SLOs have been proposed, discussed, and agreed upon. All of the program and institutional SLOs are designed as course-level SLOs. The purpose of this integration of program, institutional, and course SLOs is to make all outcomes evaluable at the course level so that instructors will evaluate them as part of their normal assessment activities in each of their courses.
2. MPC has completed the process of identifying course level student learning outcomes and helping students have clear expectations of what they can expect to be able to do at the end of the course, as MPC faculty members now include SLOs on their syllabi. If SLOs are not included on syllabi, faculty members are reminded by the Office of Academic Affairs to revise syllabi that lack SLOs.
3. MPC has addressed the intent of including SLOs in evaluations. The Academic Senate has recommended to the faculty union that when it comes time to negotiate it should suggest that an item about participating in program review be included in faculty evaluations. The rationale is that since the SLO process is encompassed within the program review process, as explained in this document, being evaluated on participation in the program review process would necessarily encompass participation in the SLO process.

Is it working? Yes. Evidence from the Program Reflections

1. Faculty appreciation of the flex day Program Reflection sessions is increasing.

MPC has evaluated the usefulness of most of its flex-day programs over the last few years. Positive comments about the Program Reflection sessions have steadily increased over the last few semesters.

Spring 2011: The Program Reflections session was scheduled before all other sessions on the first day of two flex days to emphasize its importance. A majority of respondents (~55%) responded favorably to the statement, “I found these sessions to be helpful and informative.” About 35% of the respondents did not attend the session. A single comment concerning the Program Reflections read, “Please keep the program reflections session, this is often the only opportunity to engage in broad discussion regarding student learning outcomes. ... Our meeting was productive, informative, and helpful...”

Reference: Survey Monkey Results for Spring 2011

Fall 2011: The session was held after lunch in lieu of afternoon breakouts. Attendance declined from the previous semester, with 20-40% of survey respondents attending these sessions. Of the ten respondents who submitted written comments, 4 of them were positive. The other respondents were not faculty, were required to be elsewhere, or did not find the session useful.

Reference: Survey Monkey Results for Fall 2011

Spring 2012: The session was again held in the afternoon, this time from 2:30-4:30 pm. This time 75% of respondents attended the sessions and responded favorably to the survey question. In addition, of those that provided written comments on the program reflections experience, all of them were positive.

Reference: Survey Monkey Results for Spring 2012

2. Participation in Program Reflections has increased steadily over the last few semesters.

The survey results show that the percentage of faculty and staff participating in the Program Reflections sessions has steadily increased over the last few semesters. This is partially due to increased recognition that participation in these sessions is required rather than optional. These results are based on flex day surveys in which participation is voluntary.

In Spring 2011, 65% of the 81 respondents indicated a favorable impression, with 31% indicating that they did not attend the session. This session was scheduled the first thing in the morning to emphasize its importance. Reference: Survey Monkey Results for Spring 2011

In Fall 2011, 27% of the respondents indicated a favorable impression, with 71% indicating that they did not attend the session. This session was scheduled in the afternoon after a brown bag lunch; for the first time, budget cuts prevented the institution from providing a light lunch for flex day participants.

Reference: Survey Monkey Results for Fall 2011

In Spring 2012, 75% of the respondents indicated a favorable impression, with 25% indicating that they did not attend the session. This session was scheduled from 2:30-4:30 in the afternoon after a brown bag lunch. Note how much higher the participation rate is compared to Fall 2011. Reference: Survey Monkey Results for Spring 2012

3. Substantive dialog in the Program Reflections is leading to resource allocation requests in the action plan process and to efforts to improve student learning.

The most significant evidence for SLO proficiency at MPC is the record of Program Reflections dialog throughout the last few semesters. The Program Reflections process is the centerpiece of MPC's SLO process. Program Reflections occur every semester at Flex Days, when groups of faculty come together to engage in dialog about their assessment of student learning. Because MPC's program, GE, and institutional SLOs are all embedded in course SLOs, the Program Reflections dialog encompasses all of the outcomes at MPC. Faculty and staff are free to discuss whatever SLO they think is most important to their programs in any given semester. In this manner, the most important issues are given highest priority. The dialog leads to Action Plans, which are requests for resources or plans to improve student learning.

The records of the Program Reflections and the Action Plans included in the Program Review Annual Updates provide fundamental evidence of MPC's proficiency in its SLO processes.

Completed Program Reflections forms from the 2010-2011 academic year are here:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

Completed Action Plans and Program Review Annual Updates from the 2010-2011 academic year are here: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

A few examples from these documents illustrate the substantive dialog that is occurring and how the dialog leads to resource allocation requests or non-budget dependent plans to improve student learning.

English Department

In its January 26, 2011 Program Reflections, the English Department indicated that the level of student success in any of their classes was related to the level of preparedness—or under-preparedness—of incoming students. They noted the discontinuance of the requirement for all students to take the English Placement Test before registering for classes. Students are now allowed to sign up for any class without knowing whether or not they satisfy the advisories and lack the appropriate skills. The lack of appropriate skills of entering students has negatively impacted the success of these students. The English Department also discussed the increased instances of plagiarism in their classes.

Reference: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

This Program Reflections dialog led to action plans involving requests to reinstate the English Placement Test for all registering students, working more closely with Counseling and other student services, and to purchase software designed to detect plagiarism. Another plan to improve student learning that arose out of this discussion was to make a curricular change to make ENGL 112 (Critical Reading) a prerequisite to ENGL 1A along with ENGL 111 (Intermediate Academic Writing).

Reference:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

English and Study Skills Center

The ESSC (English and Study Skills Center) is an MPC learning center that students utilize for individualized help with (mostly) basic skills in writing. In the Spring 2011 Program Reflections, the ESSC staff discussed assessment strategies and the manner in which ESSC staff “check in” with students.

Reference: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

These conversations led to a variety of action plans to improve the ways that the ESSC serves students. One example is “work with the English Department toward more cooperation, collaboration, and cohesion between English 301/321 and the lab co-requisites 401/421. Currently there is little crossover, except in isolated incidents, between assignments done in English classes and assignments done in English labs.” Another action plan was to “Explore ways to incorporate more interaction between ENGL 401 students and staff as students work through the sequence of lab activities and quizzes.” In summary, the ESSC is trying to generate more collaboration with English Dept faculty and enable more face-to-face contact with students using the ESSC. Both are expected to increase student success rates.

Reference:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

Math Department

In its January 26, 2011 Program Reflections, the Math Department echoed the English Department dialog and also talked about the under-preparedness of its students entering the Math classes. The Math Department engaged in dialog about the value of the Math Assessment Test and the validity of students taking prerequisites at other colleges. Automating homework assignments via software was discussed. The Math Department also discussed a number of curricular changes such as offering some of the lower-level Math courses over an entire year rather than a single semester. These types of changes, however, would require hiring more Math faculty members, something that has been difficult under current fiscal

constraints. The Math Department has experimented with changing the number of days/week some of its courses are offered. At times, they've increased the frequency of classes per week, believing that students can absorb and retain more when material is introduced in smaller chunks at a time, and when student-instructor contact occurs with greater frequency throughout the week.

Reference: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

The Math Department Action Plans included a long-standing request for additional Math faculty members. Because of the shortages of qualified adjuncts, the number of classes the Math department needs to serve students substantially exceeds the supply of instructors. The Math department is forced into cancelling classes instead of serving students.

Reference:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

Engineering

In its Spring 2011 Program Reflections, Engineering faculty, which consisted of one full-time faculty member and two adjuncts, discussed the lack of motivation of Engineering students and their lack of problem-solving ability. In Engineering, a possible curricular solution has been proposed and implemented. Students now turn in homework for credit. The homework has been redesigned to take the student from drills which emphasize technique (with answers included) to problems that emphasize problem-solving (answers not included). They also recognize that students in the adjunct-taught ENGR 2 graphics class need more support during the week to learn the software. Finally, the Engineering faculty discussed the success of MESA programs elsewhere and the value of starting one at MPC. "If we're serious about learning outcomes," they said, "this is a program that works."

Reference: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

Engineering Action Plans included proposals to buy updated 64-bit software to possible collaborations with neighboring institutions. They also plan to advocate for installment of a MESA program office, mentioning that MPC's neighbor Hartnell Community College considers the MESA program a crucial factor in their success.

Reference:

<http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

Earth Science

The essence of Earth Sciences is to take students into the field and have them interpret the origin of landscapes, rock outcrops, and ocean processes such as waves and currents. The majority of dialog in the Program Reflections revolved around how to support these field experiences in the classroom. Projects such as taking high-resolution zoom-able panoramic photographs of outcrops encountered on field trips, and deploying ocean drifters to measure ocean currents were discussed. The Earth Sciences Department also talked about the struggles of students not fully prepared for a college-level science course. Finally, the challenge of offering Earth Science classes at the Marina Ed Center was discussed.

Reference: <http://www.mpcfaculty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgramReflectionsSummary2010-2011.pdf>.

The highest priority of the Earth Science Action Plan is always to maintain the field trip budget. As discussed frequently and at length in the Program Reflections, field trips are essential to the vitality of the Earth Science program. The Earth Science Action Plan also included obtaining equipment to create the zoom-able panoramic photographs and bring virtual globes into the classroom. An ongoing need is to obtain instructional equipment and supplies to teach Earth Sciences at the Marina Ed Center. Planned

curricular changes included more overt and explicit emphasis on the scientific method in Oceanography labs.

Reference:

<http://www.mpcfakulty.net/senate/AccredResponse2012/ProgRevAnnualUpdateSummary2010-2011.pdf>.