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*Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges*

EVALUATION REPORT MARCH 2014

Barstow Community College
2700 Barstow Road, Barstow, CA 92311

A confidential report prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Western
Association of Schools and Colleges

This report represents the findings of the Follow-Up team that visited
Barstow Community College on March 25-26, 2014

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Introduction

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) placed Barstow College on Warning at its June 2012 meeting for a number of deficiencies in relation to the standards, which are outlined in the visiting team report from March 2012. The 2012 visiting team identified 13 recommendations to address in order for the College to meet the accreditation standards. In its June 2012 action, the ACCJC requested a follow-up report focused on 11 of the 13 original recommendations, along with a site visit. A follow-up site visit was conducted by four members of the 2012 team in April 2013. That visit and the subsequent report validated the tremendous progress the College had made in meeting the standards; however there were still several areas which the College had not met the standards. The ACCJC kept the College in its present status of warning after the team's report. The ACCJC again requested a follow up visit focused on four of the previous recommendations. In addition to the four that the Commission selected, the College also requested that two additional ones be reviewed, thus making a total of six of the original recommendations to be reviewed. The six recommendations reviewed during this follow up visit will be outlined below.

Recommendation 2: ...the College move towards a fully interactive distance education platform that includes regular and effective instructor contact, and documentation of that contact. (II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d)

Recommendation 3: ...the College must act immediately to:

- Complete and document all student learning outcomes (SLOs) for all courses and programs (II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e, II.B .4)
- Distribute the student learning outcomes (SLOs) to students (II.A.6)
- Distribute the student learning outcomes (SLOs) to adjunct faculty (I.B.5)
- Document assessment at all levels of outcomes, including course, program, core competencies (I.B.7, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e, II.B.4)
- Document improvement in student learning (II.A.1.c, II.B.4)
- Link evidence of student learning outcome (SLO) assessment to planning and resource allocation (I.B, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, III.D.3).

Recommendation 4: ...the institution develop appropriate planning documents to integrate institutional planning efforts: a) Strategic Plan; b)

Human Resources Staffing Plan; c) Facilities Master Plan; Professional Development Plan (I.B.3, III.A.5.a, III.A.5.b, III.A.6, III.B).

Recommendation 6: ...the College establish a cycle to systematically review and update Board policies and administrative procedures (IV.A, IV.B).

Recommendation 9: ...the College review all contracts to ensure that they are in alignment with the College's mission and goals (III.D.2.f).

Recommendation 13: ...the College strengthen its ability to implement, document and evaluate its plans to support ongoing and systematic dialog about institutional effectiveness (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5).

A three member team comprised of members from the original visit, visited Barstow College for this follow up review. The team included: Dr. Roger Schultz, team chair, Mrs. Beth Gomez, and Mrs. Rebecca Teague. The purpose of the team's visit was to again assess and validate the College's follow-up report and progress in addressing the deficiencies and meeting the standards of the focused recommendations. These included Recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 13. Barstow College requested the visiting team review Recommendations 6 and 9 as well, since they felt their progress in these critical areas was also complete at this time. The visit took place on March 25 and 26, 2014.

The current team was impressed at the tremendous progress the College had made since the last follow up visit, less than a year ago. Under the leadership of the new CEO, there is clearly a new culture that is emerging that has the campus engaged in robust dialog about not only meeting the standards, but being a highly effective institution that is committed to continuous and sustained quality improvement. The College staff and leadership should be commended for their dramatic improvement and changes that have been implemented and achieved in such a short period of time.

The following pages contain a more detailed listing of each recommendation, the findings and evidence related to that recommendation, and the resulting assessment and conclusion.

Discussion of the College Responses to the Team Recommendations

Recommendation 2: In order to meet the standards and address the previous recommendation, and to meet the U.S.D.E. regulatory requirements for distance education, the team recommends that the College move towards a fully interactive distance education platform that includes regular and effective contact, and documentation of that contact (II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d).

Findings and Evidence

1. Movement toward a fully interactive distance education platform

The College faculty and staff have made tremendous progress on this recommendation and have successfully implemented a fully interactive distance education platform. This initiative was broadly supported by administration, faculty, including a dedicated faculty distance education coordinator, as well as technology support staff. The focused effort allowed the College to successfully implement the Moodle learning platform, a recognized industry leader in learning platforms, to replace the prior home-grown system in a compressed time frame.

Although the implementation period was aggressive and spanned less than a year, the Spring 2014 term the College showed a 100% adoption of the new Moodle platform for all classes being offered. Also impressive was the number of faculty, 49, that had taken some degree of Moodle training. Faculty and staff interviewed commented on how smooth the rapid transition was to the new platform and that there were no significant challenges reported. Now that the College is beyond the initial implementation phase, they will follow an assessment plan they have established for distance education classes to ensure systematic evaluation and identifying ways to improve upon the delivery and instruction with this new platform.

2. Regular and effective instructor contact and documentation of that Contact

With the successful implementation of the Moodle Platform for distance education classes, the College and faculty were able to take advantage of the robust communication tools associated with it. Among the Moodle tools is a rich array of communication options for faculty to use with students, as well as data collection, monitoring and reporting capabilities. Interviews with distance education faculty, administration and support staff showed that

they appreciate the new tools and how it facilitates and supports the faculty member's ability to regularly and effectively interact and communicate with students in distance education courses.

A random audit of recently completed and currently active online distance education courses verified that not only did the capability exist, but that faculty are engaged in timely and substantive communications with students in the learning environment using the multiple Moodle tools. It was clear from the audit of these courses that faculty were engaging in regular and effective contact, and staff were able to demonstrate the ease and richness of the reporting and monitoring capabilities of the new Moodle system. Sample reports were created for the team to review the level and frequency of student interaction.

Expectations for faculty to engage in regular and effective contact with their distance education students are communicated in multiple ways including meetings, the *Faculty Handbook*, and *Web Guidelines and Procedures* publications. Further, faculty have established a *Regular and Effective Contact Rubric* that utilizes multiple criteria to rate a faculty member's level of student interaction, ranging from "Excellent" to "Needs Improvement". These strategies and actions taken by the College have yielded great results, ensuring regular interaction between faculty and their online students, as the review of the evidence and courses demonstrated. The College clearly has addressed this area of the recommendation.

Conclusion

The team believes that the College has made significant progress in addressing this recommendation and the standard. The College has successfully implemented a sophisticated and fully interactive learning management system that enables regular and effective contact between distance education faculty and their students. This new platform also provides reporting and monitoring tools to compile data to assess the levels of faculty and student interaction. Based on the evidence of all that the College has done over the last year the team believes that the College has fully addressed this recommendation and now meets this standard.

Recommendation #3: In order to meet the standard and achieve the commission's requirements for implementation of learning outcomes

assessment for 2012, the team recommends that the College must act immediately to:

a. Complete and document all student learning outcomes (SLOs) for all courses and programs

Barstow College has continued to use its curriculum development process to update and revise course outlines to include student learning outcomes. Much of this work had been completed by Barstow College during the previous follow-up evaluation team site visit. Based on interviews with faculty and staff, all courses and programs that are taught at the College have documented student learning outcomes. Barstow has also completed learning outcomes for non-instructional areas including Administrative Services and Student Services.

The College has begun to transition from a pen/paper approach to documenting student learning outcomes in an electronic and online system (Tracdat). The College is in the early stages of the migration to the new system; however, Barstow College has plans to use Tracdat to support all assessment and program review data at the institution.

b. Distribute the student learning outcomes (SLOs) to students

Barstow College continues to distribute student learning outcomes to students primarily through course syllabi for each course. All faculty are required to outline the course learning outcomes on the course syllabi per the Faculty Handbook. The Office of Instruction and the Faculty SLO Coordinator confirm whether faculty have correctly outlined the SLOs on the course syllabi. Specifically, the SLO Coordinator reviews the information posted on the course syllabi and compares the learning outcomes that are currently posted in CurricuNet to ensure that faculty are utilizing the most current and accurate student learning outcomes. Evidence of this within the course syllabi have demonstrated that faculty have complied with this requirement.

Additionally, faculty reported that students are made aware of the student learning outcomes via a physical posting on classroom walls. Many classrooms are used primarily for a single discipline and/or program and therefore have the capability of posting information pertaining to that specific program on the classroom walls. Faculty indicated that course

learning outcomes are located on posters within classrooms for students to review.

c. Distribute the student learning outcomes (SLOs) to adjunct faculty

The Team found that the College distributes the student learning outcomes to adjunct faculty through the course outlines of record. Each semester the adjunct faculty are provided copies of the course outlines of record prior to teaching their assigned course. Additionally, training is provided to adjunct faculty in a variety of capacities to ensure that they have access to the student learning outcome and assessment information. Specifically, Barstow College provides training during the Saturday Mentoring sessions where all faculty, including adjuncts, are invited to participate in training. Monthly CTE meetings are also held and adjunct faculty are provided with information pertaining to student learning outcomes and assessment. Due to the high percentage of online programming taking place at Barstow College, the institution has made a conscious effort to outreach to faculty beyond the face-to-face modality. Presentations are posted on the college website and are also available through CCCConfer so that faculty off-site have an opportunity to participate in trainings and discussions, and provide feedback regarding student learning outcomes. Basic Skills instructors are also provided one-on-one training, given templates, and sample syllabi to utilize. Overall the institution tries to provide support and resources to the field (adjunct and full-time) so that the instructors are provided clear guidance regarding their role in student learning outcome and assessment processes.

Although formal assessment and evaluation of this distribution process has yet to be completed, it appears that the current method for distribution of student learning outcomes to adjunct faculty has been effective. There are currently 105 adjunct faculty hired by Barstow College and based on the report from the College, 97 adjunct faculty have participated in development and assessment of student learning outcomes. This represents approximately 92.3% of the adjunct faculty participating in student learning outcomes and assessment.

d. Document assessment at all levels of outcomes, including course, program, core competencies

Assessment is an institutionalized process at Barstow College. Student learning outcomes are assessed at all levels of the institution: course level, program level, and institutional core competencies. The institution has completed mapping of course, program and core competencies to ensure assessment is taking place and is documented at all levels of learning outcomes.

Templates and forms have been developed and utilized over several planning cycles since the full accreditation visit in 2012 that document and report assessment results and plans for improvements. The assessment reports are comprehensive and include critical information related to course data, assessment methodologies, linkages to core competencies, analysis of results, and description of improvement plans that are based on the assessment results. The assessment reports are posted on the website and within internal network drives; however it is the intention of the institution to use Tracdat to host all of the assessment reports. The template and forms were recently modified, vetted, and approved by the academic senate to ensure a seamless transition to the Tracdat system.

e. Document improvements in student learning

Evidence to support and document improvements in student learning at Barstow College were found in several institutional structures and processes including: assessment reports completed by program faculty, comprehensive program reviews, and budget allocation requests. Currently the institution manually collects this information and posts the results on its website and/or internal network drives; however, Barstow College plans to fully migrate to the newly purchased Tracdat system allowing the College to better collect, track, and analyze trend data to provide additional evidence to support improvements in student learning.

f. Link evidence of student learning outcome (SLO) assessment to planning and resource allocation

Barstow College has made significant progress in linking evidence of student learning outcome assessment at the course level to its planning and resource allocation model. Specifically, the institution documents assessment results in both the assessment reports and program review. Information and data gathered and analyzed within the program review process is used to

drive changes in pedagogy, curriculum, assessment methods, and planning as evidenced by the assessment reports.

As departments develop program goals based on assessment and course-related data contained within the program review, they submit Budget Allocation Proposals which are then reviewed and ranked by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The IEC ranks the requests based on the budget request's linkage to outcome assessment results documented within the assessment reports and program review.

Changes related to improving the program review process have occurred including lengthening the timeline for submission of program review so that the vice presidents can assist in strengthening the linkages to the strategic priorities. Trainings for faculty have also been held to improve their ability to utilize assessment results to drive proposals for new budget allocation requests. Barstow College also created a program review handbook in the summer of 2013 to assist faculty in developing meaningful outcomes that link resource requests to student improvement and learning needs identified through learning outcome assessment results.

Given the relative newness of the resource allocation and planning model, the institution has yet to fully evaluate and assess the efficacy of the planning linkages to ensure that student learning has in fact been improved.

Conclusion

The Team found that Barstow College has made significant progress in ensuring that each of the sub-categories within this recommendation has been resolved.

- Student learning outcomes are defined and developed at the course, program, and institutional level for both instructional and non-instructional units and divisions.
- The institution has also sustained efforts to ensure that both students and associate faculty are engaged in the student learning outcomes and assessment process at the College by creating institutional practices for distribution of learning outcome information to each specific constituent group.
- Assessment is taking place on a regular, systematic basis at the course, program and institution (core competencies) through the mapping of each level.

- Documentation of the assessment results and improvements in student learning are collected within assessment reports, program review and linked to resource allocation and planning models.

Although the institution has resolved this recommendation, it has not had adequate time nor cycle iterations to evaluate or assess its processes and practices to ensure effectiveness. Many of the College's processes are newly minted and therefore need additional time to close-the-loop and complete a full cycle. However it should be acknowledged that the College does have detailed outlines of that assessment process and associated activity timelines that they have met to this point and are on track to complete.

The Team is confident that the College will continue to sustain these continuous quality improvement efforts in the future given the commitment and dedication by the institution, its leadership, faculty and staff. The Team believes that the migration to Tracdat will significantly aid in the College's ability to collect, track and analyze data over time and will support the institution's ability to document improvements in student learning.

The team believes that the College meets this standard.

Recommendation 4: In order to fully meet the standards, the team recommends that the institution develop appropriate planning documents to integrate institutional planning efforts: a) Strategic Plan; b) Human Resources Staffing Plan; c) Facilities Master Plan; d) Professional Development Plan (I.B.3, III.A.5a, III.A.5b, III.A.6, IIIB).

Findings and Evidence

1. Develop appropriate planning documents to integrate institutional planning efforts.

The team found that the College has communicated and documented its planning processes by the creation of a flow chart that illustrates and communicates the flow of communication, approval process, timeline of assessment, and decision making as it relates to the College's planning documents.

This flow chart begins with the planning documents: Facilities Plan, Strategic Plan, Human Resources Staffing Plan, Professional Development Plan and

Technology Plan. Each of these plans has the timeline of review delineated in the flow chart as well as the shared governance committee which has the primary responsibility for review of the plan. Review of the plans commences with the primary committee and then onto the President's Shared Governance Council, Academic Senate, All College Council with recommendation to the President's Executive Cabinet and approval by the Board of Trustees.

2. Strategic Plan.

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Strategic Plan. The committee is currently working on an annual assessment of the Strategic Plan this Spring 2014. Each spring they will review the strategic plan to determine the progress that has been made relative to each institutional priority and goal. The status update report will provide the progress made to date on the original strategic plan. A report will be generated and submitted/distributed through the shared governance process. Plans for evaluation/assessment of the strategic plan have not been formalized.

3. Facilities Master Plan.

The Facilities and Safety Committee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Facilities Master Plan. The plan was updated in February of 2013 which in turn necessitated a need for the College to amend their budget allocation requests. This was necessary to include a component to identify space use and allocation needs. As part of the assessment of this process, it was determined that there is a further need for the College to amend their facilities plan to address staffing needs to inform the College staffing plan. The committee is currently working on an annual assessment of the Facilities Master Plan this Fall 2014. Each fall they will review the plan to determine space needs and the potential for any reallocation of existing space. A report will be generated and submitted/distributed through the shared governance process.

4. Professional Development Plan

The Staff Development and Excellence Recognition Committee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Professional Development Plan. The plan was developed by needs identified by College constituents through a survey that was conducted in January 2013. The committee completed the

Professional Development Plan which provides employees opportunities for personal and professional growth. The committee is currently working on an annual assessment and evaluation of the Professional Development Plan this Fall 2014. Each fall they will review the plan to coordinate efforts and facilitate opportunities for professional development for staff. An annual report on professional development activities will be generated and submitted/distributed through the shared governance process.

5. Human Resources Staffing Plan

The Staff Development and Excellence Recognition Committee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Human Resources Staffing Plan. The long-range staffing needs of the College are quantified and procedures are outlined in the process for the creation of new positions and filling vacant positions. The Committee receives information from the Institutional Effectiveness Committee on trends in staffing and staff requests from the annual program review process in consideration of meeting College program and service needs. The committee is currently working on an annual assessment and evaluation of the Human Resources Staffing Plan this Fall 2014. Each fall they will review the plan to ensure that it accurately reflects the shared governance planning process and that data is used in hiring decisions. An annual report on staffing decisions will be generated and submitted/distributed through the shared governance process.

Throughout the past year, the College developed and implemented plans for strategic planning, facilities, professional development, and staffing. These plans have been integrated into the College's planning processes. Review and monitoring of the plans will be done systematically through the various shared governance committees and are scheduled to be evaluated and assessed on an annual basis.

Conclusion

The team believes that the College has made significant progress on addressing this Recommendation and meets the standard. The College has identified their formal planning documents to address the strategic, facilities, staff development, facilities and staffing needs. The College is on the verge of the first complete annual assessment cycle of the plans. It is clear that the College is committed to evaluating and assessing their planning processes. The College's commitment to an integrated system of planning

and evaluation and assessment of their plans guarantee that the College's efforts in this area will continue.

Recommendation 6: In order to fully meet the standard, the team recommends that the College establish a cycle to systematically review and update Board policies and administrative procedures (IV.A, IV.B).

Findings and Evidence

In establishing a cycle to review and update board and administrative policies, the College sought the input of faculty, staff and administrators in their respective areas of expertise. Proposed changes to existing policies were processed through the college shared governance committees for review and input. Public reading of the changes were submitted to Academic Senate and forwarded onto Executive Cabinet for review and approval. Recommendations on changes were then forwarded to the Board of Trustees for subsequent public readings and approval.

A formal cycle of review has been established on a three-year timeline. The College has demonstrated the review by documenting and tracking their progress. Two chapters per year are being reviewed and this timeline has been formally adopted in Administrative Procedure 2410. The College has made significant progress within their cycle and review of all the policies should take place within their prescribed timeline. To insure a timely and thorough review, the College is aligning their review with the Community College League of California (CCLC) recommended changes annually. As other issues may arise with regards to existing policies and procedures, review may take place outside of the prescribed timelines.

Conclusion

The team believes that the College has addressed this Recommendation and now meets the standards. The College has established a cycle to systematically review and update Board policies and administrative procedures.

Recommendation 9: In order to fully meet the standards, the team recommends that the College review all contracts to ensure that they are in alignment with the College's mission and goals. (IIID.2.f).

Findings and Evidence

Many of the existing contracts for the College are in the area of Workforce and Economic Development. All contracts are reviewed and approved by the Vice President of Administrative Services.

To ensure that all contracts are consistent with the College's mission and goals, a checklist was developed that accompanies each contract for signature. The checklist requires that each contract demonstrate alignment with the mission statement and to at least one of the Board goals and one strategic priority. The Vice President of Administrative Services reviews the documentation and processes the contract for signature.

Conclusion

The team believes that the College has addressed this Recommendation and now meets the standards. The College has established a procedure to ensure that all contracts are in alignment with the College's mission and goals.

Recommendation #13: In order to meet fully meet the standards, the team recommends that the College strengthen its ability to implement, document, and evaluate its plans to support ongoing and systematic dialog about institutional effectiveness.

The College has formalized its communication structure through the development of a new Strategic Planning and Communication Process. The process was developed through a shared participatory governance structure with vetting by the various participatory governance committees. The Strategic Planning and Communication Process is delineated in a communication and information flowchart that highlights inputs, outputs, and feedback loops through the planning models, institutional shared governance committees, governing leadership bodies (Academic Senate, Management Council, President's Council), with through-puts to the President, Cabinet and Board of Trustees.

To ensure adequate representation by all constituent groups in this new communication structure, the President/Superintendent requested that each participatory governance committee review its purpose statement, committee description, and review membership representation to assure that communication of ideas, planning and decisions are shared in a consistent manner.

Based on evidence and interviews, it is clear that the institution is utilizing focused and strategic opportunities to encourage dialog regarding institutional effectiveness. In particular, the use of all-college meetings that are held monthly aim to create an institutional forum for faculty, staff, and classified participation in discussions regarding planning, professional development, and trainings.

An example of the success of this new communication structure was the development of the institutional values. The values were discussed during several all-college meetings wherein an affinity diagram was developed to summarize the consistent value terms that were discussed by faculty. The all-college meetings have been the method by which the College campus is engaged in continuous, systematic and ongoing dialog. External experts have also been invited to come and present to the all-college meetings as needed (fire department/seizures example). Faculty who have traveled to conferences and want to present the information can do so as well during the all-college meetings. Student success initiatives have also been presented. Updates are provided at all-college meetings regarding accreditation. The policies and procedures updates were also discussed during the all-college meetings.

The all-college meetings have been met with enthusiasm by College constituents. Several interviewees shared how the all-college meetings have been revitalized to be meaningful opportunities for dialog and discussion about institutional effectiveness. Faculty and staff are supportive of the all-college meetings and appear to provide an opportunity for collaborative and collegial discussion to take place regarding institutional planning and improvements.

The all-college meetings are essentially open forums where faculty and staff have the opportunity to design the agenda and discussion topics. The proposed agenda items are sent out to the field for feedback and input. Anyone is allowed to place items on the agenda for consideration. The all-

college meeting agendas are developed through the shared governance structure where topics for agenda items are forwarded to the President/Superintendent. The all-college meetings have consistently been engaging approximately 40-50 faculty/staff, which is a significant improvement from previous all-college meetings that boasted a meager attendance of 10-15 faculty and staff. Faculty and staff interviewed believe that this revitalization is partly due to the type of collegial, open, transparent and collaborative environment fostered by the new President/Superintendent. The College leadership is being extremely intentional with the types of items placed on the agenda to garner excitement, enthusiasm and solicit real feedback and input from the field. Based on interviews, the agenda items are meaningful and critical topics that many faculty and staff are motivated to openly discuss and review. This is partly due to the fact that many of the agenda items are spurred from a bottom-up approach where the field feels empowered to participate in college-wide discussion. Faculty and staff reported that the all-college meetings no longer have a top-down approach where faculty are being lectured to on topics not of their choosing, but rather this dialog has shifted to a forum that invites and engages faculty and staff into a broader institutional discussion.

Meeting agendas and minutes are consistently disseminated, recorded and published online so that individuals that are unable to participate can still become aware of the topics that were discussed. This is critical given that over 50% of the programming at Barstow College is online making face-to-face attendance challenging for some. For those able to participate in the all-college meetings, attendance is recorded.

This method for institutional dialog is still a relatively new process having only begun to gain traction since August 2013. Based on minutes of the all-college meetings it appears that meetings have taken place monthly on a consistent basis.

Conclusion:

The Team believes that the College has made significant progress regarding the implementation of this recommendation and meets the standard. Given the time since the last follow up visit, the College has provided ample evidence and support that the College has been committed to ensuring that institutional dialog is systematic and ongoing. The College continues to

increase the opportunities for enhanced dialog about institutional effectiveness. Through the new Strategic Planning and Communication process, the College has clearly delineated and defined mechanisms for dialog at all levels of the planning process and models.

Given that this model for institutional dialog is in its infancy, the effectiveness of this new strategy has not been yet been fully evaluated or assessed. The Team is confident that the College will be able to close-the-loop on this process given additional time to finalize a cycle of implementation and engage faculty and staff in a discussion regarding the effectiveness of this new model. With the tremendous progress that has been made and by continuing to follow their established process and timelines for assessment activities the College has demonstrated that it has met this standard.