

**Fullerton College Program Review Committee
Final Report on Fall 2011 Program Reviews
20-April 2012**

Introduction

The members of the Program Review Committee have finished reading, analyzing, and discussing fifty program review self-studies submitted by Fullerton College academic programs. Every academic department filled out a reporting form that asked departments to state their relationship to the College's mission, analyze Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), describe the status of SLO assessment, examine their strengths and weaknesses, set short and long-term goals, and make resource requests based on the data analysis in the previous sections. The twofold responsibility of the Program Review Committee was to: 1.) identify common themes in the fifty reports and 2.) comment on each report's coherence, especially in regard to requests for resources. This final report will identify the common themes and also includes in the appendices lists of program goals and resources. A further description of these portions of the document occurs later in the report. Separately, the Committee will provide individualized feedback to each of the fifty academic departments. This feedback, called the Readers' Report Form, will give each program constructive criticism of their report. It also allows each program to submit additional material or explanations to accompany this year's report in a permanent file.

Common Themes

Student Learning Outcomes. The program review self-studies revealed a great deal of variation across the campus with respect to SLOs. Almost all programs reported emplacement of course-level SLOs and methods for assessing them. A slightly smaller number reported that they have assessed all of their courses. Less than half the departments appear to have “closed the loop” on SLOs. To do this, a department must have SLOs in place, must complete assessments of them, must discuss the assessment results among all department faculty members, and must implement changes to course curricula and instructional methods that data from the assessment results suggest will improve student learning. Several departments have closed this loop at least once, but many more have yet to do so. Some of them said that Spring 2012 was their target date for loop-closing, even though the College’s target date for this was Fall 2011.

The program review report form also asked departments about their progress in creating Program-level Learning Outcomes. Most departments said that they were working on them, but also asked for additional explanation about how the process will work and what exactly constitutes a Program-level Learning Outcome, as opposed to a course-level SLO.

Student pathfinding. Several academic departments reported that they have plans to assist students in navigating the program, degree, and/or certificate. Students need help signing up for courses in a logical sequence that builds toward their goal. Just telling students to read the College Catalog does not seem to be working for all

students. Faculty members have many ideas for student pathfinding, including first-week orientations, on-line advising tools, and better coordination between academic departments and the Counseling Department.

Support needed for data analysis. Faculty members expressed some frustrations with the analysis called for by the program review form. Key Performance Indicators (KPI), such as success and retention rates, can vary greatly from one program to the next and from one year to the next. It is difficult to explain such variations with rigorous analysis. Several factors exogenous to the classroom can play a role in whether a student finishes and passes a class. The KPI data appeared to provoke discussions among faculty members, which is one valuable part of doing program review. But the KPI data themselves do not tell complete story of each program's last five years.

In addition, the KPI data did not tell faculty very much about what happened to students after they took our classes. Transfer rates and degree completion numbers were not as readily available as Weekly Student Contact Hours and Full-Time Equivalent Students. The College's Office of Institutional Research clearly needs help—more funding and a larger staff—to generate applicable data such as transfers and comparative student success rates. For example, how many students who pass Math also pass Physics? This would be useful information for both departments. How many students who fail English 100 also fail Political Science 100? If program review and resource allocation is going to be based on data such as KPIs and transfer rates, then the College must furnish the program review authors with data that can support a robust

analysis and support an understanding of how this data can and should be used. Just counting warm chairs is not enough.

New full-time faculty. This was the most frequently requested resource request, appearing in 26 of the 50 self-studies. Some programs requested more than one. The committee inserted the amount \$76,496 as the base-cost of a full-time faculty hire. Actual cost will depend on each individual's step and column placement. The total requested amount exceeded \$2.3M.

Computer replacement / repair / upgrade. There were 26 departments requesting computer improvements, ranging from a new Mac Lab (starting at \$100,000) to updating existing software or software licenses (starting at \$500). Building a new computer lab is a major decision that affects many parts of the College. Departments requesting a computer lab should make a special effort to link this request to a tangible effect on student learning. The Committee urges the College to adopt a funded Technology Replacement Plan to handle computer requests in a systematic, cost-effective manner that avoids duplication of effort and expense.

Supplemental instruction / tutoring. Although these two terms do not necessarily mean the same thing, the Committee saw them as similar in cost and effect on student learning. Nine of the fifty self-studies made a strong case that SI / tutoring will increase

retention and success rates. The Committee sees these requests as viable solutions to real problems and recommends funding these requests.

Restoring lost courses or sections. Many reports indicated that students are having a difficult time registering for courses and completing programs because budget cuts have reduced class offerings. The Committee commented on restoration requests, but also noted that divisions receive an allocation of instructor units and have internal processes for determining how many sections to offer of which classes. Through shared governance faculty can advocate for changes in the allocation.

Classroom space. At least eleven of the fifty programs made requests for new classrooms, modification of existing rooms, or restoration of a room to its previous status. Departments should link this request to a tangible effect on student learning, and they should also work with their division dean to advance their proposals for additional classroom space.

Marketing and outreach. Five programs identified a need to advertise their programs to the student body and the larger community. Outreach includes announcing class offerings, advertising special events and performances, targeted recruitment of students, and publicizing new transfer degrees.

Legal requirements / advisory committee recommendations. Three programs made requests for resources based on a legal mandate, such as a license to grant certificates. Two requests involved compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, one was following the advice of the program’s professional advisory committee, and another was a need for certification from a national organization. The Committee supports these requests.

Problems with building renovations. Several programs noted that relocating to temporary quarters during renovation caused several problems that adversely affected instruction. Occasionally, renovated buildings and even brand new buildings were the source of problems.

Distance Education. A number of departments noted the rapid growth of enrollment in on-line courses over the past five years. For the most part, programs reported that students enrolled in DE courses had lower retention and success rates than did students enrolled in on-campus classes. This common theme suggests that departments should use great care when deciding which of their courses to offer on-line.

Resource Requests

In their program review reports, departments made a total of 198 requests for resources, totaling over \$9.5M. The requests are listed in a spreadsheet appendix to this document. The Committee discussed each request at length. A “yes” endorsement

indicates that the Committee found that the data analysis and narrative explanation in the report made the request reasonable. The reports varied in length and quality and there was no “secret answer” that automatically resulted in a “yes” from the Committee. Some reports made requests that will directly improve student learning. Other reports made requests that will address a looming threat to the program. The Committee’s “yes” endorsement distinguishes well-grounded resource requests from “wish lists,” i.e. resource requests that would undoubtedly improve the program, but did not appear to derive from the earlier data analysis and narrative sections of the report. The Committee’s “yes” endorsement of a resource request in no way guarantees that the request will be funded, but it does give added weight to the request in the College’s shared governance process. Even if a request did not receive a “yes,” or will not receive funding in 2011-2012, departments may submit the same request in their next program review reports and justify them by clearly showing a linkage from their stated goals to an improvement in student learning, and by explaining how their resource request will support these plans.

The Program Review Committee recognizes that 2011-12 is the beginning of a revised process of program review at Fullerton College. Although program review has happened in the past, this year inaugurates a concerted effort to link program review to budget decisions. This is a new process for all involved, and its imperfections are starting to reveal themselves. For example, the program review form did not give departments enough guidance about making a resource request. It was difficult to categorize some requests, which in some cases resulted in subjective coding. The

Committee had to make some judgment calls. The dollar amounts in the appendix are not as accurate as they could be, because some department provided no cost estimates for their resource requests.

Another apparent misunderstanding came in making the link between data analysis and resource requests. Some departments did not make a strong link, which caused their resource requests to read as after-the-fact wish-lists rather than targeted proposals that would have a direct impact on student learning.

Despite all these imperfections, some data is better than no data, and the data in the appendix provides College decision-makers with clear options for how to allocate this year's available funds. Simply going with the most-requested items does not provide useful guidance because the most-requested item was to hire full-time faculty members. Twenty-six programs made this request, totaling more than \$2.3M of annual costs. Funding these requests might not be a prudent decision in the current budget climate. Decision-makers should search for resource requests that will make a tangible improvement in student learning and also distribute the funds to a wide variety of departments.

Below are estimates of how much was requested in various categories. Coding each request to a specific category was sometimes a matter of interpretation. For example, Physical Education requested 19 assistant coaches. The Committee placed that request under "Adult hourly" instruction, but the request could conceivably fall under "Tutoring." There was also occasional overlap between two categories. For

example, requests for a new computer lab involved both “Equipment” and “Facilities.”

For more details on the nature of each request, see the spreadsheet in the appendix.

Category	Total requested amount	Amount endorsed by Committee
Full-time faculty	\$2,372,105	\$1,616,320
Part-time faculty	\$171,073	\$144,573
Classified staff	\$350,516	\$278,516
Professional expert	\$28,600	\$19,000
Student hourly	\$18,340	\$7,840
Tutoring	\$47,190	\$7,840
Supplemental instr.	\$41,480	\$33,480
Equipment	\$2,542,048	\$1,621,848
Computer	\$1,572,200	\$710,200
Facilities	\$4,062,500	\$2,893,000
Staff development	\$91,640	\$76,640
Marketing	\$29,350	\$26,340
Special projects	\$55,500	\$7,000
ADA /advisory	\$45,000	\$45,000
Other	0 (no est. given)	0
Totals	\$9,583,152	\$6,429,850

The charts on the following pages list every resource request made in the program review reports, along with a “yes” if the Committee endorsed a request. After the resource request list, there is a list of two-year and six-year goals identified by each department. The list of goals will be a useful resource for the next round of program reviews and for use by others in the development or updating of planning and budgeting documents.