Instructional Program Review
American River College
2015 - 2016

Instructional Area: Presidential Services

Department: Planning, Research, and Technology

Discipline: Research Office

Submitted: Friday, March 4, 2016
Mission Statement

Over the last six years, please describe how your program has supported the College’s mission as shown above.

ARC’s Office of Institutional Research supports planning and decision making processes at a variety of levels across the college and for all constituent groups and in this way supports many elements of the college’s mission. Specifically, it supports the college’s mission in the following ways:

- Institutional Planning: training and support for the Educational Master Plan (EMP), Program Review, and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
- Providing representation on committees
- Assisting with Workforce Development Perkins quarterly reporting
- Disproportionate Impact Analysis
- Monitoring High School transitions
- Student Equity and SSSP
- Surveys (post-grad, employment)
- Monitoring of Basic Skills enrollments, placements, and performance
- Monitoring external accountability measures (ScoreCard, IEPI, ISS)
- Accreditation
- Ad-Hoc Research
- Monitoring internal accountability measures (KEIs, Awards, Transfers)
- Assessment/Prerequisite Validation
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
- Grant support

Stated Outcomes and Recommendations from Previous Program Reviews

Recommendation from Previous Program Review Report

Were the previous program review outcomes, addressing strengths, achieved and how did these outcomes improve student learning?

The previous program review outcomes addressing strengths, as noted below, have been met. The “5-year database” outcome required modification. The research office is now using the District’s SQL tables which are available going back far more than five years (through Summer 2002).

A variety of enrollment and performance oriented statistics are provided at various levels of detail specifically aimed at supporting EMP and Program Review planning processes, as well as for Perkins reporting and in support of numerous college initiatives (e.g., student equity, SSSP).

The college-wide SLO Assessment process has been modified. The Research Office facilitated the transition from the student self-assessment surveys to the Authentic Assessment Review Records.

5-year db: To update and maintain a five-year database of all institutional measurements crucial to our
Reporting structures. Continued efforts to convert and validate PeopleSoft data.

**Focused Data:** College efforts directed at improving student success and persistence by providing timely and focused data to support planning. Perkins reporting and EMP training

**SLO Assessment:** To facilitate assessment of SLOs in the classroom by participating in discussions at both the college and district level about SLO and the best way to assess.

Were the previous program review outcomes, addressing challenges, achieved and how did these outcomes improve student learning?

Classroom Based Research has occurred for both English and Math as part of Student Equity based research.

For SLO Assessment, instructor confidentiality and data integrity have remained a top priority for the AARR process.

**Classroom Based Research:** To facilitate classroom assessments of teaching and learning.

**SLO Assessment:** Effectively coordinate the course SLO assessment process. Keeping instructor confidentiality and data integrity the top priority while making the process easier.

Were the previous program review outcomes, addressing SLOs, achieved and how did these outcomes improve student learning?

For SLO Assessment, instructor confidentiality and data integrity have remained a top priority for the AARR process.

**SLO Assessment:** Effectively coordinate the course SLO assessment process. Keeping instructor confidentiality and data integrity the top priority while making the process easier.

**Analysis of Data: A 6 Year Reflection**

**Student Enrollments and Characteristics**

After each data set below, provide a narrative reflection about the significance of the data for the program for the past five years. Includes the following sections:

- Provide a brief narrative that describes the services provided.

  To support ARC’s varied information needs, the research office provides a wide range of services which include but are not limited to the following.

  - Expertise/Consultation (e.g., how to assess effectiveness, evaluation methodologies, survey design)
  
  - Data analysis and reporting tailored to specific needs and requirements (e.g., Accreditation, SLO Assessment, Grant Applications, College and District initiatives, College and Department/Program planning processes, prerequisite validation, assessment validation, Student Equity and SSSP, enrollment management)
  
  - Survey development, implementation, analysis, reporting, and presentation using specialized survey tools
  
  - Training (workshops) for employees’ use of web-based planning systems (e.g., EMP, Program Review, SLO)
  
  - Real time database querying in support of Ad-hoc research requests
  
  - Providing contact lists to support the work of other units
  
  - Serve as members of various College and District committees

- Describe how the program specifically serves students, faculty and staff.
ARC’s research office supports the planning and decision making needs of all constituent groups across the college as noted below.

**Students:** Support is provided to students in the way of: Survey development, analysis and reporting in support of Student Government’s information needs and initiatives; Providing support for Student Services (DSPS, First-Year Experience)

**Faculty:** In addition to providing an array of reports aimed specifically at supporting instructional departments’ planning needs (e.g., EMP, Program Review), the research office provides considerable ad-hoc reports for Department Chairs and faculty about their departments. In order to serve the needs of individual faculty members, the research office provides, by request, various reports that reflect specific course enrollment and performance (e.g., performance of a given instructor’s courses with the average of all other faculty members’ sections of the same course; the progression rate and success at the next course level of a given faculty members’ students).

**Staff:** Support is provided to staff in the way of: Training for web-based unit planning processes (e.g., EMP and Program Review); Survey development, analysis and reporting.

- Program Utilization: How many students were served or used program?

Research office utilization is measured primarily by the requests cleared through the office’s web-based research request system. The following table shows the number of research requests submitted, the number completed, and the percent completed for the most recent five calendar years. Note, the number of research requests submitted between 2011 and 2015 reflects an 237% increase (from 43 to 145).

Utilization in the form of completion rates has declined in recent years for two primary reasons. First, between December 2013 and October 2014, the research office underwent a complete staffing turnover (all positions except the 0.6 FTEF faculty research coordinator). Second, the new research team has had an opportunity to rethink how it supports the college, particularly in the statistical methodologies deemed truly meaningful for assessing unit and institutional effectiveness. The result is that some requests have, with the approval of their requestors, purposely been delayed until appropriate tools could be acquired or methodologies developed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Requests Submitted</th>
<th>Requests Completed</th>
<th>% Completed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>145</td>
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<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Learning Reflection**

**Curriculum**

For all programs with degree and certificates: How well do your courses support the program student learning outcomes? How do you know?

N/A

Are students able to complete the courses required for your degrees and/or program in a "normal" timeframe?

N/A

Explain major additions, changes, or deletions to the program's curriculum over the last six years.

N/A
Have all course and program outlines been updated within the last 6 years? N/A

Information Literacy

Information literacy is a college-wide goal. Using the checklist below, how do your courses help students learn to recognize when information is needed and give students the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the needed information? Choose all that apply.

- Lecture, in-class discussions, or activities
- Research-based assignments
- Research workshop(s), led by a librarian or other research specialist
- Online library research guide or instructional video tutorials
- Individual guidance from a librarian or the instructor
- Assigned readings or other course materials
- Other

☐ Does not apply

List the courses in your discipline that include the components identified above.
(example: ENGWR 300, STAT 300)

N/A

If the questions above do not pertain to your discipline, please explain why your discipline does not include components of information literacy in your program.

N/A

This question is for English, ESL, and Business only (i.e. departments fulfilling ARC General Education Requirement II-A, CSU GE Pattern A-2, and IGETC Pattern A-1). How are information literacy skills evaluated in your program?

N/A

Student Success

After each data set provide a narrative reflection about the significance of the data for its programs for the past five years.

Provide a short, written reflection for the following sections:

- Describe how the program or service needs are addressed (how the program/service accomplishes what it's supposed to do.)

  The research team assesses how it accomplishes what it's supposed to do by the extent to which it clears requests submitted through the web-based research request system, is able to meet emergency requests for information, administer training satisfaction surveys, and is able to maintain the rapport and trust of those individuals requesting research office support.

- How effective are your current methods/procedures? What is working well, and how do you know? What needs improvement and why? Explain

  Current measures of effectiveness include 1) the office’s completion rate, clearing more than 90% of the requests received over the last five years, 2) the excellent rapport and trust it maintains with its “clients,” and 3) a strong, albeit informal, sense of stakeholder (requestor) satisfaction.

  With regard to what is working well, using a web-based request form has resulted in far fewer
dropped projects and provides an effective way of measuring utilization. The development of a web-based set of “on-demand” reports (supporting primarily program review) served as a proof of concept, the success of which makes clear the value to the institution of such development. That is, automating recurring reporting tasks in this way increases accessibility to information by stakeholders at the same time that it enables the college to make better use of its research staff (minimizes labor intensive and long-term update/maintenance tasks). Last, the collegial and collaborative work environment that now exists in the research office has resulted in open lines of communication between all members of the research team.

Opportunities for improvement have been identified in a few areas. After using the web-based research request system for two years, the research team has discussed the possibility of rethinking some aspects of the form to better align with current processes and initiatives for which research support is needed. There is agreement that the reporting capability developed to provide statistical support for EMP and Program Review should be expanded to include additional performance metrics, to report at lower levels of detail, and to provide additional options for disaggregating the results (e.g., student equity groups).

The research team has discussed the potential value of using a shared application (e.g., MS Project) to better visualize, and communicate to others, both past and future scheduled workload. It has also drawn up a schedule for better disseminating research findings to ARC’s various constituent groups (e.g., a “Stat-of-the-Day” in ARC’s Notes, IR newsletter, “Research Brief,” flex presentations, New Faculty Academy presentations).

In addition, the team has discussed the potential value of developing a mechanism for assessing the satisfaction of the individuals, committees, and groups it supports. Last, while the additional research positions recently funded by SSSP will help the research office address much of what appears in the “challenges” section of this document, the extent to which new legislation and initiatives continue to impact the research function may require additional positions in the not too distant future. As a result, there may be value in monitoring how, and to what extent, other colleges outside of the Los Rios District are building their research capacity to meet these new demands and requirements.

• From the above answers, what did you learn? What changes do you want to make to improve your service?

The research team is considering the following (see additional detail, immediately above).

  • Refinement/editing of some aspects of the web-based research request form to better align with current processes and initiatives for which research support is needed.
  • Redevelop the existing Program Review reporting system to include additional enrollment and performance oriented metrics and to include additional dis-aggregation, to report at lower levels of detail and, perhaps, to better align with the Student Equity and other initiatives.
  • Use of a shared application (e.g., MS Project) to better visualize, and communicate to others, both past and future scheduled workload.
  • Develop a mechanism for assessing the satisfaction of those individuals, committees, and groups the research office supports.
  • Request in the EMP a 50% Clerk III

SLO Assessment

How does your program routinely utilize its student learning outcomes results for program planning/improvements? Explain

N/A

In what ways have your program improvements impacted student learning? How do you do know?
From the above answers, what did you learn? What is working well, and how do you know? What needs improvements and why?

List, as a set of outcomes, the discipline’s plans for continuous quality improvement for student learning outcomes.

SLO Assessment - Support the college’s established authentic assessment strategies for assessing student learning outcomes as appropriate for intended course, program, degree, and institutional learning outcomes.

Distance Education

For every course offered in both Distance Ed and face-to-face formats:

Describe any online or Distance Ed service your program offers?

How effective are your current methods/procedures? What is working well, and how do you know? What needs improvement and why? Explain

In hindsight, did you learn that there were data needs (new and/or improved) which could have better assisted you with this report?

Please describe what your data needs would be for your next program review cycle and you plan to obtain the data

Vocational Programs Only

A. How well does your department prepare student for a job? What are the indicators?

B. Does your program provide any assistance with job placement? If so, describe the activities and include any data you have on results.

What evidence exists that program completers (or near completers) are successful on the job? What, if available, are their beginning salaries?

Findings

Based on the analyses and reflections conducted during the program review precess, answer the following questions:

- What other major developments and accomplishments occurred over the last six years?
  
  Over the last six years, major developments and accomplishments include but are not limited to the following:
  
  - A near complete turnover of staffing between 12/13 and 8/14.
  
  - The office’s web-based research request system was formalized and implemented.
ARC’s data warehouse was redeveloped (from FoxPro to MSSQL) to align with the District Office and all Los Rios sister colleges.

Statistical support was developed for new statewide initiatives (e.g., Student Equity, SSSP).

A proof-of-concept of an On-Demand (dynamic), web-based reporting system was developed (e.g., Program Review reports) and shown to be successful in improving user access to information while also reducing considerably long-term research office maintenance workload that would otherwise have been required. This provides justification for more reporting systems to be developed in this way.

SQL query processes were developed in several instances to embed specific analysis methodologies (e.g., prerequisite validation), thereby obviating the need to perform extensive manipulation in SPSS. This is another example of how additional investment of programming on the front end of a project can reduce significantly the downstream and future effort required to maintain a given reporting process.

The process originally developed for assessing SLOs has changed dramatically over the last six years, moving from the student self-assessment surveys to the Authentic Assessment Review Records (AARR).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the analyses and reflections conducted during the program review process, answer the following questions:

1A. What are the strengths of the program?

The strengths of ARC’s current research team include but are not limited to:

- Considerable expertise in research methodologies, primary and secondary data collection processes including survey design and implementation, evaluation and assessment methods, presentation of findings, and SQL programming and database administration.
- Deep knowledge of, and insight into, educational planning and research topics.
- Very responsive to formal as well as emergency research requests.
- Access to a wide range of existing data (e.g., PeopleSoft, District data warehouse, ARC data warehouse, SARS).
- Team members interact collegially and collaboratively.
- Has developed good rapport with, and earned the trust of its stakeholders.
- Represents the research function and the IR perspective on numerous committees, as well as task force and work groups.
- Benefits from a good working relationship with IT.

1B. List, as a set of recommendations, your plans for maintaining the quality of the instructional program.

Integrated Planning - Ensure that the college’s program review processes are clearly and consistently linked to student learning, institutional planning, and resource allocation processes.

2A. What are the challenges of the program?
The primary challenge the research team faces is staffing and workload prioritization as it relates to balancing the following needs (in no specific order).

- To respond in a timely way to all incoming formal research requests,
- To respond immediately to all emergency research requests,
- To provide timely support for college planning, decision-making, and evaluation processes (e.g., accreditation, program review, unit planning),
- To develop new data collection processes, analysis methodologies, and reports to support new Federal, State, District, or College initiatives (e.g., Student Equity, SSSP, Pathways, Achieving the Dream),
- To be able to invest the additional programming time necessary on the front end of projects to maximize automation and minimize time-consuming downstream maintenance workload,
- To help stakeholder groups better visualize the scheduling of research office workload (e.g., MS Project),
- To assess incoming requests for potential broader benefit to the college beyond that of a given course or department, and to expand development accordingly,
- To fulfill a needed role in project proposal intake processes to facilitate the inclusion in each proposal of both data and evaluation plans/requirements. Later, to assist in analyzing the effectiveness of the approved proposals (e.g., Student Equity, SSSP),
- To provide timely support for an increasing number of grant proposal submissions,
- To respond to legislative and other compliance oriented mandates for data sets and analyses (e.g., assessment validation, CalPASS, CTE, Launchboard),
- To redevelop, when appropriate, FoxPro coded reports in MSSQL,
- To develop and publish on a regular schedule multiple products aimed at communicating research findings to ARC's various constituent groups (e.g., “Stat-of-the-Day” in ARC’s Notes, IR newsletter, “Research Brief,” On-Demand Reporting System, New Faculty Academy presentations, Flex presentations, ARC Current),
- To develop the capability to conduct and analyse qualitative research (Focus Groups).

2B. List, as a set of recommendations, your plans for addressing these challenges.

Institutional Effectiveness: Dialogue - Support dialogue about institutional effectiveness as an ongoing, robust and pervasive manner using data and analyses that are widely distributed and used throughout the institution.