Accreditation Steering Committee Meeting
October 6, 2011

Draft Summary

Present: Mary Benard, Michael Cash, June Cressy, Lori Erreca, Mary Granderson, Paul Greer (for Kathy McGinnis), Marilyn Harvey, Gloria Lyon, Desiree van Saanen, Peter White, Xi Zhang

1. Student and Staff Satisfaction Surveys

- Xi Zhang reported that the District Research Committee will conduct student and employee surveys in Spring 2012 in preparation for the Accreditation Midterm Report due in Fall 2013. The 2009 surveys will be used as templates; however, Xi asked committee members to identify 50 questions from each survey to be continued onto the 2012 survey. Committee members reviewed criteria to use when selecting items, based on District Research recommendations. Committee members should look for items that: 1) contained the highest neutral and non-respondent ratings, 2) had the highest ratings of disagreement, 3) we should also aim to eliminate items that are no longer relevant (i.e., references to cancelled programs, services), and 4) eliminate items that may be addressed in other more narrowly-focused surveys (i.e., POS, DSPS survey) where an overlapping of information may result. Xi asked that members identify 10 additional new items for each survey. New questions should be aligned with accreditation standards and should be “perceptually-based” (not factually based).

- Xi indicated that there is a district-wide effort to transition the surveys into an on-line format with the paper and pencil format available for those who prefer to complete the surveys in paper and pencil. Committee members raised concerns that an online student survey would likely be ineffective in that they: 1) rely on students to voluntarily access/complete the survey where there are no incentives to do so; 2) may attract primarily the student who wants to voice a passionate opinion (negative or positive), which would skew the results; 3) may cause students to turn away because they feel their anonymity/confidentiality may be compromised. It was further noted that some students do not have computer access at home. Xi will share the committee’s concerns with Cathy Hasson. The paper/pencil in-class surveys allow for a captive target audience and ensure relatively high-response percentages. It was noted that the 2009 in-class student surveys (1,085 in all) resulted in 622 responses, a very healthy 57-percent response rate.

- Both student and staff reports can be found at the District Institutional Research website. VP White will forward the links to steering committee. Xi will need our 60 survey items (50 from the old survey and 10 new questions) by October 21.

- Xi noted that Employee Perception Survey, administered in 2009, had a much lower response rate. Concern was raised that some adjunct faculty and hourly staff do not have SDCCD email accounts. However, a new upgraded Outlook program will now allow district emails to be forwarded to personal email accounts, which may help to boost survey numbers.
2. Substantive Change Proposal

- A draft Substantive Change Proposal (dated September 30, 2011) for Black Studies was forwarded to committee members electronically. Members were asked to review the draft and to provide feedback by Friday, October 7, 2011. However, VP Mary Benard reported that the proposal has received review and feedback from governance councils. The deadline for submission to the ACCJC is October 14. She noted that a comprehensive proposal submitted to the Accrediting Commission in 2010 was used as the template for the Black Studies proposal. (The former was approved by the Accrediting Commission by teleconference in Novato, CA earlier last year).

- It was explained that submission of a Substantive Change Proposal is required when an institution anticipates significant changes in the content and/or delivery of courses, including when a program plans to offer more than 50 percent of its course offerings in an online format. VP Benard explained that the institution must conduct a comprehensive study of the program in order to insure that the online courses/program offer equal rigor, course content, and access of students to support services.

- Committee members discussed issues regarding online programs/courses, including the fact that many online courses are not always accepted by four-year institutions. Committee members also discussed whether we have measureable evidence of student success in online courses vs. in-classes courses.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, December 1, 2:00-3:00 p.m. (Conference Room D-102)