

PROGRAM REVIEW AND PLANNING

The college has put in place a policy on continuous improvement cycle that links the college's strategic planning, Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP) process, budgetary resource allocation and system wide decision making processes.

The Strategic Plan 2006 – 2011 provides the framework for assessment, reporting and resources allocation. Strategic goals and objectives have performance indicators that assist in determining the institutional effectiveness of the college and tracking progress being made in each of the goals areas. Quarterly reporting to stakeholders directly links accomplishments and activities to the strategic goals and objectives. A balanced scorecard is used by the college to summarize the key performance indicators and ensure a balanced approach to institutional effectiveness that helps focus the college on making decisions based on the needs for improving instruction and support services that include finances concerns, but is driven by needs for improving student learning and achievement.

The IAP process has established a framework for formalized assessment of all programs and services at the college. The IAP worksheets for improvement and assessment plans and assessment reports directly link program and services activities to their program mission, institutional strategic goals and objectives and the institutional mission. The IAP process recognizes the roles and responsibilities of superiors and the college's standing committee structure in review of improvement and assessment plans and reports and decision and assists with prioritization of improvement plans and strategies and resources. The IAP process is designed to promote discussion and dialogue of impact of programs and services on student learning and achievement at administrative and standing committee levels. The minutes of standing committees (especially curriculum, student services, assessment and planning and resources) are showing greater focus on students and learning being achieved. The discussion and dialogues are also being assisted by the richer (real time compilation including term specific and longitudinal) data being provided by the college's Student Information System (SIS) that has been put in place over the past three years. The yearly assessment reports tie directly into the formulation of the next cycle's improvement plan.

The college is implementing a performance budgeting system in fy 2011 that ties the budgeting process to the annual (IAP) improvement plans. Program budgets are based on outcomes to be achieved and are linked to high level performance indicators (such as retention, progression, persistence, program completers, employer satisfaction, improved effectiveness and efficiency of operations and services, etc.). The IAP program assessment and program review process allows direct determination if outcomes are being achieved and feed into the next improvement planning, assessment and budgeting cycle. The budgeting process is linked to the planning and assessment/program review cycle.

The annual President's Retreat brings together the college community and stakeholders to reflect on what has been accomplished during the year, what challenges have been faced and recommendations and priorities for improvement for the upcoming continuous improvement cycle.

Review of the various components of the continuous improvement cycle is ongoing and has resulted in changes to processes, procedures and forms on a regular basis through the standing committee structure. The current continuous improvement cycle was introduced as part of the college's Strategic Plan 2006 – 2011 and a formal review of the cycle will be conducted as part of the development of the Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016 (consideration is being given to reduce the college's planning cycle from 5 to 3 or 4 years) development process.