



The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the
North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools



30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400 | Chicago, IL 60602 | 312-263-0456
800-621-7440 | Fax: 312-263-7462 | www.ncahlc.org

Serving the common good by assuring and advancing the quality of higher learning

March 3, 2008

Dr. Mary Kathryn Kickels
President
Maricopa Community Colleges-Paradise Valley Community College
18401 N. 32nd St.
Phoenix, AZ 85032

Dear President Kickels:

The progress report you submitted to our office has now been reviewed. A staff analysis of the report is enclosed.

On behalf of the Commission, I accept the report on assessment of student learning. No further reports are required. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2014.

I am also enclosing a copy of the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status, which reflects the actions I have taken on behalf of the Commission. If you have any questions about this analysis or any other evaluation matters, please let me know. I can be reached via email at mbreslin@hlcommission.org or by voice at (800) 621-7440 x 107.

Sincerely,

Mary B. Breslin, B.V.M.
Associate Director, Accreditation

Enclosures



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STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES-PARADISE VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
18401 N. 32nd St.
Phoenix, AZ 85032

Affiliation Status: Candidate: Not Applicable
Accreditation: (1990- .)

PEAQ PARTICIPANT

Nature of Organization

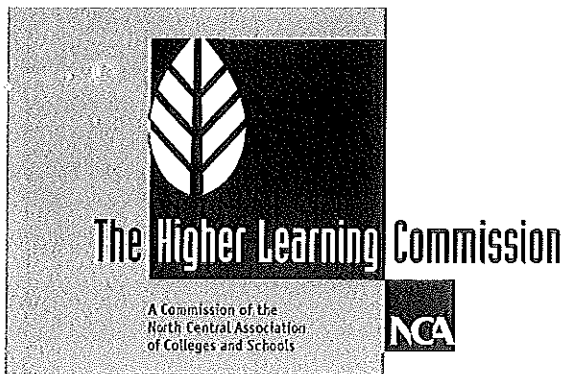
Legal Status: Public
Degrees Awarded: A

Conditions of Affiliation:

Stipulations on Affiliation Status: None.
Approval of New Degree Sites: Prior Commission approval required.
Approval of Distance Education Degrees: Prior Commission approval required.
Reports Required: None.
Other Visits Scheduled: None.

Summary of Commission Review

Year of Last Comprehensive Evaluation: 2004 - 2005
Year for Next Comprehensive Evaluation: 2014 - 2015
Date of Last Action: 08/12/2005



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STAFF ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

DATE: March 3, 2008

STAFF: Mary B. Breslin

REVIEWED BY: Katherine C. Delaney

INSTITUTION: Maricopa Community Colleges-Paradise Valley Community College, Phoenix, AZ

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Mary Kathryn Kickels, President

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION RE: REPORT: A progress report due on 03/01/08 focused on assessment of student learning.

ITEMS ADDRESSED IN REPORT: The office of the Commission received Maricopa Community Colleges-Paradise Valley Community College's report on the above topic on 2/20/08.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Paradise Valley Community College submitted a very thorough progress report on assessment in response to the concerns of the 2005 comprehensive visit team. At that time, the team had specified that the progress report should "give evidence that assessment: (1) is being used in all program areas and by all faculty, to improve teaching and learning; (2) of general education has developed measurable objectives; (3) practices inform and involve students; and, (4) is providing feed-back to programs and is being used to improve student learning." The progress report was organized around these four areas.

In order to accomplish all that the academic community has accomplished with respect to assessment since the comprehensive visit, the College hired a Director of Institutional Effectiveness who was given responsibility for the oversight of assessment throughout the institution. A Faculty Assessment Coordinator was appointed and given released time to address assessment issues. And a part-time "Out-of-Class" Assessment Coordinator was also appointed.

The College has designated the following "levels" of assessment: class/course, general education, program, out-of class. An Assessment Coordination Team has responsibility



for the holistic coordination of the assessment work of the Academic Assessment Team, the Out-of-Class Assessment Team and the General Education Assessment Team.

The progress report included an extensive chronology of key assessment events from 2005-2007, which indicated that there has been a clear focus and emphasis on assessment following the 2005 comprehensive visit. The chronology included many events and projects related to assessment, including presentations, surveys, professional development activities, governance adaptations, workshops and data collection.

Evidence that assessment is being used in all program areas and by all faculty, to improve teaching and learning.

The progress report documented the assessment measures utilized for class/course assessment. Then it explained the Annual Division Assessment Reports, which include outcomes, measures and the feedback loop to improve quality. The report also noted the progress made by the institution in conducting program reviews, which are also tied into assessment. At this point, eleven programs have completed their program reviews, and thirteen program reviews are in-progress.

The participation of residential faculty in class/course assessment increased from 69% in 2005-2006 to 79% in 2006-2007. Adjunct faculty participation increased from 26% in 2005-2006 to 32% in 2006-2007. The percentage of adjunct faculty participation is still low, but the institution includes assessment as part of the adjunct faculty orientation and the adjunct faculty are invited, as well, to college and division events which address assessment.

Evidence that assessment of general education has developed measurable objectives.

Paradise Valley Community College has developed four general education learning objectives: Communication, Information Literacy, Problem Solving and Technology. An impressive list of performance measures for each learning objective has also been developed, along with a course mapping matrix which relates each general education course to performance measures. Five rubrics for assessing the four general education learning objectives, plus general education, have also been developed.

This system is impressive and, in some respects, quite incredibly detailed. Given its complexity, the College also has to maintain a relatively simple assessment system in order that the complex system not become burdensome to the point that it cannot realistically be accomplished.

Evidence that assessment practices inform and involve students.

Paradise Valley has developed an "Agenda for Student Success and Learning" as a student-engagement and learning plan that includes eight outcomes, organized into



three parts - iPlan, iLearn, and iDo. The program helps students identify their educational, personal, and career goals and to relate their academic programs to those goals. Outcomes identified by the student encourage them to become active, engaged learners, and student participation goals are developed and supported, as well.

The iStartSmart program is based on research by PVCC's Underprepared Student Initiative Committee and is designed to increase rates of retention and the successful completion of each student's academic goals. This program requires placement testing, orientation, academic advising and completion of a College Success Course.

PVCC also involves students in assessment through the new student orientation and the College Success course, as well as in out-of-class assessments.

Evidence that assessment is providing feedback to programs and is being used to improve student learning.

The progress report detailed the processes and tools used by the faculty to assess student learning in their courses and programs. General education tools and processes were also detailed. A great deal of data concerning general education learning objectives was presented in the report. The Out-of-Class Assessment Team is also active in developing feedback data and documenting results.

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement survey is administered to PVCC students. The CCSSE is used by the College as a benchmarking instrument, a diagnostic tool, and a monitoring device. The report documented the many effective ways the CCSSE data are utilized for improvement throughout the College.

Finally, the progress report addressed issues of sustainability and future directions for assessment at PVCC. The Academic Assessment Team developed an Assessment Strategic Plan that designates tasks to be addressed over the next five years.

Clearly, PVCC is committed to assessing student learning across the curriculum and through its multiple learning support services. The College is commended for the hard and effective work it has conducted since the 2005 comprehensive visit. At the same time, the College is encouraged to keep their assessment processes and procedures as streamlined as possible in order to incorporate assessment effectively into the culture of the College.

STAFF ACTION: Accept the report focused on assessment of student learning. No further reports are required. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2014.