Project LEARN Steering Committee Minutes
February 18, 2010

In attendance: Kris Abrahamson, Carole Bennett, Wanda Burzycki, Nancy Chinn, Victor Cummings, Micca Gray, Dave Harris, Mary Kay Rudolph (briefly), Eric Thompson.

The meeting began at 3:05 p.m.

1. Report from Academic Senate Liaison: Eric said that he did not give a report at the February 17 Academic Senate meeting since he did not yet have enough information about faculty response to the PDA activities at that time. He will present a report to the Academic Senate at the March 3 meeting.

2. Debriefing on PDA Day: Members of the Steering Committee shared observations of the PDA presentations and faculty participation. Most of the morning workshops had about 10-20 attendees, though there were probably more at Carole's panel presentation. Michelle Booher-Poggi will tabulate exact attendance based on sign-up sheets. Overall, the afternoon departmental workshops displayed a high level of engagement. Student Services also had a good turnout. Department discussions focused on methodology, assessment tool options, rubrics, mapping, deactivation of courses, and writing SLO statements for courses and programs. The general consensus was that this format worked well for those who attended. However, there is a need to provide more incentive and support for the participation of adjunct faculty, who often teach classes involved in SLO development and assessment. Some suggestions for addressing this included using conference technology such as Polycom and CCC-Confer so adjunct faculty could participate over the distance; videotaping the discussions; and sending all faculty a written summary of the discussions.

3. Report from Mary Kay Rudolph regarding eLumen: Both the Basic Skills Committee and Project LEARN have recommended through resolutions that the College purchase and implement the eLumen program. Mary Kay has presented the idea to Dr. Agrella, who has tentatively stated that if Project LEARN could obtain enough funding for three years' worth of eLumen (startup approx. $42,000 and maintenance approx. $12,000/yr), the purchase may be feasible. At this point, funding may come from Basic Skills Initiative monies and from CTE funds, and possibly, at Dave Harris's suggestion, from Associated Student Body funds. Dr. Agrella had questioned whether eLumen would still be a worthwhile expense considering how far the College had progressed down the SLO path without it. The consensus of the Steering Committee was that the program was very much needed to organize and accelerate current efforts, especially as the emphasis falls more upon embedded assessment and more individualized reporting. In fact, launching eLumen at this point may be better because, since faculty have already had discussion and experience with outcomes assessment, the program would be viewed more as a tool rather than an imposed system. Without eLumen, it is doubtful the College would be able to meet the ACCJC 2012 standards for a regular cycle of assessment.

However, the Academic Senate has not yet endorsed eLumen, even though Dave Shupe made a presentation last Fall. This may be due to the fact that few of the Senators have had experience with a Learning Assessment Project. Kris will consult with Barbara Croteau, Senate President, about how best to seek Senate support.

Nancy asked whether eLumen has a Student Services component, and Kris said she would ask Dave Shupe. [Follow up: yes, it does.]

4. Report from SLO Coordinators:
- Wanda said that she has been working with individual faculty members on components of Learning Assessment Projects. Only about half of all academic departments turned in a new LAP for the 2009/1010 year. She is hoping that more will be submitted during the next C-Learn meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 23.

- Carole presented a list of over 1,000 courses that did not yet have SLOs listed in the course outlines. While a few errors were noticed in the list, and a significant number have not been taught in the past 3 years, it was quite apparent that much still needs to be done in the area of course curriculum, despite Carole's heroic efforts in that area.

5. Reports from Task Committees:
- **C-Learn**: Victor stated that C-Learn will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 23, and has not met since the last Steering Committee meeting, so there was nothing to report except that the committee needs more faculty members.

- **Pro-Learn:** Nancy reported that Pro-Learn also needs more faculty members. The group has been trying to emphasize the value of assessment in programs, particularly Student Services, beyond just meeting the standards for accreditation.

- **iLearn:** KC Greaney was not present but sent an Assessment Schedule for Institutional Learning Outcomes, which showed the assessment of ILOs through the Student Surveys and PRPP Inventory of Courses and Programs, plus the direct assessment of selected outcomes. Dave Harris explained how he led the Statewide Student Senate to vote to support the assessment of Institutional Outcomes and suggested that Project LEARN send a proposal to the ASB to request funds to support adjunct faculty involvement in the assessment of ILOs. This would be a new attempt to support institutional research at SRJC. .

5. Communication Strategy for February/March: Kris will send out a positive message after the feedback and data from PDA is documented. Wanda will follow up with a message to Department Chairs about ongoing support from Project LEARN. She will also send out very soon a follow-up checklist on what to do with whatever was accomplished on PDA Day.

Carole described an article in the most recent FAACC publications that listed community colleges that had received high marks for accreditation, and SRJC was among them. She will send the article to Kris.

6. BRIC Proposal: SRJC was not selected for this year, but Kris said the college is still in the running for next year.

7. Defining "Regular Cycle of Assessment": Kris and Mary Kay have researched the definition of "regular cycle of assessment" across colleges, but a clear definition does not seem to exist—it seems to be up to the college. Kris presented a proposal for an ongoing, systematic review of course and program outcomes. There was some discussion about the first item, in which SRJC would assess at least one SLO for every key course on a six-year cycle ("key" courses include core requirements for a certificate or major; GE courses; and Pathway math and English courses). Could the college do more than that? There was general agreement that the implementation of eLumen would positively impact the rate of assessment by streamlining the process.

8. Report on Napa College: Carole had earlier sent to all Project LEARN Steering Committee members a summary of Napa College's high rate of achievement of SLOs plus an interview with Eric Shearer, the SLO Coordinator at that college. She pointed out a number of differences between Napa's approach and that of the JC—the reliance on faculty expertise without any approving bodies seemed to have made the process more collegial, efficient, and overall, successful since Napa College has SLOs in 100% of their courses. It was pointed out that Napa has fewer courses that the JC and a different administrative approach but that it was helpful to view how other colleges have dealt with accreditation standards.

The next meeting will continue this discussion and will also discuss the implications of the adoption of eLumen. This meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.