Project LEARN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, October 18, 2012

In attendance: Wanda Burzycki, Nancy Chinn, Li Collier, Karen Frindell Teuscher, Micca Gray, Susan Quinn, Peggy Swearingen, Eric Thompson.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Eric Thompson, Project LEARN faculty co-chair. The minutes from the May 17 and Sept. 20, 2012, meetings were reviewed and approved, with two corrections to the Sept. 12 minutes: (1) the year that the National Health Survey was conducted at SRJC was 2010, and it will be given again in 2013, and (2) the Institutional Learning Outcome that the survey relates to is "maintain and improve health" (under ILO #2).

Report from the Academic Senate. Eric Thompson said that one of the Senate's main concerns has been to strengthen communication with faculty, and this would include information about SLOs. Senators are taking more responsibility for communicating more effectively and consistently to all faculty. There is still some concern about the lack of permissions in SharePoint for SLO reports, but otherwise there have been no issues regarding SLO assessment.

Report from SLO Coordinators. Anne O'Donnell had to be away for this meeting so Wanda reported for both. The SLO Coordinators have met with chairs individually and with some departments as a whole, assessing areas of need or interest relating to SLOs. A few of the issues that have come up are:

- Most department chairs are familiar with having a 6-year plan for assessment, but not all department members are.
- Some departments are ready to show certificate or major assessment using the "bottom up" approach, but at this point, there is nowhere to store this kind of document. Wanda and Anne will see if these grids can be posted on the Project LEARN SharePoint site. Wanda said she would work on a better form, and Eric said that he would like to be involved in developing that document.
- Many faculty are familiar with course assessment, but departments are concerned about how to assess courses that are taught only by adjunct faculty. Wanda and Anne have been giving suggestions, such as helping adjunct faculty identify assessment tools they already use and asking full-time faculty to collect adjuncts' class data and observations and then write up the formal report. It's also good to remind adjunct faculty that they can receive up to 3 hours of flex credit per semester for their efforts.
- The main effort right now is to train faculty and administrative assistants in SharePoint so that they know where to put the SLO assessment reports when SLO assessment are completed. Anne and Wanda will be holding two SharePoint trainings over the next few weeks: Oct. 22 and Nov. 2. They will also be meeting with Liko Puha in IT to see which quirks in SharePoint can be fixed.

Nancy Chinn confirmed the SLO Coordinators' efforts and said that, from a department chair's perspective, the most crucial points are:

- Making assessment meaningful
- Documenting discussion about assessment and results in department meeting minutes
- Getting administrative assistants and key faculty trained in SharePoint

The group suggested a brief presentation and discussion on this at a DCC/IM or DCC meeting might help communicate these points. This effort might also help bring out some "stories" about assessment—that is, how assessment and results have been used by departments and programs to make decisions about teaching and learning. Wanda will look in to scheduling time with the department chairs.

Institutional Learning Outcomes: KC Greaney was not able to attend the meeting, but Micca initiated a discussion on the thematic approach to assessing ILOs. Various approaches were discussed:

- Selecting an ILO and asking departments to voluntarily assess course or program SLOs that are related to the institutional theme, such as intercultural literacy and interaction (ILO #6).
- Find an external tool and ask departments to use it to assess selected SLOs of courses related to that ILO.
- Try a pilot, where faculty are invited to contribute course assessment results that relate to the theme.
- Ask faculty to provide input about which ILO(s) would be important to focus on and assess at this time. For instance, "personal development and management" might relate to the college's overall efforts to adopt the recommendations of the Student Success Task Force recommendations/ requirements. This might promote cross-departmental dialogue and might also be connected to the college's Strategic Planning efforts.

After further discussion, the group concluded that the next step would be to create a timeline for ILO assessment. From there, working with related groups (Strategic Plan, Academic Senate, Department Chairs, etc.), an ILO should be selected and an implementation plan, possibly using one of the ideas above, should be drawn up. And, no matter how the assessment is conducted, it is essential that the college collect adequate data (qualitative and quantitative), make the results available for broad discussion, and then provide evidence that the results and conclusions from the discussion have been used improve student learning.

The committee will continue this discussion at the next meeting. This meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.