2005 Listening Sessions

Tuesday, April 19 (Noon)
John Adams Campus

Panelists: Ophelia Clark, Brian Ellison, David Yee

Recorder: Ann Zinn

Participants (5): (see sign-in sheet)

Brian started with an overview of the purpose of today’s session, emphasizing interest in getting responses from those in attendance. Introductions followed, with explanation of panelists’ and recorder’s roles.

Brian continued with background of the self study process, describing last semester’s effort to compile co-chair reports on standards in contrast to this semester’s thematic approach. He explained that both the standards and thematic assignments came directly from the accreditation commission. He walked participants through the theme topics as listed in the table of contents and summarized (or described) at the beginning of each essay.

Each of the panelists then presented a summary of the essays they composed.

David Yee provided an overview of Theme Six: Integrity and Honesty. He described it as a question of the extent to which we communicate honestly with constituent groups and as an issue of assessment of policies and procedures. Theme six also focused on hiring issues at the college. David clarified that this theme does not follow the same pattern as the other themes, looking across the College rather than at specific case studies.

Ophelia described her group’s approach to Theme 3: College Dialogues. She explained the approach taken to meet WASC’s concept of active dialogue. This group looked at four exemplars: Enhanced Self Study (administration), reflective teaching practices (faculty), the student election process (students), and the extent to which dialogue occurs across campuses that enhances student learning.

Brian described Theme 5: Organization. He described it as a discussion of institutional resources being directed to learning activities/programs. The group focused on two case studies, the Biotech program and the Biology Department. He explained that the Biotech program focuses on student readiness and has spawned additional programs (e.g. “on-ramp to Biotech). They also looked at the ongoing grant money that funds the program and makes it unique. Its ties to corporate partners in the community is also special and has created opportunities for our students. On the other hand, the Biology Department represents a more typical college program. He then reviewed some of the recommendations made by the group at the conclusion of the essay.
Responses:

A counselor spoke up about a concern expressed in **Theme 5, recommendation 6 (p15)**, which states that counselors give “misinformation.” She suggested that the word “incomplete” would be more accurate. Counselors don’t always have all the answers, but she felt strongly that they don’t normally provide inaccurate information.

A concern was expressed about the organization of the web site, referencing Theme 6. Specifically the internal linkages are confusing because they don’t match/connect. Brian and Andrea (Speraw’s) sites were used as examples, where Andrea’s format is preferred, but Brian’s information is more current. How would students know the difference?

David said that in the essay they talked about uniformity of content and organization of the sites table of contents. One of the participants recommended we identify a professional who can look at the whole system and make thoughtful change. Having students or volunteers working on various components of the site has contributed to its patch-work and disheveled organization.

Surprise was expressed at the self study being organized by themes. A question about the relationship between standards and themes was raised. The panel explained the background on WASC’s transition to themes and the College’s response to incorporate this new approach into an otherwise traditional self study.

A participant referenced Theme 5 (p19) and his concern that there’s not more information on “limited funds,” suggesting we might add something about how well we have actually coped given tight budget constraints. He also mentioned that Theme 4 didn’t talk much about the impact of the budget crisis and its affect on staffing. Brian mentioned that the co-chair reports covered these issues in more detail. Concern was expressed at extent to which essays should be used to expose warts. While case study approach is representative, it seems like it can be manipulated to simply “showcase” the good, rather than address the “warts.” How is that truly reflective of the CCSF experience.

Brian talked about SLOs as the thread throughout the entire self study: standards and themes. He and David talked about the issue of mapping standards to themes
2005 Listening Sessions

Tuesday, April 19 (2 p.m.)
Chinatown/North Beach

Panelists:  Ophelia Clark, Susan Lopez, Kitty Moriwaki

Recorder:  Ann Zinn

Participants (10): (see sign-in sheet)

Ophelia welcomed the participants to the second listening session of the day. Names and contact information was posted on the blackboard and introductions were made. Ophelia explained the purpose of the meeting is to listen to participants’ comments on the essays. Background information on the entire self study process was presented, as well as an explanation about the structure of today’s session.

Ophelia began with an overview of Theme 3 and the approach her group took in identifying content (exemplars) for the essay. She also pointed participants to the section on linkages to standards, taking a moment to explain last semester’s more traditional standards approach and our transition to six new themes as assigned by WASC.

Susan presented an overview of Theme 4: Institutional Planning. She talked about the objective her group pursued of finding cases demonstrating dramatic improvement. She also emphasized the importance of the concluding section on recommended future directions. She also talked about the value of the self study in providing a forum for discussion on specific issues and identification of potential solutions. Theme 4 selected both credit and non-credit case studies, as well as services like Financial Aid and the restructuring of Admissions and Records.

Kitty directed participants to the summary page for Theme 6. She reviewed some of the major aspects of the theme description and talked about her group determined the best way to respond to the theme. She summarized the topics her group picked as examples of integrity/honest and explained that the concluding section on recommendations was a place where areas for improvement could be addressed.

Ophelia pointed to Theme 5 (p17-18) as a good example of how the recommendations should be organized and suggested we would work to make our essays more uniform, gleaning ideas from each others’ approach. Theme 5 approach would allow the authors to include more directions for the future.

Responses:

A question was raised about Theme 6 and the recommendation that work would be done to make the web site more uniform. How will we ensure that the site is improved? Kitty explained that the recommendation was taken from the Communications Plan. But who is to say that the decisions being made by the communications committee are good, sound decisions? What sort of oversight is there?
Another comment was made about putting messages out to the public in multiple languages in order to reach all of our constituent groups. This issue also came up a few months ago at the Mission Campus, where students are not being notified in their native languages about services or programs/events open to them. An example was given about job opportunities via Biotech, where Chinese speakers who are trained as scientists and/or physicians qualify; however, information about the program is not being disseminated in Chinese or at Chinatown/North Beach Campus.

Kitty referenced Theme 6 (p9) and the example of Biotech, where advertising is being done in multiple languages. The participant agreed that there is an effort being made, but pointed out that there are additional outlets where this information can be more effectively disseminated. A participant stated that the Office of Public Information relies on translators, who aren't doing an effective job of translating (also using software for translating that is ineffective).

A question was raised about the number of recommendations for each theme: are we cutting our own throats by generating so many recommendations we can’t possibly follow in six years? A distinction was made between WASC recommendations and our own self-reflective recommendations.

Another question came up about where the resources come from to help implement recommendations? Susan talked about the College’s planning and budgeting system and steps for prioritizing those things that need changing. Susan said there are always more great ideas than money to implement them. Heads nodded.

Congratulations was issued by a participant who acknowledged the amount of work involved. We are a huge institution and to undertake this task of self-evaluating the College is really remarkable. She made special note of the effort this time of looking broadly at programs and services at all of the campuses. Overall, it seemed as though this self study is more comprehensive than any previous.

A focus seems to be largely on transitional/basic skills, without enough mention of the other programs. Cautioned us to be careful about neglecting other programs, like the Honor program. Also felt that non-credit issues were neglected and that our efforts to integrate credit and non-credit should be better highlighted. Felt that our adult education should be incorporated. In Theme 1 (3) refers to restructuring of counseling department, “we have reorganized…driven by comprehensive assessment …development of educational plan…” Felt we reorganized for another reason. Need to clarify what plan—Electronic Ed. Plan? Educational Master Plan?

Theme 2 (p21) re: SLO initiative. While some departments likely participated more than others, on p22 (top), it reads “first time in the College’s recent history…” Need some clarification on what that means. Because back in 80s we had a Vice Chancellor of Student Services. The comment is correct if we specify “last five years…” or “in recent time we revived…in acknowledgment of vastness of institution and role of student services…”.

On same page where talks about employee satisfaction, there is always caution to be used when put out statistics. “Several department reported .5 increase in satisfaction…” (whose satisfaction…clarify). Not so confusing for those of us who have
historical memory of reorganization, but would likely be confusing to visiting team. Without more background on survey, it really seems like people aren’t happy with their jobs, whereas in context of the larger survey, one would pick up that folks want some things to change, but are aware of budget cuts, etc. Also unclear on who is rating who. Please clarify. Statistics don’t say anything when you don’t address what issues are being answered/addressed.

Theme 5 (p19) re: improvement in communication between counseling and instructional faculty (Biology Department). As in the John Adams meeting, it was suggested that the word “inaccurate” should be changed to “incomplete.” It is not appropriate to suggest that counselors are giving out wrong information. Counselors are not the only ones with “inaccurate” information. There is a lot of misinformation that goes out because there’s not enough two-way dialogue. The responsibility is not solely that of the counselors alone. It is even more difficult now because of the reorganization of counseling, where groups are operating in silos and not having monthly in-service meetings where everyone had opportunity to get on the same page. Some advantages to the smaller groups, but harder to share information across sectors.

The participant mentioned the “Counselors Academy” hosted and C/NB, where other groups are invited to dialogue.

The issue of “Smart Cards” also came up. Is it going to happen?
2005 Listening Sessions

Wednesday, April 20 (1 p.m.)
Mission Campus

Panelists: Bonnie Gratch-Lindauer, Sharon Seymour, Bruce Smith

Recorder: Diane Tong

Participants (80): (see sign-in sheet)

Bruce provided the focus of today’s meeting and provided background for the self study. Each panelist presented a short summary of the content of their respective themes. Bruce outlined the format and objectives of the meeting.

Responses:

One of the student participants wanted to know how the weakened budget is affecting the findings of these reports. Bruce responded in the context of Basic Skills, explaining that one part looks at overall curriculum; the other part looks at how we’re spending money. He went on to describe some of the college’s outreach programs, such as the Latino Services Network and African American Scholastic Programs. Are they making a difference? Yes. He said that the Learning Assistance Center shows how much we spend per student. The range is from $50 to $2,500/student. Both have positive effects. If the institution asks if we using resources well, we could say that $2,500 is worth spending.

Sharon discussed Theme 5, which looks at organization, faculty, staff, resources, and labs. What kind of structure do we have for learning? The committee chose two programs, Biotech and Biological Sciences. They interviewed teachers, chairs and deans and asked how they think college is supporting them. The Biotech program was developed to train students to work in that field. This program was developed several years ago when there was a need for students to enter this area. There are non-credit classes which help students get in credit programs. We help meet the needs of the community. After choosing the two programs, we came to some conclusions and came up with issues problems we felt should be addressed.

Sharon asked how the student participants learned about CCSF.

The response was from friends, website schedule, went to EDD which had reps from program, non-profit organizations.

Sharon – City College needs to do better job telling people about programs and opportunities.

Student – everyone knows City College is the gateway to college. You should let people know about Biotech program and/or construction programs.
Bruce explained that information is in the class schedules that are mailed to all homes in S.F. The student audience replied that many students do not live in San Francisco.

Sharon – We need to do better publicity. One example of organization support is that we need to increase funding for resources, facilities, staff, computer lab, more training for teachers, and lab aides. City College has more budget problems. Hard to find money. Governor wants to raise price of tuition.

We need to know what students do after they leave us. How well do they do in jobs or in college? We need agreements with colleges and employers to get information to us.

We need to do a better job of evaluating what you are learning, while you’re here. Did you learn what we taught you? We may need more money to do better tests. The commission feels it is important to test students the same way. It takes money to develop tests. In ESL we give you reading and writing tests at the end of the semester. We need to test speech as well.

Student: How much will the increase [in tuition] be?

Bruce: Fees will not be increased for the next semester.

Student: Will classes be cut. Will fees be increased?

Bruce: We have no power over fees. We may know more about budget in July/August. We’re not going to cut classes because if we don’t have classes, we don’t get Federal money for financial aid.

Student: I thought per diem was cut last year.

Bruce: Non credit paid by hours per student whereas Credit goes by body count. Non-credit is just as important as credit courses.

Student: How are students signing up in classes? Not all classes are doing that. Open labs should have sign up sheets too.

Carlota: Some classes are too small so they get cancelled.

Bonnie – My theme is about college dialogue. (She read the theme description out loud) How do you talk about dialogue? How do we write it in 15 pages?

Student: What kinds of meeting happen? Non-credit and credit need to work well, should have informed staff. My dialogue is interacting with office workers.

Carlota: dialogue with community – developed a program to provide training to community.

Bonnie: Think of how dialogue affects lives. Meetings go on, through student government, faculty government, academic senate, staff senate to discuss issues and find solutions. Try to pick out big examples so we could communicate flavor of
dialogue, who’s involved, what are the improvements? She talked about student success, the kinds of reports that come out of meetings. What are the measurable improvements? The committee looked at the work of the college’s Diversity Committee and the Enhanced Self Study initiative. The Chancellor wanted the college to take a deeper look at the organization. We wrote about that. It involved every aspect of the college. Lots of improvement came out of that. Dialogue is always started by somebody. The theme committee picked some examples from students, faculty, administrative areas. The student election process, where are student elections, student’s council. In early May, there are going to be elections but in 2001 it was not so well organized. Some campuses weren’t getting money perhaps they had no students interested in government. Students could make a change in the class by bringing up recommendations. There was an Environmental class where students wanted to go out in the community. As a result a program was developed with Golden Gate Park to improve things there. Students find the class a better experience.

We need to have all campuses dialog with its respective communities. The Administrative Assistant program began from a community meeting.

Bruce: What kinds of things would you like to see improve?

Student: There is a general disconnect when one is not an S.F. resident. Trying to get what classes, hard to get info from classes from website, can’t get a person on phone to ask simple question requiring a Yes or No answer. I am taking Quark for a year and trying to find specific information on it on a specific class was nearly impossible on website.

Bruce: It’s a good idea to call the department number or counselor. Find out when open counseling hours are. The department chairs phone numbers are in class schedule.

Student: I am 50 years old and have taken a lot of classes at different places. Good news: I have had the best instructors I’ve ever had here. Bad news: The guy in financial aid is great but we need more aides.

Carlota: We are ahead of you on that. We will have more financial aid counselors here.

Smiley: Access for credit students, adding and dropping courses is a major problem. Problem for students not familiar with PC. The application process is very cumbersome. If you miss a field, you can’t submit it. Why can’t A&E help credit students? If the student is unable to apply on line, it kicks you off; then the student will have to take time off from work to register on Webstar. We use PC to save money but need staff support on adding and dropping classes.

Student: did not know how system works. Took a whole semester before I found out how to get financial aid. Have more available to deal with first year students. Didn’t know how to get financial aide.

Bruce: We’ve divided the counseling department. There is a division now called New Student Counseling. If you let us know you plan to attend months in advance, we can
get you a counselor. Most students decide that they need to attend City College in August and then start looking for a counselor and get frustrated when they're booked.

Faculty: I am in Business Tech. We need to have a program to assess students to test them and find out their interests and not just stick them in a class. We need to have dialogue with other campuses of their successes, share failures to solve problems. We need to work together with Counseling. Have people come in and let them know they can get a certificate, or some programs qualify for financial aid. Need support of department heads. More communications with faculty and department heads.

Bonnie was sympathetic stating there just never seems to be enough time to dialogue effectively. She said we need to set time aside for campuses to share information.

Carlota: We need to get a full time classified staff member to greet people, “Hello, how can we help you?”

Sharon: Have recommendations need to improve communication between counselors and instructors.

Student: In credit, non-credit, I have tried to get in non-credit for two years, and have tried to get in credit since 1999. Went to various campuses, can’t get student services. Tried online and I have PC skills. We should do preventative maintenance to prevent drop out rate. Why can’t we do that here? As a result of not getting services, they think I’m a certain income so I don’t get benefits. I lost unemployment, food stamps. How do we keep students in school? I went to dept. chair, went to Mission and Downtown four times. Classes got canceled with no notice.

Student: How do we have more clubs?

Bruce: You need to contact an advisor and Skip Fotch.

Bruce: We need to equalize services at campus. We need to take a look at equity of services. What is student headcount per counselor? We need to distribute resources based on limited resources. We’ve started the process to incorporate non-credit and credit. Have more information for credit. Have more services for non-credit students. We had an idea of a one stop student center where everyone performs services at one place. Counselor can send you to Financial Aide in same area but is expensive to implement.

Student: None of the satellite campuses have book loan program. Why do we have to reinvent the wheel? Why can’t we share the resources?

Student: The woman, Iris, at the tutorial lab had to look all over for software. Hard to get consistent lab times. Not everyone can get to main campus.

Bruce: Best thing about city college is that we have multiple campuses throughout the city however, we have to able provide services.

Carlota: You have to realize that we have 600 students an hour that pass through this campus, with only two day-time counselors.
Student: You should have a box on your website for students to provide comments.
2005 Listening Sessions

Wednesday, April 20 (2:30 p.m.)
Academic Senate

Panelists: Ophelia Clark, Susan Lopez, David Yee

Recorder: David Yee, Susan Lopez, Jane Sneed

Participants (35): (see sign-in sheet)

Responses

Theme 2: This essay is not balanced with regard to SLO's -- the tone is not right, specifically references to complacency. Senate discussions are not reflected here.

Theme 3: It is not clear that in this and other essays the theme paragraph is a direct quote from WASC. Don't just mention faculty but mention the DCC and Ac Senate by name where appropriate. Multimedia Studies is a Program, not a Dept. (page 3)

Theme 4: That was very good. We need more specificity on the Data Dialog Initiative -- It's necessary but how will it be done? For example, we should have an hour of data discussion at Flex, right after the Chancellor's address.

Theme 6: p 13, EATV DOES publish a program!

Comments on overall document:

Listening sessions scheduled too close to dissemination of the draft, not enough time to review it. Specifically, will Academic Senate be able to see the entire self study report before final deadline?
Two speakers: This is a very impressive document. The document reads like a feel good novel - too rosy - and nothing in there about facilities problems.
2005 Listening Sessions

Wednesday, April 20 (6 p.m.)
Pierre Coste Restaurant, Public Forum

Panelists: Robert Gabriner, Kristin Hershbell-Charles, Bruce Smith, David Yee

Recorder: Bonnie Gratch-Lindauer

Participants (2): (see sign-in sheet)

No formal presentations were made, as Madeline and Ann had specific questions and comments to provide regarding:

Responses

Theme 1 – p. 8 Madeline stated that the phrase “students of color” cannot be used, as the Board has made a decision about not using that phrase. She could not recall the appropriate substitute phrase, but suggested that it can be found in the annual plan. Bob commented that a “glossary” of terms will be needed to clarify variant uses of terminology and to ensure consistency. Also on p. 8 Madeline questioned the word “all” in the sentence describing that “students across all disciplines….. She feels this is not accurate.

Theme 2 – Ann Clark felt that the title of the “Conclusions” section which reads “From a ‘Culture of Outcomes to a Culture of Outcomes Assessment’” is redundant.

Overall sense/reaction to the themes - In response to a question posed by Bob about their overall sense of the themes, Madeline commented that by picking certain programs as exemplary, it might imply that other programs aren’t. Ann Clark responded that overall there’s a sense of “feel-good” and perhaps a bit too “pollyannish.”

Madeline also commented that overall there was a sense expressed that the newer faculty are more progressive, almost creating a dichotomy between the younger and older faculty. Both also expressed opinions about a certain amount of redundancy and the need to edit the themes to reduce this.

Ann Clark stated that for her there was a disconnect between the themes (why this format, why the use of case studies?) and the standards reports. For her to better understand the relationship, she needed an introductory page to explain the connections.

Theme 4 – date used to describe the beginning of program review is not accurate. Need to clarify if the statement refers to the very beginning of program review or the current version.

Theme 6 – chart on p. 13 and the statement about our goal being to have a faculty that reflects the demographics of our students are not permissible, based on the outcomes of a legal challenge over 10 years ago about this issue. We can state,
however, that our goal is to have a diverse faculty; just cannot connect to the student demographics.

Theme 6 – p. 15 Need to correct the inaccurate statement that the Diversity Committee developed the Asian Infusion Project.

Comment from Julia Bergman, who had planned to attend but could not attend the session; she commented:

Facilities – I don’t see enough in the themes about facilities, which are so important for teaching and learning.
2005 Listening Sessions

Thursday, April 21 (10:30 a.m.)
Southeast Campus (Evans Campus)

Panelists: Robert Gabriner, Bonnie Gratch-Lindauer, Kitty Moriwaki

Recorder: Bonnie Gratch-Lindauer

Participants (26): (see sign-in sheet)

After the background introduction by Bob, the six themes were briefly introduced by the 3 presenters.
Comments include:

Responses

Theme 1 – The phrase basic skills is the “gateway” seems inappropriate; would prefer the term “bridge,” as it conveys a better sense of transition. Another person commented that the phrase “basic skills” seems to lack the right message; prefers the phrase “foundational skills” or “building skills.” p.3 suggestion that maybe we need another phrase for “diversity learning counseling.” Bob explained the variety of terms used by the state Chancellor’s office and commented about the need for a “glossary” to define terminology.

Theme 2 – Juanita Owens questioned whether it’s essential that the ESL students have to go through so many levels. She asked about was there really good evidence to support the need for all these levels, since barriers can be created to students by having so many levels. Kitty explained the common exams and offered to share some reports and other evidence with her.

Another comment was made that referred to a statement either in Theme 2 or elsewhere that there was data to suggest that students learn to write before learning to read. The gentleman found this contrary to evidence he was aware of and questioned the data to support such the statement.

An woman who does the taped testing for the Bridge and Ramp programs to Biotech described the situation where ESL students who had gone through much of the ESL course-sequence could not pass the taped test. Her dilemma was what to suggest to the students; to whom should they be referred? Her comments is that the institution needs to be able to ensure that students who complete the ESL credit course sequence are proficient with a certain level of reading, writing and speaking/comprehension. Kitty and Bob noted her name and will follow-up.

Theme 3 – Lillian McDaniel, Transitional Studies, commented that she was surprised that there wasn’t more space devoted to the dialogues and meetings that occurred across the district during the initial stages of the MIP. She felt that the result of these dialogues were truly important to building community and making more staff aware of the various programs and services.

Theme 4 – A comment was made that especially at Southeast, they were looking forward to improvements made to the non-credit attendance procedures. Bob agreed
that this is a high priority for the College and possibly needs to be clearer in the Self-Study that this issue is very important and deserves priority status.

Another comment was made about needing to track what happens with the students who complete the GED. What do they do after they get their GED? Comment – CCSF needs to do a better job collecting our success stories.

**Theme 5** – Only comment was that the case study for Biotech program made it clear how heavily dependent it is on grant funding.

**Theme 6** – Someone commented that the Southeast campus is one word. Somewhere it was typed as two words.

Another comment was made relating to identifying our weakness in hiring more black faculty, especially in the sciences. Kitty commented that the “Grow Your Own” program needs to do better publicity.

Comment was made that the concept of diversity needs to be expanded so that we understand it to mean diversity at every campus. Not OK to “stack the blacks at Southeast and the Chinese-Americans at Chinatown/North Beach campus.” The need is to diversify staff at all the campuses.

**Theme 6 – p. 13** disagreement between the statistic on this page and the next relating to Native American students.

Final comment was offered that we’re glad that CCSF is doing so much relating to basic skills because the poor math and writing is a national problem in higher education and our society.
2005 Listening Sessions

Thursday, April 21 (2:30 p.m.)
College Council

Panelists: Ophelia Clark, Robert Gabriner, Kristin Hershbell-Charles, David Yee, Bruce Smith, Sharon Seymour

Recorder: Sharon Seymour

Participants: (see sign-in sheet)

Responses

Theme 1
  o p. 13. Need to flesh out the “Beyond Instruction” additional Support for Basic Skills Students” and highlight things like counseling interventions.
  o Question: Is there any recommendation for giving help to faculty who teach non-basic skills courses on how to serve basic skills students in these classes better?
  o Question: Is critical thinking considered a skill that should be taught in basic skills classes?

Theme 2
  o Impressed with both case studies. Concerned that there wouldn’t be enough there if the essay was cut to 15 pages. Don’t want to lose the story of what English and Student Development went through.
  o Should be cut to 15-16 pages.
  o Don’t cut Student Development much because it’s a minority voice in the reports- need a presence in the study.

Theme 3
  o No comments.

Theme 4
  o No comments.

Theme V
  o Really seems like 1 ½ case studies rather than two since Biotech is part of the Biological Sciences Department.
  o Do the Biological Sciences case study first and then Biotech.

Theme 6
  o No comments.

General Comment
  o Request for summaries/abstracts of the WASC report for busy people who don’t have time to read the whole thing.