

Special points of interest:

- IEPI is a state-wide grant
- Goal to provide technical assistance to various colleges that submit a letter of interest
- PRTs are comprised of community college peers and experts to bring an appreciative inquiry approach to needs assessment
- IEPI is not directly connected to Accreditation, but the work of the IEPI can assist colleges as they work to meet Accreditation standards.

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IEPI...What? Another Acronym?

You might have heard yet another acronym slipping into campus-wide conversations here at WCC and across our district. IEPI is the acronym for the state-wide grant known as the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative. The primary goal of this initiative is to advance institutional effectiveness for California Community Colleges. It is a hope the implementation of this grant across our system will have a direct impact by significantly reducing the number of accreditation sanctions and audit issues which have been identified. Additionally, and arguably the more important goal is to enhance the system’s ability to serve students effectively.

This grant has been designed to tap into the exceptional expertise and innovation from within the system to promote a shared understanding of “best practices.” There are three major components of the initiative: develop a framework of indicators and college/district goals; establish technical assistance teams (also known as Partnership Resource Teams (PRT)); and enhance professional development opportunities for colleges and districts related to institutional effectiveness.

Individual colleges have the opportunity to request assistance. The institution’s CEO is required to submit a short letter of interest. (This is something that YCCCD did during the first iteration and formation of PRTs). In this letter, the individual college will outline areas where they would like focused assistance. Once accepted, a specific PRT will be created based on the unique needs of the requesting college. You maybe asking yourself, “Who makes up these PRTs?” Team members are drawn from a pool of experts that are nominated through or appointed by statewide professional organizations (e.g. the Chancellor’s Office, Academic Senate of California Community College, etc.). WCC’s SLO coordinator was nominated and, selected through this process and currently is serving on a PRT for another community college in the state. The teams composition is approved by the applicable CEO and CCCCCO. (Look more acronyms!) These established Partnership Resource Teams will make three official visits to the college. After reviewing the college’s planning documents and official reports, the first team visit involves a fact-finding opportunity for the team members to meet various individuals and assess the needs of the institution. On the second visit, the team may return to the college to provide examples of best-practices and suggestions. The third visit may be used to help assess implementation if appropriate.

Is there money involved? Short answer, yes! Grants of up to \$150,000 in seed money are potentially available for institutions that receive team visits, in an effort to accelerate the implementation of improvement plans called “Innovation and Effectiveness Plans.” However, these grants will only be available while funds exist. Another goal of the IEPI (regardless of participation and/or the funding of local grants) is to establish an online clearinghouse which will include both effective practices and pitfalls to avoid. This clearinghouse will be integrated with the Success Center of California Community College’s efforts, and will link with the excellent resources found on (Get ready...here comes a string of more anonyms) the ASCCC, ACCJC, RP Group and CCCCCO websites.

The New and Improved TracDat

Earlier this semester we transitioned to the newest version of TracDat. As you know, TracDat is our primary repository for SLO data and Program Reviews. In preparation for this update the college arranged multiple training sessions to familiarize faculty and staff with the “bells and whistles” of this new version. Although this transition happened while the college was in preparation for our current round of program reviews, there were only minimal technical difficulties with data access and reports. We would like to thank the many individuals who helped make this change somewhat “painless” (especially the individuals in our office of instruction). One of the training sessions was recorded and is available for viewing. If you missed a training session and/or you would like to refresh your understanding, please contact a member of the SLO committee for the link.

Assessment Method Highlight:

The Portfolio

The student portfolio might be a good option to help you assess your students and can be applied at the course, program, degree, or institutional level. Basically, a student portfolio is a systematic collection of student work over a period of time in an educational or learning experience. A portfolio will typically include direct evidence of student reflection and self-evaluation. Material submitted in a student portfolio could include both direct and indirect measures of learning and provide assessment data for multiple SLOs with one submission.

There are two major types of portfolios that you could design for your needs. First, a **product portfolio** demonstrates mastery of a learning task and contains only the best /final products. Second, a **process portfolio** documents the stages of learning and can provide a progressive record of student growth that may include various drafts in the creation of the final product. These portfolios could be presented in various formats both physically and virtually.

Please remember, not every assessment tool will be appropriate for every type of assessment. Therefore, using a portfolio in your assessment process may not always be the best fit. Here are some quick pros and cons of using a portfolio for assessment of SLOs.

Pros: Enables measurement of multiple dimensions of student progress with various types of data, collaborative, allows for both direct and indirect measure of learning, and can be used to assess various levels of outcomes.

Cons: Extra time needed to plan and conduct an assessment during the first iteration, gathering the necessary data and work samples might be hard to manage,

For more information on assessments you may want to consider checking out the following book which is also available in our WCC Library.

Suskie, L. (2009) Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide. Boston, MA: Anker. ISBN#978-0-470-28964-8

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Welcome New Members

The WCC SLO Committee is excited to add these two new members to our group and efforts:

- **Dr. Siria Martinez– Dean of Student Success and Research.** Dr. Martinez is a new member of the WCC family and brings a wealth of experience and understanding regarding institutional effectiveness . 
- **Omar Huerta–** Student Representative appointed by ASWCC. We are excited to have a student actively participating with our committee's work.

SLO Tips and Reminders

- There is a difference between “**outcome assessment**” and “**achievement data**”. Although when reviewed together, additional learning gaps and needs can be identified.
- Be sure to submit and/or upload into Trac-Dat your SLO results by **December 21, 2015** (Same day all grades are due from instructors).

A word from your SLO Coordinator...

Welcome to the fourth installment of *The SLO Lane*. Once again we find ourselves nearing the conclusion of another semester. Before we leave for a break, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on this past year.

Last spring YCCD was part of the initial round of IEPI needs assessment (see page 1) and we are waiting to see what those conversations provide for WCC and our students. Little did I know at the time I would eventually find myself intimately involved with the IEPI. I am now an appointed member of a RPT (Resource Partnership Team) assigned to provide a needs assessment and technical support for San Diego Mesa College. My team and I conducted our first of three visits this past month. It is proving to be an excellent professional development opportunity for myself. I get to “geek – out” on institutional effectiveness and assessment discussions with colleagues from other colleges as we work on this

project. My initial work with my team has also provided many new ideas I can not wait to share with our local SLO committee for discussion. On my PRT we are applying the “appreciative inquiry” methodology to our work. If you see me around, stop me and I would be happy to share with you the ideas of this technique.

Over the summer I finished my Ed.S. degree with a focus specifically in Higher Education/Adult Learning. My final capstone project outlined best practices for the training of faculty leaders in the community college setting. I'm proud of my work, and glad to have it done. However, the void that comes after finishing a project was quickly filled with new duties.

In the spring I will be adding additional responsibilities as Vice President of WCC's Academic Senate. It is an exciting time for WCC as we start to work on our Educational Master Plan (EMP) and assess the

needs of our campus and students. Also, the consolidation of existing committees and the potential development of an Institutional Effectiveness Committee provides an opportunity for how we can further integrate assessment into institutional processes and resource allocations.

Currently, I am working with the WCC Curriculum Committee to streamline quality feedback regarding SLOs, and how we can use SLO data to justify the placement of our General Education courses in their respective GE patterns.

Finally, as many of you are aware, our former Dean of Student Success (Molly Senecal) has accepted an opportunity at another institution. I appreciated the years of collaboration, but I am excited to begin new efforts with Dr. Martinez who provides a fresh set of eyes to our established processes.

Enjoy your semester break!



WCC SLO Coordinator:
Christopher Howerton

E-mail: chowerton@yccd.edu
Phone: (530) 661-5771