

Follow-Up Visit

Gavilan College
5055 Santa Teresa Boulevard
Gilroy, CA 95020

This report represents the findings of the Peer Review team that visited Gavilan College on November 6, 2020

Submitted to:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Submitted by:

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Date: December 9, 2020
To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
From: Michael Claire
Subject: Report of Follow-Up Team Report to Gavilan College, November 6, 2020

Introduction

A peer review team visit was conducted to Gavilan College in March 2019. At its meeting June 5-7, 2019, the Commission acted to require Gavilan College to submit a Follow-Up Report followed by a visit. Members of the peer review team conducted the Follow-Up site visit to Gavilan College on November 6, 2020. The purpose of the team visit was to verify that the Follow-Up Report prepared by the College was an accurate thorough examination of the evidence, to determine if the institution has resolved the deficiencies noted in the compliance requirements, and now meets Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

In general, the team found that the College had prepared well for the visit by arranging for meetings with the individual groups agreed upon earlier with the team chair and by assembling appropriate documents used by the team. Over the course of the day the team met with the following individuals:

Kathleen Rose, Superintendent/President
Denee Pescarmona, Vice President, Academic Affairs/Student Services
Carina Cisneros, Interim Dean, Special Programs
Jen Nari, Interim Dean, STEM
Susan Sweeney, Interim Dean, CTE
Peter Howell, Distance Education faculty member
Randy Brown, Interim Dean, Student Foundations

The Follow-Up Report and Visit were expected to document resolution of the following compliance requirements:

- 1. Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education (College Recommendation 1):** In order to meet the standards, the Commission requires that the college ensure that distance education courses consistently adhere to the policies established by the College concerning regular and substantive instructor initiated contact with students.
- 2. Standard II.A.3 (College Recommendation 2):** In order to meet the standards, the Commission requires the college ensure that students receive a course syllabus that includes student learning outcomes from the institution's officially approved course outline.

Team Analysis of College Responses to the 2018 compliance requirements

College Recommendation 1

Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education

In order to meet the standards, the Commission requires that the college ensure that distance education courses consistently adhere to the policies established by the College concerning regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact with students.

Findings and Evidence:

The Team interviewed the administrators and faculty responsible for the College's distance education offerings. The College's approach to responding to the recommendation has centered on three areas: governance, curriculum and documentation; professional development; and faculty evaluation.

With respect to governance, curriculum and documentation, Gavilan has revised *Administrative Procedure (AP) 4105*. *AP 4105* now includes clear definitions of what is expected of effective instructor-initiated contact, as well as initiated student to student interactions. In addition, the administration has negotiated with the Gavilan College Faculty Association (GFA) to modify the collective bargaining agreement, which now includes contract language that expands the definition of regular and effective contact. Finally, the pandemic has accelerated Gavilan's work in defining regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact. The College moved quickly to create an "Emergency DE Addendum" for all classes that were moved online as a result of the Santa Clara County shelter-in-place order. Among other things, the emergency addendum includes language that addresses regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact.

The College has also expanded its distance education professional development efforts. The College has adopted the Online Education Initiative (OEI) course design rubric, which details course design elements that enhance instructor-initiated contact. Related to the OEI work, the College has established a faculty driven Peer Online Course Review process. Approximately 12 faculty have completed a "train the trainer program" and now serve as mentors to other faculty. In addition, the District and the Faculty Association developed an MOU and faculty were provided compensation for completion of a 20 hour, facilitated introduction to online teaching. The College has also offered a 40-hour advanced course. As of August 2020, over 200 faculty have completed these training programs.

Finally, Gavilan has made changes to its evaluation processes to assure that faculty that teach distance education courses are properly evaluated. In particular, the Trained Faculty Observer (TFO) training process now includes training to peer evaluators and administrators on how to properly evaluate regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact. The Distance Education Coordinator is also available to meet with deans or peer evaluators to assist in analyzing courses that are evaluated.

The team reviewed a sample of 15 distance education courses and evaluated those courses using the college's definition of regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact. The team also reviewed the evaluation instrument and encourages the College to consider including "frequency" as part of the evaluation since the frequency is considered as a factor in regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact.

Conclusion:

The College meets the policy. The college has responded to the compliance requirement by clearly defining regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact in its board administrative procedures and its collective bargaining agreement. In addition, the College has modified its professional development program to address best practices in distance education and also ways to achieve substantive and regular instructor-initiated contact. Over 200 faculty have participated in this professional development activity. Finally, the College has improved its peer and administrative evaluation processes to assure compliance the board policy and collective bargaining requirements. The team reviewed a representative sample of distance education course offered in spring 2019. The team found that 13 out of 15 courses reviewed met the threshold for regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact as defined in *Administrative Procedure 4105*. The team concludes that the College has met the recommendation and meets the policy on distance education and correspondence education.

College Recommendation 2

Standard II.A.3

In order to meet the standards, the Commission requires the college ensure that students receive a course syllabus that includes student learning outcomes from the institution's officially approved course outline.

Findings and Evidence

The team interviewed administrators responsible for ensuring that course syllabi are available for all courses offered, that student learning outcomes are documented on the course syllabi, and that the student learning outcomes match the student learning outcomes in the College's officially approved course outline. The College had policies and procedures in place regarding course syllabi at the time of the reaffirmation visit. In response to the recommendation the administration has identified and has implemented several procedural changes to improve the tracking of course syllabi to assure compliance with College policies and the accreditation standard.

Each dean maintains a course syllabus tracking sheet to verify that a course syllabus has been submitted for each course offered. After the syllabus is logged in the tracking sheet, the deans with help from their division assistants, review the course syllabus for each course offered in a semester to ensure that the correct student learning outcomes are included. Syllabi with missing or incorrect student learning outcomes are returned to faculty for correction.

The administration also worked with the faculty union to enact changes in the collective bargaining agreement and the collective bargaining agreement now includes specific contract language that requires faculty to submit a course that includes student learning outcomes that match the official course outline.

Finally, the administration and the faculty have worked collaboratively to provide messaging to the faculty about the importance of including accurate student learning outcomes in their course syllabi.

Conclusion

The College meets the standard. The team reviewed a sample of the course syllabus tracking sheet. The team found evidence that the division actively manages the tracking of course syllabi and that the dean documented areas that required follow-up from faculty who had not submitted a course syllabus, or did not include valid student learning outcomes on the course syllabus (the tracking sheet indicated that the majority of courses had a proper syllabus). The team also reviewed evidence that affirms the College's statement regarding various messages to faculty about the importance of including student learning outcomes on the course syllabus. The team also reviewed the College's "Syllabus/SLO/Assessment website. This website provides assistance and guidance to faculty regarding the course syllabus requirements, as well as a link to course level student learning outcomes. The team reviewed a representative sample of 15 courses offered for the fall 2020 semester. The team found that 15 of the 15 courses reviewed had a course syllabus, and that the course syllabus documented student learning outcomes consistent with those documented in the *Gavilan College Catalog*. The team concludes that the College has fully addressed the recommendation and meets Standard II.A.3