Summary of APR Process and Outcomes
Fall 2012
Prepared by the Program Review Committee

Purpose of Annual Report:
The Program Review Committee prepares an annual report for the College President, Academic Senate President, and the College Council. The purposes of this report are as follows:
- To summarize themes and issues among the 26 instructional units/programs and 15 administrative or student service units (non-instructional) across the College.
- To self-assess the Annual Program Review process and the validity of its outcomes for the purpose of providing recommendations for future improvement, as well as to celebrate achievements.

Outcome of APR Findings: Synthesis of Common Themes and Issues
While individual APRs provide insightful information specific to that program/unit, a synthesis of all programs seeks to identify common themes and issues that tend to appear among several programs, as well as to identify outliers who deviate from shared tendencies among other programs. For the 2012 reporting year, the Program Review Committee identified the following emergent themes. Please note that these themes do not necessarily reflect shared experiences among all programs, but certainly emerged as common themes among multiple units.
- Academically Underprepared Students
    - o Several units indicated their concern and observations of a growing number of students who are academically underprepared to succeed at the college level, and/or who seem to require academic support. These increasing demands, combined with decreasing institutional resources to support these students, require additional support from faculty, as well as impact course success and retention rates.
- Fiscal Constraints
    - o A recurring theme this year was the growing concern of fiscal constraints (including possible fiscal implications pending election results), along with the secondary effects of those limitations (such as course and/or personnel reductions, dwindling instructional supplies, program sustainability, and the ability to meet the diverse academic needs of students)
- Need for Additional Faculty
    - o As noted above, the growing fiscal concerns have resulted in the necessity not to hire additional faculty (in some cases, not to replace retiring faculty or previously vacated positions). These vacancies are resulted in faculty overloads in many instances. These concerns are also precursory to questions pertaining to program sustainability.
- Facility and Security Concerns
    - o Several programs requested additional support and services to maintain facilities and/or improve security consideration to aging buildings.
- Student Success and Retention
    - o Some programs experienced increases in their success and retention rates. However, several programs continue to experience lower than desirable rates. Providing additional support and guidance to programs regarding realistic rates may help guide their efforts.

APR Process: Synthesis of Common Concerns and Issues
- New Timeline:
    - o This is BC's second year implementing our current APR format. However, a new timeline was administered to ensure that information could be submitted to decision-making committees in a timely manner. It is generally agreed that the PRC's timeline and due dates were quite aggressive. Unfortunately, this timeline conflicted with other processes this fall (including accreditation), which resulted in increased anxiety among faculty chairs and programs.
- APR Tracking:
    - o Not all APRs were submitted by their due date. In some cases, it was difficult to ascertain when and to whom the APR was submitted (program, dean, IRP?)
- Self-Evaluation:

- o Data provided by IRP was helpful and standardized. However, the self-evaluation process is not completely objective when opportunity is given to provide subjective (narrative) data.
- Integration:
  - o The APR process seems to occur in relative isolation from other campus process, lacking integration with critical functions of the institution, such as program sustainability, assessment, and curriculum.
- Lengthy APR Process:
  - o The APR process is very lengthy and time-consuming. Some participants do not believe in its value and utility upon completion.
- Data Accuracy:
  - o Some data provided by IRP were found to be inaccurate, which resulted in decreased trust and faith in the APR process by some faculty chairs and program directors.

APR Process: Summary of Commendations
- Integration with College Strategic Goals and Budget Decision Criteria:
  - o Despite its current lack of integration with some institutional processes, the APR has become better integrated with College Strategic Goals and the Budget Decision Criteria. APRs are reviewed by the PRC for their degree of integration with these two critical documents.
- Increased Usage of Objective Data:
  - o Since last year, additional data is reported on each APR by IRP. Units also have the opportunity to provide a narrative response to the objective data.
- Best Practice Forms:
  - o Increased usage of Best Practice forms (17 instructional and 5 non-instructional units submitted at least one Best Practice form with their APR) compared to last year.
- Use of Action Plans:
  - o The Program Review Committee noticed that units were more consistently developing action plans.
- Program Resourcefulness:
  - o The Program Review Committee noticed that many departments demonstrated creativity in the use and allocation of their resources (refer to attached Best Practice forms).
- Improved APR Support and Training:
  - o The Program Review Committee provided frequent communication to deans, faculty chairs, and program directors regarding the APR timeline/calendar, as well as training opportunities on developing their APR (including an APR Manual).

APR Process: Recommendations for Future Practice
- Develop an APR tracking mechanism to determine when and to whom the APR has been submitted.
- Begin the APR process in the Spring to ensure ample time in the Fall to meet deadlines and due dates.
- Incorporate the use of Program-level Learning Outcomes in the APR process.
- Allow programs to self-assess program goals that were reported on last year's APR.
- Develop additional key performance indicators common to all programs. Data to be provided by IRP. The key performance indicators (metrics) would also be used to annually assess program sustainability.
- Ensure accuracy of data reported by IRP.
- Develop a more concise and simplified APR process.
- Integrate APR with other institutional process (program sustainability, assessment, and curriculum).
- Clarify role and function of PRC pertaining to APR (review, evaluation, accountability, etc…?).
- The APR process should allow for programs to respond to, clarify and revise APR upon initial feedback from PRC.

Appendices to Report:
- Chart of APR Survey Responses
- Summary of APR Survey Responses
- Best Practice Forms submitted to the Program Review Committee

APPENDIX 1:

Chart of APR Survey Responses

APPENDIX 2:

Summary of APR Survey Responses

<u>Additional Resources:</u>

The Program Review Committee invited faculty chairs, program directors, and administrators to provide anonymous feedback regarding the APR process. This survey yielded 23 respondents. Their feedback is summarized as follows:

Challenges Encountered:
Process / Timeline
- Too short
- Does not allow enough interaction with department/getting help from colleagues/buy-in
- Overlap with assessment plan and work on strategic plan
- Obtaining up-to-date data

Forms
- SWOT section in APR repetitive
- Gathering data / finding some information needed
- Too time consuming to fill out
- M&O / ISIT spreadsheets
- Checklist not formatted correctly

How to Improve the APR Process:
Timeline
- Stagger timelines for APR, Assessment reports, Spring schedule
- Improve APR schedule awareness/announcements
- APR should be due in October
- Send APR form to departments in spring (maybe without trend data)

Format / Content
- Continue to use similar format
- Simplify form
- Provide guidance about appropriate length/number of pages
- Let chairs know how much information should be recorded
- In SWOT Strengths, clarify "outcomes achieved" and "assessment results"
- M&O form: remove "Estimated total cost"

Training
- Hold future "hands on" workshops in computer room (e.g., L148) with appropriate personnel to help (don't need to show website information)
- Provide more clarity about extra forms
- Provide more guidance for improving, adding/deleting information

Trend / Other Data
- Send IR data the week before school starts in August; will help facilitate more chair-faculty discussion at beginning of semester
- Include employment data
- Include Cost/FTES for all areas
- Labor market data should be a section with an "as indicated" qualifier
- Provide more data or ability to acquire more data easily
- "Other data" section should be part of document

Process / Miscellaneous
- Go online with "central arena" for planning information
- Everyone should be able to see easily what other departments are doing

Anything Else You'd Like Us to Know:
- Is there a rubric on how the information will be used? And how important some details may be weighted in comparison to other departments?
- Include section to compare Main Campus vs. Delano/Arvin/Stockdale courses (retention, success, zip codes
- Dean should review APR with chair to provide oral feedback in addition to the brief written feedback
- "… the Administrative Services APR's really should be done AFTER reviewing the Instructional APR's. There are some impacts to the Administrative Services APRs based on information in the Instructional APRs. Having them done at the same time creates some problems and doesn't properly show how we are planning and linking."

APPENDIX 3:

2012-2013 APR Best Practice Forms