



Outcomes | Innovation | Improvement

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CORE INQUIRIES

Napa Valley College
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The Core Inquiries are based upon the findings of the peer review team that conducted Team ISER Review on February 24, 2022.

Dr. Lori Bennett
Team Chair

Contents

Peer Review Team Roster3
Summary of Team ISER Review.....4
Core Inquiries5

Napa Valley College

Peer Review Team Roster

Team ISER Review

February 24, 2022

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Summary of Team ISER Review

INSTITUTION: Napa Valley College

DATE OF TEAM ISER REVIEW: February 24, 2022

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Lori Bennett

A 10-member accreditation peer review team conducted Team ISER Review of Napa Valley College on February 24, 2022. The Team ISER Review is a one-day, online meeting, analysis of an institution's self-evaluation report. The peer review team received the college's institutional self-evaluation report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the Team ISER Review. In general, team members found that the ISER detailed the processes used by the College to address Eligibility Requirements, Commission Standards, and Commission Policies, although some gaps were noted. The team confirmed that the ISER development process included representatives from faculty, staff, and administration. The team observed that the ISER contained several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement and a Quality Focus Essay.

In preparation for the Team ISER Review, the team chair attended a team chair training workshop on December 1, 2021, and held a pre-review meeting with the college CEO on January 20, 2022. The entire peer review team received team training provided by staff from ACCJC on February 3, 2022. Prior to the Team ISER Review, team members completed their team assignments, identified areas for further clarification, and provided a list of requests for additional evidence to be considered during Team ISER Review.

During the Team ISER Review, team members spent the morning discussing their initial observations and their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the College for the purpose of determining whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and US ED regulations. In the afternoon, the team further synthesized their findings to validate the work of the college and identified standards the college meets, as well as developed Core Inquiries to be pursued during the Focused Site Visit, which will occur in October 2022.

Core Inquiries are a means for communicating potential areas of institutional noncompliance, improvement, or exemplary practice that arise during the Team ISER Review. They describe the areas of emphasis for the Focused Site Visit that the team will explore to further their analysis to determine whether standards are met and accordingly identify potential commendations or recommendations. The college should use the Core Inquiries and time leading up to the focused site visit as an opportunity to gather more evidence, collate information, and to strengthen or develop processes in the continuous improvement cycle. In the course of the Focused Site Visit, the ACCJC staff liaison will review new or emerging issues which might arise out of the discussions on Core Inquiries.

Core Inquiries

Based on the team's analysis during the Team ISER Review, the team identified the following core inquiries that relate to potential areas of clarification, improvement, or commendation.

<p>Core Inquiry 1: The team was impressed with the college's professional learning activities outlined in the ISER. The team would like to learn more about the college's professional development strategies and efforts.</p>
<p>Standards or Policies: II.A.7, III.A.14</p>
<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The team would like to learn more about the college's development and implementation and effectiveness of the Instructional Design Institute.b. The team would like to learn more about the implementation and evaluation of other professional learning activities for staff and faculty.
<p>Topics of discussion during interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Focus on effective online teaching and culturally responsive pedagogy to address access, equity, and success.
<p>Request for Additional Information/Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Agendas for minutes for professional development trainingb. Schedules and opportunities for professional development
<p>Request for Observations/Interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Faculty teaching onlineb. Professional development leadersc. Associate Vice President of Human Resources, Training and Development

Core Inquiry 2: The team would like to learn more about the college’s systematic and integrated use of data in planning processes and the integration of those processes in decision making.

Standards or Policies: I.B.2, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.8, I.B.9, II.C.1, II.C.2, II.C.4,

Description:

In the ISER and evidence, the team observed gaps in the implementation of institutional planning and effectiveness processes in several areas. To better understand how the college integrates data into its planning and decision-making processes:

- a. The team is interested in learning how the college defines its student services for the purposes of SLO assessment.
- b. The team would like to learn more about how the college uses assessment results and other types of data and organizes institutional processes to support student learning and achievement and inform decision-making, particularly in Student Services.
- c. The team would like to learn more about how the college disaggregates its qualitative data by mode and delivery method to assess student learning and achievement.
- d. The team would like to learn more about how the college informs its constituents about the outcomes of its planning and resource allocation processes.
- e. The team would like to learn more about the college connects its athletic and co-curricular offerings to the institution’s mission and how they contribute to the social and cultural dimensions of the student experience.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Practices for use of data in the planning and decision-making processes.
- b. Practices for collecting, disaggregating, assessing, and using student learning and achievement data, particularly in student services.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. A list of all student support service programs with SLOs
- b. Planning Handbook
- c. Evidence of progress on Improvement Plans A, B, C

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Institutional Research Dean and/or appropriate research staff
- b. Committee co-chairs connected to the college planning and resource allocation process
 - a. Planning Committee
 - b. District Technology Committee
 - c. Education Technology Committee
 - d. Resource Allocation Committee
- c. VPSS and others involved in outcomes assessment in Student Services
- d. Administrator and faculty member who can provide an example of the process to take an identified need from the initial request through the resource allocation process
- e. Personnel responsible for co-curricular activities, including athletics (e.g. Vice President of Student Affairs, Dean, or Director of Athletics)

Core Inquiry 3: The team would like to learn more about the college's systematic evaluation or review and adoption of policies and processes.

Standards or Policies: I.A.4, I.B.7, I.C.5, III.A.1, 3, III.D.1, IV.A.5

Description:

The team observed evidence in the ISER that suggests several policy areas are not being reviewed regularly.

- a. The team would like to learn more about the college process for regular review and evaluation of its policies and practices across all areas of the institution, including the cycle of review for the mission and values statements.
- b. The team would like to learn more about the college's process regarding publication of information across different sources to assure integrity in all representations of its mission, programs, and services.
- c. The team would like to learn more about the college's plan to adopt APs for BP 7120 and BP 6200.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Processes for regular review of BPs and APs, including information about how the institution implements and monitors these processes to ensure timely review, including roles within the process.
- b. Process for review of college mission and vision.
- c. Processes for ensuring that new or revised student information and/or policies are updated across all publications/mediums.
- d.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. List of all APs date of last review and currently under review
- b. List of all BPs date of last review and currently under review
- c. Process for review of mission statement

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Personnel responsible for maintaining the website and ensuring that information is consistent across publications
- b. President and others responsible for monitoring and/or reviewing policies and developing/implementing APs
- c. Personnel responsible for ensuring a review of the mission statement

Core Inquiry 4: The team would like to learn more about the college's employee evaluation policies, procedures, and processes.

Standards or Policies: III.A.5

Description:

- a. The team observed statements in the ISER suggesting low completion rates for employee evaluations.
- b. The team would like to learn more about the college's evaluation practices and processes for ensuring timely completion of evaluation groups for all employee groups, including faculty.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Processes for monitoring timely completion of evaluations, including faculty evaluations.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Evaluation schedules
- b. List of employees not evaluated

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Associate Vice President of Human Resources, Training & Development and any other personnel involved with oversight for timely completion of evaluations (including faculty evaluations)

Core Inquiry 5: The team would like to learn more about the College’s overall resource management strategies and processes.

Standards or Policies: III.B.2, III.B.4; III.C.1, III.C.2, III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.3, III.D.4, III.D.5, III.D.6, III.D.8, III.D.9, III.D.10, III.D.11, III.D.12, III.D.16

Description:

The ISER and supporting evidence did not provide the team with a clear understanding of the college’s processes for resource management and strategies for sustained fiscal health. To better understand how the college manages and allocates its resources:

- a. The team would like to learn more about the College’s overall processes and strategies for managing its facilities, equipment, and technology, including practices for maintaining current facilities/equipment and ensuring consideration of total cost of ownership when planning for new facilities, equipment, and technology.
- b. The team would like to learn more about how the college prioritizes and allocates resources to address its short- and long-range plans for staffing, facilities, equipment, and technology, including the types of data that are considered for the planning and prioritization processes.
- c. The team would like to know more about how the college communicates resource allocation decisions to the campus.
- d. The team would like to learn more about how the college defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development.
- e. The team would like to learn more about how the college estimates revenue and/or appropriations. The team found ongoing recurring deficits in budget, and would like to know more about what has caused this situation.
- f. The team would like to learn more about how the college prepares and disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision-making.
- g. The team would like to learn more about how the college’s financial and internal control systems are evaluated and assessed for effectiveness.
- h. The team would like to learn more about the college’s practices for oversight of finances to ensure long-term financial stability, including practices for managing its cash balance, reserves, and long-term financial obligations.
- i. The team would like to learn more about how the college reviews contracts for alignment with college mission and strategic goals, impact on college resources (personnel time, facilities, matching funds), and potential liability exposure to ensure effective use of college resources and long-term financial stability.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Processes for ongoing maintenance and utilization of existing facilities.
- b. Processes and decision-making criteria for planning, prioritization, and resource allocation to support funding of college operations, plans, and long-term obligations.
- c. Processes and procedures for budget development and ongoing management of financial resources, including planning for funding of long-term obligations
- d. Total cost of ownership for facilities, equipment, and technology.
- e. Contract/Agreement/Grant review process.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. ADA Transition Plan or alternative access plan
- b. Outstanding work order report, sorted by priority/category and date of entry.
- c. FCMAT report.
- d. Evidence in budget or financial reports of resources allocated to fund FMP, TMP, Five-Year Capital Outlay and Scheduled Maintenance Plans, PlanNet Infrastructure Assessment/Plan, other facilities, equipment, and technology needs, and long-term obligations, including: FY 2020-21 Audit Report, FY 2022-23 Tentative or Final Budget, Five-year budget projection, List of technology replacement expenses since 2018-19 (linked to the planning document/process).
- e. Most recently submitted Final Project Proposal and Initial Project Proposal(s) for State Capital Outlay Funds.
- f. Documents/plans that demonstrate the college's evaluation/projections for total cost of ownership related to operation and maintenance, including staffing, and future replacement of capital assets – facilities, equipment, technology.
- g. Most recently completed annual unit plan/resource allocation process.
- h. Updated Technology Master Plan.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Finance, Facilities, and Technology management team, and/or committee(s) or chair(s) (Planning and Budget, Facilities, Technology)
- b. Vice President of Business and Finance
- c. President

Core Inquiry 6: The team would like to learn more about the college’s leadership and governance practices and processes.

Standards or Policies: IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.B.1, IV.B.3, IV.B.4, IV.B.5, IV.C.5, IV.C.7, IV.C.12

Description:

The ISER and supporting evidence did not provide the team with a clear understanding of the college’s processes for governance and decision-making.

- a. The team would like to understand how administrative roles and offices are involved in the governance and decision-making processes.
- b. The team is interested in learning more about the college’s collaboration in its governance and leadership.
- c. The team would like to understand the student’s role in the decision-making processes.
- d. The team would like to learn more about the Superintendent/President’s role in providing leadership in planning, budgeting, and assessing institutional effectiveness.
- e. The team would like to learn more about the Superintendent/President’s role in guiding the college process that sets values, goals, and priorities and ensuring that the allocation of resources supports and improves learning and achievement.
- f. The team would like to learn more about the Superintendent/President’s role in guiding and providing leadership in the accreditation processes and ensuring compliance with accreditation requirements.
- g. The team would like to learn more about the Superintendent/President’s role in assuring the development and implementation of statutes, regulations, and board policies, including effective control of budget and expenditures.
- h. The team would like to learn more about the governing board’s role and responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity and stability.
- i. The team would like to learn more about the governing board’s process to regularly assess, and revise as necessary, its policies and bylaws.
- j. The team would like to learn more about how the board delegates full responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without board interference and how they hold the CEO accountable for the operation of the college.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Roles and opportunities for participation in the governance and decision-making processes.
- b. Vehicles of collaboration in the governance and decision-making processes
- c. Superintendent/President’s role in ensuring board policies are current.
- d. Governing Board’s role and its ultimate responsibility for legal matters, financial integrity and stability of the college.
- e. Governing Board’s role in reviewing board policies.
- f. Governing Board’s interaction with the Superintendent/President’s accountability for the fiscal operation of the college.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Administrative procedures regarding decision making that align with board policies for decision making.
- b. Evidence showing student engagement and participation in the governance process.
- c. Evidence demonstrating the Superintendent/President's active leadership in the accreditation process.
- d. Evidence of the executive leadership's role and leadership in the accreditation process.
- e. Evidence of collaboration in decision making across the college, instructional, student services, administrative services, etc.
- f. Evidence demonstrating the Superintendent/President's active leadership in assessing institutional effectiveness.
- g. Evidence of the Superintendent/President's role in managing the resources of the college.
- h. Evidence the board regularly assesses its policies and bylaws.
- i. Evidence of the Governing Board's awareness of the college's fiscal status and participation in policy or decision-making related to planning and budgeting for the
- j. Evidence of the Governing Board's direction to hold the Superintendent/President accountable for the financial operations of the district.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Student leaders
- b. Council of Presidents
- c. Governing Board members
- d. President