SLO Update

December 1, 2008

To: Taft College Academic Senate
From: Geoffrey Dyer, SLO Coordinator

Short Term Goals:
Ensure most current Course SLOs are posted on website and syllabi.
Fall Assessment Team members report to divisions in spring.
Recruit members for spring Assessment Team.

Long Term Goals:
Draft certificate/program SLOs.
Train faculty in eLumen and incorporate eLumen into more assessments.
Integrate SLOs and assessment fully into campus culture.
Incorporate results of assessments into planning process.

Staying on Track
According to the Letter from early September from Barbara Beno, President of the ACCJC, Community colleges have until fall of 2012 to reach the level of “Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement” on the ACCJC rubric for SLOs. However, the letter also states that at this point, colleges should be at the second level of the rubric, “development.” To stay on track and continue to make progress, please draft course SLOs if you have not done so and share them with discipline appropriate faculty. You can view completed ones at the Taft College SLO website; templates and training materials from our summer in-service are posted there as well. Additionally, in the coming semester, faculty should make efforts to begin to articulate program and certificate level SLOs, participate in the Spring SLO Assessment Team (if you have not already been on an assessment team), and begin to design and adopt authentic strategies of assessment.

Course SLOs at Taft College
The Learning Outcomes for a given course must be the same across sections. Full time, discipline appropriate faculty must agree on the course level SLOs. The form to draft course level SLOs as well as the training materials from the fall, 2008 in-service are available on the Taft College SLO website in the “Assessment Resources for Faculty Section.” To see completed course level SLOs from the fall in-service, click on the “Course Student Learning Outcomes” tab.
on the webpage. Once full time disciplinary faculty agree on the SLOs for a given course, send them to the SLO coordinator for review and upload at gedyer@taft.org.

Taft College has had the policy of placing SLOs on syllabi since last year. Please make sure that your current course SLOs are on your syllabi for the spring semester. On Thursday, January 15th, an in-service session will from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. will take place in the Library Conference Room. Plan to use this time to work with discipline faculty and the SLO coordinator if you still need course level SLOs.

There is no requirement at Taft College that Course SLOs must be on Course Outlines of Record. However, course SLOs must be on the website and syllabi. If you would like to add your SLOs to your Course Outline of Record, that is fine—it increases their visibility. The potential pitfall of adding Course SLOs to Course Outlines of Record is that Course SLOs will be revised more frequently than Course Outlines.

SLO Assessment Teams

The fall SLO Assessment Team members are almost done with their individual assessment reports. They have taken an aggressive lead on implementing and documenting assessments. The participants are Karen Shah, Jessica Grimes, David Layne, David Berry, Linda West, Christina Collinwood, Diane Jones, Mariza Martinez, Julian Martinez, and Jane Cuellar. Geoffrey Dyer will be contacting division chairs requesting that members of the fall Assessment Team be added to the agenda for division meetings in spring to present their reports.

Because of the learning curve and workload of doing and documenting assessment, administration approved a proposal last summer to allow faculty to participate in assessment teams for extra duty compensation. However, it is strongly felt by many faculty that assessment and documentation of assessment fall clearly in the domain of professional commitment. While the assessment teams are receiving compensation for their specialized training, assessment, and sharing of their reports, this is a transitional effort. Assessment Teams will be offered in spring, 2009; fall, 2009; and spring, 2010. By fall of 2010, SLO assessment should be fully integrated into Taft College’s culture, and the extra duty of assessment teams will cease.

If you have not served in the summer or fall Assessment Team, please consider applying for the spring Assessment Team. The recruitment announcement will be posted in early 2009. The focus of the spring Assessment Team will be authentic assessment.

Authentic Assessment

The ACCJC rubric for SLOs indicates in the level of Development (our goal for the site visit) that “College has established authentic assessment strategies for assessing student learning outcomes as appropriate to intended course, program, and degree learning
outcomes.” The statewide academic senate has approved Janet Fulks to speak to Taft College’s Academic Senate during our spring in-service on the topic of authentic assessment.

Janet Fulks is a member of the Executive Committee of the Statewide Academic Senate. She is considered by many to be California’s leading expert on assessment of Student Learning Outcomes at the community college level. Her online workbook, Assessing Student Learning in Higher Education has been a guiding resource for our SLO Assessment Teams and has been adopted by many community colleges as a resource. Janet Fulks will present on January 16th at the Taft College Academic Senate regarding “authentic assessment.” To discuss authentic assessment in Student Services, she will bring her colleague Sue Granger-Dickson.