

Lake Tahoe Community College

Accreditation Progress Report

March 2008



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LAKE TAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Progress Report March 2008

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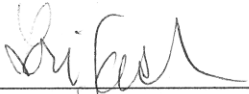
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STATEMENT ON REPORT PREPARATION

This follow-up Progress Report was prepared by a team comprised of the following individuals:

- Kurt Green, Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator
- Lori Gaskin, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Student Services
- Chris Janzen, Vice President, Business Services
- Guy Lease, Retired Superintendent/President and Consultant

The team prepared this report over a several week period between the time the college was notified in early February 2008 of the need to submit a follow-up progress report and the deadline for submittal of the report (April 1, 2008). In its draft form, the Progress Report was circulated college-wide for review and feedback in early March. The document was presented to the college's shared governance body, College Council, for review and recommendation to the Board of Trustees on March 17, 2008. The Board of Trustees adopted this Progress Report on March 25, 2008.



Lori Gaskin, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent/President
Lake Tahoe Community College

INTRODUCTION

At its January 9-11, 2008 meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges accepted the Lake Tahoe Community College's September 2007 Progress Report with a requirement that the college complete a second Progress Report by April 1, 2008. The college was notified of this requirement via an action letter from the Commission dated January 31, 2008. The Commission requested that this second Progress Report be focused in nature and specifically demonstrate resolution of the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2:

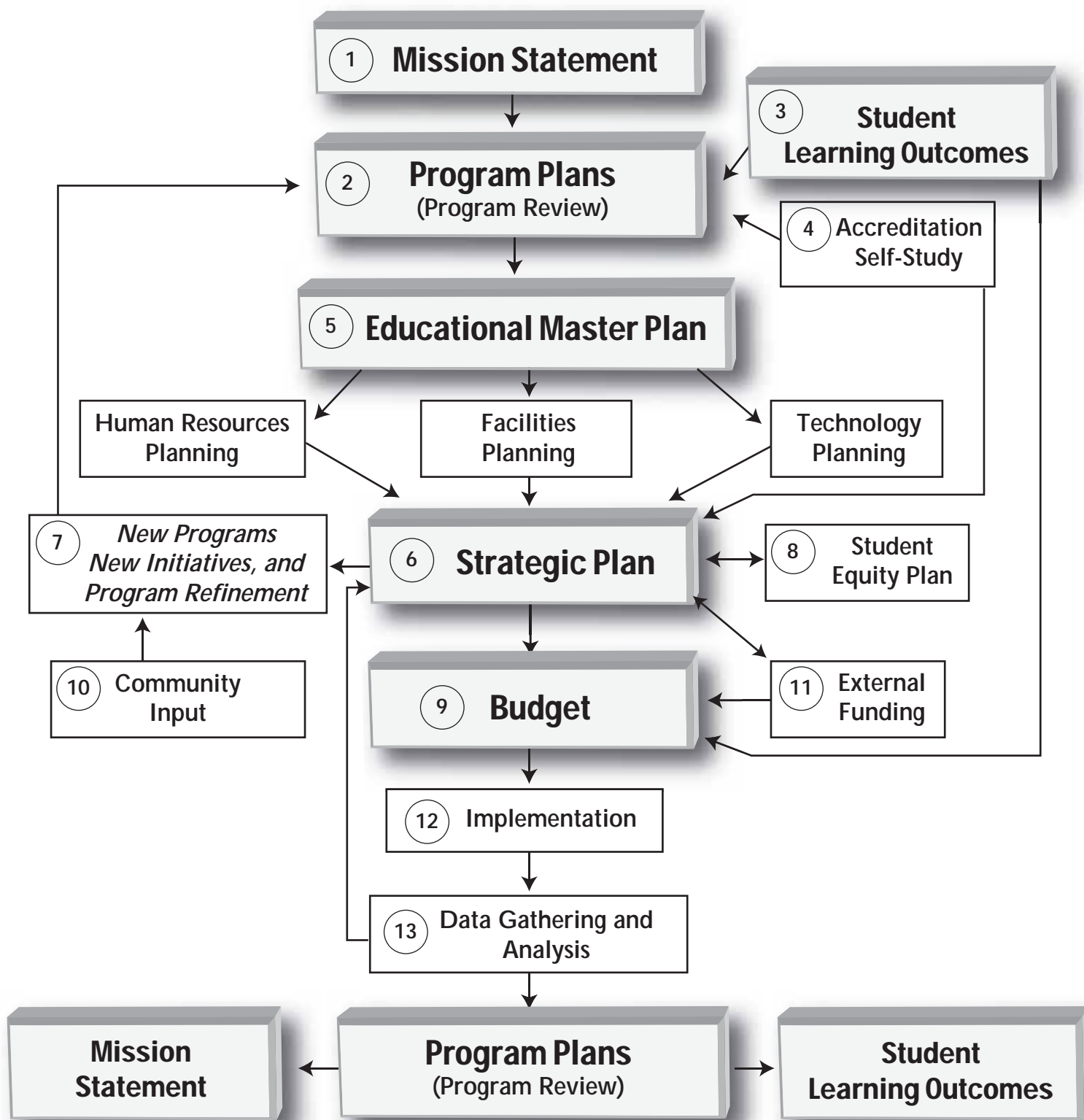
To obtain substantial compliance with Standard I, the visiting team recommends the institution reviews its established planning cycle and demonstrate the extent to which the planning process and cycle includes the establishment and measurement of SLOs and how these are linked to the mission statement, institutional research, planning, resource allocation and evaluation (I.A.4, I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7).

In order to demonstrate the linkages between SLO development, outcomes assessment and evaluation, institutional improvement, institutional planning, budget development, and resource allocation, the college is submitting a set of graphical and narrative documents which explain the integration of these processes at Lake Tahoe Community College. These are described below:

- The flow chart on page 4 entitled ***Planning Linkages at Lake Tahoe Community College*** provides a graphical representation of our major planning processes on campus and the ways in which they link together. Each numbered process is accompanied by a brief descriptor found on pages 5-7.
- The flow chart on page 8 entitled ***Linking Resource Allocation to Planning: Budget Development and Implementation Process*** provides a detailed graphical representation of the budget process identified as Box #9 on the ***Planning Linkages at Lake Tahoe Community College*** flow chart (on page 4).
- Finally, the narrative beginning on page 9 entitled ***Student Learning Outcomes: Linkage to Planning*** utilizes our college's Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan (adopted by the Academic Senate on April 27, 2007) as a means of demonstrating the linkage between our SLO implementation and assessment processes with college-wide planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.

We believe these documents accurately and genuinely capture the college's practices of integrating all aspects of institutional planning with (1) student learning outcomes development and implementation; (2) outcomes assessment and evaluation; (3) institutional improvement; and (4) resource allocation.

Planning Linkages at Lake Tahoe Community College



**DESCRIPTORS:
PLANNING LINKAGES AT
LAKE TAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

These descriptors provide a brief explanation of the major planning processes and linkages delineated in the *Planning Linkages at Lake Tahoe Community College* flowchart on page 4.

Box #1: Mission Statement

- The mission statement is reviewed twice in every six year cycle.

The mission of the college drives all planning processes as well as institutional decision-making by defining the college's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning.

Box #2: Program Plans (also known as Program Reviews)

- Program planning is a recurring assessment and evaluative study of each college program conducted every six years.

The college evaluates all programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of and/or contributions to student learning, currency, and future needs in the areas of human resources, facilities, equipment, and technology.

Box #3: Student Learning Outcomes

- The student learning outcomes process is an iterative and ongoing cycle of learning outcomes development, implementation, and assessment.

Institutional, program level, and course level student learning outcomes form the basis for the assessment of student learning and institutional improvement. See page 9 for details of the development, implementation, and assessment of student learning outcomes and their linkage to institutional planning and resource allocation.

Box #4: Accreditation Self Study

- This comprehensive study is conducted every six years.

The accreditation self study provides the opportunity for the college to evaluate its effectiveness in fostering and supporting student learning and in pursuing institutional excellence and improvement.

Box #5: Educational Master Plan

- This planning document is updated every three years.

The Educational Master Plan develops a map for the college's future by identifying and examining external factors impacting the institution, enrollment trends and projections, human resource needs, and facilities and technology plans.

Box #6: Strategic Plan

- Strategic planning is typically developed for a three to five year period and is reviewed and adjusted as necessary every year.

The Strategic Plan at Lake Tahoe Community College is designed to provide an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement for student learning and institutional effectiveness. Strategic planning at the college is driven by the mission statement and reflects campus-wide planning efforts through program review processes (locally known as program planning), the Education Master Plan, and the analysis of student learning outcomes to achieve the broad educational purposes and goals of the institution.

Box #7: New Programs, New Initiatives, and Program Refinement

- This represents an ongoing process of new program development and refinement of existing programs.

Existing programs are continuously assessed to ensure currency, quality, and effectiveness. Program development in new and emerging instructional and student support areas is evaluated in light of the goal of meeting the varied educational needs of our students and the community served by the college. New statewide initiatives are implemented in support of learning and enhancement of the success of our students.

Box #8: Student Equity Plan

- This represents an ongoing process of institutional evaluation and improvement to ensure student access and success.

This planning process examines metrics of access and success for certain population groups (i.e., ethnicity, students with disabilities, and gender) to identify potential barriers to access and success and to develop strategies to mitigate such barriers.

Box #9: Budget

- This represents an ongoing process of resource allocation linked to planning.

The annual budget plan effectively allocates human, physical, technological and financial resources to achieve the institutional mission, including implementation of student learning outcomes. See page 8 for a detailed flow chart of the budget development and implementation process.

Box #10: Community Input

- This represents an ongoing process of community-based input and institutional assessment.

Community input through environmental scans, surveys, and advisory committee feedback provides a connection to evolving community needs and input into future program development and refinement of existing programs.

Box #11: External Funding

External funds come from state and federal categorical sources that carry specific guidelines for the use of such resources and typically require annual planning and reporting. Due to matching requirements or associated institutional obligations, external funds frequently require the allocation of General Fund resources. These categorically funded programs generally require some type of program evaluation to provide evidence that they contribute to student success and to the achievement of student learning outcomes.

Box #12: Implementation

See page 8 for a detailed flow chart of the budget development and implementation process.

Box #13: Data Gathering and Analysis

- This represents as ongoing process.

In order to measure the effectiveness of student learning and institutional performance, the college gathers data that is subsequently used for ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.

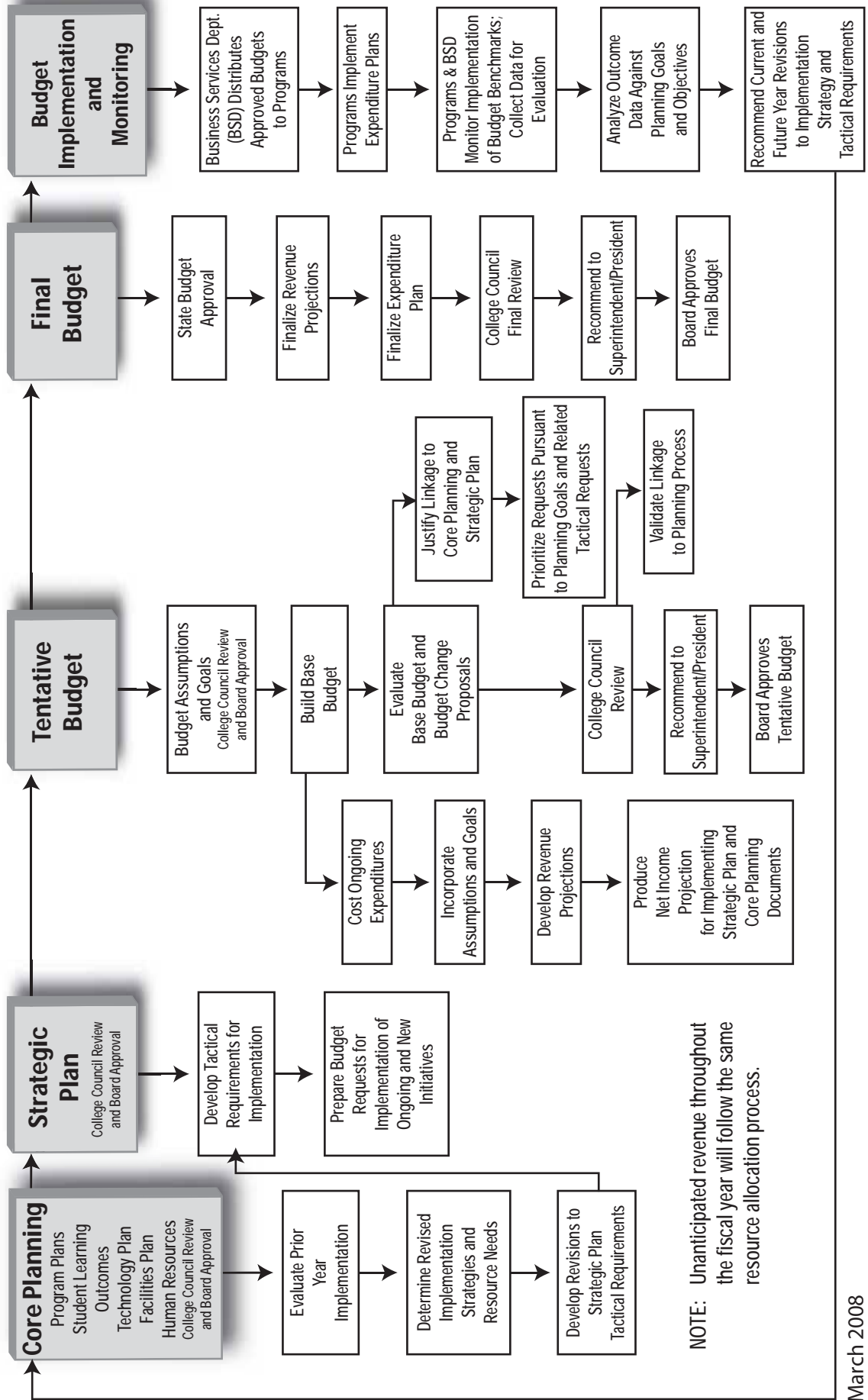
Linking Mission Statement and Student Learning Outcomes to Program Plans

Lake Tahoe Community College's planning process is cyclical by design and provides a feedback loop to our mission and our institutional planning processes.

LINKING RESOURCE ALLOCATION TO PLANNING

Lake Tahoe Community College

Budget Development and Implementation Process



NOTE: Unanticipated revenue throughout the fiscal year will follow the same resource allocation process.

March 2008

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: LINKAGE TO PLANNING

Student Learning Outcomes are integrated into Lake Tahoe Community College's planning process through our Academic Senate adopted SLO Assessment Plan. This Assessment Plan is outlined below with italicized, explanatory comments following each point.

1. Faculty develops their own course-based Student Learning Outcomes and map assignments designed to assess specific, desired outcomes.

We are currently halfway through our three year cycle of developing course level SLOs. As of February 29, 2008, we have completed SLOs for 529 of our 1140 courses. We are in year one of our assessment processes and each fulltime faculty member is selecting a course to assess and develop a map to LTCC's General Education Core Competencies (see Lake Tahoe Community College's Progress Report dated September 2007 for a full discussion of the General Education Core Competencies).

2. Choose a methodology and assess the SLO to corresponding aspects of one of the General Education Core Competencies or specific course SLOs.

Each faculty member is selecting the methodologies most appropriate for their discipline and submitting their process to the Assessment Committee.

3. Assess the assignment using a rubric that articulates specific standards and criteria.

This process is to be completed by the end of this academic year.

4. If the assignment is a major exam or project, faculty instead look at specific groups of questions that address the SLO or core competency.

5. Faculty evaluate the results of the students' assessments, note what student needs and issues were revealed and how the assignment or teaching activities could be altered to improve student learning.

This is where the connection to planning, budgeting, and resource allocation begins. Depending upon the discipline, departmental or interdepartmental faculty will meet to discuss student achievement of SLOs. Faculty comment on and summarize their assessment results and recommendations in their departmental Program Plan (also known as program review). These activities are the basis for step #6 below. This is also where individual course level SLOs become incorporated into established program level SLOs.

- 6. Faculty dialogue about their results in department meetings, sharing their assignments, their evaluation of their results, and their ideas for improvement, including what assistance the college could provide to improve student learning.**

Recommendations for curricular or programmatic change and budgeting support are developed through these discussions and are summarized in a written report, copies of which are sent to the Assessment Committee for review. These recommendations are used as input into departmental program planning and strategic planning, and as the basis for annual budget development (see page 8 for a detailed flow chart of the budget development and implementation process).

- 7. Findings are submitted to the institutional researcher who aggregates the data and reports institution-wide results in *Graphically Speaking*.**

As a result of discussion between the Academic Senate and the administration regarding SLOs and assessment, an Institutional Researcher position is being supported commencing 2008/09.

- 8. Department chairs record the issues and suggestions that arise during the discussion on the Assessment Analysis form, which is forwarded to the SLO Committee.**

This data is compiled, reviewed, and analyzed on a departmental level. The recommendations are then forwarded to the Assessment Committee for Academic Senate review and to the deans for administrative review. Once these steps have been completed, recommendations for planning and budgetary changes are made to the College Council. These changes will be used to improve student learning in association with achieving stated Student Learning Outcomes.

- 9. Faculty then generates the assignments that will be assessed in the next sequence, and the process continues.**

This assessment plan is understood to be an on-going process. The ultimate goal is for recommendations for improvement emanating from the SLO assessment process to be continually incorporated into the annual departmental budget development process, departmental program planning process, through program planning to the educational master planning process, and ultimately to inform strategic planning.