Los Angeles Valley College
5800 Fulton Avenue
Valley Glen, CA 91401

Follow-Up Report

October 15, 2008

Submitted to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Accreditation Follow-Up Report

Submitted by Los Angeles Valley College

October 15, 2008

Approved by the Los Angeles Community College District

Board of Trustees

[Signature]

Kelly G. Candaele, President

October 1, 2008

Dated
# Table of Contents

Statement on Report Preparation ..................................3  
Response to College Recommendation #2 ..................4  
Response to College Recommendation #3 ..............6  
Response to College Recommendation #4 ............9  
Response to College Recommendation #5 ..........13

---

ALL EVIDENCE CITED IS  
ON THE ACCOMPANYING DISK  
OR ACCESSIBLE ONLINE
Statement on Report Preparation

In preparation for submitting this follow-up report, the college solicited information and evidence from the following people: Rebecca Stein, Education Master Plan Committee Chair and SLO Coordinator; Yasmin Delahoussaye, VP of Student Services/2007-08 College Council Chair; Richard Torquato, LA VC Budget Committee Chair; Tom Jacobsmeier, VP of Administrative Services; Dr. Carole Yee, Dean of Academic Affairs; Deborah diCesare, Dean of Academic Affairs and Workforce Development; Don Gauthier, LA VC Academic Senate President; Joanne Waddell, Los Angeles College Faculty Guild Chapter President; Sandy Mayo, VP of Academic Affairs; and Sue Carleo, Acting College President. Input was solicited at the annual College Council Retreat on June 24, 2008. The narrative was edited and the final report compiled by Deborah Kaye, Faculty Accreditation Chair for the self study.

The report was reviewed and approved by the college Academic Senate on September 18, 2008 and by the College Council, the college's primary shared governance body, on September 23, 2008.

On October 1, 2008, the Board of Trustees' Committee on Planning and Student Success heard a presentation from the college and approved the progress report. All of the Board members received copies of the report prior to the meeting.

Sue Carleo, Acting President, Los Angeles Valley College
Responses to Recommendations

College Recommendation 2: Integration of Planning Processes

The team recommends that the college strengthen, document with narrative, and disseminate the integration of all its planning processes. These processes should incorporate evaluation, improvement and re-evaluation, as needed, of all its programs and services. (Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.2.f, III.A.6, III.B.2.b, III.C.2, III.D.3, IV.B.2.b).

Educational Master Plan

After a year of working on a new strategic plan, a campus committee decided to speed up the process by bring in consultants from Stratus. On February 1, 2008 the campus held a kick-off to mark the start of an intensive period of work to complete a new Educational Master Plan. The process was divided into three phases:

Phase I: Response to the Chancellor’s Request for an Educational Master Plan Update
Phase II: Completion of a new Educational Master Plan
Phase III: Plan for implementation

Interviews were conducted with more than 100 members of the campus community during March and April (2.1). A working retreat was held in May to work on preliminary documents. Presentations on Phase I were made and a final report was submitted to the District Planning Committee on May 28, 2008 (2.2). The Educational Master Plan 2008-2013 (2.3) was approved by the Academic Senate on June 19, 2008 and by the College Council and College President on June 24, 2008.

Starting in summer 2008, the EMP committee began working on Phase III (the implementation plan). The approved EMP is posted on the college website and an electronic copy was provided to faculty on flash drives on Opening Day 2008.

The EMP identifies all college planning processes. One focus of the EMP is the integration of planning processes and the design of a central plan that will guide all future planning efforts on campus. Included are strategies on ways to link planning efforts and strategies for evaluation.

Central to this effort is the implementation phase in which we are working to complete an implementation matrix to ensure that the plan is followed and its success is regularly evaluated (2.4).

The Educational Master Plan is linked to Program Review and other departmental activities, e.g., faculty hiring. The Instructional Program Committee, an Academic Senate sub-committee, incorporated these links to ensure departments assess not only their own unique disciplinary situations but also their part in these college-wide and community issues (2.5).
College Council
1. In September 2007, the College Council appointed a sub-committee on planning, which identified specific strategies that would strengthen our planning process by first monitoring and evaluating progress on all of our plans. The group identified 21 plans that the college is responsible for completing. To help track and integrate these plans, a planning activities calendar was adopted by the College Council in November 2007 and is now part of the Decision Making, Governance, and Procedures Handbook (2.6).

2. A planning notebook, which contained the planning activities calendar and a grid listing when plans are to be submitted to the College Council, was given to each member of the Council (2.7). The notebooks give a description of each plan, the applicable Title 5 section, the responsible party, the date that the plan was last updated, the date of the next update, and how often the plan must be completely revised. The notebooks allow Council members a place to file reports together as they are presented and to take notes on each. Each responsible party has a specific month of the year when he/she is required to appear before College Council to review the plan, provide updates, and answer any questions. The process is ongoing throughout the year (2.8).

College Council plans for this year include:
1. Identifying specific strategies that will create a mechanism to disseminate information on how planning at LAVC is integrated through linkages to resource allocation and decision making.
2. Identifying specific strategies to be incorporated into a planning-implementation-evaluation cycle that includes improvement and re-evaluation of all of our programs and services.

Hiring a Dean of Research and Planning
Our plans are in place – the next step is to tie them together and connect them to our Educational Master Plan. This will be the charge of our new Dean of Research and Planning. When the college’s Associate Dean of Research left the position to return to teaching, the decision was made to broaden and refocus the position by hiring a Dean of Research and Planning (2.9).

Although the EMP was only recently approved, efforts are already being made to base planning and decision-making on the document. One example is the Innovation Funds for Career and Technical Education programs. The funds are designed to spur innovation in the development of new career technical education programs or courses to prepare students for careers in high-growth, high-demand industries. One of the criteria included on the application is for disciplines to show how their proposal ties into the EMP (2.10).

Evidence
2.1 Interview list http://www.lavc.edu/emp/stratus.html
2.2 Phase I report and presentation http://www.lavc.edu/emp/stratus.html
2.3 Educational Master Plan & appendices http://www.lavc.edu/emp/EdMasterPlan.html
2.4 Implementation Matrix
College Recommendation 3: Development and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The team recommends that the college accelerate the continued development and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course, program, certificate and degree levels to ensure continuous improvement. (Standards I.B.1, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.3, IV.B.2.b)

Development of SLOs
The college has made great strides in the writing of SLOs and planned assessments since the ACCJC site visit in March 2007. At that time, we had approved course-level SLOs for only 35 out of a total of 1302 courses (2.7%) and 7 program-level SLOs out of a total of 133 (5.3%). Currently, of the 1252 courses listed in our catalog, 645 courses (51.5%) and 20 out of 149 programs (13.4%) have approved SLOs (3.1). In addition, SLOs that have been written for 184 courses are pending approval. These figures show substantial progress over the previous year.

Our SLO approval form requires both steps of writing an outcome statement and identifying appropriate methodology for assessment at the same time (3.2). Our SLO approval process goes through our Curriculum Committee to ensure the quality of SLO statements and the feasibility of planned assessments. Therefore, many outcomes have been written that are in the process of approval, a fairly simple and efficient process (3.3).

Since course SLOs feed into program SLOs, we focused on course SLOs at the beginning, so the writing of program SLOs is a little further behind. However, we plan to have all course and program SLOs written by the end of the spring 2009 semester.

Last year, no disciplines had all of their SLOs written. Currently, the following have them written for all their courses: Accounting*, African American Studies, Anatomy, Anthropology, Architecture, Armenian, Astronomy*, Broadcasting, Chicano Studies, Cinema, Computer Applications and Office Technology, Cooperative Education, Economics, English composition courses*, English as a Second Language, French, Italian, Geology, German, Health, Hebrew Studies, History*, Humanities*, Italian, Jewish Studies, Linguistics, Management*, Marketing*, Math, Media Arts, Nursing, Oceanography, Physiology, Real Estate*, Sociology, Spanish, Speech*, Respiratory Therapy, Women’s Physical Education and Yiddish. Additionally, several other subjects -- Electronics, Biology, and Dance -- are close to this goal. [*VCCC approval slated for Fall 2008]
Our college-wide SLOs were revised in fall 2007 (3.4). The SLO committee is working with the Instructional Programs Committee (IPC) to integrate an SLO alignment grid into the Program Review process. Using the grid, departments will show how course SLOs align with program SLOs and how courses and programs are tied to the general education outcomes. The GE outcomes are aligned with specific general education categories, so courses meeting GE requirements have already been mapped to GE outcomes (3.5).

Assessment of SLOs
In the spring 2008 semester, several pilot assessments took place. We conducted our first general education SLO assessment of reasoning skills (3.6). In addition, the following courses were also assessed:

- Anthropology 101: Human Biological Evolution
- Electronics 2: Introduction to Electronics
- English 67: Writing Laboratory
- French 1: Elementary French 1
- Sociology 1: Introduction to Sociology
- Spanish 1: Elementary Spanish 1

(3.7)

The following Student Services areas completed their SLO assessments this year:

- EOPS, TRiO, Financial Aid, Service Learning (3.8)

During the pilot program, a form was developed and used for reporting assessment results and proposed improvements (3.9). This pilot project allowed us to test out these newly developed reporting forms and process. It also created a group of instructors, mostly those serving on the SLO Steering Committee, who are helping to train others in SLO assessment. A short article on each pilot course assessment has been written and published in the SLO newsletter (3.10).

This successful pilot assessment program has set the stage for a ramping up of campus-wide involvement. This semester, we are expanding assessment. All disciplines are in the process of identifying a course to assess this year (3.11). High-enrolling courses were targeted first so that we can maximize the impact of our assessment efforts. In addition, all divisions of student services, administrative services, and the president’s office will begin assessment this year. We will also undertake another round of assessing a GE outcome. After a year or two of assessing course outcomes, we anticipate beginning the assessment of program outcomes.

In addition, the SLO Coordinator is working with the IPC chair to include a more robust reporting of SLO assessment in the program review process (3.12).

Additional Activities
SLOs have been a key component of Professional Development for the past year. Our SLO Coordinator, who is assigned .6 FTE on a year-round basis, works closely with faculty and hold frequent sessions in the Professional Development Center (3.13). An extensive SLO website was launched in spring 2008 (3.14). SLO newsletters are put out
three-four times a year to update the campus community on SLO progress and provide additional information on SLOs (3.10). The college-wide SLOs have been published in the catalog (3.4) and schedule (3.15) for the last year.

All subject areas have identified an SLO representative and almost all subjects have at least one individual who has been trained in developing SLOs and planning assessment cycles.

The recently negotiated LACCD-Faculty Guild bargaining agreement requires that approved course SLOs be listed on course syllabi as an element of faculty evaluation (3.16). Faculty are being informed of this language and encouraged to include SLOs in their syllabi through SLO trainings, published guidelines for what to include in syllabi (3.17), and through presentations at adjunct faculty orientations and workshops. A general handout on SLOs has been included in the last two adjunct orientations (3.18).

Progress on SLOs has also become part of the annual reporting of departmental goals and their progress that department chairs make to their deans.

The SLO Steering Committee met with our Educational Master Plan consultants. SLOs are part of our already established strategic goals (3.19).

SLOs have also become part of the hiring process for new faculty members (3.20).

This year we have begun our theme years based on general education outcomes that should make SLOs more visible to students and the rest of the campus community. The SLO Coordinator is working with the Public Relations specialist on how to build general awareness of SLOs. In part, this will become easier as more SLOs are established and more assessment cycles are conducted.

Evidence

3.1 SLO tracking spreadsheet and http://www.lavc.edu/vccc/courseoutlines.html
3.2 http://www.lavc.edu/slo/Forms.html
3.3 http://www.lavc.edu/vccc/forms.html
3.4 http://www.lavc.edu/catalog/2008-09/slo.pdf
3.5 GE outcomes alignment grid http://www.lavc.edu/slo/LAVCSLOs.html (click on General Education Outcomes)
3.6 GE SLO assessment documents
3.7 Course pilot assessment reports
3.8 Student Services SLO assessments
3.9 Assessment report form -- http://www.lavc.edu/slo/Forms.html
3.10 SLO newsletters -- http://www.lavc.edu/slo/SLONewsletters.html
3.11 Email to department chairs
3.12 IPC minutes -- http://www.lavc.edu/ipc/ipcagendas.htm and SLO Committee minutes http://www.lavc.edu/slo/SLOSteeringCommittee.html
3.13 Email on SLO sessions
College Recommendation 4: Current Deficit and Plans for Future Financial Stability

The team recommends that the college take action to address the current $1.9 million deficit immediately and develop plans to establish financial stability in the long term to ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability. (Standards III.D.2.c, IV.B.2.d)

The college has used a number of strategies to address its deficit and develop plans for financial stability. Our plan combines measured growth with a reduction of expenditures. These efforts will continue for the 2008-09 year:

Requested Debt Relief
Although not required to do so, the college submitted a report and appeared before the district Allocation Grant Task Force in January 2008 to request debt relief (4.1). The task force decided to grant the college a deferral on repayment of the debt from 2007-08 to 2008-09 (4.2). The review did not yield any specific recommendations, so the college moved forward with its own plans to deal with the deficit. (Note: Although the projected deficit was $1.9 million, the final ending deficit was $1.7 million due largely to an accounting anomaly with a contract education program which showed expense but no income.)

Enrollment Management and Marketing
A concerted effort has been made by the Instructional Programs Committee, Academic Affairs, and the Enrollment Management Task Force to increase FTES and optimize FTEF/FTES. The team worked with the college’s Public Information Officer to create a comprehensive advertising plan that publicizes the college and our ability to meet student needs. To promote enrollment for the Winter 2008 intersession and Spring 2008 semester, the team approved a comprehensive marketing campaign (4.3), primarily targeting non-enrolled English-speaking, 18-34-year-olds residing in the eastern portion of the San Fernando Valley. Another marketing tactic featured how education ties to the “world of work.” We redesigned our college website to make it more user-friendly for prospective students and created an LAVC page on Facebook and MySpace. We regularly make the public aware of our building program and campus improvements.

Using data supplied by our researcher, we adjusted our class offerings and scheduling to respond to student needs. The college continues to hold a One-Stop Registration Day and a New Student Welcome Day every semester, giving students access to support services all in one place and creating a welcoming environment.
To continue and expand its work, the Enrollment Management Task Force is currently being refocused to engage all parts of the campus community, develop goals and metrics for measuring progress, pursue flexibility in scheduling, and develop and advertise programs that can be completed in four semesters (4.4).

**Exploring Untapped Markets**

Since spring of 2007, we have expanded a number of programs aimed at serving community needs, resulting in increased revenue for the college.

- Last year, the college assigned a faculty member full-time to focus on noncredit programs. The current curriculum was enhanced and new courses were developed to meet new state standards. The college expanded its noncredit offerings in ESL and CTE and began offering classes at a local high school. In 2007-08 we had 650 noncredit FTES, up from 405 in 2006-07, a 60.5% increase. The college has also taken steps to convert contract education classes to noncredit classes; these are currently in the curriculum process.

- Our ACE programs (classes on high school campuses) have increased from six to 12 high school partnerships. In 2006-07 we serviced 3,566 students and in 07-08 we serviced 5,863 – an increase of 61%. All of these are credit classes.

- Our Valley College Accelerated Program (VCAP) reviewed all the tracks and put together a comprehensive two-year plan, involving aggressive recruiting efforts. The program also joined with Job Training to offer classes of interest to the local workforce, resulting in increased enrollment. In 2007 VCAP had 2,158 students; currently, in the first session of fall 2008 we have 2,814, a growth of 30%.

- Our distance education program has greatly expanded. In the current fall 2008 semester we are offering 71 fully online sections compared to 47 in spring 2008 and only 28 at the time of our self study in spring 2007. The college recently received a $2.8 million Title V grant that uses technology as a tool for student success. Over a five-year period, we will be developing an online AA degree, two online certificate programs, and online courses for nursing prerequisites.

- In conjunction with the Mayor’s Office and the City Redevelopment Agency, the college is actively pursuing the establishment of a satellite campus to be located in a proposed development project in Panorama City, a location that has the potential to reach a population we are currently not serving. As part of this exploration, the college toured several sites and met with members of community organizations and city officials. The satellite would offer courses in foundational skills and short term workforce skills.

(4.5, 4.6)

Overall economic conditions in the state, along with college efforts, have helped to boost our enrollment, which increased in fall 2007, and in fall 2008 was up by 4% over the previous fall semester (4.7). As the number of course sections has not increased as much as enrollment, we are being more productive. We are aiming for 2-3% annual growth to increase our base, and projections look good that we will reach our goal. We hope to grow at 4% and spend at 2%. We are taking care to attain our FTES without exceeding
the budget plan. We are monitoring our student class average headcount to ensure that the average remains above 35 to give us our minimum level of efficiency.

Controlling and Reducing Expenses
In spring 2007, the college made a mandatory 10% cut in all campus budgets across the board except for contractually obligated items, such as salaries and contracts (4.8). We are essentially operating on a supply budget that is at 2005-06 levels (inflation adjusted). In 2006-07, the college spent $1,050,000 on supplies, and in 2007-08, that figure was $950,000. The College Budget Committee examined all discretionary accounts and has made cuts to everything that was practical without affecting services to students and enrollment growth.

An increase in utilities costs due to new building construction has been significantly reduced by using highly energy efficient processes – without them, overall energy costs could have increased by as much as 20%; instead, we expect a relatively modest increase of 7% in the year the last building is finished.

We are also realizing a consistent expenditure per FTES and have not increased our salary costs beyond COLA for the last three years (4.8).

The college has actively monitored duplicating expenses, resulting in a significant reduction in copying costs. Additionally, the college is putting into practice plans that will help reduce paper expenses – by encouraging use of the college website to post documents and by keeping computer projectors in good operating condition for faculty to use instead of handouts. This could potentially result in a $20,000 savings annually while also supporting a green initiative to use less paper.

Limited Replacement of Personnel
The college had a planned reduction in hiring of approximately $599,000 in 2007-08 and a $725,000 reduction for 2008-09 in certificated and classified positions, accomplished through attrition rather than layoffs. This strategy is, however, limited by the need to hire more permanent faculty to meet our mandate for an acceptable ratio of full time to adjunct faculty, which in fall 2007 district-wide was 59.6%.

Budget Management and Monitoring
To maintain fiscal health, we constantly monitor our accounting processes to correct for errors as soon as possible to be sure expenses are charged to the right programs. We ensure that Prop A/AA bond expenses are transferred immediately into the bond program.

We have offloaded some expenses to grant programs, as available, and have been able to offload salaries for some faculty positions from program 100 to other specially funded programs and grants, as appropriate.

Instead of waiting until the end of the year to eliminate open purchase orders, we are closing those open orders at six months to better project balances.
Long Term Financial Stability

It is important to note that since the district has maintained an overall ending balance of approximately 10% per year (4.9), all district colleges are, in actuality, fiscally stable, including those showing a formal year-end deficit. As part of the annual district-wide budget planning process, each summer the colleges establish FTES targets for the upcoming academic year. At the same time, financial benchmarks are set via preliminary budget allocations. These benchmarks are derived in a way to ensure good management and accountability for a predicted level of students served. As the year progresses, each college is measured against this “ideal” or target allocation for managerial control purposes.

At the end of the year, the college’s ending balance reflects the success of local management efforts in allocating college resources, and the results are incorporated into presidential evaluations. The deficits that are carried forward reflect the district’s attempts to establish budget management accountability and encourage responsibility. From the perspective of fiscal accounting and control, however, all colleges are granted sufficient resources to end each fiscal year with a neutral ("0") or positive fund balance.

This is why all district colleges have continued to increase enrollments, expand FTES, add new programs, and hire new faculty in recent years—even while sometimes carrying debt forward or seeking relief from the district. The allocation grant process, which typically requires colleges to re-pay shortfalls while submitting to more rigorous oversight, is designed to encourage budgetary restraint and accountability. A newly formed subcommittee of the District Budget Committee, the Fiscal Policy and Review Committee, is working on recommendations to provide greater budgetary flexibility for planning purposes. The District Budget Committee and the college’s Budget Committee brainstorm ideas to ameliorate the college’s deficit in the short term, while the district’s reserves guarantee each college’s long term stability.

Evidence

4.1 Report to the Allocation Grant Task Force
4.2 Allocation Grant Task Force decision
4.3 Marketing efforts
4.4 Enrollment Management Task Force
4.5 Satellite efforts
4.7 Headcount comparison
4.8 Budget Deficit Plan Review
4.9 District Final Budget
College Recommendation 5: Communication and Participation in Decision-Making

The team recommends that the college implement its planning agenda regarding communication and participation in the decision-making process and evaluate its implementation and overall effectiveness. (Standard IV.A.1.b)

Increasing participation
Over the past few years, college leaders have made a concerted effort to cast a wider net and involve more participants on committees. After thoughtful discussion in the Academic Senate, the newly elected senate president proposed changing the constitution, and in fall 2007 senate membership was opened up to all faculty rather than the previous model in which membership was contingent on payment of Faculty Association dues (5.1). When committees have openings, appointments are made by committee chairs and/or emails are sent out to all faculty to recruit new members (5.2). Active recruitment on Opening Day in fall 2008 to solicit participation resulted in the collection of 211 names of volunteers willing to serve on 64 different committees this year (5.3).

The LACCD-AFT bargaining agreement has language mandating service on at least one committee, and the newly negotiated 2008-11 agreement has added Appendix Q, which lists all the faculty obligations, including committee service, in one document (5.4).

Improving communication
To emphasize the importance of communication, particularly among constituency groups and the campus at large, the college adopted the theme of communication as the area of focus for the first year of our college-wide GE SLO Assessment Cycle – it served as the theme for our fall 2008 Opening Day (5.5). Members communicate to their constituencies through reports at Department Council, College Council, the AFT, the Academic Senate, and individual department meetings (5.6). Representatives to district committees, such as the district IT Committee and Budget Committee, regularly report back to their college committees (5.7)

Our improved web site navigation and design makes it easier to find information, including committee meeting schedules (5.8). Our attractive weekly bulletin is posted on the web site and emailed to all users (5.9). Shared governance committees, including College Council, the primary decision-making body, publish the agendas and minutes of their meetings for dissemination to the campus at large by posting this information on their web pages (5.10). The college community is getting used to using the web as the first point of reference for collective memory and documentation.

We regularly update our shared governance handbook (5.11) by soliciting input from many sources. Attendance at our annual College Council retreats has increased over the years, with 49 participants in 2008 (5.12).

Evaluating our efforts
To evaluate the extent of faculty participation in the shared governance process and college committees, the Chapter President of the AFT-Guild and the Academic Senate
President conducted an online poll of the entire faculty in spring 2008. Although a common comment heard on campus has been, “It’s always the same people on all these committees,” many committee appointments are based on position (e.g., AFT chapter president, Senate President), leading to the same people serving on more than one committee. While this may have had some basis in fact in the past, recent retirements and new leadership committed to broadening faculty involvement have begun to alter that perception and the reality. In fact, when an appointment is not designated there is renewed effort to appoint new faces.

Survey results and data corroborate this. Close to 100 respondents across the campus, including full time and adjunct faculty, attested to greater than expected involvement at all levels of the campus (5.13). From department level committees and subcommittees to campus shared governance and student clubs to district and state-wide or national organizations, participation levels were robust, signifying that many people are involved. On the six primary shared governance committees on campus, there are 78 members, 66 unduplicated (5.14). We concluded that although some people’s perceptions are slow to change, levels of participation have been consistently increasing.

Evidence

5.1 Academic Senate Constitution
5.2 Email on committee opening
5.3 Committee sign-ups and survey form (two separate document files)
5.4 Faculty Duties 2008-2011 bargaining agreement
5.5 Opening Day flyer/agenda
5.6 Reports to College Council April 29, 2008
5.7 Report on District Technology Committee
5.8 http://www.lavc.edu/committees.html
5.9 http://www.lavc.edu/bulletin/bulletin.html
5.11 Decision-Making Handbook
5.12 College Council retreat sign-in sheets
5.13 Survey results
5.14 Non-duplicated committee members