ACCREDITATION UPDATE

2015 ACCJC Standards Symposium forecasts a focus on quality

by LESLIE BUCKALEW

On April 23rd and 24th, Dr. Fairchilds and Dr. Buckalew attended the ACCJC Accreditation Standards Symposium in San Diego.

As you may be aware, there are significant changes to the Accreditation Standards including a new focus on quality. Dr. Barbara Beno, President of ACCJC provided background information on the Accreditation Standards that were adopted by the commission in June 2014.

WHAT IT’S ABOUT

The primary purpose of an ACCJC-accredited institution is to foster student learning and student achievement. An effective institution ensures that its resources, programs, and services, whenever, wherever, and however delivered, support student learning and achievement. The effective institution ensures academic quality and continuous improvement through ongoing assessment of learning and achievement and pursues institutional excellence and improvement through ongoing, integrated planning and evaluation. Four Standards work together to define and promote student success, academic quality, institutional integrity and excellence.

The mission provides a framework for all institutional goals and activities. The institution provides the means for students to learn and achieve their goals, assesses how well
learning is occurring, and strives to improve learning and achievement through ongoing, systematic, and integrated evaluation and planning.

(Standard I). Student learning programs and support services make possible the academic quality that supports student success (Standard II). Human, physical, technology, and financial resources enable these programs and services to function and improve (Standard III). Ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization guides the accomplishment of the mission and supports institutional effectiveness and improvement (Standard IV). Integrating elements of the Standards gives institutions the means to develop a comprehensive assessment of academic quality, institutional integrity and effectiveness, and a path to continuous improvement.

Significant changes to the Standards include the following:

STANDARD I: The word quality appears 9 times in Standard I. Key focus now is addressing “What local processes have led to improvements in institutional quality?” The word mission appears 8 times in Standard I, so we will need to address the following, “If mission drives planning, can a college’s mission be defined so broadly that it provides no guidance in planning?” We need to provide data that demonstrates how the institution is continuously and systemically evaluates the effectiveness of the college. The process of accreditation should be integrated in everything that we do at Columbia College.

STANDARD II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services. New emphasis on student attainment and achievement, rather than SLOs existing and programs qualifying for degrees, certifications, employment or transfer. Also new, faculty, including full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty ensure that instruction meets professional standards and expectations. They are responsible for improvements in courses through systematic evaluation to promote student success.

STANDARD III: Resources. Focus is on improved planning that recognizes the role and importance of part time and adjunct faculty in the processes. Also, an increased understanding of the comprehensive nature of planning considerations (Total Cost of Ownership). III. A. 6. The evaluation of faculty, academic administrators, and other personnel directly responsible for student learning includes, as a component of that evaluation, consideration of how these employees use the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning. Also, new III.D. 15, the institution monitors and manages student loan default rates, revenue streams, and assets to ensure compliance with federal requirements, including Title IV of the Higher Education Act, and comes into compliance when the federal government identifies deficiencies.

STANDARD IV: Leadership and Governance. Central theme reflects a broad base of governance processes, emphasizes the role of the CEO in leadership of Accreditation, and emphasizes the role of data in directing governance processes and decisions. IV.A.6 (NEW) The processes for decision-making and resulting decisions are documented and widely communicated across the institution. Assessment results lead to modification of college policies and practices that lead to improved learning outcomes. Critical to this Standard is the use of data and analysis in institutional improvement. And finally, IV.B.8: To ensure that the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success, the governing board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement and institutional plans for improving academic quality.
FEATURED FACULTY

Glen White has been setting off sparks in Tuolumne County students’ minds for 22 years.

by MICHELLE VIDAURRI

If you are connected with the K-8 community in Tuolumne County, you may often hear stories of a man named “Mr. White” from voices both young and old. They will speak brightly of how Mr. White brings the wonder of science into elementary classrooms.

This man is none other than one of our own, Glen White of Earth Science.

I first felt the impact “Mr. White” has on students in our community when my own daughter came home excited about the fun she had learning science from “Mr. White”. As a parent, I delighted in her newfound enthusiasm. But I was also proud knowing that Mr. White was also one of Columbia College’s own. I was awed when I realized his impact on my child was akin to many he has had on young Tuolumne County minds over the decades.

But Glen White’s involvement in the community spreads beyond the education of our children, he is also Director of STEMTRACKS, a teaching resources grant focused on teacher improvement for K-12 educators in Tuolumne, Calaveras, and Amador Counties.

At Columbia, Glen nurtures a vibrant community of learners in his courses and as advisor of the Forestry/Natural Resources (FNR) Club. He enhances many field classes by sharing broad knowledge of geology and science in the classroom. He’s also fondly known for continuing to teach as he drives students to field experiences, and through night fall at camp.

The positive relationships and partnerships Glen has made with feeder schools and area agencies speaks well not only of his own expertise and professionalism, but also of the Columbia College community. For this reason, Student Learning has selected Glen White to be our inaugural Featured Faculty member, not only because of his contributions to the community, but to Columbia College as well.

Distance Education Tips from the Expert

by MELISSA COLÓN

ONLINE TIP: LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

A good way to engage students in an online class is to organize learning activities in a weekly learning module in a consistent format. Each module can begin with an overview that contains the objectives and a checklist of the weekly activities that will clearly enable students to reach those objectives. Learner guidance for a variety of activities can include clear written instructions, grading rubrics, examples of model work, and links to any necessary resources needed to complete the activities. Individualized instruction and advanced learning activities can be available to students in a variety of ways: easily located links to campus resources, such as writing or tutoring centers; links to publisher resources or other web resources, such as content or skill explanations or tutorials; and instructor-created synchronous or asynchronous meetings or help forums. Students are more likely to be successful in an online course that is consistent, has clear expectations and instructors provide easily located resources. ~ Teresa Borden
Thank you to those faculty members who so thoughtfully nominated colleagues for this year’s Faculty Recognition Awards. Columbia College is proud of its exemplary faculty which works tirelessly to contribute not only to the lives of students and staff, but to the greater community, and in some cases, the nation and world as well. It has been an honor to facilitate the presentation of these awards to our outstanding colleagues. Each recipient has successfully met the award criteria, which includes maintaining a commitment to excellence and institutional integrity, respect for colleagues, staff and students. Each is a master/expert in their field who motivates and inspires students and colleagues equally. They are outstanding leaders that contribute to the overall quality of education at Columbia College, and to the quality of life on campus.

2014-2015 Faculty Recognition Award Winners

**TEACHER OF THE YEAR: ANNE CAVAGNARO**

“Annie” Cavagnaro illustrates a dedication to her students and colleagues not only in her field of Mathematics, but to education as a whole. Returning to college as a student in pursuit of a master’s degree in philosophy demonstrates her commitment to life-long learning as she brings invaluable new information and experiences to share with her students. She is creative in her teaching style and encourages each student to be the best they can and encourages them to reach for the stars. Her mindfulness practice brings a calm to those who are around her be it students or faculty. Anne has served in multiple facets of shared governance including Academic Senate President 2008-2009, Senate Council, Curriculum Committee, Enrollment Management, and Faculty Representative to College Council. She also played a key role in combining the efforts of AWE and SSEAC which has become a synergistic relationship. Her commitment to personal and professional growth inspires faculty and staff alike.

**FACULTY OF THE YEAR: ELIZABETH PFLEGING**

Elizabeth Pfleging is a true champion of student success. Working as a full time counselor and Articulation Officer, Elizabeth epitomizes a continuing commitment to personal and professional growth for herself and others on campus. She has been instrumental in the development and implementation of our Associate Degrees for Transfer. Without her dedication and tireless effort it is fair to say we would not have met our mandated goals from the state, in either quality of quantity. Elizabeth frequently attends articulation conferences and workshops bringing back new information, suggestions, and ideas of ways Columbia College can better serve our students. She serves indefinitely on the Curriculum Committee keeping up to date on the ever changing regulations for C-ID, IGETC and is regularly educating the committee on the do’s and don’ts of articulation. She is patient, kind, thorough, and her leadership contributes to the overall success and quality of education at Columbia College. She is a true asset to the students and faculty as a whole with her vast knowledge of courses, degrees, certificates and transfer requirements.

**ADJUNCT OF THE YEAR: MAC FROST**

Mac Frost has been a faculty member at Columbia College since 1969. Although Mac retired as a full-time faculty member in the 1980s, he remained as an adjunct instructor in welding. Mac is well-known in the welding community and is respected in the greater welding industry. Mac was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by The American Welding Society. This very prestigious award is reserved for only the very best in the industry. After a long successful career here at Columbia College, Mac is hanging his hat up for good this year as he retires one last time as a faculty member. He departs leaving us with his example of how to be an incredible role model by inspiring students and colleagues towards professionalism excellence in their vocations.

**TENURE RECOGNITION**

Erin Naegle, D. A.
Professor of Biology
Tenured in 2015
Curriculum Corner

2014-2015 wraps up with a new catalog and streamlined CCCC0 review

by LETITIA SENECHAL MILLER

As the 2014-2015 academic year comes to a close, the team in Student Learning pauses briefly to survey the landscape of all that has taken place in the year of curriculum review and approval.

2015-16 CATALOG GOES TO PRINT

After a turbulent year of staffing shortages and changes, course approval delays at the CCCC0, and hard work by faculty, staff and administrators, the 2015-2016 catalog is being shipped to the printer by May 7, with delivery no later than the first week of June. The electronic version will be posted on the Columbia College website May 11.

COURSE IDENTITY CHANGES

The college community can anticipate significant changes taking place which are likely to affect students in their areas. Effective with the Summer 2015 term, the discipline known as Computer Science (CMPSC) has been renamed as Computer and Communications Technology, (CCT) which includes the following subdisciplines:

• CCTDM: Digital Media
• CCTIS: Information Systems
• CCTPG: Programming
• CCTSS: Support Systems

Discipline faculty feel these new identifiers more accurately illustrate and clarify the diversity and scope of sub-disciplines in the field of computing.

Such a dramatic change is not unique to one area. The discipline of Forestry and Natural Resources courses will consolidate from four course prefixes (FORES, FORTC, NARTC, NATRE) into one:

• FNR: Forestry & Natural Resources

All of these prefix changes will be reflected in the 2015-2016 College Catalog, with tabular “crosswalks” to help existing students translate the previous course prefixes to the new versions.

STRIVING TO COMPLY WITH SB 440

Currently, pending ADTs are being audited to ensure completeness of materials required for submission. The Student Learning team anticipates submission of the awards no later than May 31 assuming all applications are complete.

THE CCCC0 STEPS UP ITS GAME

After much feedback from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, and instructional administrators (Thanks, Leslie!) the CCCC0 refined and streamlined its review procedures for curriculum in April. CCCC0 staff will now only monitor hours, units, open status, repeatability and TBAs. A result of this procedure change, the existing CCCC0 course review queue was reduced by 64% in April. Columbia College was positively impacted by this change. In 48 hours, the college had over a dozen new courses approved.

This revision in procedure bodes well for those vested in curriculum at Columbia College, as it demonstrates that curriculum development and the systems that monitor it can be dynamic and sensitive to the needs of those affected most by it community college students and faculty. With collaboration, we can make anything much better.

Questions about Curriculum? Please call us.

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