PROGRAM REVIEW
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

College of Marin Academic Senate/Administration/Board of Trustees

The College of Marin Academic Senate and the College of Marin administrative leadership agree that the following statements reflect a mutual understanding of a program review philosophy and related activities at the college. Program Review, as applied to academic programs, is to assist faculty in their efforts at improving instruction.

I. What is Program Review?

Program Review is a systematic process involving the collection, analysis, and evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data about an academic program, student service program, or an administrative unit. Program Review recognizes the goals of the institution as the focus of Program Review.

II. What is the purpose of Program Review?

The purpose of Program Review is to document and improve the college's programs. The process is designed to identify strengths and to offer opportunities for program and administrative unit improvement. It is a means for determining the effectiveness of academic and non-academic programs including but not limited to instruction, student services, and administrative tasks.

III. Who develops the processes/template for Program Review?

The process/template for conducting Program Review is developed by the Program Review Committee with the consent of the Academic Senate and the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee. Programs, for the purpose of review, are defined by participants conducting the review.

IV. Who conducts Program Review?

Program Review is conducted by the members of the academic program (faculty including chairs), student service program (faculty, staff and managers), or administrative unit (staff and managers) going through Program Review. Faculty members involved in Program Review volunteer as participants and faculty who choose not to participate shall not be penalized. Department deans and managers are expected to read and comment on academic program reviews but cannot mandate changes to them.

V. What will Program Review be used for?

At College of Marin, ongoing Program Review will be used to influence long and short term planning, set priorities for sustaining and growing programs and services to students, and assist in setting budget priorities. More specifically, Program Review will help us:

- Improve services and better plan and implement educational programs
- Design and improve programs and administrative units
- Undertake long term planning at the institutional level
- Identify shared definitions and measurable benchmarks for evaluating programs

- Understand the needs of student cohorts and evaluate whether programs and services meet their needs
- Align and coordinate courses across disciplines
- Align and coordinate courses and programs with the requirements of external institutions
- Continuously reflect, refine and modify institutional practices
- Plan, prioritize, and budget using Program Review findings

VI. What will Program Review not be used for?

Effective assessment relies upon a climate of trust and freedom of inquiry. Data gathered in support of Program Review shall be aggregated so as to remove the identity of any students, faculty, and/or staff.

Therefore, College of Marin:

- Will not use program review data for program/discipline reduction or elimination. Although programs in need of revitalization or discontinuance may be identified through program review, the revitalization and discontinuance procedure is separate and governed by Board Policy and Procedure (BP and AP 4021).
- Will not use assessment punitively or as a means of determining faculty or staff salaries or rewards. The purpose of assessment is to evaluate academic programs, student service programs, or administrative units, and not to reward or punish faculty or staff.
- Will not use any single mode of assessment to answer all questions or strictly determine program decisions.
- Will not use assessment in a way that will impinge upon the academic freedom or professional rights of faculty. Individual faculty members must continue to exercise professional judgment in matters pertaining to their classroom.
- Is not expected to assess all academic programs, student service programs, or administrative units in order to learn about the effectiveness of our overall functioning; a subset may be sufficient.
- Will not assume that assessment is only quantitative. While quantitative measures can be useful, they cannot provide a thorough or accurate picture of the college's academic programs, student service programs, or administrative units.
- Will not use assessment merely to be accountable to outside parties.
- Will not use program review for evaluation of faculty.

VII. What is the college's role in Program Review?

Program Review can significantly enhance the college's ability to fulfill our mission and goals. Consequently, the college supports Program Review as a valued and important activity and provides successful models for developing assessment. The college provides research resources and research expertise and technical support in a timely manner in order to insure an accurate and complete program review.

Upon Request, the district research office will provide training and assistance for faculty conducting a Program Review.

Those preparing a program review, at their choice, shall be trained in the use of research strategies of their choosing and training oversight shall be the purview of the Academic Senate.

VIII. How will assessment tools be chosen and used for Program Review?

When faculty chooses assessment tools, we will:

- Always seek multiple methods of assessment rather than relying on any single method.
- Assess the ongoing progress of students' experience at College of Marin.
- Assess the long term impact of changes to programs and services.
- Assess those conditions that each faculty member involved in Program Review considers to be important and valuable.

IX.   What standard data will be included in each Program Review?

Data summaries and assessment tools will be common to all Program Reviews as outlined in the Program Review document. Common data summaries and assessments will be provided by the college research department.
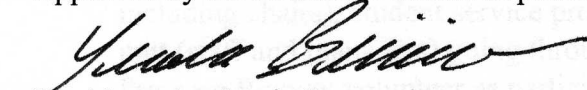
Measures, in addition to the common data summaries and assessments, may be used by programs and may vary across the college. These measures may depend upon both the student cohorts and the methods of assessment most appropriate for specific programs.

In conclusion, if faculty members choose to participate in the program review process, they shall control the process of Program Review in their own programs. This process includes the selection of the methods chosen or designed for assessment, administration of the assessment, analysis of the assessment data, and use of the assessment results.
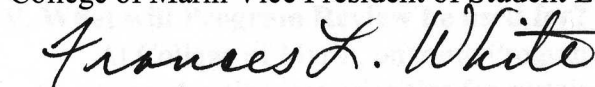
Further, when a program goes through program review, time lines for completion of the program review will be agreed upon jointly by the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee, and the Academic Senate.
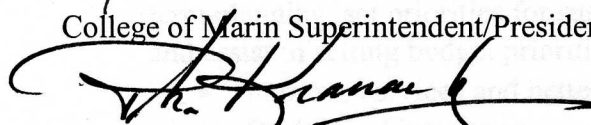
This agreement shall be subject to change or termination only by mutual agreement between the Board of Trustees, the President/Superintendent, and the Academic Senate.

Approved by the Academic Senate September 3, 2009

President, Academic Senate

College of Marin Vice President of Student Learning

College of Marin Superintendent/President

College of Marin President Board of Trustees