

SPECIAL TEAM REPORT

DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE
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Pleasant Hill, CA 94523-1529

A Confidential Report Prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community
and Junior Colleges

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that
visited Diablo Valley College on Friday, September 19, 2008

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**Diablo Valley College
Visit and Report
Friday, September 19, 2008**

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Report of Special Visit, Diablo Valley College
September 19, 2008

Introduction

Diablo Valley College has been actively working since 2006 to resolve an issue of institutional integrity with regard to grades and student records. The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges made a Special Team Visit on July 30, 2007. This visit resulted in nine recommendations with a requirement to submit a report. A follow-up Special Team Visit occurred on April 4, 2008, to evaluate progress. The team concluded that DVC had fully responded to four of the nine recommendations. On June 30, 2008, the Commission issued a Warning and asked the College to correct the five remaining recommendations. On September 19, 2008, a second Special Team Visit occurred.

The following report addresses the remaining five recommendations:

Recommendation a [1]:

Take immediate steps to systematize its business processes related to student records processing prior to its next accreditation review. The college should consider obtaining support from the CACCRAO Student Services Assistance Team or other outside Student Services experts for external review and validation in order to strengthen all of its formal processes in Admissions and Records, especially training for all staff associated with student grading policies and procedures.

The team found significant efforts by the college to address this recommendation. The college enlisted the assistance of CACCRAO to provide an external review. In addition the Interim Dean of Outreach, Enrollment Services, and Matriculation and the Interim Vice President of Student Services are experienced student services professionals with distinguished careers in California community colleges. There have been basic changes in operational procedures, changes in the facility with limited access to the Admissions and Records Office, as well as, on-going training on topics such as FERPA and security. There is a formalized process for grade changes with the President reviewing monthly reports. An A&R Manual has been developed and is reviewed on a regular basis. In addition, process expert groups have been developed. The team believes the changes to be sustainable after the leadership positions are filled on a permanent basis.

There is evidence that the climate has improved with a great sense of cooperation and collaboration between departments. Specifically, admissions and records staff are “stepping up” by taking on new tasks, learning regulations and demonstrating ownership of records. The overall campus response to increase security has been positive.

Finally, the admissions and records department has developed goals and student learning outcomes that are tied to the district plan.

Diablo Valley College has fully responded to Recommendation a [1].

Recommendation c [2]:

Diablo Valley College should shift the leadership and oversight of student records management from Information Technology to Student Services. Student Services should own the processes and IT should assume a support role. Student Services, rather than Information Technology, should take the lead in user training and documentation of business processes.

The changes in leadership have allowed the college to take a fresh perspective on operational procedures. Necessary changes have been made with minimal resistance. The leadership shift from Information Technology to Student Services is in process with training and cross training. There are regularly scheduled meetings within the college and with district personnel. Interviewed staff felt that they could communicate issues and receive resolution. There is a commitment to problem solving across the college and district. The college understands the need for leadership succession planning in Student Services.

Diablo Valley College has substantially responded to Recommendation c [2].

Recommendation d [3]:

The team observed that the college’s pre-Colleague academic history records have not yet been imported into the current student information system. Steps should be taken immediately to import all outstanding student academic history records into the student information system so that the college can improve its efficiency of admissions and records operations.

The college has developed four phases of implementation to thoroughly address academic history with an expectation of 3-5 years for completion. The plan is realistic and is being followed. The college has almost finished bringing all the records into a one index system (Onbase) that interfaces with the current enterprise system (Datatel/Colleague).

There is a commitment from the district for the required funding for staff to support the transfer of student records. While this process is clearly “hands on” work, there is also a commitment to validate records in the process of moving history to ensure accuracy and data integrity. Phases 2 and 3 will be addressed concurrently.

Recommendation on item d: That the college develops a timeline and action plan to more clearly identify the phrases and timelines, and communicate said timelines to the college community.

Diablo Valley College has substantially responded to Recommendation d [3].

Recommendation f [4]:

The College should assign the responsibility for approving access to student records to a high level Student Services administrator to ensure compliance with FERPA regulations and ensure that reports of access assignments are routinely received and reviewed.

There is a process in place for current and new employees to have access to the student data base with the appropriate security level. The request is reviewed by the senior system administrator as well as the admissions and records dean. This review is for all requests for access to the student data base not solely A&R personnel. The President is still responsible for the “process” in consultation with the admissions and records dean.

Diablo Valley College has fully responded to Recommendation f [4].

Recommendation h [5]:

The College should strengthen its leadership in the area of Student Records Management by considering working with the district to convene a senior team of college vice presidents and vice chancellors to focus on policy and procedural issues related to student records management and oversee the existing user group structure.

The college has developed an organizational/flowchart that outlines how policy and procedures are developed. The flowchart has been vetted through the shared governance process. There are mechanisms in place to coordinate the colleges’ procedures across the district. The overall coordination of policy and procedures remains untested. Upon interview, staff were unable to provide an example of how the mechanisms have worked, specifically related to Title 5 changes.

Recommendation on item h: That the college and the district publish written protocols for the development of and/or changes to district policies.

Diablo Valley College has partially responded to Recommendation h [5].

Summary

Diablo Valley College has addressed the most recent recommendations made by the last visiting team and by the CACCRAO organization. There has been a commitment by the college to make the necessary changes and improvements to meet the standards and recommendations of the Accrediting Commission. The team found that the processes in place are sustainable. The new leadership is operating in a transparent manner that is refreshing to the campus. Based upon the efforts of faculty and staff at both the college and district operations, the team determined that the issue of institutional integrity with regarding to grades and student records has been corrected.