**Executive Summary**

Our CLOs and PLOs strongly align. Our analysis of the connection between our assessed CLOs and current PLOs indicates that the majority of our students completed their CLOs (and, by extension the aligned PLOs) within a range of 79% to 100%. We are pleased with these results but continue to seek ways to help our students succeed at even higher levels.

This process has brought to light some changes that need to be made to our PLO and CLO assessment process which include: (1) revising our PLOs to more clearly indicate required learning outcomes for our majors; (2) analyzing the relationship between these revised PLOs, our CLOs, and the associated assessment tools; (3) integrating technology into the assessment process to track and support our work; (4) increasing our number of full-time tenure-track faculty so our course offerings are driven by our PLOs rather than staffing availability, and (5) following a peer-lead assessment process to assess all CLOs over the next two years.

Our department has begun making progress on this list of tasks. We have decided to eliminate PLO #4 as it was poorly written and immeasurable. We have revised the wording of our PLOs to more clearly reflect the skills we perceive as vital for a student who earns an Associate’s degree in the Communication discipline. Based on these alterations to our PLOs, we have modified the CLOs for SPCOM 100, 102, 104, 105, 106, 122, 123, and 130. We also created a Communication Studies Lab to help our students succeed in their courses. We are currently exploring an alliance between our lab and the Integrated Learning Center in order to expand availability of this resource to our students and allow us to assess its impact in a more comprehensive manner.

**Faculty Included in the Preparation and Sharing of this Report:**

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The Speech Communication Department has met to complete this process on the following dates: 08/23/2013, 01/31/2013, 02/28/2013, 03/28/2013, 04/25/2013, 05/16/2013, and 05/24/2013.

**Please provide a brief and cogent narrative in response to each of the following questions.**

1. Are the course learning outcomes (CLOs) on your spreadsheet accurate (as of right now), and do they represent the overall purpose(s) of the course(s)? *Please explain why or why not.*

The majority of the CLOs are accurate, with the exception of SpCom 101 and 109 (which will be inactivated in the Fall of 2013 curriculum review schedule). SpCom 122—CLO #3 is too vague and will be revised in the Fall 2013 curriculum review schedule. SpCom 110—CLOs #1 and #2 will be revised to replace “demonstrate knowledge” with different terms reflected in Bloom’s Taxonomy. SpCom 105’s CLOs will be revised because of the elimination of SpCom 115, 125, and 135.

1. Are the program learning outcomes (PLOs) on your spreadsheet accurate (as of right now), and do they represent the overall purpose(s) of the program? *Please explain why or why not.*

The PLOs will need to be changed by eliminating PLO #4 (which stated that students would “adequately debate others, present platform speeches, or perform works of literature in a classroom or outside venue.”) The rationale for eliminating PLO #4 is that it is poorly written and immeasurable. PLOs #1 through #3 need further refinement to better represent the overall Speech Communication AA Program.

1. How well do the course learning outcomes (CLOs) fulfill, support and align with the program learning outcomes (PLOs)? Additionally, just in terms of the structure, do you think the assessment data from the CLOs can tell a qualitative *and* quantitative story about the PLOs? *Please explain, and take some time to think through and write about what kinds of PLO analysis your CLO assessments will foster.*

The CLOs align very strongly with our PLOs. The majority of PLOs have at least one CLO that aligns with them for all courses. Our CLO assessment data supports that the majority of our students are satisfactorily meeting the outcomes and purpose of the Speech Communication A.A. Degree. Quantitatively, the completed grid on Question #4 indicates a strong correlation of the PLOs and CLOs, with the exception of PLO #4. The CLO assessments which have been used accurately reflect smaller modules of the overall desired outcomes of the program. A successful completion rate ranged from 79% to 100% for CLOs. The faculty are satisfied with the assessment results of CLOs and their alignment with the PLOs. Please note some courses had only one outcome assessed, based on the directive given in 2008.

The speech department would like to note that PLO data should drive the assessment data for CLOs not the other way around.

1. You’ve mapped your CLOs to PLOs. You’ve also been provided CLO assessment data in your packet. Now, take some time to reflect on, consider and analyze the data you have. This is not an easy section to complete, and the purpose of this pilot is to generate thoughtful reflection on—and assessment of—PLOs in relationship to our CLO assessment data.

Please look at every CLO data sheet included. Then, analyze, engage and write as much as you can, addressing the following question: ***what does your CLO data tell you about each of your PLOs?*** *Be detailed, descriptive and analytical.*

*As you consider this question…*

* + Discuss what kinds of trends you see in the data provided, and provide a qualitative assessment of each PLO.
  + Try to fill in the CLO data from each sheet on your spreadsheet, and attempt to come up with an aggregate percentage for your PLOs. Is it possible to give a PLO quantitative assessment based on all of the courses listed? Or, can you give a PLO quantitative assessment based only on your discipline/department courses?
  + **Please be thorough and provide as much reflection and analysis as possible. The more analysis, the better. Feel free to write beyond this page.**

Based on individual CLO analysis, the speech communication department courses are successful. However, in order to create an aggregated summary of program level outcomes, a consistent measurement tool needs to be applied (see Action Plan).

The SPCOM CLO data tells us that we should have more standardized PLO assessment tools that would then dictate the creation of outcome statements and assessment measurement tools.

Bullet #1

The CLO data shows that of the outcomes assessed, a range of 79% to 100% of students successfully completed the various assessed outcomes and the PLOs they aligned with in the spreadsheet.

Bullet #2

See attached for CLO data in spreadsheet.

At this point, it is not possible to complete an aggregate percentage for our PLOs. There are a number of CLOs that have not been assessed because we were following the previous directive of measuring one outcome per course per assessment cycle. We understand that the process has changed and now measure all CLOs when each course is due for assessment.

A standardized PLO measurement tool would have needed to be developed prior to assessing CLOs and asking questions regarding aggregate percentages of PLOs.

Bullet #3

In order to assess program level outcomes a standardized method of assessment needs to be determined first.

1. **Action Plan.** Based on the assessments and analysis you have provided in questions 1-4, please consider what changes or improvements you would like to make, which might include updating your CLO or PLO statements, modifying course outlines, rethinking instruction efforts, using different assessment instruments, etc. ***Based on the analysis you have provided in questions 1-4, provide an action plan for improvement that draws on your assessment results and efforts.***

Action Plan #1

The speech communication department needs to revise our PLOs. This in turn will allow us to more clearly determine if our current course offerings align with our PLOs. Once the alignment analysis is completed, this will drive the possible revision of our course learning outcome statements and our assessment tools.

Action Plan #2

This process has demonstrated the need for technology to collect and collate the data from assessment. The department collects individual data and needs to create a “norming” culture to standardize expectations. For example, recording speeches to track and analyze performance and collecting data on performance anxiety with the PRCA-24. (See individual CLO reporting data for evidence of technology need e.g. SPCOM 105)

In addition, the department needs to create standardized PLO measurement tools to assess and collect data. These tools will help the faculty determine if students are meeting the program learning outcomes, as well as evaluate the strength of the courses in the department and the effectiveness of how CLOs are measured.

Action Plan #3

SPCOM 101 and 109 have been inactivated due to the lack of personnel to teach these courses. The increased responsibility on faculty to complete various reports has created a hardship on teaching the courses in the curriculum.

The data from assessing the three forensics courses indicates a need to reinstate an additional coach. Prior to 2000, the Forensics program had two coaches with 40% assign time each. The reinstatement of this coaching position will enhance student success in the program.

Action Plan #4

The speech department has created a cycle to assess all CLOs in the next two years. The faculty will develop a schedule and point person to monitor this activity.

1. The college should be making improvements based on student learning outcomes assessment, and we need to continue to document and share the improvements and progress you have already made. *This is extremely important.*
   * Did you make any changes in your CLO or PLO statements during the last 4-year cycle that ended in 2012, or any changes this year? *Please explain what you accomplished.*
   * Did you make any improvements in the areas of teaching and instruction processes, your courses, or your program? *Please explain and provide details about your efforts!*

Bullet #1

PLOs were not changed during this time period in the speech communication department.

The following CLO changes were made during this period:

* SPCOM 100 CLOs were rewritten to demonstrate clear and measurable outcomes.
* SPCOM 102 CLO #2 was changed to reflect a singular rather than dual focus.
* SPCOM 104 CLOs were rewritten to demonstrate clear and measurable outcomes.
* SPCOM 105 CLOs were rewritten to demonstrate clear and measurable outcomes.
* SPCOM 106 CLOs were rewritten to demonstrate clear and measurable outcomes.
* SPCOM 122 CLO #3 was changed to create a more measurable outcome.
* SPCOM 123 CLO #4 was eliminated due to its immeasurability.
* SPCOM 130 CLOs were rewritten to demonstrate clear and measurable outcomes.

Bullet #2

During the spring 2012 semester, the Speech Communication faculty established a Communication Studies Lab. The primary goal of the lab is to support student success in Speech Communication courses. The department uses the lab to help students develop presentation outlines, conduct academic research, practice presentations, and reduce communication apprehension. The Communication Studies Lab attendance increased from Spring 2012 to Spring 2013 at a rate of 117% (57 to 124 students). Room utilization of the practice rooms increased from Spring 2012 to Spring 2013 at a rate of 97.5% (125 to 247 students). We are currently working at maximum capacity in the lab and are seeking an alliance with the Integrated Learning Center to increase lab hours in order to serve more students. This relationship will also help faculty assess the impact of the lab in a more organized and comprehensive manner.

1. Please reflect on the process of learning outcomes assessment in your division and at Modesto Junior College. What do you think would make it more meaningful? How could it be improved? What would help you?

The problems with this process are numerous. In no particular order:

* CLOs should not drive PLOs; that process is backwards and counter-intuitive.
* The process would be more meaningful if ILOs were included to determine if the program’s purpose(s) met the overarching outcomes of the institution.
* The campus needs an Assessment Coordinator (or Director) to both guide this process, as well as train (and retrain) faculty. The current training modality is ineffective. It would be helpful to have an outcomes assessment expert be present when the department faculty meet to complete the reflection and analysis. Unfortunately, we continue to rely on serial communication between trainers and faculty. This particular position is too much for the Academic Senate President to attempt to do on top of his/her normal Senate duties.
* Currently, this process has been a constant moving target. Every year the college seems to change how this process is done, the rules that are involved, and what is required. Departments are typically told that “this is a learning process” and “try your best.” However, our perception based on past practices is that the work we do **WILL** have major repercussions on hiring, funding, etc. Therefore, "doing our best" without the proper support and training has a negative connotation.
* All full-time faculty within a department need originator rights in the outcomes assessment module in PRNet. This would enable department colleagues to input and edit assessment data. Without this very basic ability to work and edit each other’s work in a collaborative way, it requires individual faculty members to “fly blind” within the process. As a result, this becomes an exercise in futility and departments are simply jumping through hoops for some report’s checklist instead of restricting our ability to do this work as a result of the nonsensical gatekeeping that we face.
* The timing of when these expectations are given to departments, as well as when these reports are due, is poorly planned. Reports are usually due at the end of the semester in conjunction with other lengthy reports (e.g. Program Review). If the purpose is to provide meaningful information to guide departments, then the departments need lead-time to complete these reports in the manner in which they are intended. Due dates for reports and data driven documentation need to be planned college wide so that departments can collect and analyze data properly.
* The instructions for how to use the CLOs and PLOs are confusing. Even with a pilot program, there needs to be examples of how to do this process. Human and electronic resources need to be readily available throughout the process. Some written assessment reports models from other colleges would have been helpful, especially for those of us in the pilot program. Faculty are not getting the proper resources to complete these types of assignments. For example, we completed GELO/CLO alignment spreadsheet on August 23, 2012, but did not receive copies of it. Therefore, the Department had to recreate the GELO/CLO alignment sheet on May 24, 2013. This is a frustrating replication of work.
* Provide specific departmental resources. For example, the National Communication Association publishes “A Communication Assessment Primer” that is available in downloadable PDF format on their website. This resource could be shared by the SPCOM faculty to facilitate not only this process, but also assist us in improving our assessment tools by aligning with our professional organization’s standards.
* Suggestion: Rather than ask for the success rates to be inserted into the map ( or maybe in addition), have faculty map the type of assessment(s) they use for the CLO alignment to the PLO. I think it would be more meaningful to see what type of method of evaluation is being used to determine if student is completing outcome. It could also provide a bigger picture of what types of assessments are used in different disciplines in order to assess student achievement of PLOs. For example, some disciplines might use a research paper to assess a CLO that aligns with PLO #3. See brief example of assessment map.

AA PLO #1 AA PLO #2 AA PLO #3

SPCOM 100 CLO #1 Speeches Persuasive Speech Outline

SPCOM 100 CLO #2 Exam

* Departments have historically been told that if we do “X” by a certain date, then it will help determine if we receive new faculty hires or other resources. In practice, however, that is absolutely untrue. Even when we complete these arbitrarily assigned requirements, they never seem to pan-out when resources and faculty are being determined which undermines the utility of this activity. Further, the rationale that we often are told is that “We’ll follow the process next time, but we need to move forward.” That violates the trust that faculty members have within this process.
* It would be helpful to have the spreadsheets prefilled with the percentages for the CLO data.
* We know from experience that this process will change again—without much lead-time for faculty—and yet we will be held to the “new standard” even though the goal-posts have moved again.
* In sum, the most frustrating conclusion to this entire activity is this—We have been unable to complete this activity by the due date and the onus of responsibility is beyond our capability. Of major concern to the Speech Communication Department faculty is that we value doing good work. We typically are one of the leading departments on the campus to get reports and requirements like these done by expected due dates. However, even our department is having a difficult time completing this activity in a meaningful way. It is time to invest in the proper resources to complete these processes that are important to our institution's accreditation and student success formulas.