2016 Assessment of College Processes

Overview

In April 2016, Merritt College developed and distributed a campus wide assessment of major college processes including assessment, program review, integrated planning and budgeting and collegial decision making via the participatory governance committees. In order to develop the survey questions, the campus researcher consulted a similar tool used in 2011 to assess these processes, and worked with Faculty and members of the College Educational Master Planning Committee and Accreditation Follow-up Report Committee to refine and edit survey questions.

The survey and two reminder emails were distributed to Faculty, Administrators, and Classified staff using Survey Monkey. 82 total responses were collected: 6 Administrators, 23 Classified Staff, and 53 Faculty. Survey results will be shared with the campus community, participatory governance committees and College Leadership and published on the College website.

Summary Comments

- The campus recognizes wide-scale efforts at improvement, which makes constituents feel like the campus is improving in effectiveness.
- It is imperative that in order for these processes to improve, more of the campus needs to be involved and aware.
- In comparing comments from low effectiveness ratings and high effectiveness ratings, when the comments are similar, it may be an indication of high impact strategies. If the person is engaged in this strategy, it seems to increase their awareness and understanding of the process, and positively impact their perspective and effectiveness rating. If the person rated effectiveness as low, but mentioned the same strategy as a comment, it would indicated that the lack of engagement in this strategy negatively impacted their perspective and rating in regards to effectiveness of the process. For example, the campus is at a consensus that training and support increases the effectiveness of our processes. If a person received and engaged in training, they perceived the process as effective. If a person felt there was no adequate training, or didn't receive or engage in training, they felt the process was not effective.
- Campus processes overall face similar challenges: to increase participation and collaboration, transparency, simply and sustain.
- The campus needs to define what effectiveness looks like for all these processes and identify potential direct measures of assessment.

Assessment:

Assessment Processes	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
My department or unit plans and prepares for upcoming assessment activities.	38	46%	33	40%	7	9%	4	5%
My department or unit makes improvements based on assessment results.	39	48%	20	25%	14	17%	8	10%
Overall, assessment drives improvement in student learning and achievement at Merritt College.	26	32%	37	46%	11	14%	7	9%
Please rate the effectiveness of assessment processes (SLO, PLO, and ILO) at Merritt College.	Average: 5.81							

☺ Few respondents didn't know anything about the process(5-10% by question). The majority of respondents indicated the department plans and prepares for assessment, as well as uses results to make improvements most of the time.

☺ Mean for effectiveness is 5.81, mode (most choices) is 6. Highest effectiveness rating of all the College processes.

- Respondents who rated effectiveness as **5 or lower** listed reasons related to time, support, training, and feeling like assessment is meaningless, or not used.
- Respondents who rated effectiveness as **6 or higher** were mostly based on the recent improvement the campus has made with assessment completion and process. Although not perfect or completely proficient, the respondents recognized the increased efforts, training and support they did receive.
- Some assessment processes may be working better or improving more than others. (SLO/SAO vs. PLO vs. ILO)

Common Recommendations for Improvements:
- Communication and dialogue awareness/knowledge, support (activities and key persons), simplify, clarify and streamline, timelines embed into responsibilities/department meetings, Taskstream, follow good examples and replicate, increased and wide-spread participation.

Recurring Themes:
- Training
- Clarity of process and timelines

- Systematic dialogue from assessment planning through results and use of assessment results

Program Review

Program Review Process	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
Program Review is data-driven and includes analysis of institutional and learning outcome assessment data.	32	42%	24	31%	7	9%	14	18%
My department or unit makes improvements based on results of program review.	28	36%	29	38%	11	14%	9	12%
My department or unit requests new resources based on results of program review.	36	47%	21	28%	8	11%	11	15%
Overall, program review drives improvement in student learning and achievement at Merritt College.	27	35%	22	29%	13	17%	15	20%
Please rate the effectiveness of the Program Review process at Merritt College.	5.61							

☺ The majority of respondents felt that program review is data-driven and new resource requests are linked to program review results.

- There seems to be disconnect between assessment processes and program review, with more of the campus less aware of the program review process (12-20% by question). The mean and mode rating for effectiveness is lower than assessment, 5.61 and 5.0 respectively, even though the processes are related.
- Of those rating program review effectiveness from 1-5, the reasons listed for the rating were similar to assessment; training, guidance and support, mere and meaningless or unused paperwork, waste of time. Respondents felt that there is no tangible outcome of program review linked to planning and budgeting and timeline for completion is unclear but always rushed.
- Of those rating program review effectiveness between 6-10, the reasons for the rating revolved around the perceived improvement in completion and increased emphasis on the link between program review and resource requests. Although the majority of these respondents still noted the need for training, improvement and clarity.
- Not a clear understanding between assessment processes and program review, which are intricately connected.

Common Recommendations for Improvements:

- Clear timelines and simplified process, one-on-one training and guidance and review, revise the template and questions, include all constituents and increase participation, provide incentives or acknowledgement, increased dialogue to foster understanding of the purpose and use of program review.

Recurring Themes:

- Training
- Streamlined process with clear and reasonable timeline start to finish
- Regular and inclusive dialogue within the department and with the Administrator

Integrated Planning and Budgeting

Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
Budget development and resource allocation is driven by planning and assessment.	19	25%	23	31%	15	20%	18	24%
Resources requests are linked to data and institutional goals.	20	27%	26	35%	12	16%	17	23%
Overall, integrated planning and budgeting results in improvement of student learning and achievement at Merritt College.	15	20%	23	31%	17	23%	20	27%
Please rate the effectiveness of the integrated planning and budgeting process at Merritt College.	Average: 4.94							

- A significant portion of the College is unfamiliar with integrated planning and budgeting processes.
- Even though the mode rating of effectiveness was a 5.0, the average was slightly below, at 4.94, which means the majority of respondents rated the effectiveness 5 or below.
- Those rating on the lower end of effectiveness cited reasons including lack of evidence of the process, lack of understanding, clarity, transparency or follow through in the process.
- Respondents rating the effectiveness of integrated planning and budgeting favorably noted that the process is improving, despite the challenges to remain sustainable and transparent.

Common Recommendations for Improvements:
- Recommendations for improvement to the integrated planning and budgeting process included: increased transparency, consistency, participation and collaboration among constituents and units.

Recurring Themes:
- Consistency and Transparency
- Need for simplicity, adherence and follow through
- Need for evidence of fairness and completeness of process

Collegial Decision Making

Collegial Decision Making	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
Governance committees represent all constituency groups in decision making processes.	15	21%	36	50%	8	11%	13	18%
Governance committees collaborate to implement data driven and integrated planning and budgeting processes.	12	17%	30	42%	16	22%	14	19%
Governance committees engage in dialogue about institutional effectiveness.	19	27%	32	45%	9	13%	11	15%
Overall, decision making through Participatory Governance at Merritt College results in improved student learning and achievement.	11	15%	29	40%	18	25%	14	19%
Please rate the effectiveness of the collegial decision making process at Merritt College.	Average: 4.76							

- Collegial decision making had the lowest average effectiveness rating, 4.76, with a mode of 5.0.
- Approximately half of respondent indicated the Collegial Decision making process completes or adheres to the above criteria at least some of the time, but a significant portion of the College may be unaware or unfamiliar with the collegial decision making process.
- Low (1-5) effectiveness ratings were due to reasons including: low or reduced participation, trust and follow through of the shared governance model, and perceptions of ultimate administrative power over decisions made.
- High (6-10) effectiveness ratings were due to recent efforts and improvements despite the continued issues of low participation and consistency in the process. Several comments noted the effort to involve all constituency groups.

Common Recommendations for Improvements:

- Inspirational and effective leadership of the process, increased and wide-spread involvement, productive, effective and formalized meetings, persistent hope for continued improvement, training about the process and components

Recurring Themes:

- Leadership and ownership of the collegial decision making process to ensure the process is followed.
- Increase new participants.
- Increase productivity and efficiency of meetings.

Participatory Governance Committee Assessment

Summary

- The committees and governance exist to serve and support the entire campus, yet a significant portion of the campus is unclear about Participatory Committees, and each committee's purpose, charge and/or activities.

Common Themes and Recommendations for Improvement

- Increase communication from the committees to the campus, both on what decisions were made and how they were made.
- Increase and diversify committee participation and attendance.
- Combine the Budget and Planning Committees.

College Council

College Council	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
All constituency groups are able to bring requests for policy and procedural changes to the College Council for discussion.	21	30%	21	30%	5	7%	24	34%
The College Council obtains input from all constituency groups on policy and procedural changes.	17	24%	22	31%	6	8%	26	30%

The College Council provides adequate communication to the College community about policy and procedural changes and college-wide initiatives.	11	16%	25	35%	14	20%	21	30%
The College Council facilitates the shared governance model at Merritt College	14	20%	23	32%	12	17%	22	31%

College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)

College Educational Master Planning Committee (CEMPC)	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
CEMPC regularly reviews and updates the College on the Educational Master Plan	13	19%	30	44%	9	13%	16	24%
CEMPC facilitates the alignment of College activities with the EMP, Annual Goals and District Strategic Goals.	12	18%	28	42%	11	17%	15	23%
CEMPC represents all constituency groups when recommending College planning priorities, activities and goals to the College Council.	15	22%	19	28%	12	18%	21	31%

College Budget Committee (CBC)

College Budget Committee (CBC)	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
CBC advises on the development of budgetary policies, processes and timelines.	18	27%	17	25%	5	8%	27	40%
CBC receives and review budget proposals from departments and program areas.	22	32%	14	21%	6	9%	26	38%
CBC represents all constituency groups when recommending budget development, processes and allocations.	17	25%	10	15%	12	18%	28	42%

College Facilities Committee (CFC)

College Facilities Committee (CFC)	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	

CFC identifies, prioritizes and recommends areas of facility needs for the campus.	18	26%	21	30%	3	4%	28	40%
CFC receives and relays information from the District Facilities committee to Merritt and the constituents.	15	21%	24	34%	5	7%	26	37%
CFC represents all constituency groups when recommending facility needs and improvements.	16	23%	18	26%	6	9%	30	43%

College Technology Committee (CTC)

College Technology Committee (CTC)	Always/Most of the Time		Occasionally/Some of the Time		Rarely/Never		I don't know.	
CTC identifies, prioritizes and recommends areas of technology needs for the campus.	30	43%	10	14%	9	13%	21	30%
CTC receives and relays information from the District Technology committee to Merritt and the constituents.	24	34%	11	16%	11	16%	24	34%
CTC represents all constituency groups when recommending facility needs and improvements.	21	30%	12	17%	9	13%	27	39%