

have assumed varying formats with inconsistent content. As also seen in the GE program, part of the problem might be the confusion over language: institutional “outcome” vs. “standard,” “department goal” vs. “student outcome” or “student learning outcome.” Moreover, some departments have framed their “goals” or “outcomes” by reflecting on the six institutional learning outcomes/standards, while others have focused on disciplinary language that may or may not be linked to those standards/outcomes. To date, nine academic departments have submitted five-year progress reports with great variation of information. In addition, the Education Department has completed a review as required by the California Department of Education. Given the variability of formats and review foci, it was unclear how progress in this area would be assessed and if there was progress.

Third, sustainability is related to the use of assessment within the institution’s decision-making process and the faculty development in particular. At Westmont, assessment is still the work of a few motivated people. The College needs to give thought to the place of assessment in faculty development and institutional reward, including rank and tenure, course reduction and funding. If assessment remains marginal to the system in a community that is already suspicious of the value of assessment, the current efforts will most likely be short lived in the majority of the departments (CFR 2.8, 2.9, 3.4).

In summary, the Team observed the following regarding Program Review (CFR 2.2, 2.7, 4.4, 4.8):

- a. With regard to the quality and availability of evidence, the status of the program review, progress reports, and departmental assessment activities were difficult to

assess. The variability seen in other areas of the institution in matters of assessment was clearly present (e.g., the materials across departments did not follow a similar format or template). This variability did not facilitate the review of material or demonstrate the viability of the data collection and interpretation. Consequently, the descriptors “most,” “many,” etc. are used in this analysis rather than specific numbers.

- b. An analysis of the Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators and available departmental notebooks and files reveal significant variability across and within departments. This variability is itemized in several areas: use of institutional standards, departmental and disciplinary learning outcomes, criteria for evaluation, and mechanism for interpreting and using data:

*Use of Institutional standards/outcomes.* All academic departments have embraced the six institutional outcomes, and most have attempted to integrate some or all of those outcomes in departmental outcomes. Many of the departments have identified disciplinary outcomes for their students. Some of these outcomes were expressed as student learning outcomes related to the discipline; some are general outcomes (e.g., use of technology).

*Departmental and disciplinary learning outcomes.* Some departments use the institutional learning outcomes/standards to shape their departmental outcomes, while others articulate their outcomes in language more reflective of their own

disciplines. Alignment of the various outcomes and standards remains a challenge. In addition, some departments have long lists of outcomes that have created a deterrent to assessing the outcomes. Focusing on a smaller set of outcomes, simplifying, and coordinating efforts may facilitate the assessment process in these departments.

*Formulating criteria for evaluation.* Most departments have clear summative evaluation mechanisms in place (e.g., capstone courses). While many of the academic departments reported tools for formative assessment, it was unclear whether the assessment opportunities were systematic and applied across all students, or if there are clear mechanisms for substantive feedback to students regarding their performance. While some departments have established criteria for student work, very few have developed rubrics that articulate indicators of quality, especially related to specific student learning outcomes. As such, evaluation of student work is based on individual judgment that may not be articulated to students, or shared across the department to ensure common expectations within a major or program of study (CFR 2.5, 2.12).

*Mechanism for interpreting and using data.* Discussion in departmental meetings appears to be the primary avenue for departments to reflect and use what they learn from student work toward program improvement. Some departments have established clear points in the academic year for a comprehensive examination of student work. A systematic program revision process affords the faculty time to