



**Midterm Report**

Submitted by

Mendocino College  
1000 Hensley Creek Road  
Ukiah, CA 95482

to

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

March 2024

## Certification

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

From: President/Superintendent, Dr. Timothy Karas  
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This Midterm Report is submitted to the ACCJC for the purposes of 1) highlighting recent improvements or innovations and 2) providing an update on institutional performance with regard to student outcomes since the last comprehensive peer review. The Midterm Report reflects the nature and substance of this institution, as well as its best efforts to align with ACCJC Standards and policies, and was developed with appropriate participation and review by the campus community.

Signatures:



Timothy Karas, Chief Executive Officer

2/14/2024  
Date



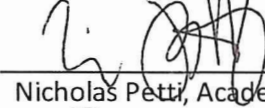
Xochitl Martinez, President, Board of Trustees

02-14-2024  
Date



Debra Polak, Vice President of Academic Affairs, ALO

2/14/2024  
Date



Nicholas Petti, Academic Senate President

2/14/24  
Date



Lawrence Ortiz, Student Trustee, Board of Trustees

2-14-2024  
Date

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## A. Reflections on Continuous Improvement Since Last Comprehensive Review

1. Briefly describe major improvements or innovations since the time of the last comprehensive peer review, focusing on areas where your institution is excelling or showing significant improvement with regard to equitable student outcomes, educational quality, and/or mission fulfillment.

Mendocino College's last comprehensive review occurred on the eve of the pandemic. The peer review team left our campus on February 27, 2020, and by mid-March, all of us were re-imagining almost everything we do as community college educators. As a result, much has changed in how we deliver instruction and student services online, but also, as we welcomed students back to campus, they have been met with new spaces to support their learning and success. The narrative below highlights a portion of the improvements and innovations recently implemented. There are more discussed in other sections of the midterm report.

### Instruction:

While there was a considerable effort being made before the pandemic to provide professional development for faculty in teaching online, this, understandably, was stepped up significantly during the pandemic. Mendocino College developed a strong peer-to-peer "Faculty-helping-Faculty" program, in which a cadre of expert online teachers were made available for one-on-one support. Additionally, these faculty were and continue to be called on to provide professional development and to review courses according to the Peer Online Course Review (POCR) rubric for the California Virtual Campus exchange. These efforts have resulted in a greater consistency in the quality of online courses. Also, since the last peer review, the onboarding of new faculty has been improved to provide a series of workshops to orient them to teaching in general, and our college specifically.

The College has also been providing professional development on culturally relevant and responsive instruction, including grading policies, teaching practices, and syllabus preparation in general. These include teaching institutes, book clubs, and providing opportunities for faculty to participate in professional development off campus.

Additionally, instructional faculty, student services, and library services have been working on making texts affordable for students. This work includes developing and identifying free Online Education Resource (OER) materials. It also includes work to identify funding to provide class sets of materials and make them available in the library. The "Lending Library" has at least tripled its collections and distribution since the last peer review visit in 2020.

Evidence:

[Equity and culturally responsive teaching online course invitation](#)

[Braiding Sweetgrass book club email invitation](#)

[CAMP Canvas and OER Camp email invitation to faculty](#)

[Intro to community college teaching workshops](#)

[Page of schedule showing ZTC](#)

## **Campus Improvements**

Many improvements designed to support student success are in process or have been made to Mendocino College since the last peer review visit. They include:

- A complete refresh of classroom instructional technology, including technology at each Center.
- The old bookstore has been converted to the Eagle Student Support Center: This Center houses Basic Needs and CalFresh, a Dream Center, the Native American Resource Center, and the Puente Program. This redesign has created a welcoming space across Pomo Plaza from our Library and Learning Center and adjacent to a newly designed Transfer Center and student government meeting space. This change has created a new flow of students in and throughout this space
- Opening of a Welcome Center: The Admissions and Records space was re-designed to create a Welcome Center. The Welcome Center houses outreach staff and admissions staff who can help direct students to the services they need. Previously, this space had traditional admissions service windows. Because of its location at the entrance to campus, students would sometimes wait in line for a window and discover they needed to go someplace else for the service they were looking for. The open design of this new space allows for students to begin their journey on campus with welcoming and knowledgeable staff to guide them to their first steps.
- Improvement of Wi-Fi: In response to the COVID pandemic, Wi-Fi access has been improved at all locations. Faster, more effective Wi-Fi is available in all buildings, and outdoor spaces, including reaching parking lots. This is significant for students who may live in remote areas with limited Wi-Fi. They can visit our locations even when buildings and services are closed to access internet.

Evidence:

[Classroom refresh overview](#)

[Model Classroom invitation](#)

[Classroom Detail Sheet](#)

[Bookstore to Eagle Support Center](#)

[Welcome Center](#)

## **Native American Learning Symposiums**

Mendocino College was recently recognized for having not only the highest percentage, but also the highest number of Native American students enrolled at any California Community College. This is a significant accomplishment for a small college. To support our Native American students' success, the College applied for and received a National Endowment Humanities Grant to, in part, provide a series of Native American Learning Symposiums. Each symposium is presented by a panel of speakers from local tribes and focuses on a topic important to local Native people. The topics and panels were chosen through a planning process which included local Native leaders. The symposiums focused on topics such as, sovereignty, education, environment and wellness. They have been well attended in person and on Zoom with over one hundred having attended at the time of this report. The symposia were designed to give our campus community knowledge and insights into the community we serve.

Evidence:

## Strategic Enrollment Management

Over the past two years, the College has been developing and implementing a Strategic Enrollment Management project with the specific goals to increase completion, consistency, clarity and communication around the scheduling of classes (MC4C). This project began as a Research and Planning Group (RP) Strategic Enrollment Management project but has become embedded in the work of Enrollment Management Committee. Membership of the project team and Enrollment Management Committee consists of mostly faculty, deans, outreach staff and other administrators and staff.

Some of the activities accomplished so far:

- Faculty development of program maps
- A scheduling dashboard with data on previous semester schedules, including enrollments, class cancellations, and fill rates
- Introduction of a two-year template for scheduling
- A close look at students' course taking practices, including the shift to more online classes and the impact of HyFlex on teaching and learning.

Evidence:

[Sample Program map HST](#)

[Sample two-year schedule CDV](#)

[SEM schedule tool](#)

[Disaggregated Enrollment data for EMC Meeting](#)

[Student HyFlex results](#)

## 2. Briefly describe actions taken in response to any recommendations for improving institutional effectiveness or feedback noted in the Peer Review Team Report for the last comprehensive peer review.

The 2020 Peer Review Team Report for Mendocino College's last comprehensive peer review resulted in two recommendations.

***Recommendation #1: In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends the College establish more effective practices to assess institutional learning outcomes and use the results for improvement (I.B.5).***

### **Mendocino College response to Recommendation #1:**

Based on the work done to complete the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER), this recommendation was received without surprise from college stakeholders. However, before establishing practices to assess ISLOs, an extensive process was begun to re-think and re-write them. Since receiving this recommendation, the following work has been accomplished:

Development of new ISLOs

- A large group was convened by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) to review the current ISLOs, look at examples from other colleges, recommend a format and begin a draft. Representation on this workgroup was carefully considered to include faculty from across disciplines and roles, students, managers and classified, especially those engaged in supporting student learning.
- The workgroup established the structure and format of the new ISLOs and identified the broad ideas that would become the specific ISLOs.
- A smaller group of mostly faculty was tasked to finish the writing
- The larger group was reconvened to review the new draft of ISLOs
- The ISLOs were “walked around” to various committees and constituent groups, including the Education Action Plan committee (EAP), the Student Learning Outcomes Team (SLOTh), Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Classified Senate and Management Team. A Microsoft Form was used to gather feedback from the campus
- Finally, the ISLOs were brought to an Inservice presentation for all College employees.
- New ISLOs were fully adopted in Spring 2022

#### Assessing the ISLOs:

SLOTh and EAP have been the committees tasked with developing and implementing the ISLO assessment process. These bodies decided to implement assessment in two ways:

- Elumen mapping: Instructional faculty mapped their course outcomes to the ISLOs so that course outcome assessments can be applied to assess ISLOs
- Student exit surveys: An exit survey for graduating students has been developed and administered to twelve students in the 2023 graduating class.

In addition to the new methods of assessment described above, an idea in progress is to have faculty complete a narrative assessment of their courses as they relate to ISLOs based on the way their courses are mapped in elumen. This is in the idea phase and will be brought to SLOTh and EAP for discussion and possible implementation into the Program Review Part 2 process.

ISLO assessment data is still preliminary and thin. Over the next two years, Mendocino College expects to have more robust data. The College has developed the process and is in the beginning stages of implementing it.

#### Evidence

[ISLO first wkgp agenda 3.24.21](#)

[ISLO Timeline](#)

[ISLO Outcomes Feedback Survey](#)

[Faculty meeting with ISLO 3.24.22](#)

[EAP Agenda with ISLO](#)

[Curriculum minutes with ISLO](#)

[SLOTh Agenda 10 24 22](#)

[ISLO Final –Copy for Catalog](#)

[ISLO Student Survey](#)

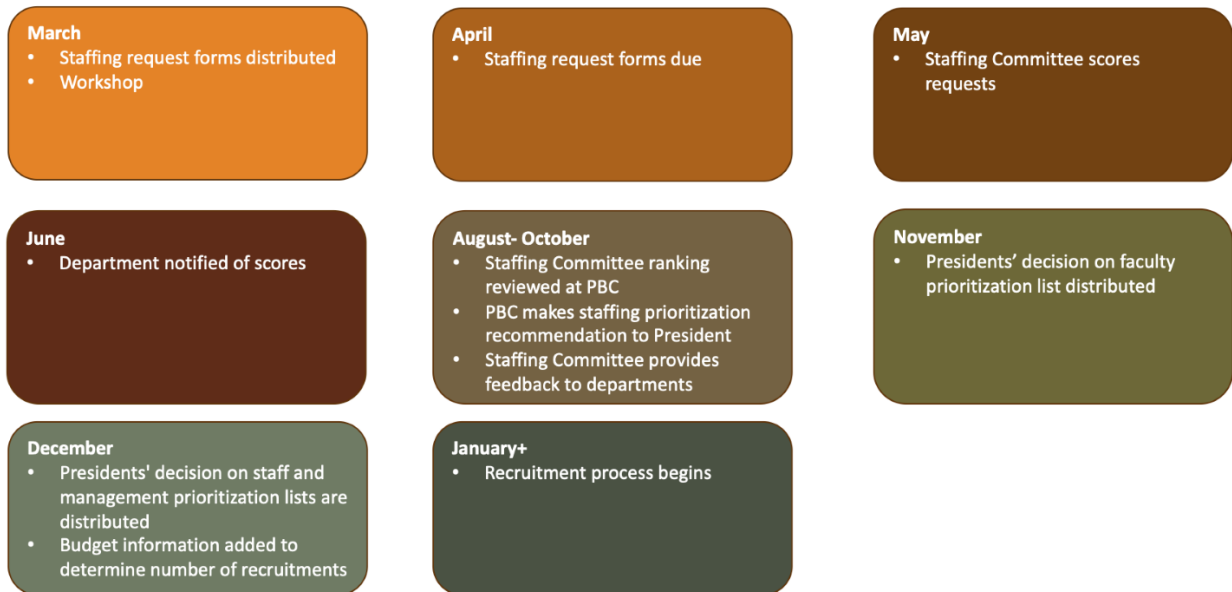
**Recommendation #2: In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends the College formally document and widely communicate funding decisions resulting from the program review process (IV.A.6).**

**Mendocino College response to Recommendation #2:**

Mendocino College has had a well-established method for making funding decisions resulting from a program review process. This process directs program review requests to appropriate committees with representatives from constituent groups for scoring and prioritization. However, as was made apparent through the ACCJC Self-Evaluation and Comprehensive Review Processes, those decision-making processes and results were not widely communicated or understood by the College at-large. Additionally, the processes followed were not consistent across committees. In response to the recommendation, the college has established a timeline, processes and more formalized and deliberate communication:

- Committee Chairs were convened to consider the recommendation and develop processes to ensure wider communication of both the process and the decisions made through the program review process.
- A clear process was developed and shared widely:

## Program Review 1A Timeline (Staffing)





# Program Review 1B Timeline (facilities, tech, instructional equipment, outreach/marketing, prof development)



Communication between committees and requestors will occur throughout this process as purchases and work orders are approved.

- Since Program Review requests are forwarded to committees, each committee receiving requests developed an improved communication plan based on the specific nature of the requests and the ways funding is secured in those contexts:
  - Staffing: submitters are invited to meet with Staffing Committee chair to review scores  
Facilities: communication occurs to clarify requests, prioritize when there are multiple requests. After the requests are scored, they are forwarded to PBC for review. Presidents' memos are shared with PBC about staffing decision.
  - Professional Development: Departments are contacted to gather additional information as needed. There is a mid-year call out for non-expended funds. Within the committee braided funding is identified for prioritized requests. Membership on committee oversees funding.
  - Technology—after the requests are scored, information is gathered to secure funding for the projects.
  - At the end of the year, each committee provides a written and verbal report to PBC.
  - Reports on allocations are made at campus wide Inservice.

Evidence:

[Committee Chairs Agenda April 2021](#)

[PBC Minutes April 5 2022](#) (example of program review reports)

[PBC Minutes October 5 2021](#) (example of staffing reports)

**3. How are the actions described above helping your institution deepen its practices for continuous improvement and transformation in relation to the 2024 Accreditation Standards?**

The actions described above relate to many of the 2024 Accreditation Standards:




- The work to improve the College’s Program Review is strongly related to Standard 1.4 and 1.5
- Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO) development and assessment are in support of Standards 2.2, 2.3 and 2.9
- The work for improvement and transformation of instructional practices relates to many areas in Standard 2, most notably 2.1, 2.2 and 2.6. The professional development effort in this area relates to Standard 3.2
- Campus improvements relate most closely to 3.8 as that refers to improvements to the physical plant. However, Standard 2.8 describes the college’s attention to both academic and non-academic needs of the students, which these changes support.
- Strategic Enrollment Management is strongly related to standards 2.5 and 2.6

**B. Reflections on Institution-Set Standards and Other Metrics of Student Achievement**

**1. Review the most recent ACCJC Annual Report and other meaningful metrics of student achievement. Has the institution met its floor standards? Exceeded its stretch goals? Describe any patterns or trends you see in performance against your institution-set standards and other metrics of student achievement.**

The most recent ACCJC Annual report illustrates fairly stable student achievement metrics with some decrease in student achievement from 2019-20 to 2021-22. In 19-20, Mendocino College exceeded stretch goals in all categories, except transfer; however, in 2021-22, the College fell slightly under its floor standards in Course Completion (under by one percent); and Certificate completion (under by 4 completions). This could be attributed to the fact that Certificates are Career Education programs, which required hands-on classes for completion, which were not attended as well when they were offered as hybrid online/in person classes. Completion of associate degrees and Transfer were achieved at rates beyond the stretch goals.

The table below depicts our most recent measure of Student Achievement Standards. These metrics are slightly different than those collected for the annual report. They are aligned with the Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF). Like the Annual Report, they show that we have dropped slightly below our 3-year average in multiple categories. This slight drop can be, at least, partly explained by the students’ experience of the COVID pandemic, the move to online instruction, and the general disruption of their lives. In number 3 below, we describe the work being done to re-calibrate student achievement.

Metric				2021-2022
	Institution Set Minimum Lowest in 3 years	Institution Set Standard 3 Year Average	Institution Set Goal Highest in 3 years	
Student Course Completion Rate	73%	<u>75%</u>	77%	74%
Student Retention Percentage	88%	<u>90%</u>	92%	87%
Student Associate Degree for Transfer	85	<u>89</u>	96	89
Student Associate Degree	178	<u>185</u>	196	238
Student Certificate Completion	34	<u>39</u>	46	35
Student Transfer to Four year	112	<u>115</u>	121	123
Transfer Level English and Math	51	<u>58</u>	68	55
9 or more CTE Units	501	<u>509</u>	517	404
*Regional Living Wage	616	<u>643</u>	684	699

**2. When you disaggregate the data for the institution-set standards and other meaningful metrics of student achievement, what do you see related to equitable student achievement outcomes (i.e., equity gaps)? What patterns or trends excite you? What patterns or trends concern you?**

Mendocino College recently completed a Student Equity Plan. That process required that we disaggregate data similar to the student achievement metrics required by the ACCJC Annual report. We were excited to find that we had closed or were not experiencing equity gaps among Hispanic, Native American and Black students in all categories, which included “Completion of transfer level math and English,” “Persistence from first primary term to subsequent primary term,” “Attained completion within 3 years,” and “Attained transfer within 3 years.”

However, we are still experiencing equity gaps among students in other categories. Our largest gaps were among Males, First Generation Students in some categories, Students with Disabilities, and Foster Youth. Specifically, the disaggregation of data showed that the following demographic groups were experiencing gaps in the following areas:

- Disabled Students: Transfer Level Math and English
- Foster Youth: Persistence
- Veterans: Transfer
- Males: Completion

Evidence:

[Student Equity Plan 2022-2025](#)

[2022-2025 Student Equity Plan Update](#)

**3. What actions has your institution taken/is your institution taking in response to the patterns and trends discussed above? How will you monitor the results of these actions in order to inform future improvements and innovations in support of equitable student achievement?**

As described above, our 2020 peer review occurred on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mendocino College maintained a sharp focus on our students and their needs as instruction and all student services were shifted online. Therefore, the actions the College has taken since our peer review visit have been changing and responsive to the needs of students, faculty and staff as the context has been shifting around us.

To start, there was a focus on faculty professional development in online teaching. In particular, much of the professional development focused on teaching for equitable outcomes online. There also were many online learning resources developed for students in online classes to support them in their classes. Over the past three years, Mendocino College has completed the process to become a host and teaching college in the California Virtual College Exchange. This allows our students more streamlined access to online courses throughout the state which can support their completion of degrees and certificates.

In addition to the focus on instruction, the pandemic brought a different focus to students' basic needs, including food, computers, internet, and mental health. Over the years since our last visit, the college has increased support in all of these areas, providing Chromebooks, hotspots, groceries, and have recently hired a Mental Health Counselor/Wellness Coordinator as well as a Basic Needs Coordinator.

As the college is experiencing a return of students to campus, they are being met with a renewed dedication of space and personnel to support their success. Through a Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) five-year grant and a Native American Student Success and Support grant, the College has hired two new managers, and four Retention Specialists, whose focus will be to keep students on track for completion of their educational goals. Data will be closely tracked to understand their role in impacting student success data, especially in persistence and completion.

In general, through regular institutional practices, including a consistent and responsive schedule of professional development, a cyclical review of program data and curriculum review, and annual analysis of institutional success data, the college is responsive to student needs and mobilizes to provide them with resources to support their success.

Evidence:

[Program Manager HSI](#)

[Program manager NASSSP](#)

[Student Retention Specialist](#)

[Basic Needs Instagram](#)

## **C. Reflections on Assessments of Student Learning**

**1. Review the results of learning outcomes assessment. Describe any patterns or trends related to attainment of learning outcomes observable in these data that may be relevant as you implement improvements and innovations in the design and delivery of academic programs?**

Faculty at Mendocino College engage with the results of their learning outcomes assessments in a variety of ways, but all our analysis of course and Program SLOs (CSLOs and PSLOs) has been at the department level. For the past several years, the SLO Committee has asked all faculty to complete an assessment of the Course level student learning outcomes every semester, using the eLumen data management system. These efforts were supported by the Academic Senate and put forward as a resolution. The goal of this effort is to build up data to allow for deeper analysis of our CSLO assessment outcomes. Reaching that deeper level of analysis is still a work in progress, as faculty and staff become more skilled in working with the data.

When faculty enter their assessment data into eLumen, they are prompted to also submit a reflection which asks them to identify how they plan to use these results to improve student learning in the future. In addition to this individual reflection process and any informal departmental reflection, departments must do a formal analysis of their SLO assessments through Program Review. The college has a two-part Program Review process. The more robust requirement, Program Review Part 2, is completed by every department on a six-year cycle and prompts the departments to analyze their CSLO data as well as their Program level SLO assessment information, which is primarily generated by mapping CSLOs to PSLOs. The Program Review analysis is reviewed by the Educational Action Planning (EAP) committee, which discusses the findings with departmental faculty and makes recommendations about avenues for improvement.

Because this data is only available at the department or course level, patterns and trends have also only been viewed at that level, not at the institutional level. For example, in their 2021 program review, the math department's review of their CSLO outcomes affirmed that students enrolled in the higher-level math courses were appropriately building skills that supported success in the next course in the sequence. This will provide a good baseline as we analyze the effects of AB1705 in the future. On the Institutional level, the SLO Team, in partnership with EAP and numerous other institutional stakeholders, has recently developed new Institutional Learning Outcomes. Data gathering on student achievement of these ISLOs has just begun. Faculty are mapping their CSLOs to these new ISLOs. This process, which will be completed this semester, will provide a higher-level institutional view of trends and patterns in outcomes assessments.

Evidence:

[Resolution S'21-02](#)

[Email requesting SLO assessments](#)

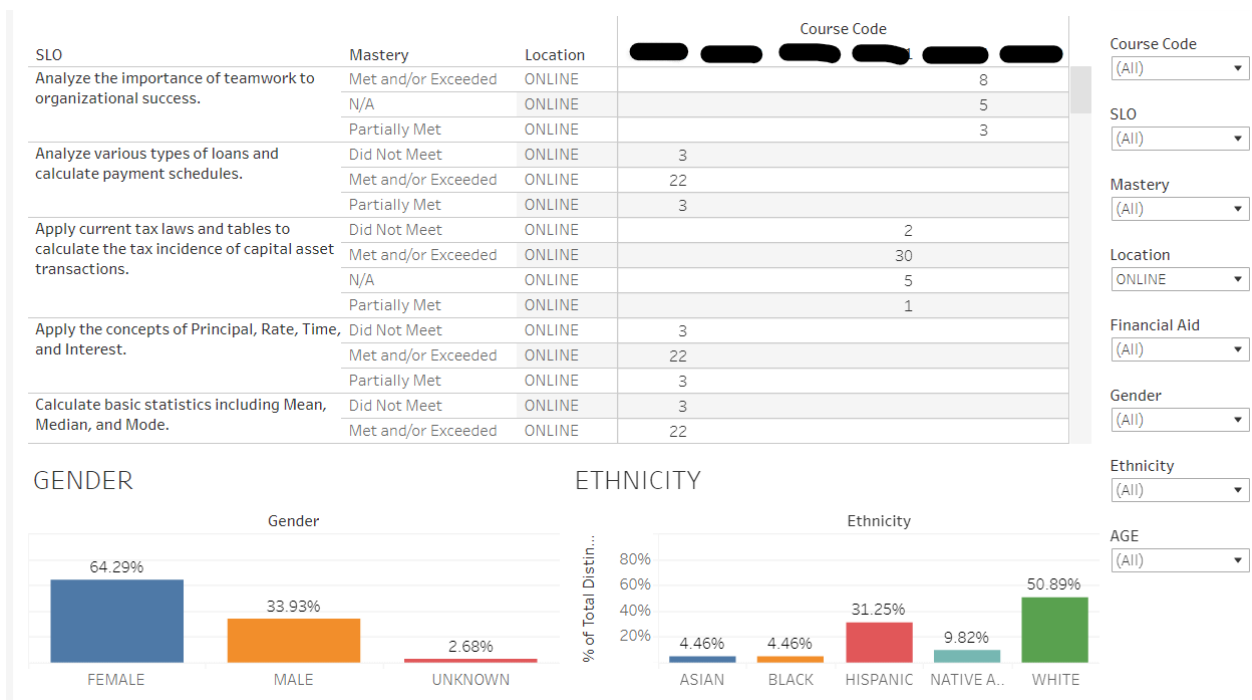
[Screenshot of reflection template](#)

[Math Program review part 2](#)

**2. How (i.e., for what subpopulations, modalities, etc.) does your institution disaggregate its assessment results? When you review disaggregated assessment results, what patterns or trends do you see related to equitable attainment of student learning? What patterns or trends excite you? What patterns or trends concern you?**

The office of Institutional Research disaggregates SLO data based on Race/Ethnicity, Age, Gender, Financial Aid recipient, and Modality/Location of instruction. Because eLumen does not provide this disaggregation, the college purchases our data from eLumen and the office of Institutional Research creates a dashboard for each department going through the Program Review Part 2 process.

Our SLO Team has had extensive discussions with Institutional Research about making this data more widely available. However, due to technical limitations and the desire to respect instructor privacy, this data currently remains only available in disaggregated form to departments in the Program Review process. The SLO Team has also created a “toolkit” of resources for faculty, including guidance on analyzing SLO assessment data with disaggregation. This dashboard image (with course identifiers removed) illustrates the interface Institutional Research creates for each department.



Again, trends and patterns found have been department by department, so it is difficult to make any institution-wide determinations from the available data. Additionally, data from 2020 and 2021 shows a high rate of N/A assessments which indicate that students withdrew from the course before the SLO could be assessed.

A comparison of departmental data suggests that generally online students are finding the same level of success as in person students and that students receiving financial aid and those not receiving financial aid are also finding the similar levels of success – which are certainly potentially exciting results deserving of further investigation.

However, the same review finds that many differences remain on a department-by-department basis. Hispanic students are more successful in some departments than others, while younger students seem more successful elsewhere. It seems prudent to maintain the departmental study of SLO assessment data and to focus on assisting faculty in gaining the skills to analyze that data effectively. ([Evidence 6](#))

Once the ISLO mapping is complete in eLumen, Institutional Research will be able to create a similar dashboard for the ISLO data. This will allow us to view the results of ISLO assessments with this same disaggregation.

Evidence:

[SLO Agenda 9 26 22](#)

[SLO Agenda 4 12 23](#)

**3. What actions has your institution taken/is your institution taking in response to the patterns and trends discussed above? How will you monitor the results of these actions in order to inform future improvements and innovations in support of equitable student learning?**

Most of the relevant information is shared with EAP. EAP and the SLO Team share a number of resource members who can bring the key points to the SLO Team for continued discussion. Program Review also includes a monitor and review process. Departments who have exciting and positive news to share are invited to discuss their ideas for improvement and innovation with the Educational Action planning committee. Those departments whose data shows cause for concern are assigned a Program Advisory Team to consult with them. The Program Advisory Team (PAT) consists of the department's instructional Dean, the Institutional Researcher, and several faculty members from other disciplines. The PAT will work with the department to develop strategies to address the concerns and will continue to meet until EAP agrees that the PAT has achieved its goals.

Evidence:

[Guidelines for Program Management](#)

## **D. Looking Ahead to the Next Self-Evaluation and Comprehensive Review**

**Your institution will begin its next comprehensive self-evaluation in 1-2 years. What opportunities, changes, or other internal or external factors do you see on the horizon that are likely to affect the context of your self-evaluation and/or comprehensive peer review?**

There was an audible and nervous gasp at an Accreditation Steering Committee meeting convened to work on this midterm report when we thought about predicting changes in the external factors affecting the context of our work. Even before the pandemic, there was a general sense that our local work was constantly needing to shift to meet the demands of external factors. Then, the pandemic, of course, changed everything. We know only that we can count on change and feel that there will always be unexpected change we need to be responsive to in the future.

Nonetheless, there are many internal opportunities and changes to describe and some external changes that are already in motion:

- As mentioned above, two new grants (HSI and Native American SSSP) provide considerable opportunity and resources for improving retention among traditionally underrepresented groups and institutionalizing those processes for all our students.
- With the newly configured spaces described above, there has also been other new personnel and a re-configuration of existing personnel to re-design the support being provided to students through Outreach, support for Native American students, a Puente program, a newly configured



Dream Center, and a Basic Needs Center. The Co-location of many of these programs allows for staff to overlap to provide services for any student arriving at the new Eagle Support Center.

- Through the development of a Middle College and significant growth in dual enrollment at our high schools, the College has opportunities to prepare high school students to enter a college pathway with significant momentum already built in their college going processes.
- The Rising Scholars program brings funding and new opportunities for reaching current and prospective students whose lives have been impacted by the justice system.
- The Strategic Enrollment Management work described above gives us opportunities to provide a schedule of classes designed to improve the student experience in planning their course taking journey.

External factors that are known to us include:

- A continued focus on workforce development: State funding prioritizes opportunities for students to plan and complete an education designed to enter the workforce or retrain for a living wage. Degrees and programs will continue to be designed and updated to allow for multiple entry and exit points from and to careers and transfer.
- The Community College system has a new Chancellor: Mendocino College will need to be ready to be responsive to new initiatives coming from the Chancellor's office. We are well poised to respond to a known initiative around dual enrollment as we have been recognized at implementing effective and impactful dual enrollment programs already.
- Artificial Intelligence: We have begun to facilitate discussions among faculty to address developments in artificial intelligence (AI) which impact education. Certainly, over the next several years (and probably longer), discussions and professional development surrounding AI, its place in education, and preventing its use when not appropriate.