

# First Monday Report

Focus on Accreditation:  
One Great Big Audacious  
**THANK YOU!!!**

Issue 15, April 9, 2013



## Upcoming Events:

- Apr 10 Library Learning Crossroads opens
- Apr 15 Artworld Perspectives: Herb & Dorothy screening  
4:00 PM  
The Great Hall
- Apr 16 Dodger Night honoring our 2012 Women's State Volleyball Champions  
7:10 PM – Dodgers Stadium
- Apr 19 The Sociology of Pop Culture: How to Apply Sociology to Media, Celebrity, and Everyday Life  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
LAVC, Monarch Hall
- Apr 25 Anthropology Lecture – Chumash-style Pictograph Sites  
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  
Behavioral Science 1308

## One Great Big Audacious **THANK YOU** for Your Dedication to Pierce College and Our Students

This is my opportunity to formally thank everyone at Pierce College for his and her active engagement in all aspects of the accreditation process. To be fully accredited requires the dedicated work of all employees every day; that aspect of accreditation is ongoing and no matter what your position is at the College, you are a part of our being accredited just by doing your job each and every workday. The exercise of preparing for and hosting an accreditation visit requires many employees to take on some additional and sometimes surprising duties. The president of the college has a unique vantage point from which to observe and take note of these special efforts. Often these contributions go unnoticed by the majority of us as we go about serving the mission of the College by enrolling, educating, graduating, and transferring students.

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## Acting Presidents During My Absence...



With the spring break, I was able to attend to a personal health issue on April 2. This will require me to be away from the college to recover for the month of April, and possibly part of May. Having the procedure completed at this time should allow my attendance at our 66<sup>th</sup> annual Commencement Ceremony on June 5, which is a very important day for our

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**"I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen." Frank Lloyd Wright**

## An Audacious Thank You Continues...

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### **Our Tangible Product – The Self Evaluation**

Let's begin by considering the work that started in spring 2011, when Dr. Mia Wood was recommended by the Academic Senate and approved by me to serve as the Faculty Coordinator for Accreditation, and the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) was formed. Both the ASC and Dr. Wood with support from Accreditation Liaison Officer, Anna Davies, set the direction that guided the College through the process of preparing our

Self Evaluation report. I would like to take this opportunity to offer a great big thank you to the members of the ASC: Shane Mooney, Wendy Bass Keer, Crystal Kiekel, Karen Murray, Joe Perret, Marian Prochter, Tom Rosdahl, David Shamus, Mia Wood, Anna Davies, Carol Kozeracki, Joy McCaslin, Alma Johnson-Hawkins, and Donna Mae Villanueva. A special great big audacious thank you to Richard Follett, who again provided his exemplary services as editor, and to Mia Wood and Anna Davies for their innumerable contributions and leadership ensuring the excellence of the final Self Evaluation document.

An essential element laying the groundwork for much of what was reported in the Self Evaluation started in fall 2010 when the Academic Senate took such a strong and principled stand on updating the entire college curriculum. A great big audacious thank you goes to the Academic Senate and Tom Rosdahl, the Curriculum Committee and Elizabeth Atondo. These efforts facilitated the development and assessment of SLOs, PLOs, and GELOs. A great big audacious thank you for all of the SLO coaches including: Kirsten Thorne, Mia Wood, Jill Binsley, Jennifer Rosenberg, and Joleen Voss-Rodrigues.

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## Acting Presidents During My Absence...

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students. During my absence, Vice President Anna Davies will serve as Acting President from April 2 through April 12; Vice President Alma Johnson-Hawkins will be the Acting President from April 15 through May 3. During

this time, my Executive Assistant, Cheryl Smith, knows how to contact me. I will be thinking of Pierce College as we spring forward to conclude another successful semester of supporting student



success, completion, and graduation. A very happy spring to all!

## Thank You...

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In addition to the guidance of this "three-legged stool" (the ASC, the Faculty Coordinator, and the ALO), there was the work of the Standard Committees, which were formed to respond to the four major accreditation standards and the 132 sub-standards, which constitute about 75% of the Self Evaluation. All of the members of the four standard committees are shown in the Self Evaluation, which is posted on the College website. It is a public document and it will continue to be available there. Please review it at your leisure and take note of the students, faculty, staff and administrators who participated in gathering the data, writing, and later reviewing the many drafts of the report in order to respond to the standards. Thanks to everyone who had a direct role in writing the Self Evaluation. A great big audacious thank you to the co-chairs of the four standard committees for their leadership in ensuring such a thoughtful, responsive, but concise report. Special thanks goes to Standard One co-chairs Lyn Clark and Carol Kozeracki; Standard Two co-chairs Diane Levine and Donna-Mae Villanueva; Standard Three co-chairs Ken Takeda, David Shamus, Wendy Bass Keer, Anna Davies, and Rolf Schleicher; and, Standard Four co-chairs Tom Rosdahl, Joy McCaslin, and Alma Johnson-Hawkins.

These very capable folks were assisted at each of the sub-standards by equally dedicated faculty and staff.

Many of us believe the Self Evaluation only contains the College's response to the standards because there is significant emphasis on meeting them. During the comprehensive visit phase of our cycle, the Accrediting Commission not only requires evidence that we are meeting the standards, we also need to ensure that we continually meet the twenty-one Eligibility Requirements (ER), that we have completely responded to and resolved any recommendations received in prior visits, with specific attention paid to the recommendations of 2007. Additionally, we must demonstrate any planning agendas written by the College in 2007 were completed. Finally, there is an opening section explaining the history and demographics of the College. A great big thank you to all of the individuals involved in writing, reviewing, and polishing these other required elements of the Self Evaluation including Carol Kozeracki and Kate Astor for their work on the history and demographics of the College, and Mia Wood for the Eligibility Requirements. Both the prior recommendations and planning agendas were addressed by the College in the spring 2010 mid-term report under the leadership

of Joy McCaslin and Nabil Abu-Ghazaleh. These sections were reviewed and edited for inclusion in the current Self Evaluation by Mia Wood and Anna Davies.

On January 31, 2010, the College was notified by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) that we would be required to present the visiting team with achievement and completion data. We were informed that this new directive by the Department of Education (DOE) had to be responded to immediately. Since this was a new and additional requirement, a great big thank you to Vice Chancellor Yasmin Delahoussaye for her leadership and to Associate Vice Chancellor of Research, Maury Pearl, who provided the necessary data for the College to present to the team and the Accrediting Commission on such short notice. A great big thank you to Jeanette Gordon, Chief Financial Officer and Vinh Nuygen, Budget Office Director for providing the College with hard copies of all the required financial data for the District and the College that needed to be reviewed by the visiting team.

### **Finalizing the Self Evaluation and Hosting the Visit**

Many of the efforts described above may be known to us because the Self Evaluation is such a tangible sign of the work that we do at the College.

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## Kudos to the Visiting Team

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There is so much more that goes into producing an excellent report and hosting a successful visit. I recall a conversation with Rocky Young in late 2006 as we were preparing for the 2007 Valleyside visits (I was at Mission College at that time). Chancellor Young reminded me that the comprehensive visit is an event, and the college serves as the host for our event guests – the Visiting Team. Let's review the background of our "guests" and the impact of accepting a visiting team assignment for the ACCJC.

The visiting team members work at both public and private community colleges in the ACCJC service area, which includes

Hawaii and territories such as Guam, Palau, and Saipan. While all of our team members were from California community colleges, it is not unusual for assigned team members to represent the breadth of the service area and public and private institutions. While they are not paid any kind of a stipend for serving on the team, their expenses for the trip are covered by the college being visited. This is one of the required costs of accreditation. When they agree to serve on a team, they do so knowing that they will have to thoroughly read the Self Evaluation and understand the visited college while simultaneously being fully engaged in their own full-time employment. They must also respond to each of the 132 sub-standards in the Self Evaluation report to ensure the college demonstrates its compliance with the standards through appropriate documentary evidence. While they are on the visit, 12 to 16+ hour days are typical. A few team members arrive on Sunday so they are prepared for early Monday morning in order to arrive for an early afternoon team meeting at the hotel. A few of our team members toured the College for about an hour prior to checking onto the hotel and attending their Monday afternoon meeting.

Meanwhile, back at their own colleges, nobody is hired to fill in for them during their absence unless they are a classroom instructor. Even in that circumstance, the substitute faculty member has to be briefed about what to cover in various class sections. Not only did our team members get to spend a week of 12-16+ hour days learning about Pierce College, they each had the responsibility of returning to their own employment the following week and catching up on a week's worth of work. You may be asking why they do it? There are many reasons. It is an opportunity for their own development and growth as an employee, but most team members will tell you they are willing to go on a visit to help their own college better prepare when it goes through its own comprehensive process. Several of our visiting team members commented to me about both ideas and lessons learned that they would be sharing with their own college for the future. Now that we understand how much work it is for a visiting team member, how does the college go about being a kind and considerate host? If you were volunteering to put in 16 hour days as a service to another college, what would you want? Would you want to be comfortable including being able to work through all of your meals? Would you want to have all of the tools you need to complete the job; and to maximize your time because every minute is precious? It is the host college's job to understand all of this and to facilitate the visit on behalf of its guests.

### **The Invitation – Our Self Evaluation**

Although the College does not determine who is invited to the "party," we do control the appearance and ease of use for the document that serves as our "invitation" – the Self Evaluation.

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# The Visits

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We've already reviewed who was responsible for the content of the report. Who actually designs it; takes and/or selects the pictures; determines the appearance of the cover; the layout of the pages; and, considers readability, including if there is space on each page for a reviewer to make notes? Essentially, who looks at the Self Evaluation as an attractive and user-friendly work of graphic design – the invitation to the team welcoming them to the college? The ASC and the Pierce College Council (PCC) had input on many of these items, but there are two primary people to whom we offer a great big audacious thank you for bringing those decisions to fruition, and for preparing such a beautiful and functional "invitation;" they are Doreen Clay and Mia Wood. I spoke with Mia and shared some suggestions and examples for putting the report together from the point of view of a team member. Once we decided on some guiding principles, Mia and Doreen were set loose to work their magic on creating the final document. A great big thank you also goes to the faculty members who identified the students featured as the introductory pages for each of the major sections. This includes the members of the Agriculture, Art, Child Development, Computer Sciences, Life Sciences, Media Arts, Music, Nursing, and Physics/Physical Sciences departments. Beginning at the pre-visit, Team Chair, Peter Garcia, complimented the College on how well the report was constructed, how well it represented the excellence of the institution, and how easy it was to read and use.

## **The Main Events – the Pre-Visit and the Visit**

There are actually two visits. A pre-visit is scheduled between the team chair and the college president to ensure the arrangements made to accommodate the team both at the college and the hotel are suitable and the team chair is satisfied that the needs of the team will be met during the visit. It is also used as an opportunity for the college to respond to any questions or outstanding issues the team may be encountering as they review the self evaluation report. Our pre-visit took place on February 28, and it included a brief tour of the College and a visit to the hotel. A great big thank you to all of the faculty and staff we met along the way that day. When I introduced each of you to the team, you were welcoming and willing to assist in any way. This group includes: Bob Lofrano, Nabil Mardini and other members of the Athletics Department who were in the gym setting up for a playoff game that evening; Linda Solar; a special task force meeting discussing the new telephone system that was meeting in the 8000 Conference Room; and the Academic Affairs staff, Jackie Bravo, Aaron Chan, Mary Fellows, and Karen Murray. We may think these gestures are small and don't impact the final team evaluation report, but these initial, less formal contacts with college students, faculty and staff give the team chair and assistant a sense of the campus climate, which either confirms what they are reading in the report or causes them to question it.

There was tremendous activity in the weeks leading up to the visit. Mia Wood and Carlos Guzman, our website guru, had been working for months to ensure that our Self Evaluation and all of the links throughout the website were live. Several times, Lyn Clark reviewed all of the websites for committees reporting to the PCC to ensure their pages contained the appropriate content, and when they did not, committee chairs were notified to correct the situation. A similar process was undertaken by Tom Rosdahl on the Academic Senate side of our College governance structure. As a result, many of the committee chairs were working on evenings and weekends to ensure their pages were up to agreed-upon standards for committee page content. It is my understanding that technical issues caused some committee content to be hidden, moved, or lost,

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which forced the committee chairs to revise and review their pages on an ongoing basis to be ready for the visit. A great big audacious thank you to Mia Wood, Carlos Guzman, Lyn Clark, Tom Rosdahl, and everyone who was involved in the ongoing update and maintenance of the College website and the many pages of committee content.

The week before the visit, Paul Nieman, Rodney Allen, Custodial Supervisor, and the entire Custodial Staff took on extra projects to make the College shine. I specifically requested not only that various facilities be cleaned but that any broken equipment be repaired or replaced, especially in a few key areas. Not only were all of my specific requests addressed, the staff went above and beyond that list. Hallways were polished, the carpeting in the CSB was cleaned, the Great Hall was made spotless, and everything was set up in order for us to put our best foot forward for our guests. On two occasions during the visit, Rodney Allen was the man of the hour. On Monday, when I went to look at the team room, I decided the furniture needed to be rearranged. Rodney was in the

room, I decided the furniture needed to be rearranged. Rodney was in the room in a matter of minutes working on a reset. Similarly, on Thursday morning when I checked the Great Hall and determined it needed to be reset, Rodney Allen and Sharon Baker were on the job almost before the telephone was put down. A great big audacious thank you to Paul Nieman and all of the Facilities Department staff for straightening up the "house" and making us sparkle throughout the visit.

Let's talk about team rooms. The team rooms at the College and the hotel serve as the key meeting/work rooms for the entire team to gather in during the visit. It is critical that these rooms be secured because the team is working on an in-progress confidential document while they are on site. Naturally, security at the hotel was not an issue for the College. To provide peace of mind to the team that only they had access to the College team room, Lawrence Walker rekeyed the CSB Conference Room. He then returned it to the original lock by Friday afternoon so that it was available for College needs

available for College needs after the team departed. A great big thank you to Lawrence for seamlessly providing a secure work space for the team and an accessible one for the College.

As a work room, the team room must have all of the tools necessary for team members to work efficiently and with minimal disruption. A great big thank you to all of the staff members who contributed their time and professional talents to setting up the team rooms in the CSB and at the hotel. This includes the members of the Info Tech Department. Under the direction of Mark Henderson, Greg Whaling ensured that WiFi and a telephone were installed in the CSB; computers, printers, a projector, and a copier were installed by Hoon Cho, Vlad Paransky, Richard Heath, John Millhone, and Arnel Arenas; shredders were loaned by Judie Price from the Office of the Vice President of Student Services and also Bruce Rosky from the Business Office. Vlad Paransky installed computers, a printer, and a projector on Monday morning. March 11, in the team room at the hotel,

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## It Takes a Village...

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and then picked them up on Thursday afternoon once the team had checked out of the hotel.

In addition to their technical needs, the team also needs regular office supplies including pens, paper, sticky notes, staples, paper clips, etc. These items were gathered and placed at each seat by my assistant, Cheryl Smith. As a small gesture of welcome (the ACCJC limits these items to something modest), Cheryl went shopping to purchase snack items, which were placed in Pierce College mugs from the Bookstore and attractively wrapped for each of the team members. These were also placed at each team member's seat along with a professionally designed name tag and a flash drive. These were our "party favors." To ensure a variety of snacks were available for the team at the hotel throughout the visit, Anna Davies purchased chips and granola bars. On Monday morning, Cheryl and I went shopping for fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese and crackers, cookies, plates, napkins, and utensils. Next, we delivered and set them up in the hotel team room. The hotel provided the beverage service each day. This activity offered us the opportunity to give that team room the once-over before the team arrived.

The team's assistant and her or his counterpart at the college must have the ability to juggle numerous details, including: handling appointments and logistics for interviews, arranging for lunches and snacks, making dinner reservations, coordinating travel to and from the hotel, and providing every additional piece of evidence the team requests. Jeanie Dewhurst, President Garcia's Executive Assistant at Diablo Valley College, was the team's assistant. My Executive Assistant, Cheryl Smith, served in that role on behalf of Pierce College. Essentially, Jeanie and Cheryl were the liaisons between the team and the College. To facilitate Jeanie's access to Cheryl, Cheryl was located in an office in Human Resources while the team was on campus. To ensure the President's Office was covered during the week of the visit, Mary Fellows worked from my office in order to answer phones and direct traffic. For the three weeks prior to the visit and the four days the team was at the College, Cheryl responded to numerous requests including the scheduling and rescheduling of interviews, notifying Pierce College students, faculty and staff of their interview times and locations, forwarding requests for additional evidence to Mia Wood, ensuring these requests were filled and the documents delivered to the team room, coordinating food service for the College team room with the Freudian Sip, ordering lunches for the team, and coordinating transportation to and from the hotel for team members. A great big thank you to Mary Fellows for assisting me during the week of the visit so we could free up Cheryl to work as the College liaison to the team. A great big thank you to Grigor Hogikyan and the staff in the Freudian Sip for providing beverage service for the team room, open accounts, and accelerated service for team members wishing to order directly at the Sip. A great big audacious thank you to Cheryl Smith for serving as the "party coordinator." Cheryl's attention to detail, ability to multi-task, and professionalism were a superb representation of the dedication of Pierce College employees in support of the excellence of the institution.

A great big thank you if you were a participant in an interview with a team member as an individual or a member of a group during the visit. The team engaged in over 100 interviews during their time with us. A great big thank you to everyone who attended one of the three public forums or the exit report during the visit. Based on comments made to me, the team had a real flavor of the College after the Tuesday afternoon forum in which almost every department chair spoke about the special programs she or he oversees. From your comments, the team could feel the camaraderie and pride in the work that each of you do with your colleagues and your students.

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I believe it made a significant impact. A special big thank you to community member, Shirley Blessing, who attended three of the public forums. Mrs. Blessings' devotion to Pierce College is an outward sign of how this institution is valued by our external community. A great big thank you also goes to Ed Cadena, our College Project Manager, for arranging a tour of the new, but not quite finished, Library Learning Crossroads Building. Ed was there to ensure a safe tour and to address any technical questions posed by the visiting team member.

To anyone whose gifts and talents in making the visit go so smoothly were missed by me, please let me extend an apology for not mentioning you here by name. There were hundreds of other acts great and small that have taken place over the past two years and during the week of the visit - you also deserve a great big thank you!

The saying "It takes a village to raise a child" seems to be an appropriate analogy to the preparations for and completion of a successful Self Evaluation report and comprehensive visit. It took the members of the Pierce College Village (PCV) to get us through a successful comprehensive accreditation visit. It will be through the dedication and excellence of the PCV that we will be able to move forward with the results of this work once the ACCJC makes its decision and notifies us in early July of our accredited status. Now that we are such pros at this type of party, why don't we do this all again in two years? There's no sense in waiting for six - right? Finally, one great big audacious THANK YOU to all the members of the PCV for your daily accomplishments in support of accreditation, student success and completion!

