



**EL CAMINO COLLEGE
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
PLAYBOOK**

April 2025

Institutional Effectiveness Playbook

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Institutional Effectiveness Playbook

Introduction

Institutional effectiveness at ECC involves an ongoing cycle of assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating efforts to improve student outcomes and operational efficiency. It involves setting clear goals, regularly assessing both academic and administrative units, and using the resulting data to inform improvements and allocate resources effectively. Using disaggregated data to guide critical decisions and integrating continuous improvement practices into everything that El Camino does will enable the College to be laser focused on its mission of “providing equitable student-centered learning, career development, and lifelong enrichment.”

It is the hope of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee to demystify the practices and procedures for a more effective institution and empower all members of the El Camino community to engage in continuous improvement practices. Whether you are teaching in the classroom, supporting students in service areas, managing campus finances and backend operations, or maintaining our campus facilities, understanding these principles will help you contribute more effectively to our shared mission and vision.

How to use the IE Playbook

What is the purpose of this IE Playbook?

This Playbook serves as a practical guide to institutional effectiveness, offering straightforward frameworks and tools that connect daily work to strengthening our institution.

More specifically, the purpose of this Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Playbook is three-fold:

- Equip Institutional Effectiveness Committee members, faculty, staff, and administrators with the resources needed to apply institutional effectiveness principles in daily operations.
- Clarify how institutional effectiveness activities connect to ECC's mission, vision, values, and institutional priorities.
- Guide departments and units in using assessment disaggregated data to make informed decisions that enhance educational quality and operational performance.

How to use IE Playbook in everyday work?

The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Playbook is designed as a practical guide to support El Camino College's (ECC) Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) and all stakeholders involved in enhancing student success, improving operational efficiency, and achieving data-informed continuous improvement across the College. This Playbook illustrates practical applications of institutional effectiveness, with real examples, templates, and tools. It serves as a roadmap to build and sustain a culture of evidence-based improvement, supporting every unit and department as they work toward ECC's Comprehensive Integrated Planning (CIP) goals.

This Playbook is not intended to be a lengthy theoretical manual; rather, it's a toolkit for action-oriented decision-making and improvement. The Playbook is structured to help users find relevant sections based on their needs and responsibilities. Each section provides clear guidance, concrete steps,

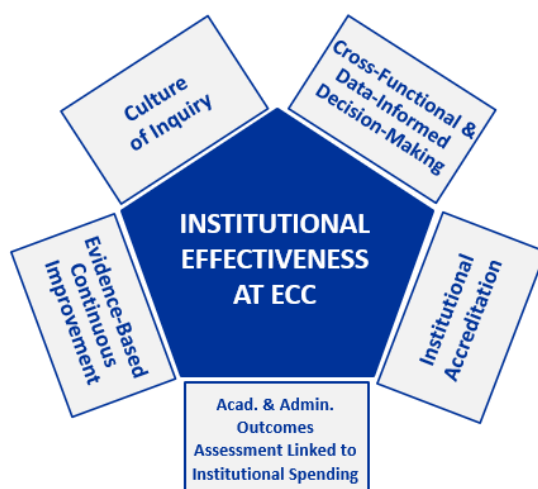
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and resources that align with ECC's vision, mission and values, enabling stakeholders to contribute effectively to ECC's Comprehensive Integrating Planning (CIP) goals.

Strategic Framework for Institutional Effectiveness

What does Institutional Effectiveness include in ECC?

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) at El Camino College is a comprehensive framework that responds to the CIP goal *strengthening institutional effectiveness & continuous improvement* from the theme *Environment for Transformation*. This framework is designed to ensure that the College operates in a way that maximizes student success, resource utilization, and continuous improvement. The visual outlines the five key components of institutional effectiveness at ECC:



a) *Culture of Inquiry*

Institutional Effectiveness promotes a culture where all stakeholders are encouraged to ask questions, explore disaggregated data, and reflect on results to inform actions. This culture of inquiry fosters curiosity, accountability, and transparency, creating an environment where data is used not just for reporting but as a tool for learning and growth.

b) *Cross-functional and data-informed decision-making*

Institutional Effectiveness is collaborative, involving multiple units working together to achieve shared goals. This cross-functional approach enables diverse perspectives to inform decisions, enhancing the institution's ability to respond effectively to complex challenges. Data-informed insights guide these collaborative efforts, helping teams make informed choices aligned with ECC's mission and the CIP goals.

c) *Academic and administrative outcomes assessment linked to institutional spending*

Institutional Effectiveness includes assessing both academic and administrative outcomes and connecting these results to resource allocation. By linking spending decisions to measurable outcomes, ECC ensures that resources are strategically directed toward areas that demonstrate the greatest potential impact on student success and CIP goals.

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d) Evidence-based continuous improvement

By consistently evaluating outcomes, ECC ensures that improvements are based on solid evidence, enabling the College to better meet students' and community needs.

e) Institutional accreditation

Accreditation is a reference for accountability and continuous improvement. The IE process at ECC supports compliance with accreditation standards, ensuring that the College meets the high expectations set by the ACCJC and continues to improve its quality of education and services.

How does IE relate to ECC's Vision, Mission, Values, and CIP Goals?

Institutional Effectiveness directly supports the College's vision, mission, and values. The mission emphasizes ECC's commitment to partnering with diverse communities to offer student-centered learning, career development, and lifelong enrichment, while the vision focuses on sparking innovation and creating equitable opportunities for students, employees, and the community.

IE operationalizes these principles by using disaggregated data to improve access, enhance educational quality, and ensure that all efforts align with student success.

Furthermore, IE upholds ECC's core values by promoting evidence-based decision-making and transparency, enabling stakeholders to make impactful, ethical, and inclusive choices.

Vision

El Camino College will spark innovation and create equitable opportunities for our students, employees, and community.

Mission

El Camino College is equity-focused and partners with its diverse communities to provide student-centered learning, career development, and lifelong enrichment.

Values

Integrity

We commit to ethical practices and act with transparency, sincerity, and respect in all situations.

Equity

We celebrate the unique strengths of all individuals and support the marginalized to cultivate a diverse, inclusive, anti-racist environment.

Student-Centered Mindset

We proactively respond to the needs of our students and prioritize their success and well-being.

Employee Wellness

We support the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of our employees by providing resources and services to meet their professional needs.

Community Engagement

We contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of our neighboring communities.

Social Responsibility

We support our students to become the next generation of responsible leaders who recognize our collective duty to contribute to the well-being of our communities and the world at large.

Collaboration

We work together with respect and open-mindedness to achieve common goals.

Sustainability

We steward the college's human, financial, and non-financial resources responsibly, and pursue innovation and continuous improvement to impact future generations.

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What are the IE roles and responsibilities of the College's stakeholders?

The roles and responsibilities for Institutional Effectiveness are shared across stakeholders based on their specific areas of expertise and influence.

Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) Members

IEC members coordinate assessment activities, analyze results, and recommend improvements across the College. They ensure that all IE efforts align with CIP goals and accreditation standards, fostering a culture of data-informed decision-making throughout the institution.

Executive Leadership

The Superintendent/President and Vice Presidents set the vision and strategic priorities for institutional effectiveness. They ensure that resources are allocated to support IE initiatives, champion a culture of continuous improvement, and hold all college units accountable for using disaggregated data to enhance student success and operational effectiveness.

Faculty

Faculty assess student learning outcomes within their courses and programs, using disaggregated data to guide instructional improvements. They also develop program reviews and collaborate with colleagues to share best practices that support student achievement.

Staff

Staff in academic affairs, student services, and administrative areas assess outcomes in their own units to improve support services and operations. They gather feedback, analyze disaggregated data, and implement enhancements that ensure services are effective, accessible, and aligned with ECC's mission and CIP goals.

Administrators

Administrators use assessment data to guide planning, budgeting, and decision-making in their divisions and offices. They work closely with IEC members and department/office leads to implement improvements that align with institutional priorities, ensuring that divisional/office resources are used effectively to support ECC's CIP goals.

Assessments and Data-Informed Decision-Making

El Camino College has a wide range of internal and external tools to support data-informed decision-making. Selecting the right resource depends on the type of question or area you are assessing. The following section provides guidance on how to use data for assessments and to inform decisions.



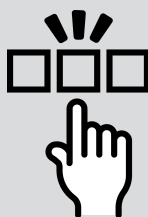
Step by Step Guide for Data-Informed Decision Making



1

Define the Question or Goal

Start with a clear question or goal. For example, are you aiming to improve student retention, enhance support services, or streamline processes? Defining your goal will focus your data gathering.



2

Identify Relevant Data

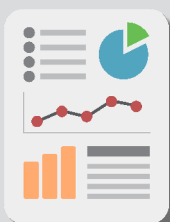
Determine what data is needed to address your question. This could include enrollment data, student feedback, service usage, or assessment results. Consult with the Institutional Research and Planning Office if you're unsure which data to use.



3

Collect and Access Data

Use internal or external dashboards, surveys, and reports to gather the data. ECC IRP, the Chancellor's Office, and other local and state agencies provide a myriad of tools. Start by checking what's available in the [Institutional Research and Planning webpage](#).



4

Analyze the Data

Review the data for trends, patterns, or issues. Focus on what the data reveals about your goal. For quantitative data, look at trends and averages; for qualitative data (e.g., open-ended survey responses), look for common themes.



5

Interpret and Draw Conclusions

Based on your analysis, determine what the data suggests about possible actions. Are there clear areas for improvement? Is there a particular student group or process that needs more attention?



GO

6

Make Decisions and Take Action

Use your insights to make evidence-based decisions. Develop an action plan that outlines steps for implementing improvements and assigns responsibilities.



7

Monitor and Adjust

Track the results of your actions. Continue collecting relevant data to see if your changes are effective. Adjust your approach as needed based on ongoing results.



Practical Guide on Choosing the right dashboards, surveys & tools

For hyperlinks check red text

ECC Dashboards

Info: Data on key student metrics, (enrollment trends, retention rates, course success rates, demographics).

Utility: Ideal for analyzing current student performance and identifying areas where targeted support or interventions may be needed.

ECC Campus Climate Surveys (Student & Employee)

Info: Administered every three years, they gather feedback from students and employees.

Student areas: overall experience, student connection, diversity, equity, and inclusion, classroom instruction, food and housing insecurity, domestic violence.

Employees areas: work environment, sense of belonging, professional development, job satisfaction.

Utility: To assess campus culture and to identify improvements that can enhance the student and employee experience.

ECC Engagement Survey

Info: Administered every two years, provides insights into overall employee engagement.

Utility: For identifying strengths and address areas for improvement.

ECC Reporting Services

Info: Provides custom reports using the Ellucian Reporting database, refreshed daily early morning. Contact the ITS Helpdesk for access. Only reports you have access to will be displayed.

Utility: To support student life from application, enrollment, financial aid, academic status/standing, and grades.

Reports in ECC Reporting Services include the following data categories: Academic, Active Course Sections By Term, Admissions and Records Tools, Campus Police, Continuing Education, Course Sections By Term, Employee, Enrollment Summary and Management, Faculty Evaluation, Financial Aid, Financial and Payroll (LACOE), MIS Reporting, Purchasing, Schedule Development tools, Special Student Populations, Student Basics, Student Development, and many other types of data.

External

Student-Centered Funding Formula (CCCCO)

Info: Provides funding and performance metrics aligned with the SCFF.

Utility: For analyzing ECC's funding metrics and explore how various performance indicators affect resource allocation under the SCFF model.

IPEDS

Info: Offers a range of reports and data tools related to postsecondary institutions: **Data Explorer** for custom searches on specific topics, **Trend Generator** for creating trend analyses on metrics (enrollment, graduation rates, financial aid), **Publications and Products** for accessing comprehensive reports and tables, **Institution Lookup tool**, which provides data on individual institutions.

Utility: For benchmarking ECC's metrics against similar institutions nationwide, allowing for a broader context in decision-making.

Internal

ECC Factbook Dashboard

Info: Key data on student demographics, enrollment trends, course completion, graduation rates, and other essential metrics.

Utility: For gaining a broad overview of our student population and institutional performance across the last five years.

Program Review Reports

Info: Comprehensive view of each office/program's performance over time.

Utility: For evaluating department/office effectiveness. Essential for faculty and department/office leads involved in annual updates and program review reporting. Check the following links: [academic program review reports](#), [student services program review reports](#), [administrative offices program review reports](#).

ECC Environmental Scan

Info: Provides analysis of internal and external factors impacting ECC (data on demographic trends, regional economic conditions, labor market demands, and student success metrics).

Utility: Instrumental for strategic planning to understand community needs, anticipate future challenges, and align programs and services with local workforce demands.

DataVista (CCCCO)

Info: State-level data on graduates' employment outcomes, program review data, comparisons among college, district, or regional outcomes, adult education transition to college, awards and transfer completion, adult education pipeline, and student success metrics by cohort.

Utility: For benchmarking ECC's performance against statewide trends and identify opportunities for improvement.

DataMart (CCCCO)

Info: Wide range of data on enrollment, demographics, student outcomes, and program performance.

Utility: For generating custom reports across various parameters and doing deeper analysis of ECC's performance relative to other California community colleges.

LA Regional Consortium Dashboard

Info: Provides insights into the economic impact of community colleges in the Los Angeles area.

Utility: To understand ECC's economic contributions and workforce alignment within the local region.

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Case studies of how data-informed improvements have worked at similar colleges

Example #1: [Coahoma Community College \(CCC\): Data-Informed Transformation Overview](#) (2019)

Problem Addressed

Located in a region with high poverty rates, Coahoma Community College (CCC) faced challenges in supporting student success effectively. Students struggled with persistence and engagement, exacerbated by limited initial onboarding and advising processes. The college aimed to build systemic solutions to these barriers.

Approach and Actions

After joining the Achieving the Dream (ATD) Network in 2018, CCC utilized data-driven strategies to identify key issues in:

- **New Student Orientation:** Orientation was restructured into an eight-week course, emphasizing connections to campus resources. The course was offered in both online and in-person formats, ensuring continuity through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Advising:** Efforts focused on building a more student-centered advising model.

The college engaged stakeholders through the ATD Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT) and student outcome data workshops, identifying orientation and advising as pivotal areas for intervention.

Results

- **Improved Persistence Rates:** Persistence for first-time students increased from 64% in Fall 2019 to 75% in Fall 2020.
- **Enhanced Data Utilization:** Dashboards tracked key indicators (e.g., modality impact on student outcomes) and guided continuous improvements.
- **Broader Engagement:** Initiatives to increase faculty availability, strengthen student connections, and develop academic, social, and financial counseling.
- **Communication Upgrades:** SMS-based engagement improved responsiveness and student interaction.

Role of Data

- Data dashboards facilitated real-time monitoring and cross-departmental collaboration.
- Evidence was used to guide curriculum changes and inform staff training.

Example #2: [Mesa Community College \(MCC\): Data-Informed Student Learning Improvement](#) (2022)

Problem Addressed

Mesa Community College identified gaps in assessing and improving institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) across various departments. Specifically, the need arose for a cohesive and systematic method to evaluate and enhance learning in areas such as communication, critical thinking, civic engagement, and cultural/global engagement.

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Approach and Actions

- *Adoption of the "4Cs" Framework:* MCC developed the "4Cs" framework—Communication, Civic Engagement, Critical Thinking, and Cultural/Global Engagement—as its ISLOs to guide student learning assessment. These outcomes were aligned with the college's Vision, Mission, and Values.
- *Development of Standardized Rubrics:* Drawing from the AACU's VALUE rubrics, MCC created customized criteria and rubrics for assessing the 4Cs in diverse academic disciplines.
- *Faculty Collaboration and Training:* Faculty across departments integrated the 4Cs into assignments and classroom activities. Professional development sessions supported faculty in using rubrics and aligning course-level outcomes with institutional goals.
- *Data Collection and Reporting:* Data was collected through embedded course assessments and analyzed to evaluate student learning trends. Faculty reported standardized scores and qualitative reflections to highlight strengths and areas for improvement.

Results

Student Performance:

- Communication: 80% of students met or exceeded expectations.
- Critical Thinking: 74% demonstrated competency.
- Civic Engagement: 68% achieved proficiency.
- Cultural/Global Engagement: 72% exhibited adequate understanding.

Faculty Engagement:

- 68% of academic departments actively participated in assessment activities.
- Over 300 faculty members contributed to assessment and planning efforts.

Institutional Outcomes:

- Retention rates increased by 3%.
- Graduation rates rose by 10%.
- Transfer rates to four-year institutions showed steady growth.

Role of Data

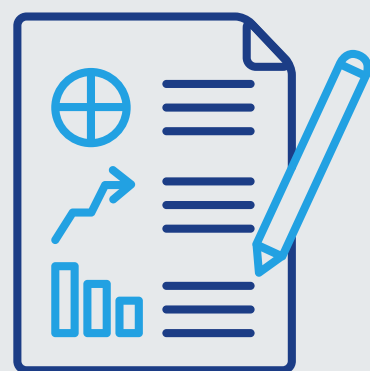
- *Alignment and Analysis:* Data from assessments were used to identify alignment gaps between student learning activities and institutional goals.
- *Continuous Improvement:* Faculty analyzed trends to refine curriculum design, teaching methods, and assignment creation.
- *Professional Development:* Data-informed insights informed the focus of workshops and training sessions for faculty.



Step-by-Step Guide to Data Governance in Your Department

What's Data Governance?

- **Policies, processes, and standards** that ensure **data is accurate, consistent, secure, and accessible** for informed decision-making.
- Establishes **clear roles, data definitions, and security measures** to maintain data integrity and compliance.



Using Data in Your Office? Start Practicing Data Governance!

- If your **office collects, reports, or uses data** to inform decisions, you're already engaging in data work.
- To ensure that data is accurate, consistent, secure, and useful, it's important to **follow basic data governance practices**.



- Start by implementing **small but effective steps in your office**.
- If you need help, **work collaboratively with IRP and ITS** to strengthen data governance.

Clarify Roles & Responsibilities

1

- Identify **who in your office is responsible for collecting, maintaining, and using data**.
- Work with ITS and IRP to **establish clear processes for managing data**.

Use Standardized Definitions

2

- Make sure **your team uses consistent definitions for common metrics** (e.g., persistence, course success, transfer to 4-year institutions).
- **Check if definitions exist in institutional reports or dashboards** before creating new ones.

Ensure Data Security & Privacy

3

- **Protect sensitive student and institutional data** by following FERPA guidelines and security policies.
- **Limit access to data** only to those who need it for their role.

Improve Data Access & Transparency

4

- **Use official dashboards and reports** instead of creating one-off spreadsheets that might contain outdated or inconsistent data.
- **Avoid data silos** by sharing insights and collaborating with other offices as needed.

Verify & Use Data Responsibly

5

- Before making decisions, **ensure data is accurate, up-to-date, and validated**.
- If you're unsure about data quality, **consult with IRP for data validation support**.

Monitor, Review, and Adjust

6

- Establish a **routine to review the data your office uses** and refine processes as needed.
- **Provide training opportunities** for staff on data literacy and governance best practices.

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Accreditation and Compliance

Introduction to the 2024 ACCJC Standards

Accreditation is a quality assurance process through which external agencies evaluate educational institutions and programs to ensure they meet established standards of excellence. It plays a vital role in affirming the credibility and value of the education offered, giving students, employers, and other stakeholders confidence in the institution's integrity and academic rigor.

Our accrediting body is the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). As part of the accreditation cycle, we undergo a comprehensive review every eight years, submit annual updates, and complete a midterm report at the four-year mark.

The new [ACCJC standards](#) were released in 2024. The standards are four and each of them includes a set of sub-standards. The hyperlink shared in this section provides a detailed list of the sub-standards for each of the standards listed below:

Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

The institution has a clearly defined mission that reflects its character, values, organizational structure, and unique student population. The mission outlines the institution's explicit commitment to equitable student achievement and serves as a guiding principle for institutional planning, action, evaluation, improvement, and innovation.

Standard 2: Student Success

In alignment with its mission, the institution delivers high-quality academic and learning support programs that engage and support students through their unique educational journeys. Academic and learning support programs promote equitable student success, and the institution evaluates student learning and achievement data to inform improvements and advance equitable outcomes.

Standard 3: Infrastructure and Resources

The institution supports its educational services and operational functions with effective infrastructure, qualified personnel, and stable finances. The institution organizes its staffing and allocates its physical, technological, and financial resources to improve its overall effectiveness and promote equitable student success. The institution actively monitors and assesses resource capacity to inform improvements to infrastructure and ensure long-term health and stability.

Standard 4: Governance and Decision-Making

The institution engages in clear and effective governance practices that support the achievement of its mission. Governance roles and responsibilities are delineated in widely distributed policies, and institutional decision-making processes provide opportunities for meaningful participation and inclusion of relevant stakeholders.

Checklists for complying with accreditation requirements

- [2024 Accreditation Standards with Review Criteria and Suggestions for Evidence](#)

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Tools for making accreditation reporting easier and more efficient

To improve compliance, ACCJC now provides the review criteria and suggestions for evidence to use with each standard and substandard.

- [2024 Accreditation Standards with Review Criteria and Suggestions for Evidence](#)
- [Accreditation Handbook and Report Templates](#)
- [ECC's Accreditation Webpage](#)

Program Review and Outcomes Assessment

Program Review Processes

Academic Program Review

The Academic Program Review process represents a vital link between student learning in the classroom and the operation of the College. The academic program review process is the primary vehicle by which each academic program documents its ongoing assessment and disaggregated data analysis related to student metrics, scope and currency of curriculum; adequacy of instructional resources, course- and program-level learning outcomes, program's strengths and weaknesses, and satisfaction with the overall program experience. Academic program reviews also document faculty recommendations related to program resources and/or curriculum.

The Academic Affairs area is responsible for supporting and monitoring the academic program review process. Division Deans designate particular faculty members who provide program-level leadership for completing a scheduled review in any given year. At least one SLO Facilitator is also designated to assist with the coordination of course- and program-level learning outcomes assessment for the division. SLO Facilitators help complete the assessment of student learning and program learning outcomes within program reviews.

Student Services Program Review

The Student Services Program Review seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of services offered by student support areas. It identifies recommendations to ensure the Student Services area helps students succeed by meeting their educational goals. Based on the key student population served by each program, the Student Services Program Review process involves assessing the program's environment, strengths, and current resources, and identifying areas for improvement. It also includes reviewing data to evaluate progress, inform future planning and resource allocation, and ensure alignment with institutional priorities and ACCJC standards.

Administrative Program Review

The Administrative Program Review process is intended to evaluate the progress towards achieving existing goals and outcomes of an office or program in the Administrative Services, Human Resources and the President's Office areas. The administrative program review also involves looking forward to plan for the next four years—setting up new/adjusted goals and outcomes, guided by the aforementioned evaluation. Through the administrative program review process, each office/program

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has an opportunity to: 1) critically evaluate the accomplishments and services offered and 2) plan four-year ahead, recommending necessary changes in order to ensure that goals and outcomes are met.

Steps Involved in Program Review Processes

The review process consists of four steps: training, evaluation and planning, approval, and dissemination.

Training

A training workshop will be held for program reviewers before starting the process. The training will cover an orientation to the process, discussion of timelines and expectations, and answers to stakeholders' questions.

Evaluation and Planning

To start off the evaluation, program reviewers collect the necessary data to assess the progress of existing goals, objectives and outcomes, as well as student metrics and curriculum in the case of academic program review. Data may have been collected in the reviewer's office/program or in other areas of the College, or outside the institution. If the latter is the case, reviewers request the data to the relevant stakeholder. Reviewers may also have to survey stakeholders during the time they conduct the program review process in order to collect data that will serve assessing all the components previously mentioned. Informed by the assessment results, program reviewers start the planning process for the next four-year period. All employees working at the office/program under review should be given the opportunity to read and comment on a draft of the report prior to its submittal for the manager's review.

Approval

El Camino College has three committees that review the program review reports. One for the Area of Academic Affairs, another for the Area of Student Services, and a third one for the administrative areas of the College (Administrative Services, Human Resources, and the President's Office). Committee members review and provide feedback on the reports. Feedback is incorporated by program reviewers so that the report can be delivered to their supervisor. The supervisor will read and provide comments to the reviewer prior to approval and dissemination of the report, so that the reviewer can incorporate final adjustments. Approval is granted after adjustments have been incorporated.

Dissemination

Approved program review reports must be made available in one of the three program review websites ([Academic Program Review](#), [Student Services Program Review](#) and [Administrative Program Review](#)). These documents should be used as input when conducting annual planning.

Types of Outcomes Assessment

The assessment of outcomes at ECC takes place every four years in all areas of the College within the program review process. In the case of Academic Affairs, two types of outcomes are evaluated:

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- *Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)*¹: specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate after they have completed a particular **course**.
- *Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)*: specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate after they have completed a particular **program of study** (specified sequence of courses or a specified series of programmed activities).

In the case of the areas of Student Services, Administrative Services, Human Resources and the President's Office, *administrative/service area outcomes (AOs/SAOs)* are evaluated. These are defined as specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or attitudes that students/stakeholders are expected to demonstrate as a function of their engagement with a particular College service (e.g., financial aid, counseling, cashier) beyond the College's academic disciplines.

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are defined as a general set of core competencies that the College and its students are expected to demonstrate as a function of the overall health of the College and their overall educational experience at the College. Institutional Learning Outcomes reports are presented to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC), which disseminates results to the campus community for their use in all planning processes.

Actionable tips for connecting outcomes to budgeting

Regularly Review and Adjust Budget Allocations

Establish a continuous review process to assess the effectiveness of budget allocations in achieving desired outcomes. Be prepared to reallocate resources based on assessment findings to address emerging needs and priorities. Regular reviews ensure that budgeting remains responsive to institutional performance and strategic objectives.

Align Strategic Planning with Budgeting and Assessment

Ensure that strategic goals, budgeting decisions, and assessment activities are interconnected. This alignment facilitates resource allocation that directly supports institutional objectives and measurable outcomes. Developing a linked planning and budgeting process can be achieved through adaptable frameworks tailored to the institution's specific needs.

Continuous Professional Development on Assessment and Budgeting

Offer training and professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators to enhance their understanding of assessment practices and budgeting processes. Educating stakeholders on the importance of integrating these areas promotes a more cohesive approach to institutional planning and resource management.

Participate in Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement

Foster an institutional culture that values ongoing assessment and the use of data to inform decision-making. Encouraging continuous improvement ensures that programs and services are regularly evaluated and refined, leading to more effective use of resources and better student outcomes.

¹ Academic programs assess selected SLOs annually due to the extensive number of SLOs that each program has.

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Strategic Planning and Implementation

Planning is the process of envisioning a desired future and creating a roadmap towards that future. This cyclical process includes thinking about what has been accomplished to date, identifying goals, and envisioning how to achieve those goals.

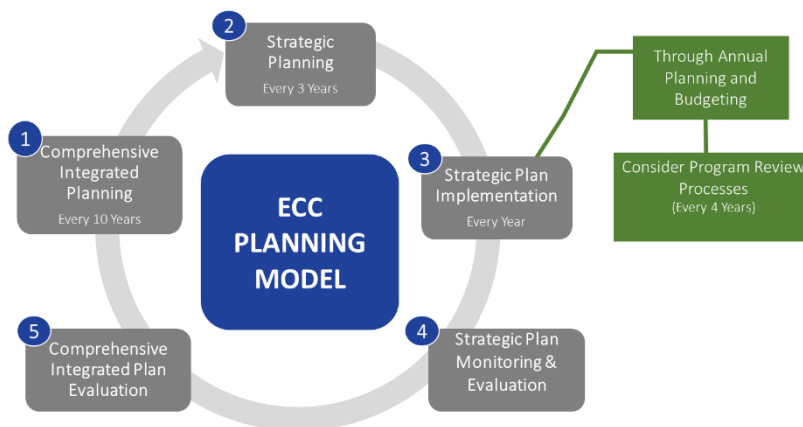
Integrated planning (IP) is an approach to planning that engages all stakeholders to work together toward a common vision. Integrated planning aligns the plans of the College both vertically (from the mission/vision to on-the-ground operations) and horizontally (across areas, units, divisions, programs, and offices). It engages all the institution's areas of operations (academic affairs, student services, finance, human resources, information technology, and communications).²

The Strategic Planning Cycle

El Camino's approach to planning incorporates four types of planning:

- **Comprehensive Planning** has an institutional-level scope and includes a long-range, 10-year time perspective.
- **Strategic Planning** establishes implementation plans with a shorter timeframe to support the long-term institution-level comprehensive plan. This may include initiatives and milestones that contribute to the 10-year plan.
- **Program Reviews** provide an opportunity for each program or department to coordinate mid-term or 4-year plans that support the plans of the institution. To support the efforts of the programs or departments, each program or department will also strategically plan **resource allocation** to support plans at the program/department or institutional level.

Each plan should include accountability, monitoring, and evaluation initiatives. Throughout the various planning processes, and especially at the end of each planning cycle, each group responsible for the plan should be evaluating progress and reporting on progress metrics.



² <https://www.scup.org/planning-type/integrated-planning/>

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Practical Guide for Strategic Planning

Goals are broad, directional statements of what we plan to accomplish in the longer term. Where do we want to be in the next few years aligned to the mission, vision, and values of the institution?

Reflection questions to develop goals include:

- How does the college/division/department envision contributing to its mission?
- In what ways will the college/division/department increase its efficiency and effectiveness?

Example of a goal: “Support a culture of data-informed decisions that are student-centered”

Example of poorly worded goals:

- Goal that is too broad – “Improve office productivity”
There are many aspects of productivity so this goal could be interpreted in different ways. As a result, it is difficult to define actions and measure progress.
- Goal that looks more like an activity – “Develop a policy and procedures manual”
Focuses on the process of creating a manual rather than the purpose of having a manual. Does not convey the broader purpose that the manual intends to serve.
- Goal that equals a budget request – “Hire a program coordinator”
Focuses on the position rather than the intended purpose or need to be fulfilled by the position.

Outcomes are the short-term statements that describe what stakeholders (employees, students, external stakeholders) served by the college/division/department will experience, receive or understand if the goals are met.

Reflection questions to develop outcomes include:

- What needs will stakeholders have satisfied as a result of the work of the college/division/department?
- What will stakeholders experience, receive, or understand as a result of the work of the college/division/department?

Example of an outcome: “Students experience an efficient registration process.”

Example of poorly worded outcomes:

- Outcome too broad and doesn’t state benefit for stakeholders – “Website traffic improved.”

Actions/activities are tangible initiatives that describe how the college/division/department will accomplish the desired goals and outcomes.

Reflection questions to develop actions include:

- What steps are needed for the goal or outcome to be achieved?

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Example of poorly worded actions/activities:

- Actions/activities that are specific short-term tasks and not aligned with goals and/or outcomes – “Develop a website” or “Get approval for additional staff”. This is not framed within the context of its contribution to a goal or outcome. The accomplishment of this activity may be outside of the scope of the division/department.

Best Practices in Strategic Planning and Implementation

Make Planning a Team Effort to Foster Shared Ownership

- Leverage collective insights for more comprehensive assessment of previous plans and insightful analysis of disaggregated data, and thus more meaningful goals.
- Involve the team responsible for plan implementation in the planning process to strengthen understanding and buy-in of the plan.
- Regularly discuss goals with others to work collaboratively to achieve goals.

Avoid a Compliance-Only Approach

- Regularly refer to plans to guide the prioritization activities of the institution, area, division or program, both when resources are abundant or constrained.
- Focus discussion more on clarifying the vision or goals before filling in a document template.

Steward Plans as Living Documents

- Use plans to guide budgeting decisions and to prioritize day-to-day activities
- Regularly consult plans, adjusting the pace of plan implementation as necessary.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

At El Camino College, collaboration and stakeholder engagement are essential to fulfilling our mission of providing equity focused student-centered learning, career development, and lifelong enrichment. These practices build institutional effectiveness by creating a culture where transparency, inclusion, and shared responsibility thrive. When we bring together diverse voices—from students, faculty, staff, and administrators—we enhance the quality of our decision-making and ensure that all perspectives are considered in shaping programs, services, and resource allocation. This collaborative approach strengthens our ability to respond to complex challenges, align efforts across departments, and create equitable opportunities that support all members of our college community.

Moreover, collaboration is not just a method of working together but a strategic act of building institutional capacity for continuous improvement. By intentionally engaging stakeholders in data-informed planning, assessment, and implementation, we foster a culture of inquiry and accountability critical to achieving our Comprehensive Integrated Planning (CIP) goals. It enables us to operationalize our vision and values by translating insights into action and using evidence to drive transformation at

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every level of the institution. Collaboration and stakeholder engagement ultimately allow El Camino College to be more adaptive, innovative, and effective in serving our students and advancing institutional excellence.

Building Effective Teams for Institutional Effectiveness

For a more collaborative environment, the IEC recommends forming cross-functional teams to address key priorities. A structured approach to team formation includes:

- **Defining Clear Objectives:** Each collaborative initiative should have a defined goal aligned with ECC's mission and strategic plan.
- **Selecting Diverse Team Members:** Teams should include faculty, staff, administrators, and students to leverage different perspectives.
- **Establishing Communication Channels:** Regular meetings, shared dashboards, and collaborative workspaces enhance coordination.
- **Leveraging Institutional Resources:** Utilize existing tools, such as data dashboards and accreditation reports, to inform discussions and decisions.
- **Implementing and Evaluating Actions:** Ensure follow-through by tracking progress and making necessary adjustments based on outcomes.

This helps to sustain momentum of the team towards the achievement of common goals and purposes in the most efficient way possible.

Templates and Tools for Effective Communication and Engagement

To enhance transparency and coordination, some specific tools to help build a more effective and efficient campus community include:

- Assessment Report Template
- Guidelines for facilitating more effective meetings

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Example of an Assessment Report

This can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of any activity or initiative. In this way El Camino College actively pursues continuous improvement.

Title: [Unit Name] Assessment Report

Date: [Insert Date]

Prepared by: [Name & Position]

I. Introduction

- Purpose of the assessment
- Overview of key objectives

II. Data Collection & Analysis

- Summary of collected data (student success metrics, feedback surveys, etc.)
- Key insights and trends

III. Findings & Recommendations

- Implications from the data. What are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Proposed action steps

IV. Next Steps & Implementation Plan

- Timeline for execution
- Responsible parties
- Metrics for success

Facilitating Effective Meetings

To facilitate a more effective meeting, it is recommended to do the following:

Before the meeting: (48-72 hours in advance)

- *What is the purpose of the meeting and what specific outcomes should be achieved by the end of the meeting?*
- *What is the most effective meeting format to achieve these outcomes? (e.g., virtual vs. in-person, large-group plenary vs. breakout discussion groups, pre-assigned group facilitators vs. ad-hoc facilitator assignments when the meeting begins, how will discussion results be recorded—virtually or handwritten).*
- *Who should be invited to the meeting?*
 - Identify the essential perspectives needed to reach the meeting outcomes.
 - Balance comprehensive representation with meeting efficiency. Smaller groups may be more efficient for brainstorming new ideas/proposals and for decision-making.
 - Consider a tiered approach: Small working groups for initial brainstorming. Larger representative groups for feedback on initial ideas proposed by the smaller group and for consensus.

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Facilitating Effective Meetings (cont.)

- *Preparation of materials to help meeting participants engage in a more meaningful way:*
 - Distribute the agenda in advance. Include clear meeting objectives with the proposed agenda.
 - Share meeting materials in advance. Highlight key sections and provide reflection questions to help participants prepare for the meeting.
 - If appropriate, request individual feedback ahead of the meeting and use the consolidated feedback as a starting point for the meeting discussion.

During the meeting:

- Begin by confirming the desired meeting outcomes.
- For each agenda item, provide brief background or summarize the question/issue(s) to be resolved. Ask for clarifying questions to ensure participants understand the proposal or issue(s) to be resolved and then open the floor for discussion.
- Employ active listening techniques to create an environment where participants feel their perspectives are heard and understood while facilitating an efficient meeting that achieves the desired outcomes.
 - When asked a question, repeat the question asked to ensure there is common understanding of the issue before responding.
 - Summarize frequently. Quick recaps of key discussion points keep discussions on point.
 - Call on silent participants to provide them the space to voice their perspective and/or incorporate elements of the [Robert's Rules of Order](#) to ensure all perspectives have equal representation.
- Capture action items or agreements in real-time on a virtual shared document, whiteboard, or flip-chart paper.
- Park tangential comments or questions to refocus the meeting on the agreed outcomes ("Let's put that in the parking lot for later.")

At the end of the meeting:

- Summarize the next steps and agreed action items, responsible parties, and deadlines.
- Confirm the date/time for subsequent meetings if applicable.
- Revisit 'parking lot' items if there is time.

After the meeting: (within 24 hours)

- Distribute meeting notes and/or virtual meeting recordings.
- Include in the meeting notes:
 - Key decisions made
 - Agreed action items, responsible parties, and deadlines
 - Date and purpose of the next meeting if applicable

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Example of a meeting agenda:

Meeting Objective: [Define the purpose or desired objectives of the meeting]

Agenda:

Opening Items:

1. Welcome and confirmation of the meetings' purpose and objectives
2. Review meeting minutes and agreements from previous meetings
3. Review proposed meeting agenda

Agenda items for discussion

To establish a more efficient agenda:

- When determining the order of items on the agenda, place related agenda items together. This allows participants to stay focused and actively engage on related topics.
- Strategically order the items on the agenda based on urgency and the estimated discussion duration. Place items that can be deferred to a future meeting toward the end of the agenda. Schedule topics likely to generate extended discussion later in the agenda, so quicker items can be addressed first so participants stay engaged.
- Set rough time estimates for each agenda item. This helps meeting facilitators keep the meeting on track, though these details do not need to be shared with participants.

Meeting close

4. Summarize meeting agreements
5. Confirm next steps

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Guide for Stakeholder Feedback Collection

With a spirit of continuous improvement to ensure that stakeholder feedback informs opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the College, this guide outlines best practices for gathering and analyzing input.

Methods of Data Collection:

- Surveys (quantitative & qualitative questions)
- Focus groups (structured discussion prompts)
- One-on-one interviews with key stakeholders

Analysis & Follow-up:

- Summarize common themes. Use insights from qualitative research, focus group or stakeholder interview to explore quantitative results more deeply.
- Identify areas needing further research, and explore timelines and concrete ways for future research.
- Share findings with relevant departments for action.
- Determine how data insights can inform existing processes and operations to institutionalize continuous improvement practices.
- Establish timelines for ongoing data collection to facilitate a continuous cycle of insight and improvement.

Sustaining Engagement and Continuous Improvement

Collaboration to improve the effectiveness of the institution is an ongoing process. To prioritize and incorporate institutional effectiveness in the day-to-day operations of the College, we can all focus on the following:

- **Regular Check-Ins:** Schedule updates to discuss progress and opportunities for improvement
- **Professional Development:** Establish training opportunities on data literacy and assessment best practices.
- **Recognition of Contributions:** Acknowledge the efforts of stakeholders who advance the culture of data-inquiry, and continuous improvement.

Since institutional effectiveness focuses El Camino activities to achieve its mission and vision, it is the responsibility of all members of the campus community. By following the guidelines of this Playbook, we can work together to establish more **inclusive, actionable, and impactful** ways to enhance student success and operational efficiency.



El Camino College