

Accreditation Follow-Up Report with Visit

Copper Mountain College

March 2009

Prepared and submitted by:

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Submitted to:

Accrediting Commission
for Community & Junior Colleges
of the Western Association
of Schools and Colleges

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Superintendent/President

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STATEMENT ON REPORT PREPARATION

March 2009

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

FROM: Copper Mountain College
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This statement, signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the institution, describes the process of the report preparation and identifies those who were involved in its preparation, review, and approval.

This report was prepared with participation from the campus community, including the College Council, Faculty Senate, Classified Senate, Copper Mountain College Faculty Association, Copper Mountain College California School Employees Association, Copper Mountain College Administration and Management staff, as well as Copper Mountain College participative governance committees and ad hoc committees/teams. The Accreditation Liaison Officer worked with previous accreditation response teams, faculty, staff, and administrators to respond to each of the recommendations made by the Commission. Throughout the process, the Board of Trustees was advised of progress on meeting the recommendations.

Roger Wagner, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President

Introduction: This report addresses four recommendations made by ACCJC in June 2008. Intense effort by college staff has resulted in significant progress in three areas deemed critical by the Commission: the acquisition of a new ERS; improvement in campus morale; and linking the resource allocation process to planning and program reviews. As you will see in the responses to each recommendation, the college has made a sincere effort to correct the deficiencies noted by ACCJC. Regarding the fourth recommendation, the one-year timeframe implicit in Recommendation 1 has not allowed the processes established this year to go through an entire cycle. The completion of all departments' program reviews accomplished during the summer and fall of 2008 establishes a benchmark for annual updates, providing a basis for the college to link its planning for all college programs and services to budgeting. (Reference 1)

Recommendation 7: *The team strongly recommends that the college President take decisive measures to improve the campus climate by building trust and fostering mutual respect and communication with all campus constituencies. (IB.1; IB.2; IB.4; IB.5; IIA.2a; IVA.1; IVA.2; IVA.2b; IVA.3; IVA.5)*

At the last ACCJC visit in April 2008, the college was in the process of selecting a new Superintendent/President to succeed the interim president who served during 2007-2008. By July of 2008, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs was selected as the new Superintendent/President. Increasing campus cooperation and championing servant leadership immediately became the new president's focus. Based on a campus climate survey conducted in December 2008, there is compelling evidence that the morale of college staff has dramatically improved. Descriptive statistics, supported by inferential statistics, reveal true progress in three key areas: satisfaction with participation in the college planning processes; sharing of information across campus; and achieving a respectful climate. (Reference 2) In this survey, Table 4, "Changes in aggregate survey responses from Spring 2008 to Fall 2008," reveals significant positive movement in nine out of 12 questions asked of respondents. The questions drawing the largest increase in satisfaction were: "CMC administration handles grievances fairly" (from 52% positive in spring '08 to 67% positive in fall '08); "The Administration provides effective leadership to define goals, develop plans, and establish priorities for the institution" (from 66% positive in spring '08 to 77% positive in fall '08); and "The Administration supports and uses a decision-making process that involves the persons who will be affected" (from 51% positive in spring '08 to 61% positive in fall '08).

Both qualitative and data-based evidence suggest that major credit for the climate improvement should be given to the tone set by the new Superintendent/President. His concern with sharing the principles of servant leadership has struck a chord with campus constituents, not just by the way he practices it, but by his conscious efforts to articulate the tenets of this approach. In the spring of 2008, as Vice-President of Academic Affairs, he brought Dr. Kent Farnsworth (perhaps the leading expert in the concept of servant leadership) to campus to present a seminar for all staff members. In January 2009, the Superintendent/President himself gave a three-hour follow-up session. In a recent example of how the servant leadership theme is becoming a true part of CMC's outlook,

the Classified Senate printed and distributed laminated cards with ten servant leadership quality indicators that Dr. Wagner highlighted at the January staff day meeting. (Reference 3, 4, 5, 6)

The Superintendent/President has made it clear that harmonious relations among all campus constituents is not only a goal for the college, but one that is essential to its everyday operation. While he was Vice-President of Academic Affairs, he introduced the “212” program to publicly recognize college staff who go out of their way to assist others, or improve the campus in some fashion. (Reference 7) He is the first CMC Superintendent/President to ask for a 360-degree evaluation of his job performance, which was conducted late in the fall 2008 semester. The Board of Trustees reviewed every comment offered by every employee who chose to participate in this evaluation. (Reference 8)

The Superintendent/President frequently attends meetings of the Academic Senate (Reference 9) and maintains good relationships with faculty and classified leaders. He also holds weekly meetings with representatives from both the faculty and classified unions and the Human Resources director, with the goal of proactively addressing labor relations. As a measure of the success of this practice, there have been no unresolved grievances since these meetings began. It should be noted that the presidents of the classified and faculty unions have stated that negotiations are far less stressful and complicated than they were under previous administrations. (Reference 10)

Further evidence of the new spirit of respectful collaboration among college constituents is the holiday party held in December 2008: the Superintendent/President wanted all college staff to be able to attend, so he absorbed some of the cost himself, and the classified and faculty unions made financial contributions as well. This party was the best-attended CMC social event in a decade.

The Superintendent/President maintains excellent ties with the community by attending civic meetings, and by his strong support of area non-profit organizations. He has recently taken on the role of chair of a committee for the United Way campaign in the Morongo Basin. (Reference 11)

At the Superintendent/President’s urging, CMC faculty have brought the international honor society Phi Theta Kappa to the college, in order to provide scholarship and leadership opportunities to our students. When the national chapter requested a financial contribution from the college to support its scholarship fund, the faculty union voted to offer a considerable sum. This generosity reflects the new climate of growing mutual respect and trust on campus.

During his first month as Superintendent/President, he devised a plan designed to bring low-cost yet concrete improvements to the college’s aging classrooms. He and the staff in his office “adopted” a classroom by cleaning and painting it. Moved by this example, the college community chose other classrooms to treat in the same manner, and the result was attractive, freshly-painted classrooms to welcome students in August of 2008.

(Reference 12) At a monthly all-staff meeting, the Superintendent/President announced his plan to offer cash-back rebates to anyone who uses a local store to embroider the CMC logo on his/her shirt. The president models his campus pride by wearing such a shirt virtually every day. (Reference 13)

In an effort to allow all campus elements to jointly air their concerns on issues facing CMC, the Superintendent/President has eliminated duplicative meetings in favor of a more streamlined approach, resulting in a town-council style College Council, which meets twice a month. At these meetings, campus managers and leaders from designated constituent groups can communicate directly, bringing the viewpoints of their colleagues to bear on various issues that affect CMC. Following are staff who attend the College Council meetings:

James Arneson, Director of Base Programs
ASCMC President, Student Representative
Bonnie Bilger, Human Resources Director
Janice Blaisdell, Payroll Supervisor
Bruce Bridenbecker, Division Chair
Gregory Brown, Vice President of Student Services
Dan Cain, Director of Facilities
Glenda Case, Division Chair
Karen Coghill, Confidential Representative
Greg Gilbert, Division Chair and SLO Coordinator
Laura Hall, Director of Marketing and Community Relations
Jackie Hanselman, EOPS/DSPS Coordinator
Brian Heinemann, Director of Financial Aid
Sheri Holbrook, Title V Coordinator
Carolyn Hopkins, Faculty Association President
Cathy Itnyre, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Steven Kemp, Director of Management Information Systems
Rodger McGinness, Vice President of Instruction
Leslie Moody, Director of Nursing
Virginia Moore, CSEA President
Cheryl Munsey, Academic Senate President
Joe Olson, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services
Cecelia Simpson, Classified Senate President
Syndee Slayton, Executive Director of the Foundation
Julie Thixton, Director of Maintenance and Operations
Roger Wagner, Superintendent/President

(Reference 14) To communicate with college employees, the Superintendent/President sends a weekly e-letter to all subscribers. (Reference 15)

Recommendation 1: *The team recommends that the College provide evidence that its newly approved Strategic Plan and forthcoming Educational Master Plan are implemented through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, and resource allocation. The planning should be research-based, collegially developed, and directly supportive of the College's decision-making processes. (IB.3; IB.4; IIA.2e; IIA.2f; IIIA.5; IIIA.6; IIIB; IIIB.2b; IIIC.2; IIID.1a; IIID.1d; IVA.1; IVA.2; IVA.2a)*

The college's Strategic and Educational Master Plans were developed with the assistance of a consultant who worked closely with many campus groups in the compilation of the documents. Based on staff and community interviews and anecdotal evidence, these plans will need to be modified in light of newly-completed program reviews and the results of recent research conducted at the college. The goals for 2006-2009, which were developed by college staff at an all-day strategic planning exercise, were as follows:

- Employ the WASC planning cycle;
- Improve our communication both internally and externally;
- Improve campus culture and climate;
- Evaluate and strengthen resource development;
- Expand opportunities to increase leadership and participatory governance processes.

(Reference 16)

ACCJC's warning letter of June 2008 is an indication that these goals were not sufficiently met at that time. However, in the last year, employment of the cycle of evaluation, integrated planning and resource allocation, based on program reviews utilizing data contributed by the college Research Committee, has become part of CMC's identity. The recent adoption of the Budget Advisory Committee's proposal to link research-based program reviews to the budget is evidence that the college is now well-positioned to meet the goals. (Reference 17) As for Goal 3 (ACCJC Recommendation 7) regarding campus climate, two surveys conducted in the 2008 semesters document substantial improvement. (References 2, 18, and 19)

As the college builds its new Enterprise Reporting System, training is already underway to assist faculty and staff in acquiring relevant data for their reports and program reviews, thereby ensuring that SLOs and goals are data-based. All campus groups have had discussions concerning the types of data they require for their work, and they have offered input to the committee overseeing the construction of the new ERS. (Reference 20)

The allocation process adopted by the Budget Advisory Committee entails scrutiny of data-driven program reviews. The process requires budget items resulting from program reviews to go through the following process:

- the items are examined first by program-level managers including division chairs,

- the budget proposals are reviewed by the all-constituent College Council,
- the Budget Advisory Committee then reviews the items and sends them with recommendations to the Superintendent/President,
- the Superintendent/President presents the proposed items to the Board of Trustees, (If the Superintendent/President's recommendation to the Board of Trustees differs from the BAC's recommendation, the Superintendent/President will present both points of view to the Board.)
- The Board of Trustees votes on the proposed budget item.

Uniform criteria at all phases of the process include examination of how proposals will impact the College Mission Statement, 50% Law, and WASC standards. (Reference 21) Program review updates examine whether goals have been accomplished, then modifications are made, and the cycle begins again. As of February 2009, very few programs have been through the entire cycle; most of the reviews were only completed at the end of the fall 2008 semester. Business Administration and the Library have been through three cycles; Health Sciences has been through several in order to be in compliance with many of its external regulatory agencies; and Communication has completed two. By the spring 2010 semester, all programs at the college will be in compliance with the process established by the CMC Board of Trustees at its February 2009 meeting.

Recommendation 2: The team recommends that the plan to acquire a new Enterprise Reporting System be expedited and that appropriate staffing for institutional research, ERS training, and system operations and servicing be provided to support the use of information technology required to improve institutional effectiveness and reliable data-based decision-making. (IB.3; IB.6; IB.7; IIA.1; IIA.2; IIIC.1; IIIC.1a)

The college recognized its obligation to move toward the selection of a new Enterprise Reporting System early in 2007. After the campus community conducted an interview screening process of appropriate providers, Datatel was selected and a contract was signed in December 2007. (References 22 and 23) Much progress has been accomplished on the establishment of CMC's new enterprise reporting system during the 2008-09 academic year. In the selection of the Datatel system, and in deliberations on the specifications required to make best use of this system, there has been broad and enthusiastic participation from faculty and staff. Since Datatel was determined to be the new ERS, the various tasks associated with implementing the new system have proceeded relatively smoothly and on time. As of February 2009, personnel in all areas of the college are in the process of being trained (Reference 24). The contract for implementing the ERS has a service component built into it (Reference 23). The college has purchased new hardware to support the system, along with backup hardware to ensure system integrity. This backup system has been placed at an off-campus location to maintain the security of the system. The system will be fully operational on April 20 of this year.

To the extent that some of the department program reviews were completed during the fall 2008 semester, they helped to guide appropriate staffing for utilization of the new Datatel system. The college is currently in the process of hiring one Information Technology staff member to assist with implementation of the system. Many CMC staff recognize the need for an institutional researcher on campus, as that would ease the acquisition and dissemination of data useful for program reviews and outcomes analysis. However, financial constraints and prioritization of faculty hires to meet the required fund expenditure on teaching faculty prohibit hiring a full-time institutional researcher during the near term. To ensure appropriate staffing for institutional research, the college continues to rely upon its Research Committee. (Reference 25) Members of this committee have a combined expertise and knowledge in research methodology. In the current academic year, they have conducted research directly related to recommendations made by ACCJC (i.e., the campus climate survey of fall 2008; data retrieval for program reviews; the evaluation of Superintendent/President; and analysis of the Student Climate Survey of Spring 2008).

As the Datatel system nears completion, campus staff will continue to be trained to access more complete data from the system. There will be further opportunities for them to have hands-on experience with the facets of the new system that will be needed for their individual work. (Reference 24) Extensive training will enable the Research Committee and appropriate college staff members to work with current and complete data to ensure that decisions are data-based. The CMC budget includes funds that are dedicated to training staff to retrieve data and generate reports. (Reference 26)

Recommendation 3: *The team recommends that the College establish, through a fully participatory process, a College-wide structure for ongoing systematic review of all programs for relevance, achievement of learning outcomes, currency and future program needs and plans. The recent consultant-driven review of programs may serve as a guide. The program reviews should be integrated with the College's budget, educational and strategic planning processes. (IB.5; IB.7; IIA.1a; IIA.1b; IIA.4; IIA.2a; IIA.2c; IIA.2e; IIB.4; IIB.3c; IIC.2; IIIA.2; IIIB.2; IVA.1; IVA.2b)*

In April of 2008, very few departments at the college could claim that they had conducted program reviews: only Business Administration, Communication, Health Sciences and the Library had completed them. During that semester, the college created a position for a faculty member to oversee Student Learning Outcomes at the college. (References 27 and 28) At the same time, the college modified its academic structure, identifying three new divisions. The chairs of Communication and Fine Arts, Math and Science, and Career and Social Sciences, along with the Health Sciences Coordinator who functions as a division chair, oversee program reviews and schedule classes.

Assisted by the SLO Coordinator and aided by the division chairs, faculty began a tremendous effort to initiate and complete program reviews in the spring and summer of 2008. The Research Committee provided the best available data to each academic department to assist in the process; other departments at the college utilized data relevant to their areas such as results from the faculty and staff and student climate surveys.

(References 2, 18, 19, and 29) TaskForce 1 & 3, convened to work on CMC's accreditation responses in the March 2008 progress report, developed forms and processes for all college departments to follow in their program reviews. (Reference 30) The result of this work was the completion by December 2008 of 41 program reviews: up from four only six months earlier. Every program in every department at the college has now completed its program review, and will use these as benchmarks for annual reviews.

The college can cite several examples of improvements made through completion of program review cycles. Library program reviews have led to the development of program-level objectives and student learning outcomes; assessment of SLOs in library workshops; revision of the library's technology plan; and revision of the library Mission Statement. (Reference 1.28) The Business Administration Department's completion of an assessment cycle has resulted in the creation of standard exit exams for all sections of an introductory course. (Reference 1.8) The new division chairs credit recent positive enrollment management changes (such as fewer low-enrolled courses and fewer cancelled courses) to analysis of program review data sets. (Reference 1)

The data provided by the Research Committee to academic and vocational departments during the spring and fall 2008 semesters included information through 2007. As departments continue their program reviews at the current time, they are constrained by the lack of current data, due to the conversion of the college ERs from CoCo to Datatel. When the conversion is complete, college staff will need to develop a research calendar integrated with the program review and BAC calendars, to support implementation and assessment of annual program reviews in order to complete the cycle.

Having completed all program reviews, along with their continuing revision throughout the spring 2009 semester, will allow the entire process to go through a cycle by the spring 2010 semester. At that point, all departments will be able to measure SLOs and program review goals, re-plan, and refine the process to reflect what has been learned.

Conclusion: With a campus community committed to meeting all expectations and requirements of the ACCJC, the college has made tremendous progress in the last eight months. Campus morale has demonstrably improved over the spring 2008 semester. The new ERS is well underway, with April 25, 2009 as the target date for student registration for the summer and fall 2009 semesters. All programs and departments at the college have finished their program reviews (37 of them for the first time). Finally, the Budget Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from all campus groups, has devised a process to ensure the integration of planning and budgeting, with the final piece, assessment, yet to be developed as the cycles complete their first year next spring. Once the college's new ERS is fully in place, providing current data for college departments to independently access, it will be necessary to create a research calendar integrated with the program review and BAC calendars. College staff will then be able to connect program reviews to the current Strategic and Educational Master Plans, allowing for a data-based assessment of the plans to guide the college in the future.

Document References:

Reference 1 --- All Program Reviews

Reference 1.1 --- Academic Affairs Office Program Review

Reference 1.2 --- Administration of Justice Program Review

Reference 1.3 --- Admissions and Records Program Review

Reference 1.4 --- Anthropology Program Review

Reference 1.5 --- Art Program Review

Reference 1.6 --- Automotive Technology Program Review

Reference 1.7 --- Base Programs Program Review

Reference 1.8 --- Business Administration Program Review

Reference 1.9 --- CALWORKS Program Review

Reference 1.10 -- CIS Program Review

Reference 1.11 – Communication Program Review

Reference 1.12 – Computer Science Program Review

Reference 1.13 – Counseling Services Program Review

Reference 1.14 – Developmental Education Program Review

Reference 1.15 – DSPS Program Review

Reference 1.16 – Early Childhood Education Program Review

Reference 1.17 – EMT Program Review

Reference 1.18 – EOPS Program Review

Reference 1.19 – Facilities Program Review

Reference 1.20 – Financial Aid Program Review

Reference 1.21 – Fire Technology Program Review

Reference 1.22 – Fiscal Services/Business Office Program Review

Reference 1.23 – History Program Review

Reference 1.24 – Home Health Aide Program Review

Reference 1.25 – Human Resources Program Review

Reference 1.26 – IT Program Review

Reference 1.27 – Liberal Arts Program Review

Reference 1.28 – Library Program Review (2006-07 and 2007-08)

Reference 1.29 – Maintenance and Operations Program Review

Reference 1.30 – Nursing Assistant Program Review

Reference 1.31 – Philosophy Program Review

Reference 1.32 – Political Science Program Review

Reference 1.33 – Psychology/Sociology Program Review

Reference 1.34 – Registered Nursing Program Review

Reference 1.35 – Science Program Review

Reference 1.36 – Social Science Program Review

Reference 1.37 – Superintendent/President's Office Program Review

Reference 1.38 – Transfer Empowerment Program Review

Reference 1.39 – Title V Program Review

Reference 1.40 – Vocational Nursing Program Review

Reference 1.41 – Workforce Development Program Review

Reference 2 --- Fall 2008 Staff Climate Survey

Reference 3 --- Servant Leadership quality indicators produced by Classified Senate

Reference 4 --- Staff Day program from Dr. Farnsworth's visit

Reference 5 --- Staff Day program January 2009

Reference 6 --- Human Resources evaluation summaries of 1-09 staff development day

Reference 7 --- 212° information

Reference 8 --- Evaluation of Superintendent/President form

Reference 9 --- Academic Senate minutes

Reference 10 – Board of Trustees minutes

Reference 11 – Photos from local papers

Reference 12 -- Classroom photo from local paper

Reference 13 -- Photo of President Wagner

Reference 14 – Minutes, agendas of 2008-09 College Council to date

Reference 15 – President’s newsletters

Reference 16 – Educational Master Plan, Chapter 3

Reference 17 – Board of Trustees minutes 2-26-09

Reference 18 – Spring 2008 Staff Climate Survey

Reference 19 – Spring 2007 Staff Climate Survey

Reference 20 – Academic Senate minutes

Reference 21 – Budget Advisory Committee document

Reference 22 – March 2008 Progress Report, page 7

Reference 23 – Datatel Contract

Reference 24 – Training Schedule

Reference 25 – Research Committee documents

Reference 26 – Exhibit from Datatel contract

Reference 27 – SLO Coordinator Journal

Reference 28 – Faculty Association letter

Reference 29 – Student Climate Survey of 2006

Reference 30 – Taskforce 1 & 3 documents