

# The Instructional Program Review Narrative Report

**1. College:** Merritt College

**Discipline, Department or Program:** Real Estate

**Date:** February 15, 2010

**Members of the Instructional Program Review Team:** Guy Forkner

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## **2. Narrative Description of the Discipline, Department or Program:**

Merritt College Real Estate program provides a comprehensive offering for beginning as well as advance students who are seeking a new occupation to improve the students existing skills. This program has been in existence since fall of 1982 and has survived the market's ups and downs over the history of this program.

Merritt College offers day, evenings and weekend classes, students receive both certificate as well as degree programs that provide employment and promotional opportunities.

Our students are given the opportunity to work in the Real Estate field in the following capacities; Real Estate Agents and Brokers, Appraisers, Property Managers, Financiers, Land Developers, and Investors.

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## **3. Curriculum:**

- Is the curriculum current and effective?

The Real Estate courses are relevant, but certain courses are not attracting enrollment because of the current economy. Students want more consumer protection classes rather than sales and broker examination preparation.

Have course outlines been updated within the last three years? If not, what plans are in place to remedy this?

All of the Real Estate Department's outlines were updated within the last three years

- Has your department conducted a curriculum review of course outlines? If not, what are the plans to remedy this?

The Real Estate Department is current.

- What are the department's plans for curriculum improvement (i.e., courses to be developed, updated, enhanced, or deactivated)? Have prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories been validated? Is the date of validation on the course outline?
- With the exception of RLEST 4B, Advanced Legal Aspects of Real Estate and RLEST 7B, Advanced Real Estate Appraisal the department does not have courses with pre- or co-requisites and advisories. RLEST 4B and 7B are the second courses in a series of 2 courses for real estate law and appraisals.

- What steps has the department taken to incorporate student learning outcomes in the curriculum? Are outcomes set for each course? If not, which courses do not have outcomes?

Since Spring 2009, all courses submitted to the College Instruction Committee for creation and updates have incorporated Student Learning Outcomes. Therefore approximately 95% of all real estate courses include SLOs.

- Describe the efforts to develop outcomes at the program level. In which ways do these outcomes align with the institutional outcomes?

The Real Estate Department held several meetings to develop program level outcomes and complete program mapping for degree/certificates. These outcomes directly align with institutional outcomes, especially the communications institutional outcome.

- Recommendations and priorities.

1. Complete Program Level mapping and SLOs for all Real Estate Department degree/certificate programs by the end of Spring 2010. Determine which programs need to be reconfigured and/or dissolved during the mapping process.
2. Complete course outline updates with SLOs for each course.

#### **4. Instruction:**

- Describe effective and innovative strategies used by faculty to involve students in the learning process. How has new technology been used by the department to improve student learning?

Some real estate faculty have taken several staff development courses and other activities, such as the Annual Consortium Conference for Student Learning Communities, Introduction to Online Technology courses, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Workshops, and best practices to strengthen the learning process for students. The recently received and installed Walk 'N Talk interactive whiteboard with multi

functionality (touch sensitive, collaboration, Internet connectivity, video projection, etc.) will support improvement in student learning. Formalized training is pending for Spring 2010.

- How does the department maintain the integrity and consistency of academic standards within the discipline?

The real estate department maintains integrity and consistency of academic standards via periodic meetings to discuss pertinent matters, such as, Unit Plan, SLOs, share workshop and conference findings, program mapping, faculty and student evaluations, student retention and completion rates, etc.

- Discuss the enrollment trends of your department. What is the student demand for specific courses? How do you know? What do you think are the salient trends affecting enrollments?

Based on the data provided by the PCCD Office of Research & Planning, student demand for business courses, especially transfer and workforce preparation are growing—especially for hybrid and online courses. Students gravitate toward instructional delivery that extends 24/7 access opportunities. Almost from their inception, distance education courses have filled and closed before the semester begins

Fall 2009 showed an increase in enrollments, productivity and student retention. Hybrid courses (combination of f2f and online) are needed for some courses. As technology costs lower, student access will increase supporting collaboration via the web and enhancing student learning. Some beginning students will require more personal contact to solidify their confidence in learning via technology instructional delivery systems, especially being intrinsically motivated and successful. Online tutorial will support this trend.

Are courses scheduled in a manner that meets student needs and demand? How do you know?

The data provided by the PCCD Office of Research & Planning is inconclusive. The real estate morning and afternoon classes have fewer students. Evening and weekend classes have been the standards for the program, but the new online classes have grown dramatically.

The department schedules courses which meet college and department requirements. We have noted numerous student requests for classes which close prior to the semester and have attempted to add extra sections when feasible. We use the volume and tenor of student-emails and enrollments as a measurement.

- Recommendations and priorities.

Continue to expand hybrid and online courses in so far as possible in the face of continued loss of state funding and a decrease in our permanent staffing of the past few years.

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## 5. Student Success:

Based on the College Average as identified by the PCCD Office of Research & Planning, the real estate department's student retention and completion rates are above the College Average

Few students are obtaining degrees in real estate but the number has been growing as the economy has worsened. This is due to the fact that this discipline is primarily a test preparation program for real estate salespersons and brokers.

- What are the key needs of students that affect their learning? What services are needed for these students to improve their learning? Describe the department's efforts to access these services. What are your department's instructional support needs?  
Key needs that affect student learning include access to relevant developmental education support courses, tutorial services, and career planning & placement services.

Faculty are involved in various campus and discipline initiatives, i.e. Title III Grant, SLOAC activities, Student Learning Communities, peer tutoring, etc.

- Describe the department's effort to assess student learning at the course level. Describe the efforts to assess student learning at the program level. In which ways has the department used student learning assessment results for improvement?

The Real Estate Department, under the guidance of the College Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Committee, established a course and program level assessment goal. The department created an assessment activity and a rubric to implement—target assessment implementation Spring 2010.

- Recommendations and priorities.
  1. Seek coordination with Learning Center for tutorial services.
  2. Establish Student Learning Communities with English and Mathematics Departments for Real Estate Students.
  3. Advocate for a College Career Advising and Placement Center.

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## **6. Human and Physical Resources (including equipment and facilities)**

- Describe your current level of staff, including full-time and part-time faculty, classified staff, and other categories of employment.

Within the next 4 years, the Real Estate Department will need an additional full-time faculty. Fall 2009 the department included 1 full time and 7 part time faculty members. It is projected that 1 full-time Real Estate faculty will retire. At least one new full-time faculty member must be hired within the next 2 years. If more classes are offered, additional part-time faculty must be identified to deliver instruction.

- Describe your current utilization of facilities and equipment. Projects, laptops, computer labs,

Unfortunately, faculty equipment continues to be stolen (laptops, camera, projectors etc.). These need to be replaced.

The existing support offices, recently relocated to library, must be moved and need to be relocated back and move and assemble furniture and equipment in storage.

- Are the human and physical resources, including equipment and location, adequate for all the courses offered by your department (or program)?

Building D is old. Classrooms have limited connectivity and no projection capability. New student and faculty furniture are needed in some of the classrooms and offices.

Build a small auditorium to handle up to 200 people.

Faculty offices are inadequate—lack of book shelves, definition of personal space, etc.

- **Recommendations and priorities.**

1. Hire faculty as recommended in this section above.
2. Request and order furniture via Measure A.
3. Real Estate is slated to move into the new Science & Technology Building—5 to 6 years.

## 7. Community Outreach and Articulation

*For vocational programs:*

- **Describe the department's connection with industry. Is there an Advisory Board or Advisory Committee for the program? If so, how often does it meet? Is the program adequately preparing students for careers in the field? How do you know?**

The real estate department is connected the real estate industry through local boards and the California and National Associations of Realtors. The department has an Advisory Committee of seven that meets every other month. Currently the college is also working towards a college wide Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee. The program needs to assess whether or not degrees/certificate programs are adequately preparing students for careers. The real estate department has a student club called Merritt Real Estate Forum dedicated to professional development and continuing education. The Forum has a Senior Advisory Board and about 600+ members that continue after graduation.

- **Have students completing the program attained a foundation of technical and career skills? How do you know? What are the completion rates in your program?**

Based on data provided to the department, completion rates are good, but a follow up assessment is needed to ascertain the validity of technical and career skills achieved through the degree/certificate programs.

- **What are the employment placement rates? Include a description of job titles and salaries. What is the relationship between completion rates and employment rates?**

This is another area where data is insufficient. Program completion follow-up is null and void, especially as it relates to employment rates for program completers.

- **What industry trends are most critical for the future viability of the program? How do you know? What are the implications of these trends for curriculum development and improvement?**

The real estate industry represents 30% of the economy and the future viability of the program is reflected in the California and National Economy. We will develop new programs as the real estate laws change.

***For transfer programs:***

- Describe the department's efforts in meeting with and collaborating with local 4-year institutions. Is the program adequately preparing students for upper division course work? How do you know?

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Department faculty were previously involved in The Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum (IMPAC) project originated in the Intersegmental Committee of Statewide Academic Senates (ICAS) of the California Community College (CCC), University of California (UC), and California State University (CSU) systems. IMPAC is a unique faculty-designed, faculty-run project designed to assist the student transfer process from the community colleges to the UC and CSU systems for the baccalaureate degree.

Fall 2009, Merritt's Articulation Officer counseled the Real Estate Department about the need to update course outlines to reflect any new pre-requisites required to maintain agreements with CSUs and UCs.

***For all instructional programs:***

- Describe the department's effort to ensure that the curriculum responds to the needs of the constituencies that it serves.

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The real estate department works directly with the real estate industry through local boards and the California and National Associations of Realtors. The department has an Advisory Committee of seven that meets every other month. Currently the college is also working towards a college wide Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee. The program needs to assess whether or not degrees/certificate programs are adequately preparing students for careers. The real estate department has a

student club called Merritt Real Estate Forum dedicated to professional development and continuing education. The Forum has a Senior Advisory Board and about 600+ members that continue after graduation.

- Recommendations and priorities.

Seek and apply for funding sources to support faculty efforts to develop new programs and meet workforce trends.

## Definitions

**Department/Program:** For the purpose of the Instructional Program Review, a department/program is defined as a course or series of courses which share a common Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) number at the four digit level of specificity. TOP is a classification system for academic programs in the California Community Colleges.

**FTEF (Full Time Equivalent Faculty):** Also known as load equivalency. A full-time instructor teaching 15 lecture hours per week = 1.0 FTEF. One lecture hour = 50 minute instructional period. One lab hour = .8 of one lecture hour equivalent.

**FTES (Full Time Equivalent Student):** This unit is used as the basis for computation of state support for California Community Colleges. One student attending 15 hours a week for 35 weeks (one academic year) generates 1 FTES.

To approximate the FTES generated by a 17.5 week semester class use the formula:

$$\text{WSCH (Weekly Student Contact Hours from the census)} / 525 \times 17.5 = \text{FTES}$$

The WSCH of “contact hour” is the basic unit of attendance for computing FTES. It is a period of not less than 50 minutes of scheduled instruction.

For example, a class of 40 students meeting 3 hours per week generates 120 WSCH. To figure the FTES for the class, the formula yields:

$$120 / 525 \times 17.5 = 4.0 \text{ FTES}$$

**FTES/FTEF:** The ratio of full-time equivalent students to full-time equivalent instructors.

**Persistence:** The percent of students who attend one semester and then attend the subsequent semester (fall and spring semesters).

**Retention:** After the first census, the percent of students earning any grade but a “W” in a course or series of courses. To figure retention for a class, subtract the “W”s from the total enrollment and divide the number by the total enrollment.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** The desired knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitude that a student attains as a result of engagement in a particular set of collegiate/academic experiences.

## **Appendices**

**Instructional Program Review  
Resource Needs Reporting Template**

<b>Division:</b> Business & Technology		<b>Department/Program:</b> Real Estate		<b>Contact:</b> Guy Forkner	
<b>Item Identified in Program Review (justification)</b>	<b>Human Resources (Staffing)</b>	<b>Physical Resources (Facilities)</b>	<b>Technology and/or Equipment</b>	<b>Supplies Budget</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>
	Hire 1 Faculty in next 3 years—in the area of Real Estate  Hire at least 1 Student Instructional Assistant	1 Large Room to handle large classes and special presentations (up to 200 people)	Desk & Chairs		Salesperson and Brokerage Test Preparation.  Continuing Education Classes Real Estate Entrepreneurship

### Integrated Planning Template

<b>Division:</b> Business & Technology		<b>Department/Program:</b> Real Estate		<b>Contact:</b> Guy Forkner	
<b>Strategic Direction __:</b>					
<b>Institutional Goal ____:</b>					
<b>Objective:</b>				<b>Priority:</b>	
Activities/Tasks	Responsibility Lead person(s)	Resources	Timeline	Comments	College Planning Link(s) *
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

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\*College Planning Links:

Budget Committee

Facilities Committee

Technology Committee

Curriculum Committee

Learning Assessment (SLO) Committee

**Student Learning Outcomes Reporting Template  
(Course Level Outcomes)**

<b>Division:</b> Business & Technology		<b>Department/Program:</b> Real Estate		<b>Contact:</b> Guy Forkner		<b>Division:</b> Business & Technology
<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Outcome Measure</b>	<b>Definition of Data (Sample/Population)</b>	<b>Method of Data Collection &amp; Source</b>	<b>Expected Level of Performance</b>	<b>Actual Level of Performance</b>	<b>Plan of Action</b>

**Student Learning Outcomes Reporting Template  
(Program Level Outcomes)**

<b>Division:</b> Business & Technology		<b>Department/Program:</b> Real Estate		<b>Contact:</b> Guy Forkner		<b>Division:</b> Business & Technology
<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Outcome Measure</b>	<b>Definition of Data (Sample/Population)</b>	<b>Method of Data Collection &amp; Source</b>	<b>Expected Level of Performance</b>	<b>Actual Level of Performance</b>	<b>Plan of Action</b>