



OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE®

**The College Academic Master Plan  
(CAMP)  
Final Report**

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**Prepared by:**



College Brain Trust

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OCC initiated a College Academic Master Plan (CAMP) that was primarily derived from the independently developed Campus Academic Master Plans and overseen by the CAMP committee. Because the College did not begin the CAMP development with a common framework for data collection, environmental scanning and a planning system, the completion of a planning document that could guide college decisions was difficult.

In the fall of 2011, CBT consultants met with faculty groups and academic administrators over the course of two visits, facilitating a workshop on planning for the college community and providing the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs with a report and recommendations. The college worked to address the recommendations, and by the spring of 2012 a set of Strategic Objectives was developed.

Ed Buckley and Diane Troyer, the CBT team that returned for two visits in the fall of 2012, realized that the Strategic Objectives to be addressed in the CAMP were generalized value statements rather than strategic objectives based on evidence of need for change. The challenge now is to transform these statements into meaningful objectives that can be prioritized, to support them with solid evidence, and to provide them with clear action steps that lead to real changes that support student learning and institutional effectiveness.

This report provides recommendations to address this challenge in two phases. In Phase One, the college is asked to "test drive" a process in which the Academic Leadership Team joins stakeholders to take a small number of Strategic Objectives and identify the critical issues, gather relevant data and evidence, and create concrete action steps by which the Objectives can be met. This may well require rewriting the Objectives while honoring the apparent intent of the originals. In Phase Two, building on their experience in Phase One, the work group is asked to create a permanent advisory group; gather evidence and develop action steps for the remaining Strategic Objectives; align the CAMP with other college plans and resource allocation processes; create a communication strategy to promote college-wide engagement; and provide training to key leaders and stakeholders.

## TASK OVERVIEW

CBT Consultants Ed Buckley and Diane Troyer were assigned to address this task of the OCC Project. In the summer of 2012, they reviewed a number of college documents related to institutional planning and communicated extensively via telephone and email with several key administrators. (The two consultants and a third, Mary Gershwin, had worked with the college on the CAMP in the fall of 2011.) From Sunday, September 23, through Wednesday, September 26,

2012, Buckley and Troyer conducted a site visit during which they spoke with Richard Holcomb, Cathey Maze, Martin Orłowski, Nancy Showers, Carla Mathews, Robert Montgomery, the CAMP Committee, the Deans group, and Chancellor Tim Meyer.

A preliminary report dated October 3 was sent to the Academic Leadership Team members after the first visit. The CBT team returned for a second visit (October 12-20), accompanied by consultant Julie Slark, who was working on CAMP-related tasks, and met with the Academic Leadership Team to assess their progress on the CAMP's development. A second preliminary report dated November 3 was sent to the Academic Leadership Team following the October visit. This report reflected the findings and recommendations made in the preliminary report, with some additional recommendations for the Academic Leadership Team to consider. A final report, entitled *Notes and Recommendations to the Academic Leadership Team for the Completion of the Academic Master Plan*, dated October 26, was sent to the Team. Each of these reports built upon the previous ones as the consultants collaborated with the Academic Leadership Team to create the strategies to complete a truly useful academic master plan for OCC. This report to the College substantially reflects the content of the three reports sent to the Academic Leadership Team

#### FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Significant changes have occurred since the CBT visit to the Oakland Community College in the fall of 2011. The Chancellor has recently reorganized the administrative structure, centralizing academic functions at the college level under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs, who now has an administrative team consisting of Mary Cathey Maze, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs; Martin Orłowski, Executive Director of Curriculum and Student Learning; Nancy C. Showers, Executive Director of Institutional Research, Quality and Planning; and Carla Mathews, Executive Director of Enrollment Management. The Vice Chancellor and his team now have formal authority for the development of the CAMP. Academic divisions will soon become college-wide rather than campus-specific, and deans will be assigned either to be Academic Deans, reporting to the Associate Vice Chancellor, or Campus Deans, reporting to the Campus Presidents.

These decisions have created some anxiety and confusion. Campus Presidents as well as Deans and their supervisors are in the process of adjusting to their new roles and responsibilities. While job descriptions are written for the new responsibilities, written processes are not yet in place to support this shift in organizational focus. Faculty leaders have raised questions about the future role of the College Planning Council and the CAMP Committee in institutional planning. Some faculty and administrators want to know more about how *campus* needs and interests will be addressed in the new structure. However, there appears to be general support or at least acceptance of the principle that OCC needs to have unified, college-level, integrated planning in order to continue providing effective student learning.

The College has engaged in a lengthy and highly collaborative process to develop the College Academic Master Plan (CAMP). The process of development included review of the Campus Master Plans as well as extensive work by the College Academic Master Plan Committee and the College Planning Council. A draft of the CAMP was reviewed at the CPC retreat in July 2012. The 28 Objectives in the plan were prioritized into Tier 1 and Tier 2. Following the review, Vice Chancellor Holcomb ranked five Objectives as Tier 1, seven Objectives as Tier 2, and one objective

as "Campus Focus." The Chancellor identified three of the Tier 1 Objectives (2, 11, and 27) as of primary importance. The resulting document is the CAMP dated September 21, 2012. The College Brain Trust team reviewed the document and held discussions with the Academic Leadership team (ALT), the CAMP Committee, CPC and Director of Institutional Research.

Prior to its second visit, the CBT team sent the ALT the first *Preliminary Report* that spelled out a number of observations made during the first visit and recommended ten steps the ALT might take to complete the CAMP. In October, the Leadership Team used the CBT report as a guide to revise the Plan. They created a spreadsheet in which the Strategic Objectives, now rewritten so as to be "actionable," were grouped by "Academic Master Planning Themes," linking them to existing key performance indicators (KPIs), as well as to yet-to-be developed action steps and other categories\*. The analysis that follows is based on a review of the work of the ALT, discussions with the ALT team members, and the CBT consultants' growing understanding of some issues that are hindering the advancement of this important project.

#### ANALYSIS

For the CAMP to be effective, it must be anchored in *clear evidence*. However the current CAMP's objectives are not grounded in documented evidence and some are general value statements rather than strategic statements.

The CAMP should serve as *the key driver of a system of connected plans*, including the Strategic Plan, the various resource allocation plans (budget, technology, staffing, facilities, etc.), program review, and other planning activities. But while the CAMP flows directly from the Strategic Plan, it is not clearly linked to these other institutional plans. In fact, the College has not yet adopted a formal model of institutional planning that describes the responsibility and function of all of the institution's formal planning processes.

Although the broad outlines of the CAMP are in place, the Academic Leadership team must take steps to assure that the CAMP provides the framework for establishing college priorities and spells out the actions required to bring about improvement. The developing of action steps for each of the priority Objectives should begin immediately. Such action steps are critical to the plan's success.

Colleges that embark on transformative change typically encounter the sort of skepticism, concerns, and resistance now evident at Oakland CC. The process for completing the development of the CAMP should reflect *meaningful engagement of stakeholders*. The College needs a plan for communicating its vision, engaging representatives of all constituent groups, and otherwise championing the CAMP as an engine of transformation.

It also needs to provide training. Institutional planning is a complex activity, requiring stakeholders to understand how to gather data, analyze evidence, and implement practical action steps to meet measurable goals.

The Academic Leadership Team's work on this project is to be commended. The team has worked diligently to address CBT's recommendations. However, it has been hindered because many of the Strategic Objectives are value statements, crafted by various committees over a protracted period of time without reference to any data or evidence. Some are so broad that they give the college little

direction; others are tasks that do not rise to the level of a strategic objective. As a result, the Team has not yet devised an effective way forward on this task.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

CBT recommends a two-phase process to be led by the Academic Leadership Team to complete development of the College Academic Master Plan. In the first phase, the ALT should begin with a very limited number of objectives and go through the entire development process, including action steps. The goal is to reinforce a team approach to the process and to "test-drive" the process before taking on all of the college's Strategic Objectives. The team can then modify the process to make it more effective.

In the second phase, the ALT should assume overall leadership for the completion of the entire plan, so that it can be fully implemented in the 2013-2014 academic year.

### Phase One (Completion Date: **December 15, 2012**)

The Academic Leadership Team should select a small group of stakeholders, including academic deans and faculty, to participate in this first phase. These should be individuals who are respected, credible, competent leaders who can bring additional expertise and perspectives to the table. ALT should provide them an orientation, and the combined group (ALT plus the stakeholders) should be given a title, such as "Phase One CAMP Work Group."

Throughout the duration of Phase One, the work group should provide weekly updates to the college community, explaining the significance of the project and inviting questions, comments and other feedback.

At each stage—selecting the objectives, identifying issues/problems, identifying the data, and writing the action steps—the work group should focus on the goal of bringing about meaningful, concrete change that improves student learning.

#### **1.1 Pick no more than three to five of the Strategic Objectives as first priority objectives for development.**

This task should be completed by the Academic Leadership Team *prior* to adding additional stakeholders to the project. Select Objectives that can potentially improve student learning outcomes, are fairly clear in their intent, can easily be made "actionable," and for which you have or can find strong supporting data and evidence.

#### **1.2 Revise the Strategic Objective Statements as necessary to clarify intent and assure a clear set of action steps for each.**

The CBT consultants determined that some of the Objectives in the CAMP reflect clear outcomes, but others need slight revision to clarify focus and intent. The goal is not to change the Objective but to change how the Objective's intent is communicated.

#### **1.3 Identify the critical issues to be addressed or problems to be solved in each objective.**

Identify the critical data and evidence that help define the issues/problems and point to focused action steps. Each objective and set of issues/problems should be assigned to a specific person or

office to investigate. While IR should manage this process and will be the primary source of directed data and evidence, some tasks may be assigned to IE or to an appropriate dean.

**1.4 The Director of Institutional Research should appoint a cross-college Institutional Research Advisory Group to assist in the review of data and evidence for the CAMP, including the following tasks:**

- a. Review current KPIs and align them with the CAMP to determine which KPIs provide evidence to support and/or measure outcomes for the CAMP objectives. IR should provide an initial mapping of the KPIs to the CAMP.
- b. Document evidence for the Phase One Strategic Objectives by **December 15, 2012**, and continue working on the next set of high priority Strategic Objectives.
- c. Identify a clear set of data or evidence for each prioritized objective. This evidence should be presented to the Vice Chancellor and reviewed by the CAMP Committee or other appropriate group of faculty and administrator stakeholders. If there is little or no evidence of a gap between goals and outcomes, the Vice Chancellor should reconsider the priority of the Objective or recommend rewriting the Objective so that it can be evidence-based, or eliminate it.
- d. Document evidence for the first phase CAMP Objectives in time to meet the December deadline. Document evidence for the remaining Objectives by **March 1, 2013**.

**1.5 Create a template for focused Action Steps in support of each Strategic Objective, with the following components:**

- a. The Strategic Objective, rewritten if necessary in an "actionable" form
- b. Evidence for the needs described or gaps to be filled by the Objective
- c. Assignment of responsibility to a specific administrator to lead in the creation of Action Steps for each objective
- d. Suggested work-group or work-group components to assist the administrator in producing the Action Steps
- e. Specific Action Steps needed to meet the Objective, written so as to clearly call for well defined, measurable change, and identification of those responsible for taking action
- f. Timelines for actual implementation of the Action Steps, culminating in a specific date by which the Objective should be met
- g. Preliminary estimate of the resources needed to meet the Objective
- h. Statement defining how evidence of success will be assessed for each Action Step
- i. Statement defining how evidence of success will be assessed for the Strategic Objective as a whole

**1.6 Develop Action Steps, assignments of responsibility, timelines and measurements for each Strategic Objective, drawing upon the work of the Institutional Research Advisory Group and featuring the components listed in Task 1.4.**

**1.7 Upon completion of Phase One, create and circulate a report to all college constituencies, explaining the purposes of the CAMP, the work group's progress towards its completion, and actions underway or planned through June 2013.**

**1.8 Assess the process and make modifications as necessary before moving on to Phase Two.**

Phase Two (Completion Date: **June 15, 2013**)

**2.1 Expand the work group created in Phase One, making sure to include individuals from each constituency (faculty, administrators and classified staff), to monitor and oversee the completion of CAMP.**

Throughout the duration of Phase Two, the work group should provide weekly updates on their work, commenting on progress, explaining the significance of the project, and inviting questions, comments and feedback from the college community. At each stage—selecting the objectives, identifying issues/problems, identifying the data, and writing the action steps—the work group should focus on bringing about meaningful, concrete change that improves student learning.

**2.2 Prioritize the remaining Strategic Objectives.**

The Vice Chancellor should specifically identify the remaining Objectives to be implemented during the 2012-13 Academic year. Whichever Objectives are selected, the Academic Leadership Team should use the task as a training opportunity for itself and other participants, demonstrating how the CAMP will function and how effective planning works.

**2.3 Revise the Strategic Objective Statements as necessary to clarify intent and ensure a clear set of Action Steps for each.**

The CBT consultants determined that some of the Objectives in the CAMP reflect clear outcomes, but others need slight revision to clarify focus and intent. The goal is not to change the Objective but in how the Objective's intent is communicated.

**2.4 Continue the process of the cross-college Institutional Research Advisory Group to identify the appropriate data and evidence needed to complete a gap analysis for the all Strategic Objectives, following the steps outlined in Phase One.**

Document evidence for *all* CAMP Objectives by **March 1, 2013**.

**2.5 Develop Action Steps, assignments of responsibility, timelines and measurements for each Strategic Objective, drawing upon the work of the Institutional Research Advisory Group and featuring the components listed in Task 1.4**

This task should be completed by **March 1, 2013**.

**2.6 Align the CAMP priority Objectives and Action Steps for 2012-13 with the College Budget Allocation Process**

This step should be coordinated with CBT consultant Mike Brandy's work in assessing and recommending systematic planning for resource allocation based on data.

**2.7 Develop a CAMP calendar.**

This calendar should list the CAMP start and end dates, the regular intervals for review of progress towards meeting Objectives and modifying Objectives and Action Steps as needed, and the key dates for review, evaluation, and revision of the CAMP at the end of the five-year period.

**2.8 Develop procedures and timelines that align the calendars of Discipline Program Review with CAMP Objectives and Action Steps implementation.**

As disciplines become more effective in creating their Program Reviews, the college will need to develop mechanisms to coordinate discipline visions, goals, and action steps with CAMP Objectives and Action Steps. This will likely involve the participation of oversight/governance groups in a formal process.

### **2.9 Develop a Communications Plan**

It is recommended that the Vice Chancellor and his Academic Leadership Team, building on the experience with the CAMP workgroup, develop a communication plan for disseminating information through a variety of media, meetings, and workshops. Communication about this project to the college community must be consistent, clear and intensive.

### **2.10 Develop a Professional Development Plan**

Initial professional development should be implemented to ensure that deans and others responsible for implementation and action are trained on the application of evidence and accountability for action.

### **2.11 Develop an annual CAMP planning and assessment cycle with the following features:**

- a. Regular periodic review and assessment of the development of the CAMP (particularly the development of Action Steps) by designated individuals and institutional committees
- b. Regular periodic review and assessment of the quality and effectiveness of CAMP's planning, including outcomes assessment of the Action Steps (2013-14 and beyond) by designated individuals and institutional committees
- c. A written annual summative evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the CAMP's planning, with recommendations for improvement (2013-14 and beyond)