December 2007

To All Departments and Administrative Units:

Attached to this memo you will find the Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (PIE) forms for the 2007-08 academic year. Because we continue to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the PIE process in facilitating and documenting campus planning efforts, a few changes to the process have been made for this year, but we are hopeful that you will find the overall process to be both familiar and supportive of existing ongoing efforts in your work area.

The dominant characteristics of the PIE process are as follows:

- The focus is on the coordination of unit planning with college-level planning. This is accomplished by the designation of college goals developed by the President’s Advisory Council (PAC.) The focus of our broader assessment of institutional effectiveness will be based on progress we can document in meeting these college goals.

- Planning is documented through the creation of student learning outcomes (SLO), administrative unit objectives (AUO), and unit goals. As departments and administrative units around the campus have now been involved in outcomes assessment efforts for the past 3 years, it is the expectation that all work areas should now be positioned to report on at least one full cycle of outcomes assessment, including the use of results from your prior assessment efforts. This work builds on the goals, established outcomes, and assessment data collected over the past years, and acknowledges the need to see assessment efforts as ongoing and cyclical.

- While much work has been done on SLOs at various levels of programs and disciplines, we need to increasingly focus efforts on developing outcomes and assessments at the course level. Departments should continue to document progress on their previously-established outcomes...
(whether course- or program-level), but increased efforts need to be directed toward more comprehensive SLO development for each course. This expectation is clearly communicated in recent documents from the college’s accrediting commission. Moreover, outcome-based assessment of courses allows departments to examine effectiveness and make important changes that substantially affect student learning in each and every classroom.

- Planning is intended to be broadly inclusive with as many individuals participating at the unit level as is possible. We believe that the best planning takes place when we encourage and support appropriate input from all college constituencies, and this participation is most relevant and useful at the department or unit level.

- Requests for resources should be tied to unit, program, and team goals, and should be supported by data analysis. Types of resources include needed budget as well as other kinds of support the college can provide, e.g., research support, training, positions, and instructional equipment. Given the unpredictable times when funding is made available by the State throughout the academic year, establishing a strong foundation of unit planning based on clearly articulated goals is imperative for us so that we can spend our money wisely and thoughtfully.

The timeline for the PIE process this year is as follows:

- **December 2007** Departments and administrative units receive forms
- **May 2, 2008** Completed forms are due to division office or appropriate manager OR are completely entered in TracDat.
- **May 23, 2008** Deans/managers prepare a summary of the PIE forms they received and submit to appropriate Vice President
- **June 13, 2008** Vice Presidents prepare a summary of reports they have received for consideration in establishing institutional priorities
- **July 3, 2008** IEC reviews all submitted summaries to prepare a year-end report to PAC on progress made in meeting College goals

It is our continued hope that this PIE process will be one that enables your department or administrative unit to look at your operations positively and realistically as the basis for planning. We know that a great deal of planning goes on in large and small ways that results in improved functioning and in significant changes that make us a more effective college. We ask you to collaborate with us now in implementing a planning process that will allow us to document your considerable efforts and work, to improve our institutional effectiveness, and to allocate our complex resources in ways that will make a difference.

**What’s different in the PIE forms/process for 2007-08:**
The timeline gives departments even more time to complete the report. Even given the changes to our academic year with the 16-week semester and the Winter Intersession, it should still be possible for all departments to complete the forms on time.

The College goals for 2007-08 have been updated. Continuing with the modifications begun last year, departments are asked to identify where their unit goals and activities are in alignment with the specified college goals, but there is also recognition that not all goals derived from the unit’s individual planning efforts conform precisely with college goals. These unit goals are still important, and still need to be acknowledged in any attempt to paint a comprehensive picture of planning efforts. Additionally, trends emerging from department level goals provide essential input that can lead to establishment of future college- or team-level goals (see next bullet.)

In an effort to create stronger linkages between PIE and existing resource allocation processes, an additional level of “team” goals will be implemented. All academic and administrative units are part of one of four teams: Instruction, Student Services, Human Resources, or Administrative Services. Beginning with input from this year’s unit PIE documents, each team will set goals and create priorities that will be used to drive resource allocations. Since our existing processes for allocation of new resources occur predominantly at the team level, this change will greatly strengthen the connection between unit-level planning and resource support.

There is an increased emphasis on the use of data. In addition to reporting external and internal conditions that influence planning (4a and 4b), a new section (4c) asks departments to review available data and specify important trends that affect their programs or services. Data reports will be provided by IT, but departments may also use their own internally-generated data to complete the relevant portions of this section. Analysis of this data trends section coupled with the goal implementation section (7) should provide the foundation for resource requests throughout the year, including budget and staffing requests to be proposed through the regular college processes.

In addition to the paper format PIE document, departments are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the electronic version offered in TracDat. In most cases, this powerful tool has been pre-loaded with input from last year’s PIE cycle that will serve as a starting point for documenting progress on ongoing goals. Moreover, TracDat is very useful in helping the college analyze and archive our collective progress toward college goals. For your convenience, a number of TracDat training sessions are available through Professional & Organizational Development to facilitate your use of this valuable tool. (You can also find the PIE forms electronically on the IEC website: http://inside.mtsac.edu/organization/committees/iec.)

What happens to our completed PIE reports?

Your PIE documents are reviewed and summarized at the team level. Members of the IEC then work with these team-level summaries to create an overall summary of the year’s planning efforts for PAC. In reviewing these summaries, trends that emerge from various units, departments and teams may be translated by PAC into new or revised college goals for the next cycle. In addition, the yearly PIE documents are archived in TracDat. The IEC has established a website that contains documents related to current and past planning efforts, including examples of strong PIE reports from previous years. You may find these samples to be useful in the preparation of this year’s forms.