EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In spring 2010, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) asked Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) employees to complete an online survey. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate their perspectives on the college’s program review model that is used for planning purposes – Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (PIE).

Of the college’s 1,800 full and part-time employees, 299 employees completed the anonymous survey. Overall, the results indicated the following:

- 43.1% understood the college’s program review and planning model known as Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (PIE)
- 40.2% were aware of how PIE affects their departments
- 35.5% were involved in the PIE process
- 44.1% were invited by their department/unit to be part of the PIE process
- 40.1% said that their unit/department encouraged them to take an active role in PIE
- 33.8% of employees received a copy of their final group’s PIE report
- Of those who wanted to be involved in PIE, 74.5% were able to do so
- Of those who wanted to be involved in PIE, 60% said that the PIE process was done in a collaborative environment
- Of those who wanted to be involved in PIE, 54.4% thought that their unit/department met often enough to discuss PIE
- Of those who wanted to be involved in PIE, 50.9% were satisfied with the overall experience with the PIE process
✓ Some narrative statements from the employees included:

- Overall, classified were less aware of PIE and felt less involved than the other groups
- The PIE process requires time and effort for collaboration and reflection
- The ePIE (electronic version of PIE) is cumbersome
- It is unclear how PIE is used in planning or used in a meaningful way
- There is a need to show employees examples of how PIE has been done in other units/departments, what they did with that information, and why it is of value to the unit/department as well as the college
- There is a need to educate employees on PIE and ePIE and why it is important to the college
- The alignment of the unit/department reports and the VP summaries needs work

It is clear from the findings that there is room for improvement in both the processes and structure of the college’s program review system known as PIE. The information provided by employees concerning their understanding of and satisfaction with the PIE process provides IEC with a wealth of information about their perspectives as well as suggestions for further improvement. It is hoped that a similar survey will be conducted at the conclusion of the next cycle or two of PIE to gage any change in the employees’ perspectives based on implemented improvements.
INTRODUCTION
In spring 2010, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) asked Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) employees to complete an online survey. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate their perspectives on the college’s program review model that is used for planning purposes – Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (PIE).

Of the college’s 1,800 full and part-time employees, 299 employees completed the anonymous survey. The detailed findings are outlined in the remainder of this paper.

FINDINGS
The following is a detailed summary of the findings, separated by employee group. Please note that percentages are used in the narrative, while simple counts are used in the charts. As some groups are small, a use of percentages along with counts is more appropriate.

DEMOGRAPHICS
Employees were asked a number of demographic questions. Their responses indicated the following:

- 46.2% were classified; 42.1% were faculty, 7.7% were managers, with the rest being unidentified
- 71.6% work at the college full-time
- 31.8% have worked at the college less than 6 years; 27.1% from 6-10 years; 26.1% for 11-20 years; and 14.7% more than 20 years

UNDERSTANDING PIE
When asked if employees understood the PIE process at Mt. SAC some 29.6% said no and 43.1% said yes while 14.1% were neutral and 12.1% didn’t know; however, when looking at the responses by employee groups, there are some differences:

- Classified Employees: 31.4% said no, while a few more, 35.8%, said yes, some 16.8% were neutral, and 14.6% didn’t know
Faculty Members: 32.0% said no, while a few more, 44.8%, said yes, some 10.4% were neutral, and 12.0% didn’t know

Managers: 8.7% said no, while 78.3% said yes and some 13.0% were neutral

When asked if others in their unit or department understand the PIE process, 20.3% said no and 20.5% said yes while 12.8% were neutral and 25.3% didn’t know.

**IMPACT ON DEPARTMENT**

Employees responded to the statement about them being aware of how the PIE process affects their department as follows: 29.9% said no (disagreement) and 40.2% said yes (agreement) while 12.0% were neutral and 16.2% didn’t know. As the chart below indicates, classified employees may need more information in this area.

![Chart showing awareness of PIE process](chart.png)

When asked how their department or unit decided what was most important to be included in PIE, they said the following:

**Classified**

- The item with the biggest impact was included in PIE
- There has to be a direct relation to the department’s services
- Some employees didn’t know how the decision was made
• Other employees made the decision unilaterally
• Some groups used past experiences to guide the decisions
• Some groups used collaboration as the process and examined the goals and needs of department to drive the final decision

Faculty
• The unit/department used a collaborative discussion approach for the most part
• Consensus was used to make the final decision
• A few employees didn’t know how decisions were made
• It was clear to faculty that the focus was on students’ needs

Management
• Pulling the information together was the managers’ job with some prioritizing done with the departments.
• The managers followed the format needed for the VP’s summary.
• Some brainstorming was used and prioritization

IN VolvemeNT IN PIE

Did they want to be involved in the PIE process? 35.5% said yes, 26.8% said no, 21.1% were undecided and the rest were unknown or don’t know responses. The large number of undecided responses (see next chart) indicate that there is room for further education on this PIE process for employees to decide if they would like to be involved or not.
If employees wanted to be involved in the PIE process, the following pattern of responses indicated if they were actually able to do so or not (based on the 106 from the previous question who said that they DID wish to be involved): 74.5% said yes, 14.2% said no, 6.6% gave no response to this question, with 3.8% answering undecided, and 0.9% saying that their response was not applicable.

When asked why they were not able to participate in the PIE process, respondents indicated the following:

**Classified**
- They were never asked
- They didn’t know what PIE was or when it was discussed
- PIE was done by one member of the department and shown to the employees after it was finished (i.e., not collaborative)
- The employees were not willing to put the time into it or they were part of Auxiliary Services that doesn’t have to do PIE
- The employees’ schedule wouldn’t allow for it

**Faculty**
- Adjunct faculty were not sure how they could be involved or if they could be
- Some employees feel the process is too complicated and gets more complicated each year. The amount of time to invest in it also was seen as too much.
- Some faculty were not aware of how they could be involved in PIE

**Management**
- A few managers indicated that they didn’t know what PIE was because they were new to Mt. SAC.
Overall, some suggestions for improvement from employees included the following:

- Offer PIE training for all new employees
- Offer PIE refresher trainings
- Offer real stories about those who have done PIE and the lessons learned
- Determine how all employees may be given the opportunity to participate in PIE

When asked how they were involved in the PIE process, the respondents indicated the following:

**Classified**
- Attended meetings and was part of the brainstorming process
- Contributed ideas and department achievements
- Reviewed sections
- Collected data
- Attended department/unit meetings where it was discussed
- Looked at the needs and future development requirements
- Provided input on goal setting and objectives
- Filled out the worksheet and entering it into ePIE

**Faculty**
- Created student learning outcomes (SLOs)
- Provided overall input to PIE – some describe it as a cumbersome process
- Worked as part of the team to help and some describe the process ad in-depth

**Management**
- Facilitated and lead the process
- Oversaw, coordinated, and collaborated with the team
- Wrote the division summary (and found the process to be cumbersome)
- Assisted in the creation of SLGs, SLOs, AUOs, and SAs
When asked if they were invited to be part of the PIE process, 44.1% said yes, 36.5% said no, 14.4% didn’t know, with the rest of the responses being no response of undecided. The high number of “no” responses is worthy of further discussion. A possible strategic objective for 2010 to 2011 might read as follows: During the next evaluation of the PIE process, there will be a 10% point increase in those employees who indicate that they were invited (i.e., asked) to be part of the PIE process (baseline year 2009 to 2010 of 44.1%).

Employees who wanted to be involved in the PIE process (n=106) were asked if during PIE most people from their unit/department who wanted to participate in the process were given the opportunity to do so; 63.2% said yes (agreement), 18.9% said no (disagreement), 4.7% answering undecided, and 13.2% saying that their response was not applicable.
When ALL survey respondents were asked if their unit/department encouraged them to take an active role in PIE, 40.1% said yes (agreement), 32.5% said no (disagreement), 7.9% undecided, and 19.5% indicating the question was not applicable to them. The high number of “no” and “not applicable” responses are worthy of further discussion.

When asked what surprised them about being involved in the PIE process:

**Classified**
- Some thought PIE was hard or confusing while others thought it easy
- Some understood the big picture impact of PIE and how team work and collaboration were important

**Faculty**
- Some found the process difficult while others didn’t
- Some didn’t understand why the same request, year-after-year, remains unfilled
- Faculty thought that ePIE was hard to understand and cumbersome
- A few saw the usefulness of SLOs for students and teaching and learning while others did not
Management
- They felt that ePIE reports were better, but still a bit tricky and rigid to input the data into ePIE correctly. ePIE takes a lot of time and effort for the collaboration needed.
- The ePIE reports are not reflective of what is happening in the classroom
- Some are using PIE for true planning on a periodic basis and as a place for archives

Overall, some suggestions for improvement from employees included the following:
- Provide examples of good and excellent PIE and demonstrate its strengths and weaknesses

When asked what they learned as a result of their participation in the PIE process, they said:

Classified
- PIE takes a lot of collaboration and efforts
- Planning to plan is most important
- PIE helps you get the big picture of the department and its needs

Faculty
- The PIE process is time consuming, lacks time for reflections, and is hard to keep the momentum
- PIE involves collaboration and communication and budget is tied to PIE (though weakly)

Management
- Plan to plan
- Double duty PIE -- if you are already doing something major then put it into PIE
- PIE is complex and has a weak link to budget
- PIE is not connected to the classroom, especially the budget required in the classroom.

When asked how employees’ involvement in the PIE process could be improved, they noted the following:

Classified
- They should be asked to participate in periodic meetings and be given time and opportunity to do so (especially those with no computers)
- They said that the relevance of PIE should be communicated to classified
- They said that there should be motivation to participate in PIE
- They said that PIE should be done as an ongoing process for classified to see value in it
Faculty
- Provide faculty with a better understanding of PIE
- Use meetings with the team for PIE
- Demonstrate the benefits of PIE
- Make the PIE process less difficult
- Provide time to do PIE and reflect on it
- Indicate how PIE is related to budget

Management
- Provide clarification on when assessment is happening
- Use department meetings for discussion of PIE
- Pay adjunct faculty for their PIE time

Overall, some suggestions for improvement from employees included the following:
- Education for employees on PIE and ePIE
- Provide simple and pragmatic examples

**PIE MEETINGS**

Employees who wanted to be involved in the PIE process (n=106) were asked if the PIE process was done in a collaborative environment in their unit or department: 60.0% said yes (agreement), 26.7% said no (disagreement), 7.6% answering undecided, and 5.7% saying that their response was not applicable.
Employees who wanted to be involved in the PIE process (n=106) were asked if their unit or department met often enough to discuss the PIE process: 54.4% said yes (agreement), 29.1% said no (disagreement), 9.7% answering undecided, and 6.8% saying that their response was not applicable.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Employees who wanted to be involved in the PIE process (n=106) were asked how satisfied they were with the overall experience with the PIE process: 50.9% said they were satisfied, 25.5% said they were dissatisfied, 13.2% answering undecided, 4.7% didn’t know, and 5.7% saying that their response was not applicable.
PIE REPORT

When ALL survey respondents were asked if they received a copy of their group’s final PIE report, 33.8% said yes, 36.9% said no, 11.5% didn’t know, and 17.8% were unsure. The high number and varied responses of “no” and “not applicable” are worthy of further discussion. A possible strategic objective for 2010 to 2011 might read as follows: *During the next evaluation of the PIE process, there will be a 10% point increase in those employees who indicate receiving a copy of the PIE report (baseline year 2009 to 2010 of 36.9%).*

OTHER THOUGHTS ON PIE

When asked what else they would like to tell the college about their experience with the PIE process, comments were similar to that expressed already by employees. Not all were involved, some of those involved found the process to be cumbersome, some didn’t see the value in the work while others did, some would like PIE training as well as ePIE training, and some don’t understand the link between PIE and budget. Below are a few quotes that capture this.
Classified
• “The report was provided, but there were some areas where my input could have benefited the unit. I was disappointed for not taking part in this because we are very united in our department. I would have love to participate, so I think if a suggestion is given that managers and supervisors need to include others in the office that would help. Not having a title should not jeopardize the opportunity for someone not to provide input that in the end would benefit the entire unit.”

Faculty
• “I strongly believe that the campus needs to take a more global view of its priorities and make choices about what it wants to accomplish. I am in a situation where I deal with many faculty across campus, and I have observed a growing stress and work level from people who in general enjoy being actively involved and have a positive outlook on their work. I believe the campus needs a global timeline for our priorities and a discussion from a more broad-based view about what can realistically be accomplished well.”

Management
• “I think the main problem with PIE is the apparent lack of follow-through once the material is submitted. Yes, a division wide report is generated and then a college summary and, yes, we are frequently told that PIE will be used in allocation and planning decisions, but I have yet to hear of one specific allocation or planning decision that was made on the basis of PIE. This greatly contributes to the widespread belief that PIE is a bureaucratic waste of time. (Such decisions may very well have been made, but few of us hear about them if they have.) There needs to be well-publicized follow-up from the cabinet-level showing how PIE influenced significant decisions, including difficult funding choices. I think this would greatly increase the staff's faith in the PIE process and convince them of its integral role in institutional decisions and plans. I also wonder if, during a time of budget crisis with very little funding available for "planning" and staffing being cut to the bone, it doesn't make sense to streamline the PIE process to reflect these realities, until such time as more robust planning scenarios become plausible again.”

PROCESS AND STRUCTURAL SUGGESTIONS
The comments throughout the survey contained many constructive suggestions for PIE. Below is an outline of those suggested changes for the Institutional Effectiveness Committee to review and consider.
**Process**

- Change the timeline so that it is more reflective of the work that is done in an academic year. Allow time for reflection before, during, and after PIE is due.
- Have time to read PIE, digested it, and provide input on it available
- Provide periodic refresher training on PIE and ePIE and provide training for new employees and new chairs
- Make it more collaborative – too many times people said it was done by one or a few people – invitations were desirable and keeping employees in the loop as to its progress
- Provide more good examples of PIEs
- Provide departments/units with suggestions for what is good practice – such as multiple meetings, etc. Include examples of how groups are using PIE for planning purposes (and how PIE is for planning)
- Improve communications – both at the beginning and throughout. Also, provide a copy of it to all department/division employees
- Do PIE over many months and not just before it is due
- Include part-time employees in the PIE process
- Provide more communications about what is PIE, how it is used, why employees should value it, and its link to ePIE.
- Provide a better process for updating who has access to ePIE and who edits ePIE
- Continue to advocate for ePIE experts as the ones who enter information into ePIE while allowing the group brainstorming and achievements to be driven by the PIE worksheet
- Demonstrate that learning is occurring as part of the PIE (i.e., make it meaningful)
- Provide direction and motivation on how to keep the PIE momentum going
- Provide clear campus expectations about PIE and its relation to budget allocation
- Provide examples of how PIE is connected to unit/department and college planning
- Re-examine how cumbersome it is to keep completed SLOs/AUOs/SAs in the ePIE system when trying to work on new assessment

**Structure**

- PIE does not meet all needs (faculty, classified versus instruction and student services) and it is too complex
- Need a stronger link to budget
- Provide more training/suggestions for making ePIE better. Provide more information on final reports and why linkages to goals are important. Need to work with users to determine what reports would be most useful
- Need better alignment of department/unit report to VP Summary for those units that report directly to the VP
- The PIE worksheet should be edited to reduce duplication and allow for carryover of data from year-to-year
- ePIE tabs and navigation need to be improved by providing training
CONCLUSION

It is clear from the findings that there is room for improvement in both the processes and structure of the college’s program review system known as PIE. Less than 50% of those who completed the survey understood the PIE process, were aware of how PIE affects their departments, were involved in PIE, were invited to be part of PIE, had their unit/department encourage them to take an active role in PIE, or received a copy of PIE. When the questions were re-focused to only those employees who wanted to be involved in PIE, the percentage of favorable responses were over 50%. Of those who wanted to be involved in PIE and who were able to participate in PIE, they said that: (1) the PIE process was done in a collaborative way, (2) they thought their unit/department met often enough to discuss the PIE, and (3) they were satisfied with the overall experience with the PIE process.

The numerous qualitative responses from participants indicated many suggested areas for change in the process and structural aspects of PIE including to re-align the timeline to the functioning of the college, provide more opportunities to be invited to the table for PIE discussions, provide more time to digest PIE, provide more PIE trainings, provide more examples of good PIEs and PIE processes from units/departments, encourage a more collaborative process, improve communications regarding PIE both college-wide and within the units/departments, encourage groups to conduct PIE throughout the year as part of their planning processes, build PIE experts within teams, demonstrate how and why PIE is meaningful, provide suggestions on how to keep PIE alive, align the PIE worksheets between unit/department and VP Summary, and edit the worksheet and electronic PIE to reduce duplication of effort.

In conclusion, the information provided by employees concerning their understanding of and satisfaction with the PIE process provides IEC with a wealth of information about their perspectives as well as suggestions for further improvement. It is hoped that a similar survey will be conducted at the conclusion of the next cycle or two to gage any change in the employees’ perspectives based on implemented improvements.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to those employees who took their precious time to participate in this survey – your perspectives are of value and will be used to make improvements.