

Letters and Science Department

Annual Planning for Academic Year 2015-2016

Planning Year 2014

Description Of Section

Mission/Connection to College Mission

The Liberal Arts and Sciences section is the primary instructional body providing transfer education, basic skills, and honors instruction, it supports career technical education programs that require general education proficiencies, and it delivers learning support services through the library and learning assistance centers. In support of the College mission, the Liberal Arts and Sciences section is committed to both traditional and distance delivery.

Instructional departments:

English and Foreign Languages
Health Science and Physical Education
Library/Information Competency
Mathematics
Science and Engineering
Social Science
Visual and Performing Arts

Other units:

Basic Skills
Honors
Learning Centers
Library

Programs, primary responsibility:

Engineering
General Education Pattern: Local Cerro Coso
General Education Pattern: CSU-Cert
General Education Pattern: IGETC
General Sciences
Kinesiology for Transfer
Liberal Arts: Arts & Humanities
Liberal Arts: Mathematics & Sciences
Liberal Arts: Social & Behavioral Science
Mathematics for Transfer
Psychology for Transfer
Studio Arts for Transfer

Programs, secondary or supplemental responsibility:

Administration of Justice (math, psych and soc)
Business Administration (econ and math)
Human Services (English, psychology, speech)
Computer Information Systems (math)
Computer Science (math and physics)
Vocational Nursing (biology, information competency, psychology)
Welding Technology (math)

Review And Planning

Summary of Areas of Improvement

Equity

The disaggregated retention and success data for the Liberal Arts and Sciences section as a whole show a couple of trends. The first is that African American students and American Indian students (with the exception of PE) do not perform as well as other ethnic groups. This is a trend across the college, and, while some departments are higher than the overall college average and some are lower, the same trend is equally as clear in the Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The second major pattern is that departments that are rich in online offerings--particularly English, math, and the social sciences--see lower success rates, compared to the college average, for Males, students aged 30-39, and students aged 40 and above.

Program Review

The following program reviews were completed in 2013-14:

- Liberal Arts, Arts and Humanities
- Liberal Arts, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Liberal Arts: Arts and Humanities. Several gaps were identified, mostly in alignment and assessment. It was determined that CIC needs to adopt a formal mechanism for approving or disapproving courses newly proposed as additions to the Liberal Arts degrees, the discipline areas need to begin a second round of mapping to sharpen the relation between PLO's and courses required, the discipline areas need to develop an action plan to improve the success and retention rates in DE sections compared to traditional offerings, and the discipline areas need to attain at least an 85% assessment level in SLO's, working toward 95% as an ongoing standard.

Liberal Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences. The same gaps in alignment and assessment were identified in the Social and Behavioral Sciences degree. CIC needs to adopt a formal mechanism for approving or disapproving courses newly proposed as additions to the Liberal Arts degrees, the discipline areas need to begin a second round of mapping to sharpen the relation between PLO's and courses required, the discipline areas need to develop an action plan to improve the success and retention rates in DE sections compared to traditional offerings, and the discipline areas need to attain at least an 85% assessment level in SLO's, working toward 95% as an ongoing standard.

SLO Assessments

The year 2013-14 was spent chipping away at SLO assessments. From last year's plan to this one, the LAS section saw a 3% rise in the percentage of courses with SLO's assessed, but that's not going to get it done. We know that ACCJC is roughly expecting colleges to have an 85% rate of SLO assessment to be considered "proficient" and a 95% rate to be considered at the SCQI level. The section's goal is to reach the 95% rate by the end of AY 2014-15.

The annual unit plan template calls for an accounting of SLO targets missed and improvements designed. Last year, the section identified 19 SLO's whose target was missed and for which improvements have been planned and reassessments scheduled.

As of November 13, 2013, these were the assessment rates of LAS departments and subjects:

Discipline/Department	Assessments in CurricUNET	Courses Actively Offered
ASL	1	2
English	12	13
ENSL	3	3
French	1	1
Latin	3	4
Spanish	4	4
Speech	1	1
English Sum	25	28
English %	89.3%	
Information Competency	1	1

Library Sum	1	1
Library %	100%	
Mathematics	15	16
Mathematics Sum	15	16
Mathematics %	93.8%	
Health Science	1	1
Physical Education	15	23
PE and Health Sum	16	24
PE and Health %	66.7%	
Biology	8	11
Chemistry	7	7
Engineering	3	3
Geography	0	1
Geology	0	1
Physical Science	3	7
Physics	3	3
Science and Engineering Sum	24	33
Science and Engineering %	72.7%	
Anthropology	3	3
Economics	3	3
History	6	10
Philosophy	2	5
Political Science	2	3
Psychology	6	6
Sociology	4	4
Social Science Sum	26	34
Social Science %	76.5%	
Art	9	12
Music	6	8
Theatre	1	2
Visual and Performing Arts Sum	16	22
Visual and Performing Arts %	72.7%	
TOTAL SUM	123	158
TOTAL %	77.8%	

Progress Made on Prior Year Initiatives

Outreach

Progress Made:

Initiate or continue meetings as appropriate with particular local-area high schools; initiate community outreach events for those departments and disciplines that would benefit by such activities.

Progress: Outreach in the Liberal Arts and Sciences area **saw a rise in the number of activities events in and an increase in participation in outreach events by liberal arts and sciences faculty.** Faculty in English collaborated on two new outreach events: 1) raising awareness about poetry through a variety of activities and events during poetry month and 2) opening the Metamorphoses to high school students within the service area. A faculty member in anthropology played a high profile roll in the Petroglyph festival in Ridgecrest. A faculty member in Spanish recruited a guest lecturer sponsored by her international club. Several full-time and adjunct LAS faculty at ESCC participated in new outreach and recruitment events at ESCC. And a number of Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty attended the community forums and the meeting with high school faculty at Tehachapi High School during Spring 2014.

Part of the difficulty of these events for the LAS section, while they increase community awareness of the college, is that they are not TARGETED to potential students in the sense of developing a pipeline of incoming freshman for specific programs. This has happened in large part because individual disciplines in the liberal arts and sciences have not had programs to promote. But that is changing with the development of the SB 1440 transfer degrees. By the end of 2014-15, it is anticipated that the LAS section will have 8 transfer degrees, with six more on the way in 2015-16. In tandem with this development will be an expectation that departments will identify populations of potential students and develop and direct more targeted marketing and outreach to them.

Improve Basic Skills instruction

Progress Made:

Depending on the success of the pilot at ESCC, implement modularized lab instruction at IWV and KRV in lieu of low level writing courses; phase out reading courses as reading instruction is embedded in writing classes.

Progress: The first of these was a resounding failure. **A new modularized lab, English C042, was run during the fall and spring semesters (though at IWV only) with success rates of 41.4% and 30.4%**--well below that of the regular English C040 classes at an average of approximately 50%). A faculty post-mortem indicated the classes suffered from software problems and student lack of motivation. But another contributing factor was the college not being large enough to accommodate the experiment. Because only three English 40 classes are run on the ground at IWV each semester, giving over one entire section to English C042 (and a morning one at that) reduced available seats and likely forced students into the section who did not want to be. The end result is a lesson the college seems to learn over and over again—that innovation not carefully thought out can be counterproductive.

The second strategy was much more successful. **In 2014-15, the number of reading sections was reduced to zero.** Far from this having an adverse effect on composition classes, success rates remained virtually identical in the two basic skills classes, up 2.7% in English C030 and down 1.8% in English C040.

However, the bottom line is that basic skills is not improving as rapidly as it could or should be. Math basic skills continues to be slightly below the state average (27.2% versus statewide 30.6%), while English continues to be significantly below (24.2% versus statewide 43.6%). Fixing basic skills is a priority for both SSSP and Achieving the Dream, and we know that the English and the math remedial sequences struggle with equity issues. For this reason, the section plan supports the Learning Assistance Center proposal to increase the faculty coordinator presence in the LAC to full-time in order to more effectively coordinate, plan, monitor, and assess tutoring and other learning support services.

Consolidate an SCQI culture of analyzing student achievement data in program reviews and SLO's, identifying gaps, and implementing improvements

Progress Made:

Continue to plan and engage in broad-based dialogue regarding student success and best practices; make program review results and SLO updates a continual part of the dialogue at all Academic Affairs committees

Progress: **Student success and best practices are being discussed and examined in more effective faculty professional development activities.** Faculty flex activities in 2013-14 and early in 2014-15—including the adjunct professional development day in November 2014—were built around the idea of more intimate faculty-to-faculty sessions for the purposes of talking shop, trading tips, and learning from each other.

Program Review and outcome assessment reports have become a part of more Academic Affairs activities, which includes liberal arts and sciences faculty. One development in 2013-14 was the administration of an employee survey regarding planning and program review. This survey was completed by 70 faculty members, both full-time and adjunct. The survey was combined with the annual assessment of SLO, program review, and college planning committees, and a summary of this comprehensive planning document was distributed to all employees college-wide in October 2014. In fall 2014, annual unit plans were presented by faculty

chairs at a college council meeting for the purpose of explaining their planning. An additional way the program review and SLO results have become more integrated is through the appearance of the SLO and program coordinators at the faculty chair committee meetings to gather input or provide updates.

Initiatives for Next Academic Year

Improve Basic Skills Instruction

Strategic Plan Goals Addressed:

1

Action Plan:

on-board the new position of LAC coordinator, consolidate supplemental instruction in the math and writing centers, establish a referral norm in English and social sciences for tutoring,

Measure of Success:

improved success rates in English and math basic skills courses onsite; improved success rates in 100-level social science classes onsite

Expected Completion:

May 2016

Person Responsible:

Vice President, Academic Affairs

Designed:

It is designed to increase student success

Student Experience:

Remediation

Begin Targeted Outreach for LAS Programs

Strategic Plan Goals Addressed:

2

Action Plan:

implement outreach/marketing plans for each LAS program that were developed in spring 2015

Measure of Success:

increased numbers of students identifying LAS programs as their majors

Expected Completion:

May 2016

Person Responsible:

Vice President, Academic Affairs

Designed:

It is designed to improve internal unit operations

Student Experience:

Intake

Resource Needs

Facilities

Facilities needs are identified in the library, learning assistance, math, and science plans. The 3M Security gates in the library at Ridgecrest are approaching end-of-life and will need to be replaced sometime in the near future. The learning assistance center requests improved lighting on the second floor, where current lights are non-existent or burnt out and in need of replacement. The math department would like to see whiteboards in the East Wing at IWV. And the science department has identified needs for laboratory benches at KRV as part of the site remodel taking place in 2015-16.

Information Technology

Aside from a couple of projects that require IT assistance (SARSTRAK for basic skills and the Learning Assistance Center), the only substantial IT-related request is from the Math Department but stands in for several department that would like the classrooms in the East Wing to all upgraded to smart rooms. The Learning Assistance Center requested a second computer lab at IWV, but this need is more properly for instruction in the CTE area. The library department put in a request for software and hardware to carry out video production (approx. \$75).

Marketing

The biggest marketing need for the Liberal Arts and Sciences remains the transfer degrees. It is very important to not only get the word out that the college is increasing its offering of these degrees (English, Business Administration, and Early Childhood Education new this year, with Anthropology pending) but also promote the benefits of the “Degree with a Guarantee.” In addition, the math department has asked for more targeted marketing for its online degree, which would be a good idea for ALL Liberal Arts and Sciences online degrees. In addition to this major campaign, the library has requested to be aggressively included in all site and college marketing strategies. More detailed information can be found there.

Professional Development

Specific professional development needs are located in the library, basic skills, and Learning Assistance Center unit plans. However, the two biggest overall needs for the Liberal Arts and Sciences section are 1) training in specific practices for addressing student equity, and 2) continued sharing of best teaching practices in faculty-to-faculty sharing sessions. The first of these is extremely important, and the Liberal Arts and Sciences section proposes that student equity, closing the achievement gap, and teaching practices that effectively address disproportionate impact be a professional development thread for faculty in 2015-16.

Staffing

The following certificated positions are proposed in the annual unit plans, Librarian, Math, Psychology, Philosophy, PE, Library adjunct coverage: 16 hours a week at KRV instead of 8 and 6 hours a week at IWV up from 0.

The following certificated position is proposed in this section plan: LAC Coordinator (see below).

Several classified positions are proposed in the annual unit plans, but the educational administrator supports only the following at this time: Library Tech I at IWV, change current position from 30 hrs/9 mos to 40 hrs/12 mos.

The Learning Assistance Center AUP makes a case for a full-time equivalent faculty coordinator of LAC’s college-wide. In part, the case is made on these merits:

- The LAC is similar in size, structure, and function to the Library, which has a full-time faculty member while the LAC does not.
- The LAC, like the library, is a distributed service requiring coordination across five campus locations and eventually needing to expand to the sixth (East Kern).
- The LAC, like the library, employs a mix of classified staff and adjunct faculty members—2 full-time classified positions at IWV (LAC Office Supervisor, Learning Center Technician), as well as 6 adjunct faculty members at Bishop, Mammoth, and KRV totaling 112 hours per week.
- The LAC, like the library, has a comprehensive budget including personnel, supplies, equipment, and travel—currently \$85,000 split among four campus codes.

- The LAC, like the library, provides a range of services that need coordinating—tutoring, supplemental instruction, proctoring (both in-house and for non-Cerro Coso students), open lab assistance, GED Exam instruction, and assessment preparation.
- The LAC, like the library, is considered its own unit for planning purposes—which requires an annual unit plan, a 5-year program review, and administrative unit outcomes assessments, not to mention responsibility for an accreditation standard, II.C.
- The LAC, like the library, employs student workers—although in far greater numbers than the library, 39 student workers as traditional tutors, supplemental instructors, and lab aides, all of whom require processing, training, tracking, and evaluation.
- The LAC, like the library, works in close collaboration with all academic departments—English and math primarily but many other disciplines that have tutoring or proctoring needs.
- The LAC, like the library, delivers a single class, Supervised Tutoring, which has student learning outcomes that must be defined, assessed, and analyzed—last year tutors did over 4,000 hours of tutoring at IWV and KRV, not inclusive of drop-ins, while ESCC in the spring alone reported 314 contacts broken down into 451 instances of academic assistance serving 96 students. In 2013-14, Supervised Tutoring served 432 students and generated 8.58 FTES. Proctoring has been just as busy, coordinating 2,361.30 hours of proctoring in calendar year 2013 (Spring, summer, and fall 2013) and providing 1918 exams. Thirty CC-Online courses currently require proctoring.
- The LAC, like the library, is an important learning support function that will play a central role going forward in the initiatives for Achieving the Dream, student success, and student equity—in fact, student success and student equity plans specifically identify tutoring as a place for a major intervention.

Up till now, these activities have been coordinated by a single faculty member on approximately 50% reassigned time. But that has not been adequate, as the LAC unit plan describes. Without the hours approximating those of a full-time dedicated position, there will continue to be coordination insufficiencies, training insufficiencies, planning insufficiencies, and monitoring/tracking insufficiencies.

The proposal as put forward in the Learning Assistance Center unit plan recommends two faculty members on .50 release time. Discussions, however, have ensued throughout the fall with several persons and groups, including the LAC faculty lead, LAC classified staff, the librarian, the Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty chairs, and the Achieving the Dream data and core teams. Based on those discussions, this section plan proposes a single 1.0 full-time position for the following reasons:

- Streamlined Reporting—with a single person as a focal point, not only is it clear for those that work with the person whom to report to but also clear up the organizational ladder who is responsible for getting work accomplished. One of the largest complaints in the LAC unit plan is that the current faculty lead is being undercut by the decisions of others, such as administrators, site directors, and faculty chairs. But it is hard to see how this situation would change with two faculty members each on .50 reassigned time. One of the two would have to be the spokesperson and therefore the lead faculty—and therefore would have (or deserve) a different level of reassigned time, and at that point would be serving as a de facto coordinator anyway, but paid at a lower rate and still only temporarily reassigned from a primary assignment
- Clear Communication—with a single person responsible, it would be very clear who speaks for the department in committees and on work groups, who makes decisions, who answers questions, who completes the planning documents, and who is responsible for work to be accomplished
- Effective Collaboration and Decision-making—with a single person communicating for the department, collaboration becomes not just more effective but effective period. There is a significantly reduced opportunity for confusion or mixed messages or misunderstandings or mix-ups. Lines of reporting and communication are clear; collaboration can be instant and certain, not having to check back with another person. The lack of effective collaboration is one of the biggest deficiencies of the current situation noted in the LAC unit plan.
- Single Vision—with a single person in charge, communicating, and collaborating, the college stands a much better chance of getting what we have in the library: a unified vision driven by a single person who can see all elements of the program at a single time, who has a sense of its history, an understanding of its trajectory, and a goal for its continued improvement. This makes it immensely easier to develop 'ownership' for a unified department with streamlined practices, processes, data sets, and documentation.

Resource Requests Not Already Listed In Unit Plans

2000 Category - Classified Staff

4000 Category - Supplies and Equipment

5000 Category - Service, Utilities, and Operating Expenses

6000 Category - Capital Outlay