

## PROGRAM REVIEW UPDATE 2015-2016

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**Program: Learning Skills**

**Division: Student Services**

**Date: 10-6-2015**

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**Audience:** Deans, Vice Presidents of Student Services and Academic Services, All Planning and Allocation Committees. This document will be available to the public.

**Purpose:** To document significant program accomplishments, plans and needs between Triennial Program Reviews. This update should provide a snapshot of your program.

**Time Frame:** This update should reflect on program status during the 2014-15 academic year. It should describe plans starting now and continuing through 2016-17.

**Topics:** The first section of this Program Review Update focuses on general program reflection and planning. The second and third sections focus on reflection and planning regarding Student Learning Outcomes.

**Scope:** While this Program Review Update does ask for some analysis of data, detailed data reports in the form of appendices should be reserved for the Triennial Program Review.

**Instructions:**

- 1) Please fill in the following information as completely as possible.
  - 2) If the requested information does not apply to your program, please write "No Changes Since the Program Planning Update."
  - 3) Send an electronic copy of this form to the Program Review Committee Chair and your Dean by \_\_\_\_\_.
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### Part One: Program Snapshot

**A. Have there been any significant changes to your program, your program's data or your program's needs since the previous Program Planning Update?**

**If there are any changes, describe the relevant information and its significance in the space below.**

These changes might have originated from within the program or because of an external source (the institution or the state, for example). Possible sources of relevant information might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Data generated by your program
- Data from the Office of Institutional Research
- CEMC Data
- Retirements
- State Mandates
- Labor Market Data

There have been significant changes to the learning skills program. Since the curriculum offered in the program has changed, data from the Office of Institutional Research reflects that there has been a decrease in enrollment. F'13 to F'14 = 256 to 133 (WSHC) and resulting decrease in productivity.

However, my FTEF has changed to 0.7. This is all because I no longer offer LD assessment through a class which is garnering FTES. In addition, since this is a small program, small changes in the college environment have a big effect. Jim Gioia was on sabbatical for that year and Brian was on leave for a month at the beginning of school. Fewer students were referred to my classes. Many mainstream counselors don't understand when to refer students. I have a PR problem. The

Learning Skills program has been in a state of continuous movement since I was hired: away from a babysitting service for students who really couldn't advance through a degree, to a program that is a legitimate part of the matriculation process for students with learning difficulties. This push-pull between populations continues to cause ambiguity as to who should or shouldn't enroll (although legally I cannot exclude anyone). Special classes have the ability to be held to lower enrollments because it benefits students with learning issues. Similar courses at Chabot have a capacity of 15. Unfortunately, for reasons that I felt would benefit my enrollment in the long run, I raised my class capacities to 20. Now, I am being held accountable for that and the situation has changed.

The last area of change that I want to discuss is the effect that this curriculum change has had on my load. I am the only (or one of only a few) full time instructional faculty members in the student services division. I was hired on a faculty FSA following the model established by Chabot College. However, now that I can no longer provide assessment through a "class" I have to provide this service using counseling hours. (I also have that FSA). This seems to cause a problem with administration in managing my load and evaluating the effectiveness of my program.

**B. What objectives, initiatives, or plans from the 2014 Program Planning Update (PPU) have been achieved and how?**

I planned to do more LD assessment and am I doing that. Providing that service outside the time constraints of a class make the process more thorough and meaningful for the student (and myself if I am also their instructor). I wanted to learn more about the role of the affective domain on student learning and I am accomplishing a lot in that regard. I have attended training on Growth Mindset through the 3CSN and am incorporating strategies into my classes. I am also on sabbatical this semester and have the opportunity to research and utilize information on how Executive Dysfunction in students affects the learning. Lastly, I also wanted to work more with the Veterans program, but that did not happen.

**C. What obstacles has your program faced in achieving objectives, initiatives, or plans?**

A side-effect of doing more LD assessment is having to offer fewer courses. I would like to be able to hire an adjunct learning skills instructor, but have had difficulty making this happen. Another obstacle remains a reiteration of concerns from last year. I am quoting from last year's review: "...there needs to be renewed and continuous discussion regarding the ongoing mission of the learning skills program: the types of courses offered and how LD assessment will be conducted. At this point in time, my load, my role and my focus is very blurry due to increased and varied student demands with few resources." The Learning Skills program is often overlooked by counseling and student services administration as a viable or valuable support for basic skills students. We can serve more than just students with learning disabilities, but remain ignored and underutilized.

**D. What are your most important plans (either new or continuing) for next year?**

I guess this is where I put my desire to develop a new course for students with memory and executive function issues (for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time). Now, however, it is part of my sabbatical project, so it should happen. I would like to expand campus awareness of the fact that the Learning Skills program can do exactly what it says: teach students how to learn and be successful. At convocation, Vincent Tinto discussed the need for some students to have support classes to take along with their basic skills classes. I will be making a renewed effort to try and make this happen.

**E. Do plans listed under question (D) connect to this year's planning priorities (listed below)? If so, explain how they connect.**

- *Establish regular and ongoing processes to implement best practices to meet ACCJC standards*
- *Provide necessary institutional support for curriculum development and maintenance*
- *Develop processes to facilitate ongoing meaningful assessment of SLOs and integrate assessment of SLOs into college processes*
- *Expand tutoring services to meet demand and support student success in Basic Skills, CTE and Transfer courses.*

These plans should reflect support for #4. It is not tutoring, but it involves supplemental instruction and student success development, and these are basic skills classes.

**F. Instructional programs: Did your program meet its program-set standard for successful course completion? \_\_\_yes \_\_x\_no**

**(This data can be found here: <http://goo.gl/y9ZBmt>)**

**If your program did not meet your program-set standard, discuss possible reasons and how this may affect program planning or resource requests.**

First, I want to say that my program set standard is high, currently at 77%. So meeting only 71% is not that bad. I believe the reason that I did not meet this standard last year has to do with the problems this program is facing that I stated above. 1) Enrollments are down. 2) I am serving students with less ability to benefit. 3) The curriculum has been made more rigorous which when combined with #2, causes a drop in success.

**G. How have students been impacted by the work of your program since the last Program Planning Update (PPU)?**

The fact that there hasn't been any increase in staff is what is impacting student learning. DSPS students are definitely not receiving the same level or quality of instruction that they receive at other colleges, that have instructional assistants and adjunct faculty. On the other hand, I made a conscious choice to do more LD Assessment and with the help of an hourly assistant, I have been able to identify more students who qualify for services than in the last year. I consider this to be a very important step forward in service.

## Part Two: SLO/SAO Assessment Review

Review your program's SLO assessment results for AY 2014-2015 and respond to the following questions.

- A. Discuss how assessment results in at least one course in the program indicate success in student learning (OR) Discuss how assessment results of at least one SAO in the program indicate success in service to students.**

Last Fall, 2014, 80% of the students in LRNS 117 (Reading) passed an assignment of difficulty using word parts to examine word meaning. Although this is one assignment, it is one of the more difficult ones, requiring both content knowledge and critical thinking.

- B. Discuss assessment results that indicate a need for improvement.**

Assessment results in LRNS 118 (Writing support) were dismal in the area of grammar as was evidenced by an assignment where students have to identify parts of speech in a sentence. Over 76% of the students demonstrated they turned in the assignment, but failed to follow instructions. In this particular case, they consistently did not identify all parts of speech. Grammar continues to be an elusive content area for my students. In this class, it is taught both separately and in context to their work. They are also required to do online self-paced activities. I believe the lack of success is both due to the fact it is extremely difficult to cram years of elementary school work into one semester, especially when they didn't grasp it if and when first presented, and also because it requires effort and studying, which they are not willing to do, at least at this point. Recent studying that I am doing on the role of learning and the affective domain is telling me, however, that I need to provide more relevance to the material (other than their English teachers will be counting it); I need to scaffold the ideas more; and I need to work with the students on Growth Mindset, which should tell them that they need to put in more effort and they CAN succeed.

- C. Instructional Programs: For the course(s) listed in (B) above, discuss how your program, or someone in your program, made changes or plans to make changes in pedagogy as a result of SLO assessment results.**

**Non-Instructional Programs: For the areas(s) listed in (B) above, discuss how your program made changes or plans to make changes as a result of SAO assessment results.**

This has absolutely happened for me. As a result of seeing student's ongoing difficulty in learning grammar I realize more than anything my pedagogy has to change. Recent studying that I am doing on the role of learning and the affective domain is telling me that I need to provide more relevance to the material (other than the fact their English teachers will be counting it); I need to scaffold the ideas more; and I need to work with the students on Growth Mindset, which should tell them that

they need to put in more effort and they CAN succeed. My population needs to go over content slower than I have been instructing. This may mean leaving out some of the less relevant grammar material because I am very thorough, in order for them to better learn the most important content. The mainstream English department is presenting content in an accelerated mode, which is probably helpful the most students, but not mine. I feel it is also appropriate in this venue to offer once again the idea that we should be considering instituting a non-credit program for lower basic skills students. The state's mandates regarding success are generally OK, but do present issues with access and equity for our growing populations of students that have previously been denied an appropriate education (whether due to lacking in their k-12 institutions, or their own personal or family issues)

**D. Instructional Programs Only: Give an example of a change in the number of units and/or lab hours based on assessment data, if applicable.**

None last year, but it will be in my planning for next year.

**E. Instructional Programs: Discuss how distance education course assessment results compare to face-to-face courses, if applicable. (*Respond to this question if your program has distance education courses.*)**

**Non-Instructional Programs: Discuss how SAO assessment results for online services compare to face-to-face services, if applicable. (*Respond to this question if your program provides services online.*)**

n/a

**F. Did your program discover the need for additional resources (for AY 15-16 or 2016-17) based on the assessment results? YES  NO**

**If yes, please explain.**

Without at least a 25-30 hour per week instructional assistant to assist with LD assessment and instruction, the learning skills program will continue to lose its effectiveness since I can only do so many things at a time and this work is time and energy consuming. In addition, in order to continue the level of LD assessment that we need, I cannot teach all of the courses, or grow the variety of courses, as is really needed, without at least an adjunct learning skills instructor.



### Part Three: SLO/SAO Continuous Improvement Process

#### A. SLO Planning through AY 2016-17

As appropriate for your program, please address each of the following areas. For each area, describe your program's plans starting now and continuing through the academic year 2016-17. Focus on how the program's SLO process will impact student learning or the student experience at Las Positas College.

1. SLO/SAO assessments: How does your program plan to use assessment results for the continuous improvement of student learning or services? (*NOTE: 100% of courses in your disciplines should be assessed a minimum of once every two years. Each program must assess at least 25% of its courses every semester. Programs with SAOs should assess at least 50% of their SAOs every year).*)

Examples might include (Your responses may vary.):

- changing number of units/lab hours
- changing pedagogy/curriculum
- changing assessments
- changing service hours
- changing modes of service delivery

I have discovered that 1 unit is not enough to effectively cover all the material that I now present in LRNS 116 (which is now a lecture only class on How the Brain Learns and strategies to affect better learning and retention of material). The course needs to be 2 units. Almost every class needs to have more embedded counseling in the form of building growth mindset and improving executive function. I am now beginning to see this as even more important than the content itself. I need to do more scaffolding of material. The courses need to become even more multi-modal in instructional delivery.

2. Have your assessment results shown a need for new/revised SLO/SAOs? YES  NO

If yes, complete the table below:

<b>Estimated number of courses for which SLOs will be written or revised: 6</b>	<b>I need to add and/or revise the SLOs in every course. I have focused too much on smaller learning outcomes. I want to work to combine several smaller objectives into a larger learning outcome and have more than one.</b>
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<b>Estimated number of SAOs that will be written or revised:</b>	
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a. What courses or SAOs will your program assess during this academic year (2015-16)?

All of them. I feel this is very important for continuous improvement.

b. Instructional programs only: In order to budget to pay part-time faculty to work on SLOs during the academic year 2015-16, estimate the number of part-time faculty in your program who are likely to participate in the SLO process in 2015-16.

<b>Number of Part-Time faculty who will participate in the SLO process (creating, assessing or discussing SLOs)</b>	
<b>Fall 2015</b>	n/a
<b>Spring 2016</b>	n/a