**Question Set: Learning Resources Division**

**Comprehensive Program Review 2014**

**General**

* *Reflecting back on your equity success rates, what specific initiatives have had the most positive impact on your success rates? How is your department sharing these effective practices among full-time and part-time faculty members?*

The areas of the Learning Resources Division--Student Success Center (SSC), Distance Learning Center (DL), and the Library-- all contribute practices that increase success rates. For example, Library and SSC workshops and tutoring sessions help student build connections with each other and with the campus, which is effective in building relationships and creating inclusive learning spaces.  In DL, the training and development sessions offered to faculty include effective online pedagogical recommendations that, when employed, increase success rates among online learners.

More broadly, the LR Division Equity Core team has ramped up the past two terms with regular meetings, professional development with Office of Equity, Social Justice, and Multicultural Education, area dialogues, and concentrated work on our equity plan update. For Fall 2014, a significant portion of the schedule for LR Division meeting will be dedicated to fostering inclusive and equitable environments for students, staff and faculty. Division meetings each term have called attention to success practices that empower and engage students as they complete coursework at De Anza.

* *What do your SLO/PLO and Equity assessment results reveal about resources needed to achieve higher student success and retention rates?*

In terms resources needed to directly and positively help us continue to meet our program and service area outcomes, staffing limitations have been repeatedly voiced as having a negative impact on the support we provide to students and faculty.

* *As you look at the enrollment numbers on your departmental program review data sheets, please tell us what you have done to increase enrollment or, if your department has decreased, please tell us what your plan is for increasing enrollment this coming year?*

Library and student success courses are non-WSCH generating activities and focus on information literacy, research skills, skills for college success and supplemental instruction/support for specific courses. For online learning, the department/instructional division that offers the course determines the schedule and assigns faculty.

The Learning Resources Division does support enrollment, retention and success across all instructional divisions by:

* + Reviewing and addressing success gap data and enrollment data during professional development opportunities within each academic support area and as a division
  + Increasing visibility and use of our academic support resources through dynamic outreach
  + Implementing services that reduce barriers and encourage success like Smarthinking (online tutoring)
  + Providing instructional support for students in online courses
  + Exploring resources and frameworks for quality instructional design in online courses
  + Collaborating with other instructional and student service offices and programs
* *What is your budget planning process? How do you prioritize resource allocation within the division?*

The Learning Resource Division Council meets every other week and the Dean meets with each area lead twice a month or more. We regularly discuss budget allocations, ongoing expenses, potential expenses as well as alternative funding resources. We prioritize items that are sustained efforts that serve students well. In all budget planning, we aim to maximize the funds allocated for Learning Resources.

**Distance Learning**

* *It’s impressive how your success rates have been increasing annually. If possible, can you let us know how your success rates compare with on-line/distance learning courses on a national basis? (including targeted populations)*

National level data regarding online learning and completion is at a very early stage: in fact, in June 2014, the National Center for Education Statistics released a comprehensive state-by-state report of distance education enrollment for Fall 2012. With the shift from enrollment to completion at the federal and state level, the most useful data for comparison comes from 2013 Distance Education Report prepared and published by California Community College Chancellor’s office.

Success rates for De Anza Distance Learning courses have been higher than the state average. As referenced in the Comprehensive Program Review, De Anza increased from 63% to 66% in the past five years, while the state average increased from 53-60%. Data for targeted student online success was not available from this report, only completion rate by each group.

  


Resources:

[California Community Colleges Distance Education Report 2013](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/reportsTB/REPORT_DistanceEducation2013_090313.pdf)

[Nation Center for Education Statistics: Enrollment in Distance Learning Web Tables](http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2014023)

* *There seems to be an increase in the number of hybrid courses offered. Is this true? Will this trend continue? What the success rates of hybrid DL courses compared to non-hybrid DL courses?*

Hybrid course offerings are generated by each instructional department and divisions during the regular planning and scheduling process. While DLC provides support to the whole campus in terms of Catalyst Course Management System, including faculty training and consultation, student technical support and Catalyst operations, the DLC has been charged with supporting fully online courses. As such, we do not have comprehensive data for hybrid courses.

* *In the future, is there any thought in partnering with Foothill in the delivery of on-line courses? Would there be a cost savings if we both used the same platform? Would it save money on equipment, servers, etc.? Do we know how we compare to FH with regards to student success in DL courses?*

So far there have not been plans for offering online courses in collaboration with Foothill. With the expectation of a comprehensive statewide approach to online education via the Online Education Initiative, we will likely see dramatic changes in the California online learning landscape in the next few years.  
  
We put together rough estimates when this question emerged during the 2012 Program Review. There might be potential cost savings in hardware if both colleges use the same CMS; however, the complexity of sharing a CMS is a considerable challenge. A few significant factors are presented below with rough estimates.

Etudes (the Foothill CMS) costs over $100K/year for off-site hosting. For Catalyst, it would require, at a minimum, 1.5 tech staff maintain Moodle (the De Anza CMS) to manually create courses each term. Of course, there could be other hosted or campus-managed CMS options to consider as well.

A critical issue is the transferability of course content between the two systems or to a third CMS. Courses cannot be automatically transferred and remain in the same format. This would require training for all staff and faculty who utilize the CMS, including system administration and technical support. As an example, the conversion & transition cost if we move to one of the existing systems would require around $250K for 2-3 years of overlap of both systems, retraining of faculty, converting content, cost of hardware software $50K servers, additional technical support staff double ($200K for 1.5 additional permanent staff positions) or increased cost in hosting services.

For De Anza, growth in online courses would be at a stand still or perhaps decline for at least two years during a potential transition to a shared CMS. It might be a challenge to host enhanced and hybrid courses during this time as well due to a primary focus on training and support. Of course, any CMS shift or change has benefits too like more options, tools, reporting and flexibility depending on the CMS.

As far as online success rates in comparison to Foothill, according to a report by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning based on 2005-2009 data (see related links below), Foothill success rates are higher on average and for targeted populations. When reviewing this data, though, it is important to recognize the difference in the communities served by each college, overall FTES and that Foothill’s online program is structured and staffed differently than De Anza.

[Institutional Research and Planning Selected DL Data Report, February 2012](http://www.research.fhda.edu/documents/DistanceLearningFiguresFinal.pdf)

* *Which staff positions need to be replaced due to vacancy and growth?*

As mentioned in the CPR, we are conducting an assessment of needs based on our strategic planning efforts. At this time, an online learning/educational technology specialist is a more current and appropriate fit for the online program over the next few years.

**Library**

* *Can you clarify your statements in II.A.4.b in your CPR document? As mentioned in the document, the equity gap for LCEN/LIB classes is large and possibly increasing. Have you found the increased communication w/students using catalyst and email helpful? Have you thought about also working with Student Success and Counseling to strategize on ways to come up with an early alert system as opposed to going back to past practices of dropping students early who do not turn in the first few assignments?*

Yes, both LIB instructors have found communication with students using Catalyst and email very helpful at prompting students to become active early in the quarter. Going forward, instructors will drop students who do not log in to Catalyst and turn in homework during the first month of the courses, which will translate to higher success rates.

LIB instructors will consult with their Student Success Center colleagues to investigate whether the new online tutorial service, Smarthinking, offers tutoring in library research skills. LIB instructors are interested in finding out more about an early alert system when the college chooses a system.

* *Does OCLC world share (WMS) require the same financial commitment as SIRSI? Is there a savings after the migration? Will you require the same augmentation to your budget from the college?*

The simple answer is, yes, the library will save money with the adoption of OCLC’s WorldShare. The last year the library used Sirsi, the cost was approximately $30,000. The library also paid OCLC approximately $7,000 for their cataloging and interlibrary loan service for a total cost of approximately $37,000. The cost of the first year of OCLC’s Worldshare service is $34,500, which includes both the integrated library system (ILS) component as well as cataloging and interlibrary loan services for a net savings of $2,500. The Library will continue to need the augmentation of approximately $30,000 per year for the foreseeable future.

Savings are also to be found at the college and district levels. Worldshare is a cloud-based system and the library did not have to use Measure C funds to purchase new servers, that, at a minimum, would have cost $20,000. In addition, ETS staff does not have to maintain a physical server on campus, nor do library staff have to update server software and apply security patches.

Worldshare is a thoroughly 21st century ILS, which includes a long list of functions that Sirsi did not offer, including:

* Unified search results which include articles in addition to books, DVDs, etc.
* Ability of find items in nearby library quickly with the option of implementing user driven interlibrary loan in the future
* Integration with popular social media, including Facebook and Twitter
* Citation tool built in
* Support for foreign languages, including Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Arabic

**Student Success**

* *The math review modules sound very successful. Are they just being used for students who want to appeal their placement, post-placement test? If not, how is the process publicized as a pre-placement option? Do you have any other assessment preparation in place or planned?*

The math review modules are indeed successful, and have made a difference for many students. As stated in the SSC Program Review, approximately 30% of students utilizing review modules are from the targeted student population and over 65% of all students signing up are reviewing pre-college level mathematics (Math 210, 212 and 114.) Overall, the modules have allowed students to reach college-level math skills in less time and with better success. We continue to refine processes and information to better serve students.

The review modules, developed in partnership with Khan Academy and ALEKS, are intended to assist students in reviewing content from math class(es) that they have already completed at some point in time. They are not intended to teach new content or replace course completion.

The math review modules are designed to assist students with the following:

(i) Pre-assessment preparation for initial testing. We are targeting students who may have had a gap in their mathematics education. Many new students, for example, do not take math in their senior year of high school and many continuing students postpone completing assessment and don’t enroll in mathematics for several quarters.

(ii) Post-assessment preparation for retesting. Students who assess 15 points or less (12.5% or less) from the cutoff for the next level receive an invitation to complete the review module and reassess.

Prior to receiving a placement test appointment, students must confirm that they have selected and prepared for the test(s), read and understand the retesting policy, and understand the “Day of Test” list.

Following the assessment test, students are given options on their printout, depending on their scores (as per above):

(i) enroll in the placed math course

(ii) enroll in the placed math course OR complete math review modules and retest.

If they choose the math review modules, they must fully complete the modules before retesting.

Assessment Center and preparation information is detailed on the following sites:

<http://www.deanza.edu/admissions/placement/testagreement.html>

<http://www.deanza.edu/admissions/placement/math.html>

<http://www.deanza.edu/studentsuccess/mstrc/testprep.html>

* *Why did you not ask to replace any of the Academic Advisor positions in your CPR that were previously cut?*

Three of four Academic Advisors were funded by Title III and those positions ended when grant funding was no longer available. One advisor was funded by the college and that position was transferred to Counseling during the budget cuts. We did not request replacing any of these positions because we understand the pressures on Student Services, the difficult budget realities, and the slim chance for restoration of any eliminated classified positions. With this in mind, and remembering past challenges, we prioritized our request for restoration of the eliminated Instructional Support Technician position. We determined that the area with the highest student demand and most dire need for the position is the Math and Science Resource Center.

That said, embedded and “intrusive” counseling and advising, where academic advisors and counselors are integrated with instruction and meet students where they are, is considered a high-impact practice, with evidence of its success highlighted in national and statewide research by RP Group, Columbia University Community College Research Center, and the Basic Skills Initiative “Poppy Copy” (Effective Practice A.5.) The advisors who worked with the SSC helped many students learn about themselves, their goals, and how to attain them, and provided essential information to keep the most at-risk students on track. There were, however, administrative challenges with this model and with the collaboration with Student Services. We would enthusiastically welcome and pursue the model again, only with strong support of Counseling and Student Services.

* *When smartthinking is assessed, will it be compared against success via traditional in-person tutoring? Will you use comparative data in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, etc?*

De Anza contracts with Smarthinking to provide online tutoring for our students. It is not intended to replace on-campus tutoring, but rather to extend hours and access for students who can’t make it to campus for tutoring during our open hours. Primarily, Smarthinking is for students in distance learning and evening classes, those who work during the day, have family or other responsibilities, and students who need additional help or help in courses for which we don’t offer SSC tutoring.

Smarthinking also adds to our accreditation compliance requirements that specify that students in distance classes must have access to services equal to those available to students on campus.

Standard reports from Smarthinking are organized by tutoring subject and include student ID’s. We have been tracking usage hours and subjects throughout the quarter: usage has exceeded our expectations and we have recently purchased more hours. We have also “spot-checked” actual sessions in various subjects to track quality, look for patterns, such days and times of use, and heavy users, who we will reach out to invite them to the SSC for in-person academic support services.

Spring 2014 is a pilot term for Smarthinking. At the end of Spring, when we have data on success rates, we will analyze results to determine the impact of online tutoring on various groups of students. We will also use raw data from the Smarthinking reports to build ARGOS reports that explore the following:

* + Who uses Smarthinking? Are there demographic patterns? Do they also use SSC tutoring on campus? What portion of students are taking one or more distance learning courses?
  + When do students use Smarthinking? Evenings and weekends, or during SSC open hours?
  + Do students who use Smarthinking show improved success rates in the courses they received help with, compared to similar students (in terms of demographics, gpa, test score, etc.) who did not use any tutoring?
  + Is there a correlation between the number of sessions or hours and success rates? (Note: for on-campus tutoring, we usually see more dramatic results after five or more hours of tutoring, with success increasing with number of hours of tutoring.

We will also survey students who used Smarthinking to find out how they learned about the service, what prompted them to use it, how they used it, how satisfied they were with the service, what other academic services they may be using, and their perceptions about how Smarthinking impacted success in their courses, and more.

* *Are you/will you be working with other departments in the use of smartthinking? For example, will you work with the Language Arts department with regards to the Essay Center within smartthinking?*

Our first goal in working with faculty and departments was to get the word out and create basic informational materials as shown here: <http://deanza.edu/studentsuccess/onlinetutoring/tipsforfaculty.html> .   
This effort has been very successful, judging from the very high usage.

Our next step, in addition to continuing visibility efforts, is to work closely with faculty, both individually and at department and division meetings, to share ideas about how to make the best use of both online and on-campus tutoring.

Because we don’t supervise the Smarthinking tutors, faculty can instruct students about how best to work with the tutors. For example, ESL 263 students write body paragraphs, without introductions and conclusions, but if the Smarthinking tutors don’t get this information from the students, they tend to suggest that students include introductions and conclusions. In other words, faculty may have specific requirements for assignments, or specific feedback for students, and all this should be included in the tutoring request. The more information the student provides, for both online and on-campus tutoring, the more effective the tutoring sessions are.

We plan to reach out to faculty and invite conversations about online and on-campus tutoring as part of our SSC Fall Opening Day visits to divisions and departments.