



▼ Dept - (SSH) Paralegal Studies



For 2017-18 Submitted by:: Terry R. Ellis

APRU Complete for: 2017-18



Program Mission Statement: • Students will be able to evaluate, critique and analyze legal and factual information: related to Critical thinking



• They will be able to synthesize and analyze such information effectively, both in writing and orally: related to Communication an Expression



• Students will be able to compare and contrast the American and California legal systems, demonstrating how they are situated in the global environment: related to Global, cultural, social



and environmental awareness



• From diverse source materials, students will determine legally relevant facts: related to Information literacy



• Students shall be able to assess whether given information is sufficient or insufficient to evaluate a legal issue and utilize appropriate resources to obtain relevant needed information: related to Information literacy

I.A.1 What is the Primary Focus of Your Program?: Career/Technical

I.A.2 Choose a Secondary Focus of Your Program?: Transfer

I.B.1 Number Certificates of Achievement Awarded: 0

I.B.2 Number Certif of Achievement-Advanced Awarded: 31

I.B.3 #ADTs (Associate Degrees for Transfer) Awarded: 0

I.B.4 # AA and/or AS Degrees Awarded: 35

I.C.1. CTE Programs: Impact of External Trends: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects for the period 2016-2026 a national growth rate of 14.6% for paralegals and legal assistants. The State of California projects for this period a growth rate of 14.1% for Santa Clara County. Median wage for paralegals in Santa Clara County is \$76,242. The De Anza College Paralegal program has experienced a decline in student numbers. The decline is a consequence of the robust local economy and it should be noted that almost all paralegal programs nationwide are seeing drastic reductions in student populations. Some programs in othr parts of the country have actually been closed. Our graduates are highly sought after and feedback from employers indicates that our students are being well prepared for their new positions. There appears to be no curriculum changes that would have a major impact on increasing student numbers.

I.C.2 CTE Programs: Advisory Board Input: Recent Advisory Board meetings have extensively discussed the declining student numbers. Board members have cast doubt on increasing student numbers by recruiting in local high schools. But since approximately

half of our paralegal students possess advanced degrees of some sort the board has had some discussion about recruiting student graduates in local colleges. It is the intent of the program to explore this possibility. In its most recent meetings the board has discussed enlarging the reach of the program to begin offering courses for continuing legal education for practicing paralegals and to begin community service by establishing a legal clinic to provide services to low income and homeless persons. This would help to improve the public visibility of the program and show to potential students the types of services that paralegals can render. Additionally, a committee was formed to revise and bring up to date the paralegal website and the website has already removed outdated lists of instructors and added the names of present instructors. General information has been revised and the website has an entirely new appearance. It is still a work in process. The board has also discussed the possibility of placing our beginning classes online or in hybrid delivery in order to boost enrollment. The board feels that advanced practical classes will be problematical in an online version but our beginning classes could be delivered in this mode. Faculty of the program will be consulted on the practicality of doing this and determine if any faculty is interested in beginning the process necessary to present classes online. When all is said and done it must be noted that many other paralegal programs nationally continue to experience dramatic downturns in student numbers. Many institutions are putting pressure on paralegal programs to justify their existence and sad to say several programs have been discontinued. While pay rates for paralegals continue to rise it is still very hard for the profession to compete with the technology pay rates in our local area hence there is a shortage of job changing students that has been a traditional source of students for the program. It must also be noted that the demographics of our area has been changing such that many potential students can no longer afford to live and work in our area.

I.D.1 Academic Services & Learning Resources: #Faculty served:

I.D.2 Academic Services & Learning Resources: #Students served:

I.D.3 Academic Services & Learning Resources: #Staff Served:

I.E.1 Full time faculty (FTEF): 3

I.E.2 #Student Employees: 0

I.E.3 % Full-time : The full time ratio is 13.2% and this is a 5% increase while the Part Time ratio has decreased to 74.5% and this is a decrease of 9.8%.

I.E.4 #Staff Employees: 0

I.E.5 Changes in Employees/Resources:

II.A Enrollment Trends: The program had an enrollment of 1,330 in 2012-13. It increased to 1,426 in 2013-14 and decreased to 1,307 for 2014-15 and decreased to 1,102 for 2015-16 and has decreased to 910 for 2016-17.

II.B.1 Overall Success Rate: Overall Success Rate has had a decline from 84% in 2012-13 to 81% in 2014-15 and an increase to 83% for 2015-16. For 2016-17 it has decreased to 81%

II.B.2 Plan if Success Rate of Program is Below 60%: Within the program 53% of all solid academic classes have a success rate of 80% or above. The remaining classes with

one exception have success rates between 70% and 80%. Only one class falls below 60% and this class is the Intellectual Property class. This is a difficult and challenging class for all students. The program plans to discuss the problems with this class with the primary instructor and other members of the program to see if there are any strategies that might be employed to improve success.

II.C Changes Imposed by Internal/External Regulations: The program submitted an Interim Report to the ABA in 2015 and the final review was received in the fall of 2016. No deficiencies were found nor corrections requested. The program is now in the early stages of preparing the comprehensive seven year re-approval report for re-approval by the American Bar Association.

III.A Growth and Decline of Targeted Student Populations: African American students have consistently made up approximately 5% of the program's population with the number increasing to 6% for 2016-17. The Filipino population of the program has ranged from 4% to 3% to 5% and is presently at 4% for the most recent reporting period. The Latino/a student population was at a high of 35% in 2014-15, decreased to 26% for 2015-16 and has increased to 30% for 2016-17. Native Americans reached a high of 1% of the student population in 2012-13 but for all other periods the numbers have been so small as to show a 0%. For 2016-17 the number has gone back to 1%. The Pacific Islander student population rose to a high of 3% for the last reporting period but is once again 0% for 2016-2017. In terms of raw numbers student numbers of Targeted Groups are down along with the overall decrease of total students within the program.

III.B Closing the Student Equity Gap: The success rate for targeted groups remained relatively constant around 78% for three out of the four past reporting periods. For 2016-17 the success rate is 75% and this is only a 1% decline from the past period. We note that there is an equity gap of 9% in success rates between targeted groups and non-targeted groups. This number while not substantial is still a greater gap than we find acceptable. Instructors have made an effort to reach out to students that are displaying difficulties in class and all instructors are holding office hours to make it possible for students to visit them for assistance.

III.C Plan if Success Rate of Targeted Group(s) is Below 60%: Aside from Native American students the program has no targeted group that is below the 60% success rate. As indicated above, the program recognizes that the difference in success rates between the not targeted groups and the targeted groups while not substantial is unacceptable in most cases. The program's instructors have participated with the Division's CAR process and will continue to do so. The director of the program has communicated with all instructors and made them aware that the gap in success rates between non targeted and targeted groups is unacceptable and wherever possible attempts need to be made to close the gap.

III.D Departmental Equity Planning and Progress: There was no stated departmental Equity Plan in the 2015-16 Program Review due to the fact that the overall success rates and the success rates for individual targeted groups was above 60% rate.

IV.A Cycle 2 PLOAC Summary (since June 30, 2014): 0% The program plans to make a major effort to conform to the requirements of PLOAC Summary.

IV.B Cycle 2 SLOAC Summary (since June 30, 2014): 127.77? (I am arithmetically challenged)

V.A Budget Trends: Previous to this academic year the program was granted lottery funds to use to obtain passwords to Westlaw for our students to use in a variety of classes. It is a requirement of the American Bar Association that in order to maintain approval a paralegal program must provide to its students access to either up to date legal print materials or online resources. As the library elected to suspend keeping up our legal collection the program was forced to obtain passwords from Westlaw. Perkins funds cannot be used for an ongoing subscription so the program must look to other sources to meet this ABA requirement. Due to nonpayment by the district of invoices our Westlaw access is currently suspended.

V.B Funding Impact on Enrollment Trends: The program's enrollment has decreased but it is not due to any external or internal funding changes. The inability to provide access to the ABA required legal research tools may drive students to other competing programs where they can learn how to use online research and it should be noted the program could lose its ABA approval. This would clearly likely result in its spirally down.

V.C.1 Faculty Position(s) Needed: None Needed Unless Vacancy

V.C.2 Justification for Faculty Position(s):

V.D.1 Staff Position(s) Needed: Growth position

V.D.2 Justification for Staff Position(s):: The college provides no clerical support to the program and the Division has but one division assistant for the entire division. The ABA requirements of record keeping and assessment of students and the program are very time consuming and the director of the program finds it increasingly more difficult to keep up with the demands of the college, the ABA requirements, and a teaching load. A reliable part time assistant would be a great asset.

V.E.1 Equipment Requests: Over \$1,000

V.E.2 Equipment Title, Description, and Quantity: The program has no need for hard equipment but has a great need for soft equipment in the form of the Westlaw passwords as described in section V.A above.

V.E.3 Equipment Justification: See section V.A above. Soft equipment needs should be looked at in the same way as hard equipment and a program that does not have hard equipment needs should not be discriminated against as the provision of legal research tools is as important to the program's success as a piece of equipment is to another program.

V.F.1 Facility Request: None

V.F.2 Facility Justification:

V.G Equity Planning and Support: No

V.H.1 Other Needed Resources: Staffing resources are needed for continual ABA compliance requirements. See V.D.2 above

V.H.2 Other Needed Resources Justification: See V.D.2 above.

V.J. "B" Budget Augmentation: The Paralegal Program badly needs an award of \$31,000 from Lottery or other funding sources in order to continue to provide passwords to our students so that they will be able to use the Westlaw system. The ABA requires programs to either have print materials that students can use to learn legal research or to have an electronic system such as Westlaw or Lexis/Nexis. We have had WestLaw and without this resource the Program will lose ABA approval when we are up for re-approval in October of 2018. Without ABA approval the paralegal program will no longer be competitive with other paralegal programs in our area. ABA approval has become the requirement for employment in our area.

V.K.1 Staff Development Needs: Funding for attendance at Paralegal Educational conferences and for faculty training in the use of legal software is needed.

V.K.2 Staff Development Needs Justification:

V.L Closing the Loop: Allowing our students to have access to a legal research tool will continue to support student success and make our students attractive candidates for employment upon completion of the program. Our students have a high rate of employment after completion and employers report tht they find our students to be well trained and ready to make a great contribution to the needs of the employer.

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#SLO STATEMENTS Archived from ECMS: 5