

STANDARD I

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

Los Angeles Southwest College has a mission statement by which its faculty, staff, and administration work together toward the goals of identifying and effectively serving its constituent community and students. The college demonstrates a strong commitment to its mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning. Based upon the results of a recent survey, 62 percent of faculty and staff respondents indicated their belief that campus meetings work toward the overall mission of educating students. The mission is communicated throughout the campus. The college uses quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, and implementation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished. The College meets this standard; however, the college has outlined five planning agenda items to further enhance this standard.

I.A. Mission

The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning

I.A.1 The institution established student learning programs and services aligned with its purpose, its character, and its student population.

DESCRIPTION

The Los Angeles Southwest College (LASC) mission statement is the following:

“Los Angeles Southwest College is committed to providing an environment for quality learning to enrich the lives of our diverse population.”

The LASC mission statement incorporates the definition of the college's broad educational purpose as enriching lives and providing an environment for quality learning. The college offers classes and programs that range from remedial courses

that prepare students for collegiate study, to courses that lead to an occupational certificate or degree, to programs and courses that are transferrable to a four-year college or university, and to personal enrichment classes. The students come primarily from the local community and are adult high school graduates and drop-outs, English language learners, individuals desiring courses for personal growth, transfer, workforce education, job certification, and continuing education. A majority of students in the college service area require remedial coursework as determined by assessment testing.

EVALUATION

The college developed its mission statement with the current and future student populations in mind. The college had an external environment scan prepared to assess the potential students the college can serve. The Enrollment Management Team uses trend analysis data in its decisions regarding course offerings to ensure that the classes are available to meet the needs of the community. The college is now placing an additional emphasis on addressing the needs

of its student population. Use of baseline data elements and measures of changes will help the college better understand the needs of the student population and how well the college is accomplishing its mission. The college fully meets the standard.

PLANNING AGENDA

- None

I.A.2 The mission statement is approved by the governing board and published (give examples where and how it is published and how often it is published).

DESCRIPTION

The LASC mission statement was approved by the Los Angeles Community College Board of Trustees on November 2, 2005. The mission statement is published in the LASC college catalog, which is prepared annually; it is also published on the LASC website, which is regularly updated; and it is published in the schedule of classes, which is printed each semester. In addition, the mission statement is posted around the campus in areas with high student, staff, and faculty traffic, such as Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Business Office, Assessment Center, Counseling Center, Bookstore, administrative offices, staff and faculty meeting areas, and the Associated Student Organization office.

EVALUATION

The college mission statement is effectively provided to the community and the college through the major college publications and at strategic campus locations. The college could include its mission statement on all its printed materials. The college fully meets the standard.

PLANNING AGENDA

- None

I.A.3 Using the institution's governance and decision-making processes, the institution reviews its mission statement on a regular basis and revises it as necessary.

DESCRIPTION

The college mission statement is reviewed on a three year cycle. This an inclusive process utilizing broad-based participation as prescribed in the *Planning Handbook* via the Mission Review Committee. This committee represents staff, administration, students, faculty, and community members.

EVALUATION

The review of the mission statement was a comprehensive and inclusive approach in developing and revising the mission statement. The Dean of Institutional Planning and Research facilitated a brainstorming session with the constituents, distributed a sample of other community college mission statements, and outlined some best practices from the literature for writing an effective mission statement. The college fully meets the standard.

PLANNING AGENDA

- None

I.A.4 The institution's mission is central to institutional planning and decision-making.

DESCRIPTION

Planning processes and documents outline that the institution's mission is the foundation of college planning. As part of all planning activities, the mission statement is referenced to ensure that college decisions follow the college mission. The college planning documents incorporate the mission statement as the basis of all planning goals.

EVALUATION

The LASC mission statement is central to and is integrated into all college planning. The mission itself underlies the college strategic plan, which, in turn, underlies unit and division planning. All plans focus on the college mission statement. The college fully meets the standard.

PLANNING AGENDA

- None

I.B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.

I.B.1. The institution maintains an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.

DESCRIPTION

The college engages in many types of dialogue concerned with student learning and institutional processes. Dialogue occurs at meetings of the senior administrative staff, the faculty senate, and the institutional planning committees, in addition to departmental and staff meetings, town hall meetings, and campus communications such as email, *Tuesday's at LASC*, and posted material. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of faculty and staff who completed a recent survey indicated they felt their participation in campus meetings helps to improve the college. In 2004-05, as a result of this ongoing dialogue, faculty adopted student learning outcome (SLO) guidelines and established the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Committee to assist the campus in creating SLOs at the course, program, and

institutional levels. The committee meets bimonthly and consists of faculty, administrators, classified staff, and students. The committee discusses and plans SLO workshops, holds campus-wide forums for all employees, student service groups, and academic affairs to educate, facilitate, and inform the campus about methods to improve student learning. At the time of this writing, the SLO committee is engaged in developing SLOs at the institutional level. One of the major efforts includes conducting a campus-wide forum that engages participants in analyzing institutional learning values. The SLO Committee will follow up on the information gathered in this forum to develop future institutional SLOs.

With regard to institutional processes, the college encourages dialogue among its various constituencies and makes a concerted effort to maintain open lines of communication campus-wide. Following an intensive collaborative effort in 2001-02, the college adopted a *Planning Handbook* to guide the planning and institutional improvement processes on campus. Planning and institutional improvement dialogue take place systematically and regularly in planning meetings conducted by committees such as the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (SPBC), Technology Steering Committee, Facilities Planning Committee, unit planning teams, and division planning teams.

EVALUATION

The campus engages in dialogue about student learning and improvement of institutional processes on a regular basis. Over the past two years, this dialogue focused on the topics of student learning outcomes and implementing and integrating the institutional planning processes. While the dialogue focused on student learning

outcomes is in its formative stages, an increasing number of campus members are engaging in the conversation. The SLO Committee is actively involved in the development of institutional SLOs as well as committed to facilitating SLO development at the course and program levels.

With regard to improving institutional planning processes, the SPBC created a Planning Revision Task Force (PRTF) that is currently exploring ways to improve the campus planning processes by engaging campus members in various venues to gather feedback on the current campus planning processes. The PRTF expects to forward its findings to the SPBC in spring 2006. The SPBC will then formulate recommendations to send to the President and faculty. The college fully meets the standard.

PLANNING AGENDA

- None

I.B.2. The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. The institutional members understand these goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.

DESCRIPTION

Los Angeles Southwest College develops goals at various levels, including but not limited to programs, instructional and non-instructional units, and divisions, as well as college wide. In order for these goals to be accepted, they must be in consonance with the college mission. For instructional

programs, faculty adopted a six-year program review process cycle. In conducting these reviews, faculty completed an online template that requires each program to construct a minimum of three goals with supporting activities, responsible parties, and appropriate timelines for completion. Using program reviews as a basis, each instructional unit (department) follows a similar format creating goals and objectives while completing annual online unit plans. Non-instructional units also complete an annual unit plan with goals, measurable objectives, supporting activities, responsible parties, and completion timelines. Following the annual unit plan update the Academic Affairs division, the Administrative Services division, and the Student Services divisions continue the planning cycle by constructing divisional goals and objectives while attempting to integrate the goals and objectives of the units under their responsibility.

On completion of division plans the Goals Subcommittee of the SPBC creates the annual *Integrated College Operational Plan* (ICOP), which is taken from the divisional plans with goals and objectives, supporting activities, responsible parties, and completion timelines included.

EVALUATION

During the past three years, the college established goals and objectives in line with the core elements of the planning process. The one exception was the ICOP, which was completed for the first time in the 2004-05 academic year. The college collaborates on the creation of these goals and objectives as illustrated in the membership of each of the planning teams. About half of faculty and staff who completed the survey indicated they felt informed about institutional goals and objectives. The SPBC is looking at

ways to improve awareness of these crucial planning elements during its current revision of the Planning Handbook. The college fully meets the standard.

PLANNING AGENDA

- None

I.B.3. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. Evaluation is based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.

DESCRIPTION

When the unit plans, division plans, and ICOP are completed, the goals and objectives from the previous year are evaluated and assessed as to their status and effectiveness. One of the modules in the unit and divisional planning template asks the planners to assess the status of the previous year's goals. If the goals are completed, that is so indicated. If not, the evaluators assess the relevance of pursuing the goal and further integrating it into the next year's unit and division plans.

With regard to the integration of planning, the *Planning Handbook* provides six criteria that the higher-level planning teams consider to determine whether lower-level goals, objectives, and resource allocation requests should be incorporated into higher level planning.

The Dean of Institutional Research and Planning provides institutional research data on a regular basis to program review

initiators as well as unit, division, and institutional planning teams and committees. One of the key pieces of data used in unit planning contains information on enrollments by time of day, student demographics, FTES, average class size, retention, and successful course completion rates. The OIPR updates the data on an annual basis, delineating five-year trends in each area. The reports are on the college website under “Institutional Research” and the office provides a hard copy upon request.

The Enrollment Management Task Force along with department chairs, deans, and other administrators review data provided by the OIPR including FTES and enrollment trends averaged over three years by course and section to increase effectiveness in enrollment management. The data are then used to determine which classes to add, cancel, or postpone.

EVALUATION

From the recent survey, 81 percent of faculty and staff responded that they felt that their participation affects the college’s advancement toward achieving its goals. While goals are reviewed annually, there is no systematic process in place to monitor the goals throughout the year. This lack of follow-through appears to be a weakness in the planning process. In addition, the course and program levels need additional data in order to analyze the effectiveness of programs. This kind of research could be disaggregated to further determine the underlying causes of attrition, poor success rates, and declining enrollments that could prove helpful to planning teams. One of the drawbacks is that there is a lack of support staff to assist with supplying research data. This seems to be a particular challenge for the non-instructional areas that frequently

need point-of-service data and qualitative research, such as focus groups, interviews, and observations, in order for those areas to effectively evaluate their programs. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college’s efforts.

PLANNING AGENDA

- Implement a process to monitor and assess the progress of goals and objectives throughout the year in order to increase effectiveness.

I.B.4. The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

I.B.5. The institution uses documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies.

DESCRIPTION

Los Angeles Southwest College utilizes a participatory governance and planning process from the various campus constituencies that is facilitated by representation of those constituencies on key campus committees, such as the SPBC, Educational Master Planning Committee, Facilities Planning Committee, and the Technology Steering Committee. These committee memberships represent groups such as faculty, employee unions, department chairs, supervisors, administration, program managers, and students. The Budget Subcommittee of the SPBC folds into the ICOP the resource allocation plans divisions. The President

receives the recommendations for the prioritization of resource allocations following the annual planning retreat held each spring. The President either funds these requests or responds in writing to the SPBC as to why items were not funded. The various constituent representatives on the committee are expected to share these explanations with their respective constituencies.

EVALUATION

Most campus members would agree that the implementation of the planning process over the past two years, following the *Planning Handbook*, is improving the institution's effectiveness. There is broad input for resource allocation, especially in the area of one-time expenditures such as block grants. In addition, this past year an increased level of dialogue occurred regarding the overall campus budget. The SPBC recently developed the first institutional strategic plan consisting of strategic goals and objectives that were sent to the LACCD Board of Trustees for approval in fall 2005. The intent is that future spending should be tied to the college's strategic goals. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

PLANNING AGENDA

- Align the budget allocation process with the *Strategic Plan*.

I.B.6. The institution assures the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes by systematically reviewing and modifying, as appropriate, all parts of the cycle, including institutional and other research efforts.

DESCRIPTION

The *Planning Handbook*, developed in 2002, and agreed upon by faculty leadership and the President, outlines a process for an evaluation of the planning cycle after one full year of implementation. This evaluative process is an inclusive and participatory process actively soliciting feedback from planning participants, campus constituencies, and other interested parties. After receiving feedback from this procedure, the SPBC makes recommendations to improve its processes to the President and faculty leadership. Following this evaluation, the SPBC establishes a timeline for ongoing and systematic evaluation of the planning process.

EVALUATION

It was not until the 2004-05 academic year that the college was able to complete a full planning cycle as indicated the *Planning Handbook*. In fall 2005, the Dean of Institutional Planning and Research asked the SPBC to review the planning process as prescribed in the *Planning Handbook*. This process is currently taking place with anticipated revision recommendations expected to be forwarded to the President and faculty leadership in late fall 2005. One of the recommendations will be developing a schedule for the next evaluation of the planning process. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

PLANNING AGENDA

- Revise the *Planning Handbook* in order to improve institutional effectiveness incorporating lessons learned from the previous planning cycles.

I.B.7. The institution assesses its evaluation mechanisms through a systematic review of their effectiveness in improving instructional programs, student support services, and library and other learning support services.

DESCRIPTION

In the last two years, LASC revisited its program review process by refining the program review template and integrating it with a web-based design. Previous attempts to complete program review yielded only 2 of 39 reviews being completed over a three-year period. The self-study document for program review was too long (over 24 pages) and enormous paperwork and clerical work was involved. The task made it difficult for the college to maintain momentum and focus over a three-year cyclical period, and there was a lack of faculty acceptance of the process.

Furthermore, data was neither readily available nor understandable. Subsequently, the faculty revised and approved the program review document, and the college brought in technical expertise to convert the approved paper document to a web-based platform.

Prior to the program review revision, the campus underwent a similar process in placing the instructional and non-instructional annual unit-planning template into a web-based platform.

During the program review and unit planning cycles, the OIPR provides data to college units so they can evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, and develop goals, objectives, and action plans for program improvement.

EVALUATION

Faculty and staff were asked on a scale of one to five (one being least positive and five being most positive) if the institution maintains a self-reflective dialogue about the quality of its services. The average score, 2.7, indicates the need for the college to improve its self-reflective dialogue. The campus experienced a tremendous achievement when all the academic program reviews were completed within a four-month period beginning in November 2004 and ending in February 2005. The new web-based format focused on electronic communication for technical review resulting in enhanced overall communication, improved access to resources, and better enforcement of deadlines. The online program review needs to be fully integrated with the unit planning documents to provide a seamless planning interface for users.

During the past three years, the instructional and non-instructional programs and services have undergone annual unit plan updates. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

PLANNING AGENDA

- Review the process and revise the timeline for program reviews to better integrate the online program review and unit planning documents.

STANDARD I: INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND EFFECTIVENESS

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF EVIDENCE

IA—Mission

- *Campus Climate Survey*
- College Catalog (<http://lasc.edu/catalog>)
- Constituency Council membership
- Constituency Council minutes and/or meeting materials
- Division plans
- Emails, announcements, ballots for mission statement development
- LACCD Board of Trustees minutes
- League of Innovation Conference presentation
- Mission Review Committee minutes and/or meeting materials
- Mission Statement
- *Planning Handbook*
- Planning templates, e.g. program review, unit plan, and division plan
- Recent class schedule (<http://lasc.edu/schedule>)
- Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (SPBC) minutes and/or meeting materials
- SPBC Budget and Goals Sub-Committee minutes and/or meeting materials
- Student surveys
- Unit plans

IB—Improving Institutional Effectiveness

- Academic Senate minutes regarding curriculum and Student Learning Outcomes.
- Associated Student Organization (ASO) minutes and/or meeting materials
- *Campus Climate Survey*
- Chair of Chairs minutes and/or meeting materials
- Classified AFT minutes and/or meeting materials
- Constituency Council minutes and/or meeting materials
- Division plan template
- Division planning team minutes and/or meeting materials
- Division plans
- Examples of new courses and new programs approved by the curriculum committee
- Faculty AFT minutes and/or meeting materials
- Flex Day activity materials
- *Integrated College Operational Plan (ICOP)*
- LACCD shared governance agreement
- LASC Website (<http://lasc.edu>)
- Membership of campus committees
- New Beginnings minutes and/or meeting materials
- *Planning Handbook*
- Planning process documents as generated by the SPBC
- Presidential forum materials

- Program Review template
- Qualitative – focus groups, public forums, meetings, comment cards, opened ended questions in surveys
- Quantitative – reports produced by the Office of Institutional Planning and Research
- SAP Users group
- Senior Staff minutes and/or meeting materials
- Shared Governance (collegial—participatory) agreement
- Strategic Planning and Budget Committee (SPBC) minutes and/or meeting materials
- SPBC Budget and Goals Sub-Committee minutes and/or meeting materials
- SPBC Goals Sub-Committee minutes and/or meeting materials
- *Strategic Plan* (<http://lasc.edu/strategicplan>)
- *Tuesdays at LASC*
- Unit Planning Team minutes and/or meeting materials
- Unit plans
- Vocational Education program evaluations