

# STANDARD II

## STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Los Angeles Southwest College is the pragmatic result of a long-held dream and focus of its service community's vision for a post-secondary option for high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services for South Los Angeles. Students have, for 39 years, sought out the instructional programs and services that the college offers, whether the goal was to prepare for transfer to a four-year institution, prepare for a specific occupation, acquire or update skills, or continue life-long learning. The college's programs and services for students' academic success are at the heart of this standard of the self-study with the goal of achievement of student learning outcomes. Los Angeles Southwest College provides an environment that supports learning, enhances understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and behavioral development for all of its students. Faculty and staff were surveyed and asked to rate the quality of student instruction provided by the college on a scale of one to five, where five was the most positive rating. Respondents gave the most positive rating to the college's ability to provide quality instruction to students (3.3) and to promote students' educational and personal achievement (3.3). Lower average marks were given to LASC's provision of innovative and state-of-the-art instructional programs (2.7). The college meets this standard. However, an ambitious planning agenda is detailed to more fully comply with the subsections of this standard that includes student learning outcomes, program development and improvement, data collection and analysis, course and program planning, professional development workshops, improving services to students, enhancing student campus activities and improving student involvement, and expanding and improving library and learning support services.

### II.A. Instructional Programs

**The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.**

**II.A.1. The institution demonstrates that all instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, address and meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity.**

**II.A.1a. The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with their educational preparation and the diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The institution relies upon research and analysis to identify student learning needs and to assess progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes.**

**DESCRIPTION**

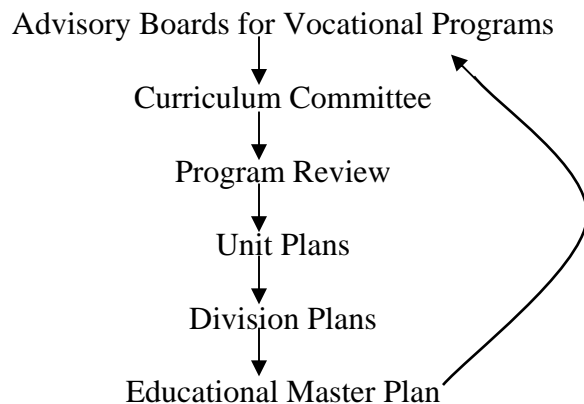
Los Angeles Southwest College is committed to the college mission statement, which is to encourage and facilitate learning for its diverse student population, at the same time, address the college's various educational goals. The mission statement declares, "Los Angeles Southwest College is committed to providing an environment for quality learning to enrich the lives of our diverse population." Therefore, the college review and planning processes for the instructional programs are significant in upholding the integrity of the learning process for students and result in relevant learning to student goals.

The institution identifies and seeks to meet the varied educational needs of its students through programs consistent with the educational preparation, diversity, demographics, and economy of its communities. The college's educational programs are developed and revised at regular intervals based on research and analysis conducted at various levels to ensure that instructional programs focus on the mission of the college.

The Dean of Institutional Research and Planning provides a range of studies and shares these with the department chairs, academic deans, and various campus groups for college instructional planning processes. The college's instructional planning process provides for continuous program assessment with the use of research data that includes, but not limited to the following:

- FTES
- Enrollment Trends
- Labor Market Data
- Industry Standards
- Articulation with Four-year Colleges
- College and Community Demographics

- Student Success/Achievement Data

**Structure for Instructional Approval and Review Processes**

The process involves the Curriculum Committee, charged with monitoring the updates of course outlines, degree requirements and articulation agreements, as well as monitoring to ensure that new courses and programs meet current academic and industry standards. Advisory board input and labor market demand, for instance, are some criteria used to support the creation and revision of vocational courses and programs by the committee. Within the creation of any course development, the goal is to identify learning outcomes and evaluate delivery modes consistent with identified need.

The course and program evaluation process continues through program review when, every six years, department chairs and their respective deans participate in a self-evaluation of college instructional programs. The college has recently revised the program review process in a web-based system that focuses on illustrating data in a user-friendly manner. Data and research are inclusive in the process that address demographics and labor market trends.

Unit planning is the next step whereby each department conducts annual self-analysis. Departments review their instructional unit plans in the context of the college mission statement; these unit plans annually integrate into the instructional division plan. Administration evaluates resources allocated within the division plan in light of division goals and in line with the college's mission statement. All these processes provide input into two critical components: 1) the *Educational Master Plan* and 2) the *Integrated College Operational Plan*. The *Educational Master Plan* provides forecasts for the institution's academic programs at five-, ten-, and fifteen-year intervals. The college conducts this analysis every two years; the most recent review occurred in fall 2005. The *Integrated College Operational Plan* (ICOP) incorporates information from the college plans, including the *Technology Master Plan*, the *Facilities Master Plan*, and the *Educational Master Plan*.

The Enrollment Management Task Force, composed of faculty and administrators, reviews the information from these plans to create courses each semester that conform to student needs and demand. The college vocational areas develop new vocational programs and revise existing programs in response to advice from advisory boards and changing employment markets and industry demands. In 2004, the college initiated a partnership with the University of Southern California to develop community focus groups to further determine regional labor needs.

## EVALUATION

The college has increased its emphasis on using and applying data to assess program effectiveness. The college has processes in place to monitor and review to ensure that

instructional programs align with the mission of the college. Although the research process is adequate, there are areas that need to be improved. Vocational programs lack consistent learning outcomes data that include employment surveys and job retention. In addition, when surveyed, students expressed the need for "more choices in vocational classes." The next level of rigor targeted for assessing student success will reflect discipline and program success rates. Current data indicates that success rates in some areas is less than 50 percent. The faculty in fall 2005 created a task force that will coordinate and demonstrate best practices from campus faculty on how to create student success models addressing diverse learning styles.

The integration of data and planning processes has identified trends that assist the campus in improved success models for students. The dialogue has been consistent in various faculty and staff forums and campus workshops. One thing is clear, based on a recent survey regarding the importance of educational programs and good teachers, 84 percent of student respondents cited educational programs and 91 percent cited good teachers as their reasons for attending LASC.

The campus is evaluating and investigating a dilemma that appears when comparing the diversity of the campus with the diversity of the community. This is especially relevant in light of a recent survey in which 87 percent of student respondents indicated that the location of the college in proximity to their home was important to very important in their decision to enroll at LASC. The surrounding community of the institution is over 50 percent Hispanic, yet the college only reflects a Hispanic student body of about 27 percent. Through a Title V grant, the college recently focused its efforts on

transitioning English as Second Language (ESL) students into degree applicable coursework. The campus developed a “Bridges to Success” program that provides support services to the predominantly Latino second language learners. As a result of Title V funded activities, college and community demographics information allows faculty to better understand the growing Hispanic community surrounding the college. This information has been communicated to the department chairs through the planning processes. Some departments are working to incorporate the information into recruitment plans for department programs. These departments include natural science and English. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college’s efforts.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- By fall 2006, identify a process to provide data on employment outcomes of students who complete college certificates or degrees and on programs to meet the needs of the surrounding community.

**II.A.1b. The institution utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate to the current and future needs of its students.**

**II.A.2d. The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that reflect the diverse needs and learning styles of its students.**

#### DESCRIPTION

The college utilizes delivery systems and modes of instruction compatible with the objectives of the curriculum and appropriate

to the current and future needs of its students.

Since 2003-04, LASC has developed ten online courses to keep up with the demands of students as well as demands of learning and technology. In addition, an academic dean has been assigned to continue the progress of this online delivery method and to develop workshops and orientations for students and staff. The Technology Steering Committee and staff development activities have supported this process.

Also, courses currently offered have a course outline of record that specifies the instructional delivery method and course objectives. Part of the program review process includes evaluation of course outlines. The Office of Academic Affairs works toward all courses listed in each semester’s schedule of classes having updated course outlines.

The course outline of record includes information on the course, and the Curriculum Committee reviews each course outline. From a review of various course outlines, however, the most commonly used teaching methodologies include lecture that supports and adds information to the class text; laboratory that ranges from hands-on scientific analysis to self-instruction language review; and fieldwork appropriate to the needs of the course for a practicum experience. The individual faculty selects the methodologies most suited to the best delivery and the needs of the students, based on the faculty evaluation of what makes student achievement most successful and may include work experience, computer-aided instruction, on-line and instructional television distance learning, and an honors program. Various methodologies are used in one course or program. Instructors often discuss the relationship between different

teaching methodologies and student performance. The department chairs receive data on student achievement, so that when department chairs conduct program reviews and unit plans, dialogue occurs among instructors as they evaluate the achievement data. This data and the relationship to teaching methodologies has also been a primary discussion on the campus as the college prepares to offer more online classes to support student demand. For example, the Technology Steering Committee has discussed the goal of developing strategies to use technology in the classroom.

The originating faculty member or department determines the appropriate credit type and delivery mode of the courses and programs it submits to the chair of the Curriculum Committee for technical review. The information regarding credit type is based on research the initiator has conducted, which is often substantiated by the committee, on four-year matriculation reports or analysis of two-year colleges that offer the same course and program. If the course is established in consultation with an advisory board, the board then suggests credit type and particular delivery modes. The college determines the location of the courses based on course delivery requirements such as laboratory or lecture classrooms.

The *Spring 2005 Student Survey* documents student views of course effectiveness in meeting student needs. The survey asked students to evaluate the effectiveness of the class schedule, the helpfulness of staff and faculty, the length of semesters, the best time of day for classes, the preferred number of days per week to attend classes, the types of pedagogy, and preferred learning styles. The results of this survey are being used to improve college services.

The faculty evaluation process includes a student evaluation form which provides student feedback on the effectiveness of each instructor's delivery method. The faculty evaluation committee may discuss the results with each evaluatee as part of this process. The instructor who is evaluated must address and correct any areas with an evaluation of "needs to improve."

Faculty and staff can attend off-campus workshops that address learning needs and pedagogical approaches; workshops are paid from staff development funds, and faculty are encouraged to share the information from the workshops with other faculty and staff in department meetings and reports, in addition to completing conference and professional development activity reports. At a recent encounter on learning needs and pedagogical approaches, Los Angeles Southwest College was selected to participate in a University of Southern California grant project "Equity for All" where the focus is to identify and discuss impediments to student success through an inquiry process that is guided by campus faculty members, staff, and administrators. The project will also develop strategies through various pedagogical approaches. The college has engaged in widespread discussion of this subject. A reorganization of various departments resulted in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) being reassigned to the English department. The plans for the LRC reflect a structure surrounding the assessment of learning styles and the delivery of strategies to support learning styles. Also, the GAIN/CalWORKs provides diagnostic programs in its academic support center.

### EVALUATION

The college strives to create an environment of dialogue regarding the needs and learning

styles of its students. This dialogue is continuous at departmental and college committee meetings, and among faculty and administration. With the reorganization of the Learning Resource Center, a proposal exists regarding help for students with a “safety net” of supportive assessment and prescriptive programs. This discussion also occurs in the GAIN/CalWORKs program and through the matriculation process.

On a recent survey, 45 percent of students stated that teaching styles were a problem for them in attending the college. Achievement data and student completion rates indicate that the campus needs to develop a task force of best practices to support higher levels of student success rates. Often student evaluations of faculty methodologies indicate that the campus is effective in its delivery modes and instructional methodologies. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college’s efforts.

#### **PLANNING AGENDA**

- Expand the offerings of online courses and develop online programs to meet the growing demand.
- Develop and support the new strategies for assessment of learning styles created with the re-organization of the Learning Resources Center in the English department.
- Use “Equity for All” project data to further identify and enhance student learning styles.
- Start a “Best Practices Forum” with faculty to determine how to identify and address individual learning styles and incorporate best practices into the curriculum.

**II.A.1c. The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.**

**II.A.2b. The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The faculty have started to create student learning outcomes at the course level. In May 2004, the first SLO workshop was conducted for faculty at LASC with approximately 40 faculty in attendance. Four months later, in September 2004, approximately 50 faculty, staff, and administrators from LASC participated in an SLO workshop at Los Angeles Harbor College facilitated by Dr. Mary Allen, former Director of CSU Institute for Teaching and Learning. The college faculty established the SLO Committee in fall 2004. The committee meets twice a month and consists of faculty, staff, administrators, and a student. The committee’s charge is to guide the campus in aiding and equipping those at the course and program level in creating, measuring, evaluating, and communicating the results of student learning outcomes in various areas. The college has begun campus-wide dialogue on SLOs with the ultimate goal of creating a learning institution with a culture of evidence to improve student learning. A

SLO Committee website has been created to document these efforts, <http://lasc.edu/slo> .

In April 2005, the faculty approved a resolution from the SLO Committee to hold as a standard the *Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning* published by the American Association of Higher Education. The following month, the faculty adopted a work in progress form the SLO Committee, *Guidelines for Development, Assessment, and Reporting of SLOs at the Course and Service Level*. The faculty conducted workshops in fall 2005 to create course SLOs using the adopted guidelines. Currently the faculty is developing student learning outcomes and incorporating them into the course outlines.

This process, although incomplete for all of the college's courses, is the result of recent knowledge and updates of the SLO conversation that campus personnel have received at workshops and in the literature. Faculty have begun to integrate SLOs into course outlines of new and updated courses that are then submitted to the Curriculum Committee. Approximately 25 percent of existing courses have SLOs. In June 2005 several faculty in English, speech, and biology piloted and assessed their course SLOs. They reported the results in an SLO workshop for faculty on the first day of the fall 2005 semester.

The college, however, has not fully identified SLOs at the course, program, nor institutional level. The SLO Committee, along with the President, held a campus town hall meeting in fall 2005 to receive input from the college community in order to begin to establish institutional SLOs. Once the college identifies the institutional SLOs, in concert with the college's mission statement, assessment and evaluation is planned.

Department chairs in vocational areas work with their respective advisory boards. The dialogue between the faculty and the experts in the field has helped to identify potential student learning outcomes.

### EVALUATION

The college has placed a high value on student learning and quality education as stated the mission statement. This focus is demonstrated in the most recent survey where 87 percent of student respondents thought the college had assisted them in acquiring knowledge and skills applicable to a specific job or type of work.

Although the college is identifying SLOs at the course level, it also needs to make efforts to identify SLOs at the program and institutional levels. The college is aware of the necessity to assess SLOs and evaluate the results to improve teaching and learning. The SLO Committee is in the process of developing a template for assessing and making necessary SLO improvements. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

### PLANNING AGENDA

- By spring 2006 develop a comprehensive timeline for completion of identification, assessment, and evaluation of SLOs at course, program, and institutional levels.

**II.A.2. The institution assures the quality and improvement of all instructional courses and programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, developmental, and pre-collegiate courses and programs, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training courses and programs, programs for international students, and contract or other special programs, regardless of type of credit awarded, delivery mode, or location.**

**II.A.2a. The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.**

#### DESCRIPTION

The program review process was developed using criteria identified by faculty and administration. Program review is a process of careful analysis conducted by those who work closely with each program. For the college to be current with its instructional and support services, changes, improvements, and advancements result from program review. The college completed program reviews for instructional and non-instructional programs in 2004-05.

The *Curriculum Committee Handbook* lists the criteria for new proposed programs and courses. The *Campus Climate Survey* and the *Spring 2005 Student Survey* provides both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data is also collected through community focus groups, faculty evaluations and ad hoc feedback. Collectively this information is used as a resource to drive the development of new

and emerging courses and programs that are submitted to the Curriculum Committee for approval.

Campus dialogue is a method whereby individuals explore, investigate, research, experience, and share information with the campus. Faculty, staff and students have several venues where dialogue occurs, including regularly scheduled committee, campus-wide, departmental, and special interest meetings. Community input is often gathered at on-campus and off-campus meetings, through college advisory committees, the college foundation, and with the President's contact with individuals and visits to community groups.

Program viability review is a faculty-directed process meant to ensure that programs meet the needs of students. The process also includes a review of instructional resources, the college's mission and the *Educational Master Plan*.

Program viability review committees may make recommendations that include, but are not limited to, the institution or adoption of a new program, discipline or department; a plan to enhance the performance of an existing program, discipline, or department; the restructuring of an existing program, discipline, or department; or the discontinuance of an existing program, discipline, or department.

A request or motion from either the college President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or the faculty senate may initiate the process. Information gathering decisions made in the course of the program viability process must be based on a broad and thorough investigation of all factors relating to the benefits of a program for the students and the surrounding community served by Los Angeles Southwest College. Decisions

take into consideration information that goes beyond simple measures of current student demand or WSCH figures. At a minimum, general types of information gathered and weighed in the process of formulation of recommendations include the relationship of the program to the mission statement and the *Educational Master Plan*. Other information considered includes recent program review recommendations, measures of student, service-area, and labor-market demand in addition to current program effectiveness. The opinions of outside experts in the fields related to the program are also gathered and considered. Finally, the respective committee carefully studies the projected impact on the overall educational program, on the students and faculty, on the college budget, and on the community.

## EVALUATION

In the *Campus Climate Survey*, 83 percent of faculty and staff who responded ranked serving student needs as the number one goal of the college and 62 percent ranked quality education as the second goal. The on-going evolution of program review, the course approval process of the Curriculum Committee, campus-wide dialogue, and student and community input are part of the process to ensure quality education.

### *New Programs and Curriculum*

The processes that exist to approve and administer new courses are those of the Curriculum Committee, which is charged with that responsibility. The processes are proving to be effective as the committee begins to require data to support student learning outcomes. In addition, individual departments evaluate courses annually through the unit planning process; whereas program managers review programs every six years. Furthermore, the college has

plans, and is moving toward, reviewing vocational programs every two years.

Recent focus group activities have given the campus new ideas on where to develop contract education that includes economic development venues and customer service training in the surrounding community. The basis on which the college would develop these new environments, with faculty involvement, includes current and future demand for the content of the courses. The demand is projected by analysis of statistical information, labor market trends, and campus dialogue through the Curriculum Committee and administrative recommendations.

### *Program Review*

The results of the program reviews for the instructional programs are submitted to the faculty senate; the *Educational Master Plan* also refers to these results. The program review website provides access to the senate-approved documents. Improvement as a result of these evaluations occurs as separate processes and vary according to what the department or program manager determines needs improvement. On the other hand, when programs are subject to a program viability process, a faculty senate subcommittee outlines and monitors specific recommendations and timelines for improvement.

Faculty in the discipline conduct program review. The college, in addition, relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory boards, where appropriate, to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs that include general and vocational education, and degrees.

*Program Viability and Evaluation*

The college embraces the challenges and works hard not only to correct weaknesses, but also to develop new strengths in programs for which there are concerns. Program viability review is a means to ensure that college programs are of high quality. Weaknesses are noted and faculty and administration work together to address areas that require improvement.

The nursing program recently completed a review by the California State Board of Nursing due to low pass rates on the National Council of State Licensure Examiners (NCLEX-RN). There was a perceived lack of quality in the program. The Nursing Program Viability Committee conducted an extensive study at the request of the college administration and found a substantial need for improvement. Evidence for improvements exists not only in the nursing viability study, but also in the registered nursing board recommendations to the campus. Following the recommendations of the program viability committee along with the recommendations of the registered nursing board has resulted in improvement in the nursing program, although still under board review. These improvements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Additional technology training for nursing faculty to enhance the curriculum delivery
- Revision of the nursing student grievance process
- The revision of all nursing curriculum with the assistance of outside expert consultants
- Administrative support to enhance the collection of nursing student data to support future program effectiveness

A second area of concern for the college had been the Program for Accelerated College Education (PACE), which also underwent a faculty senate program viability study. The study identified the need for improvement, including a restructuring of the program. The PACE viability program study offered evidence not only of the areas which need improvement, but also where the program can be strengthened. The PACE program has a new director. New activities have been implemented, and the program's revitalization is beginning. Improvements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Revision of the PACE application process
- Administrative support for PACE student counseling services
- Establishment of learning community experiences within program content areas offered by PACE that are supported by faculty dialogue
- Regularly scheduled group meetings for all PACE students

*Summary*

The program review process and the Curriculum Committee's review ensure the goal of quality in instructional courses and programs at the college. In addition, the college uses its program review and program viability processes to effectively evaluate each college course and program for improvement. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

**PLANNING AGENDA**

- Using data from focus groups, program review, viability recommendations, and other pertinent data, improve and develop future programs that meet student and community needs.

- Review vocational programs every two years.

**II.A.2c. High-quality instruction and appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning characterize all programs.**

**DESCRIPTION**

High quality instruction is supported in several ways. The Curriculum Committee approves new course outlines and programs to facilitate high-quality instruction that promotes appropriate course rigor. One of the college's initiatives is the five-semester plan. This is a systematic effort for scheduling of advanced classes to complete program and degree requirements.

Determination of the breadth, depth, rigor, sequencing, completion deadline, and synthesis of learning contained in each program is part of the program review process. Each program review seeks to analyze statistical trends that impact the various programs, such as enrollments, FTES, average class size, student demographics, and attrition. In addition, the document records success rates, degrees and certificates, as well as physical facilities, FTEF, professional development, support staff, curriculum reporting/revisions, labor market demand, student learning outcomes, revenue, costs, and resource requests. Based on this information, programs are asked to summarize their strengths and weaknesses and to set goals and objectives for the future program growth and improvement. This process helps department chairs identify appropriate course offerings based on student demand and need, cycles for completion of courses, and labor market demand for programs.

In order to enhance the understanding and agreement regarding the quality and rigor of the programs, campus-wide dialogue occurs at many levels of the instructional arena. For example, instructional committee work focuses on the issues of college programs beginning with departmental monthly meetings where faculty share and discuss individual efforts to improve the content and delivery of the department's courses. The department chairs in the monthly Council of Instruction and Department Chair meetings, discuss current quality and strategies to enhance the chairs' respective instructional programs. The dialogue continues in other intra-departmental regularly scheduled meetings, such as those of the Curriculum Committee when new courses and programs are introduced.

In addition, various outside agencies, such as the California State Board of Nursing, evaluate the college's programs for the depth, rigor, and breadth of instruction that is required in those particular fields of study; these outside agencies assist the college in maintaining standards for programs and students.

**EVALUATION**

The college, through various processes, has strong mechanisms in place to address this standard. The results of the student survey on several items dealing with the core of instruction indicate the following: 87 percent of students believed their instructors to be up-to-date in their field, 87 percent thought tests to be relevant to the course material covered, and 86 percent felt the grading practices in the courses were fair.

The Curriculum Committee approval process strives to ensure that quality programs are developed and offered. For the most part, the processes work.

Established programs and the curriculum in programs are subject to the rigorous program review process and the results indicate the majority of the campus programs are composed of quality curriculum.

The “five-semester plan” attempts to provide sequencing for completion of programs within five semesters but the plan has had its challenges. Enrollment data suggest that advanced level courses are often subject to cancellation to due low enrollment, whereas the introductory level classes have high enrollment. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college’s efforts.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- Review and evaluate the “five-semester” plans.

**II.A.2e. The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.**

**II.A.2f. The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.**

#### DESCRIPTION

To monitor the effectiveness of instructional courses and programs, course evaluation is performed through the Curriculum Committee and program review processes. Criteria used in program review include relevancy, appropriateness, and achievement of student learning outcomes, currency, and planning for the future. The criteria also include FTES data, course completion rates, SLOs review, five-semester planning, labor market data for relevancy in vocational programs, program accomplishments and challenges, and timelines for evaluating the need for classes. This process is consistently followed for all college programs, regardless of the type of program. As previously noted, in 2004-05 a web-based program review process allowed for the efficient completion of reviews for the college’s instructional programs. This new process surpasses a previous process that was both laborious and time-consuming.

The program review process includes a curricular review whereby the discipline faculty evaluates recency of course outlines, a comprehensive review of the role of the program in the overall college curriculum, and requires faculty to report what other programs are affected and supported by the program under review. In addition, specific questions direct the reviewer to determine the relevancy of a program based on advisory board meetings for vocational programs and by transfer institution comparability for academic programs. The review includes a module on program student learning outcomes. Again, the college recognizes that program SLOs have not been fully developed.

## EVALUATION

Through the new web-based program review process, the college has been successful in completing program reviews and integrating the model into the college overall planning process.

Institutional planning uses program review results in several areas, including the ICOP and in the review and update of the *Educational Master Plan*. Departmental unit plans and divisional plans integrate program review evaluations.

Revisions to the campus instructional programs included several departments that were reorganized in the spring 2005 semester based on program review recommendations. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

## PLANNING AGENDA

- Revisit the six-year program review cycle and timeline, add student survey data, expand the SLO component, and possibly include an external review.
- Develop workshops to enhance faculty knowledge and implementation strategies on how to utilize SLOs for improving instructional programs and courses.

**II.A.2g. If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.**

## DESCRIPTION

Only one college unit uses a departmental course examination. The English department's final measurement of students in its remedial courses uses departmentally agreed-on rubric for each remedial course level; the rubric is based on skills competencies and is developed by a faculty member for each course level. The lower level basic skills course focuses on sentence structure with grammar review; thus, the student learning outcomes for this level would require the student to demonstrate sentence skills with a moderate level of grammar understanding during the final writing. The next level course requires the student to learn and practice the skills of paragraph structure through the basic modes of argument with an additional grammar review. The department faculty meets to share and grade typical student writing for each course level to facilitate both full-time and adjunct faculty's shared goals for learning outcomes and commonality for grading.

The department supplies a published essay written at the appropriate reading skill level for each course, which all remedial English course instructors use in their classrooms as a final essay. Instructors meet afterwards to read and score the finals with a suggested grade based on the respective course-level rubric.

Each instructor uses this shared grading as part of the final course grade.

## EVALUATION

The English department's final examination process attempts to minimize test bias because of the level of scrutiny by departmental members. Although outside validation of test-bias has yet to occur in the

process used by the English department, it recognizes validation as reasonable next step. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

### PLANNING AGENDA

- Validate the English departmental final examinations.

**II.A.2h. The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course's stated learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.**

**II.A.2i. The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes.**

### DESCRIPTION

The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of the program stated courses which are equivalent to other institutions of higher learning at the lower division and higher division levels. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education that the college's Articulation Officer researches and maintains on file in a continuous process.

The campus catalog outlines the level of student achievement necessary for obtaining a degree or certificate. Currently graduation requirements indicate that 18 or more units in a major content area are necessary for a degree. Certificate criteria vary in the number of units. In addition, levels of achievement are connected to the

completion of course student learning outcomes which are being identified within the program.

The Articulation Officer is also the Curriculum Committee Chairperson. This dual capacity allows for support and review of curriculum and courses so that they are consistent with the standards implemented through the campus curriculum approval process. There is assurance that the institutional policies are equivalent to the standards of four-year institutions for transferable courses and units. Many four-year institutions accept Los Angeles Southwest College's lower division equivalent courses through a comparison process of articulation; the receiving institutions often request that the curriculum is updated and is consistent in content with their approval systems. The Articulation Officer works very closely with the department chairs and designated faculty members who initiate new coursework. The Office of Academic Affairs maintains campus curriculum in an electronic format as well as hard copies of course outlines. Curriculum Committee meetings have regular dialogue regarding the articulation equivalency of courses and removal of possible redundancy of content in similar courses.

Various disciplines have participated in meeting the Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum (IMPAC) project standards to establish statewide rigor core curriculum.

### EVALUATION

The college encourages regular communication with other institutions through the Articulation Officer. The Curriculum Committee meetings provide a

forum to ensure that departments are abreast of the latest information.

Although there have been successful workshops on SLOs, the college is in the process of developing degree and certificate SLOs. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- Develop, implement, assess and improve degree and certificate SLOs through activities such as holding departmental workshops, collecting data, and reviewing SLOs from other institutions.

**II.A.3. The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.**

**General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:**

**II.A.3a. An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.**

**II.A.3b. A capability to be a productive individual and life long learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.**

**II.A.3c. A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.**

#### DESCRIPTION

General education requirements for the degrees of Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science (AS), and transfer competencies require coursework in political, civic, and social responsibilities at

the local, national, and global levels. The graduation requirements of general education course completions are necessary for the AA and AS degrees and the transfer requirement completions and are listed in the catalog and student handouts in the Counseling Office. The college requires the general education curriculum in vocational as well as liberal arts programs. The goal is to produce a well-rounded individual whose skill competencies will integrate with a general education philosophy.

Through an articulation process with surrounding public and private four-year institutions, LACCD guidelines, Title 5, and Board rules, the college determines the basic content and methodology of traditional areas of knowledge in general education.

The Articulation Officer encourages faculty input used to support the concept that general education courses include the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge. This coordination and development is encouraged within the course outlines and in the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee's course outline approval process is consistent in supporting that content and methodology are included in course outlines and is evident in the outline template. The committee approves courses and programs that include course content and methodology in line with the tenets of general education.

Skill-level criteria are specific to discipline and program requirements. In some vocational programs, for example, external agencies may evaluate degree and program requirements to ensure there is compliance with mandated requirements. Criteria recommended by advisory boards assures relevancy, objectivity and standardization. In addition, each discipline has a district-wide discipline committee whose members

are department chairs, or their representatives, from the other district campuses.

Each discipline has a measure of student skills that it employs. For instance, courses requiring the direct use of technology, such as the computer science and business disciplines, use equipment that enable students to measure their applied learning skills in both lecture and laboratory environments. Courses requiring the learning of verbal and written skills have the appropriate measuring tools, such as oral delivery in speech classes which use the classically structured Montaigne *essayer*, and regularly assigned essays and research papers that utilize the Modern Language Association (MLA)-style in English classes. Some courses require students to research information through other documentation standards, such as social science courses requiring research skills using the American Psychological Association (APA)-style, whereas our natural and applied science courses often require the research learning skills using the Council of Science Editors (CSE) style.

General education requirements for the AA and AS degrees and transfer competencies also require coursework in political, civic, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally, as well as historical and aesthetic awareness and appreciation in a world cultures framework.

## EVALUATION

Currently no formal general education learning outcomes exist, but these outcomes are a planned activity of the Student Learning Outcomes Committee. The college catalog documents general education competencies as requirements for degrees

and certificates and explains the rationale for these competencies.

The Curriculum Committee has a General Education Subcommittee to work on issues and understanding of the importance concerning general education courses for the educated participant in a civilized society. The committee, however, has not been active.

The college has not identified general education learning outcomes. The college recognizes that improvement is required in formally identifying data in this area and assessing such outcomes.

Students have shared that they understand course content and can apply the knowledge they learn in various situations, including higher level courses of general education requirements to achieve degrees, certificates and meeting transfer requirements. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- Develop, assess, and improve general education student learning outcomes that integrate life long skills throughout the curricula.

**II.A.4. All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.**

#### DESCRIPTION

The college degree of Associate in Arts and Associate in Science programs include at least one area of focused study or interdisciplinary core courses along with the general education courses. Information regarding the degree major cores is listed on

“major” sheets in the counseling office and in the college catalog.

#### EVALUATION

The college catalog reflects that all degree programs include a focused study in at least one area of inquiry or major or in an established interdisciplinary core. The college satisfies this standard requirement and openly publishes this information. The college fully meets the standard.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- None

**II.A.5. Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.**

#### DESCRIPTION

According to dialogue that discipline committees have with their advisory boards, many of the students who complete vocational and occupational degrees and certificates meet employment competencies. Furthermore, student surveys and student achievement data support that students are meeting the applicable standards that prepare them for employment, external licensure, and certification. The college, through its computer applications and office technology discipline, also recently gained membership with the World of Webmasters, a noted organization for the support of webmasters. In addition, the college, through the appropriate disciplines, works closely with external agencies, such as that in the nursing discipline, which has a

separate accreditation process, to prepare students for certification by those agencies.

### EVALUATION

Based on the dialogue and data, the college demonstrates, in most cases, the students' ability to meet the requirements of employment, licensure, and certification. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

### PLANNING AGENDA

- Analyze data to determine to what extent students are completing external competency requirements.

**II.A.6. The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies. The institution describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section, students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institutions officially approved course outline.**

### DESCRIPTION

The Catalog Committee meets regularly to review and update educational and course information. This committee includes the dean responsible for curriculum and the Articulation Officer, both of whom work closely with the committee to ensure that information is accurate when listed in websites and published.

The catalog describes degrees and certificates, including the educational requirements, number of units to complete, and any prerequisite courses. In addition, the information is available in the Counseling department where there are handouts for each discipline's degrees and certificates.

Expectations of student learning and achievement are evident in course and program descriptions generated by the Curriculum Committee and in student learning outcomes developed by faculty.

Students receive syllabi for each course. The faculty member updates course syllabi each semester; the department chairs and the Office of Academic Affairs collect these syllabi at the beginning of every term, and these become documents of record. The Curriculum Committee encourages faculty to include student learning outcomes and course objectives, as they are developed, in the syllabus. Faculty evaluations may include review of syllabi and congruence with course outline of record.

### EVALUATION

Students have access to the campus catalog on the college website; the catalog reflects accurate information that is updated annually. The Catalog Committee meets regularly to review information in the catalog for accuracy and currency. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of student respondents indicated they receive course syllabi and the syllabi are followed. Syllabi information is not yet standardized, however, faculty have approved a syllabus checklist that ensures inclusion of critical course information for students. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

**PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**II.A.6a. The institution makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies in order to facilitate the mobility of students without penalty. In accepting transfer credits to fulfill degree requirements, the institution certifies that the expected learning outcomes for transferred courses are comparable to the learning outcomes of its own courses. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements as appropriate to its mission.**

**DESCRIPTION**

The Articulation Officer coordinates and reports policies for transfer of coursework. Articulation policies are made available to students and the public in publications such as class schedules and the college catalog. They can also be obtained the Counseling Office through the handouts entitled *Plans A and B California State University General Education (CSU-GE)* and *Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)* as general education core curriculum for transfer. In addition, students and the public may obtain articulation information on a college or university of their choice at [www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org). The Articulation Officer annually reviews and updates policy information, submits the policies for Curriculum Committee approval, and the respective information is published and printed.

**EVALUATION**

The college feels that it effectively meets this standard. Through published and printed material, the college makes available to its

students articulation policies with transfer institutions and develops articulation policies in concert with its mission statement. The college fully meets the standard.

**PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**II.A.6b. When programs are eliminated or program requirements are significantly changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.**

**DESCRIPTION**

The college has a process for evaluating programs and, if changes occur, addressing student needs with a minimal amount of disruption. Students are notified of change and alternatives are presented.

When the college eliminates or makes major changes in programs, it does so through the activities of the program viability process. This process acknowledges identified signals that initiate a process to determine whether changes or termination of a program is necessary to maintain program viability. As part of the process, the college ensures that students are advised about any changes that may occur as an outcome of the review process and creates systems, if necessary, to ensure that students who are impacted by change can complete their programs.

**EVALUATION**

The two recent program viability studies concluded with a series of recommendations to improve the programs based program data

evaluation, focus groups, surveys, and interviews.

The PACE program viability process resulted in a reduction of courses and components. The college was able to redirect students into appropriate courses so that they could finish their program in a timely manner. In a few instances, the college created new courses outside of the PACE program in a format to assist the students in the completion of their initial goals.

During the nursing program viability process, many recommendations were made to revitalize the program including, modifying the fiscal operations, revamping the curriculum processes and revising curriculum. The new curriculum, which was approved by the nursing board, is being phased in. The college did not admit a nursing cohort in the spring 2005 so that the nursing program could minimize having to continue offering courses in two different programs. This phasing in one and out has caused some challenges when students who are in the old program need to repeat a course. To address this, the nursing program has made some modifications to the course offerings and is currently scheduling short-term classes for the students. The college fully meets the standard.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- None

**II.A.6c. The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently to prospective and current students, the public, and its personnel through its catalogs, statements, and publications, including those presented in electronic formats. It regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to**

**assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.**

#### DESCRIPTION

The college ensures that college publications are accurate and have the most current information concerning policies and practices to assure integrity of information. For example, the Catalog Committee annually reviews that publication by contacting individuals and committees for new, changed, or eliminated courses, programs, requirements, policies, and procedures. Individual faculty submit updated information endorsed by the respective chair. Each semester's class schedule is updated, not only with course offerings and instructor listings, but also with updated college policies and procedures. In addition, faculty and staff have computer access to electronic campus messages and updates from district, administrative, and supervisory personnel on all changed or eliminated processes, procedures, and policies, so the college is current on relevant issues. The district and the college administration regularly review the policies concerning electronic messaging to maintain professional integrity.

The college publicly publishes information on student achievement on the institutional research website, <http://lasc.edu/research>. The Dean of Institutional Research and Planning keeps the information accurate and updates it annually.

#### EVALUATION

The college engages in a planning review process to ensure that information is available, accurate, and presented in a variety of formats. Through the Catalog Committee, the college frequently reviews policies, and that information is included in

the catalog and schedule of classes. Such reviews ensure the integrity of the college's information. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the students who were surveyed thought that the college publications, e.g. catalog, class schedule, and web site, adequately reflect the college's practices. The college fully meets the standard.

### PLANNING AGENDA

- Standardize syllabi information that incorporates student learning outcomes.

**II.A.7. In order to assure the academic integrity of the teaching-learning process, the institution uses and makes public governing board-adopted policies on academic freedom and responsibility, student academic honesty, and specific institutional beliefs or worldviews. These policies make clear the institution's commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.**

**II.A.7a. Faculty distinguishes between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline. They present data and information fairly and objectively.**

### DESCRIPTION

The district board-approved policy on academic freedom appears in "Article 4" of the faculty labor-management collective bargaining *Agreement* and is available to all faculty and administration. The policy states, "The faculty shall have the academic freedom to seek the truth and guarantee freedom of learning to the students." This statement is also in a similar form in the campus catalog, which is available to students and the public.

The college expects that the faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline by adhering to the district board policies on political statements. For example, an instructor may encourage students to vote in an election and direct them to a table outside the classroom building where voter registration forms are available, but the instructor may not express a political bias nor suggest to his students that they vote a certain way. Furthermore, the district, the collective bargaining agent, and the college adhere to the non-discrimination statement of "Article 5" of the *Agreement* stating the board and the collective bargaining agent will not discriminate against any faculty member. It is expected that the faculty member may not discriminate against any student because of the student's background or beliefs and may not impose a contradictory expression on that background or beliefs, which imposition in the classroom would impede the student's academic freedom.

### EVALUATION

The concept of academic integrity and freedom in the teaching process is broadly accepted at Los Angeles Southwest College. The issue is addressed in faculty evaluation processes and is a topic of discussion at the various faculty meetings. The institution respects the concept of sharing world-wide beliefs with the student population to broaden their knowledge of the world. Policies as described above are current and acknowledged in the teaching process. With the diverse body of students represented at Los Angeles Southwest College, the commitment to acceptance, dissemination, and free pursuit of knowledge is widely embraced. In response to the recent survey, 79 percent of students indicated that instructors encouraged them to explore

different viewpoints, and 88 percent stated that instructors treated them with respect and dignity. In addition, 86 percent of student respondents felt that instructors provide honest feedback about their skills and abilities.

The faculty have not had concerns with this distinction, but they feel that review can strengthen the college. The college does however, have the mechanisms in place for a student grievance process and the faculty peer evaluation process to determine how effectively the college and the faculty meet the expectations of keeping personal bias out of the classroom. The college fully meets the standard.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- None

#### **II.A.7b. The institution establishes and publishes clear expectations concerning student academic honesty and consequences for dishonesty.**

##### DESCRIPTION

The college has a clear position and statement on student academic honesty. The position is also clear on the consequences for dishonest behavior. The *Student Handbook* delineates what the college considers to be academic dishonesty. This is further stated in the college catalog and in some course syllabi. Student orientation meetings and personal development courses reinforce personal behavior in an academic setting.

##### EVALUATION

The college does an effective job making clear its expectations that cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable. The recent

student survey indicates that 82 percent of students stated that the policies and penalties for cheating are provided and followed. Special program handbooks also address this issue, as well as the campus catalog and some syllabi.

The faculty have discussed the issue in meetings and dialogued on strategies to eliminate academic dishonesty. However, the college recognizes that there is a cultural difference in the meaning of “cheating.” Despite this, the college is committed to academic honesty and reliance on the faculty to define and enforce the definition of plagiarism and cheating. The college fully meets the standard.

#### PLANNING AGENDA

- None

#### **II.A.7c. Institutions that require conformity to specific codes of conduct of staff, faculty, administrators, or students, or that seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews, give clear prior notice of such policies, including statements in the catalog and/or appropriate faculty or student handbooks.**

##### DESCRIPTION

The codes of conduct for staff, faculty, and administration concern legal and quasi-legal issues, such as discrimination, sexual harassment, theft, or forgery, and can be found in campus and district policies. The district and the campus administration give notice, as required by law or policy, of such codes of conduct. Issues concerning personal behavioral breaches, such as sexual harassment, are discussed in meetings, one-on-one interactions, and topics of workshops and bulletins from the Compliance Officer. Student codes of conduct appear in the

*Student Handbook*, the college catalog, student services handouts, and in the schedule of classes.

Some college policies, such as those concerning electronic devices in the classroom, appear on some classroom bulletin boards and throughout the campus. Information from the Compliance Officer is also available to students.

### **EVALUATION**

The campus policies regarding conduct of students and staff are widely distributed and accessible in printed documents and posted on bulletin boards. The college fully meets the standard.

### **PLANNING AGENDA**

- None

**II.A.8. Institutions offering curricula in foreign locations to students other than U.S. nationals operate in conformity with standards and applicable Commission policies.**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Los Angeles Southwest College does not offer curricula in foreign locations.