Cluster Update Plan

The purpose of the Cluster Update Plan is to help Clusters: 1) utilize department/unit plans to develop priorities within each cluster; 2) utilize priorities in the budget development process; 3) monitor progress on department/unit plans and validation committee recommendations; and 4) document any changes within the cluster, College, State, or surrounding community. Although the Cluster Update Plan utilizes the department/unit plans, it is strongly recommended that cluster planning begin prior to the September 30th Annual Update Plan deadline.

An open forum will be held during each update period to notify the campus community of cluster priorities and budget processes.

Please complete and submit your Cluster Update Plan to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

For questions regarding the Cluster Update Planning process, please contact Ryan Cornner or Alfred Gallegos at the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Name of Cluster: Liberal Arts & Sciences
Name of person(s) completing this form: Dr. Richard Moyer; Kerrin McMahon, Al Rios, Carol Kozeracki, Ryan Cornner, and Vi Ly
State of the Cluster

Describe the state of the Cluster to indicate the current needs and directions of the cluster. Please be sure to include external data that indicate any significant recent events, or activities in the State or surrounding community that may impact the current or future status or direction of the Cluster. Please include a description of internal data that describe the current status of the College and Cluster units. Use the Annual Updates from the Cluster’s departments/units as needed to support this description. Define the Cluster’s past priorities and indicate what efforts have been made toward these priorities and any changes that have resulted in delays in cluster efforts.

External Data

SB 1440, “Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act,” which was originally signed in 2010, continues to have an impact on ELAC curriculum as we strive to meet the required benchmarks of the law by creating transfer curricula that will enable our students to seamlessly move through ELAC to CSU campuses. ELAC now has fully approved transfer degrees in Art History, Communication Studies, Early Childhood Education, Geography, History, Kinesiology, Mathematics, Psychology, Sociology, and Studio Arts. Degrees in Anthropology and Music were submitted but have been returned by the state for revision. Degrees in Administration of Justice, Elementary Teacher Education, Journalism, Physics, and Spanish are in process. The challenge remains to assist the disciplines of Business Administration, Economics, Geology, Philosophy, Political Science, and Theatre Arts in developing the state-mandated degrees.

SB 1414, “Common Course Numbering System,” was approved in 2006 and is still in the process of being fully implemented across the state. The C-ID system was established to meet the legislated mandate for a common course numbering system among California’s public colleges and universities and offers a means of one-to-many articulation with four-year universities and across all 112 community colleges. By June 1, 2015, colleges must replace all course-to-course articulation used for all AA-T and AS-T degrees by showing that all course(s) have awarded pending or final C-ID status. Articulation may only be used where no C-ID descriptor is available. The Chancellor’s Office will supposedly begin deactivating all noncompliant AA-T and AS-T degrees beginning June 2015 that do not have approved C-ID numbers for courses where descriptors exist. However, ELAC will not be affected as all transfer degrees approved to date have all their courses submitted to C-ID, and our curriculum process guarantees no transfer degree is considered that does not meet this requirement.

As part of statewide curriculum reform, it has been necessary to eliminate most repeatable courses, which were previously common in kinesiology and the arts, and replace them with distinct “leveled” courses requiring students to show incremental
progress and eliminating repeat enrollment in the same course level, barring an unsatisfactory grade. Leveling is now fully implemented; its impact remains to be seen as students just began working through the levels in fall 2013.

Students in all courses now also have to comply with state regulations limiting their number of attempts at any one class within a community college district to three enrollments, including withdrawals and unsatisfactory grades. Data on the number of students affected, as well as the courses most affected, have been requested from OIE.

Continued growth in FTES – 2.75% in 2013-14 and 1.75% in 2014-15 – enables the college to continue recovering from the severe cutbacks of earlier years. Via the Enrollment Management Committee, we have made an effort to judiciously distribute increased class hours to disciplines in order to maximize student access and success.

Finally, the newly established GO East LA initiative, establishing a pathway for students from feeder high schools (presently Garfield High School) smoothly to ELAC and then to transfer institutions, shows promise with strong support from our high school and CSU partners. It is obviously too early for data, but Academic Affairs will do its part to actively promote and facilitate this initiative for student access and completion.

**Internal Data**
In 2013-14, Women’s PE and Men’s PE merged into a single Kinesiology Department. This required significant planning and adjustment on the part of faculty, staff, and administration. The merger is now complete. Academic Affairs is confident the new arrangement will better serve students by eliminating confusion and duplication, and enabling cooperation in curriculum, budget, and department governance matters. The remaining piece of the puzzle is the expected separation of the Dance discipline into its own department.

The English department continued the process of streamlining its basic skills curriculum to reduce the number of courses in the sequence leading to English 101. In its current format, there are four courses that entering students who assess at the lowest level would have to take: Reading 20, English 21, English 26, and English 28. As planned, English 26 will be eliminated while the remaining courses (English 21, 28, and 101) will be enriched through a number of approaches, including web enhancement, coordination with the Writing Center, and potentially the development of supplemental modular courses. Reading 20 may also be removed from the sequence if the faculty are confident that the benefit of moving the students through the English sequence more quickly does not result in lower success rates for the least prepared students.
The status of the future South Gate/Firestone Center remains high on the agendas of faculty and administration. Faculty have expressed interest in programming class offerings at that site, rather than having individual departments determine their offerings on an ad hoc basis as is presently done at South Gate.

The new Student Success building is projected to be ready for occupancy by summer of 2015. The building will house English/ESL, Humanities, Foreign Languages, Communication Studies, and Chicano Studies as well as the Learning Center, the Honors Program, and state-of-the art facilities for language arts to be shared among Foreign Languages and ESL students. This transition will enable repurposing of space presently occupied by these programs as the campus progresses in its physical transformation.

The college adapted and expanded its first year programs in 2013-14. As the result of an official viability review, the Adelante Program was revised to focus on full-time and part-time students who place into English 21 or below. The program will operate in 2014-15 with five cohorts (approximately 225 students) at the main campus and at South Gate. The First-Year Completion program, which was developed based on the best practices in the literature and the experience of the Adelante program, welcomed its first cohort of almost 500 full-time students in Summer 2013. Both programs offer dedicated counselors, tutors, workshops, and activities that emphasize transfer and career exploration. The campus remains committed to the value of cohort education targeting first-time students.

**Status of Previous Priorities**

1. Diversify course offerings at South Gate campus and provide support services comparable to those offered at the main campus.

Between 2013-13 and 2013-14, ELAC’s course offerings at South Gate grew from 394 to 435, a 10% increase. Particular growth was noted in English (7 extra courses), math (8 extra courses), and social sciences (9 additional courses). A medical terminology course was offered for the first time at South Gate. Limited laboratory facilities continue to restrict the availability of life science and physical science courses at that campus. The college expanded its Student Services staffing and hours of operation at South Gate with a commitment to more counseling, financial aid, and matriculation staff on site.

2. More closely integrate the efforts of the Academic Affairs and Student Services areas.
The First Year Completion program brought together the Academic Affairs and Student Services areas to support its initial cohort of students. The dean and director work closely with the assigned counselor, the Transfer Center director, and the outreach coordinator to recruit students, select appropriate courses to offer, and support students in formulating and achieving their academic goals. In addition, the Vice President of Student Services extended an invitation to his monthly meeting to the Academic Affairs deans, three of whom now regularly attend the meeting.

3. Ensure college compliance with the ACCJC requirements related to student learning outcomes assessment and improvement at the course, program, and institutional level.

In 2013-14, the college demonstrated its commitment to achieving the ACCJC’s standards related to learning outcomes assessment by hiring a full-time, tenure track faculty member exclusively for this function. This individual worked closely with the Academic Senate and department chairs to hire two campuswide facilitators to assist her and to select and train dozens of department facilitators to guide their respective departments’ efforts. She also offered training for the deans and department chairs and regularly reports on learning outcomes assessment efforts to the governing committees on campus. She is also leading the Learning Assessment Committee’s efforts to more closely integrate learning outcomes with the curriculum approval process. ACCJC’s response to our annual learning outcomes status report, which was sent to ACCJC in the Spring, resulted in a marginal grade from the Commission, showing continued need for improvement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Goal</th>
<th>Annual or Long-term</th>
<th>Alignment with Strategic Plan/ Anticipated Outcome of Cluster Goal</th>
<th>Resources Needed (Staffing, Budget, Equipment, etc.)</th>
<th>Related Departments/Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Diversify course offerings at South Gate campus and provide support services comparable to those offered at the main campus</td>
<td>Annual and Long-term</td>
<td>Goal 3 – sustaining community-centered access and participation; accreditation standard IIA – providing comparable quality of instruction at all locations</td>
<td>Ongoing discussions with department chairs should result in more classes; expansion of student services will require sustained pressure because additional resources may be required</td>
<td>May require some increase in staffing for support services; course offerings can be achieved with reallocation of existing hours</td>
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<td>More closely integrate the efforts of the Academic Affairs and Student Services areas</td>
<td>Annual and Long-term</td>
<td>Goal 1 – increasing student success and academic excellence</td>
<td>First-year completion program will serve as a pilot to test the efforts to integrate the services provided by</td>
<td>Initial need is for regular, effective communication and joint planning between areas, both at the administrative level and through committees</td>
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<td>Ensure college compliance with the ACCJC requirements related to student learning outcomes assessment and improvement at the course, program, and institutional level</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Goal 4 – ensuring institutional effectiveness and accountability; accreditation standard IIA – requiring the identification, assessment, and utilization of SLOs</td>
<td>A concerted effort to identify and assess program learning outcomes, including the support of the deans, should allow the college to make substantial progress in this one area that continues to be very problematic</td>
<td>No additional funds needed, just a concerted effort on the part of faculty and administrators</td>
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Validation Committee Recommendations Alignment

**Table 2: Validation Committee Recommendations Alignment**
Please list recommendations from your most recent comprehensive cluster review. Please note any units within your cluster that align with each recommendation.

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<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Progress Made Toward Cluster Recommendation</th>
<th>Anticipated Completion Date of Cluster Recommendation</th>
<th>Resources Needed (Staffing, Budget, Equipment, etc.)</th>
<th>Related Departments/Units</th>
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Budget Priorities

Complete a statement of priorities for the 2014-2015 fiscal year that describes the rationale for which items will be funded. Example, the cluster has prioritized the funding of upgrading software needed to remain current in its disciplines. Cluster priorities should be developed with the intent of creating categories that include multiple units.

Personnel:
Lab technician replacement is needed for the Chemistry department. Funding (100) should already be in placed.
Technical support assistant is needed for Distance Ed = $42,422 + benefit.
Multimedia specialist is needed for Distance Ed = $64,454 + benefit.
Lab techs needed for Anthro/Geog, Life Science = $61,500 + benefit for each department.
Instructional Assistance for Writing Center = $61,500 + benefit.
Tutors for Writing Center = $125,000.
Tutors for Math lab = $25,000.
Student workers for Foreign Language = $6000.
Student workers for Social Sciences = $11,000.
Student workers for Writing Center = $25,000.
Student workers for Life Sciences = $2893.
Student workers for Anthro/Geog = $3000.

Equipment/Materials
Microscope repair for Life Sciences = $3000.
Lab supplies for Life Sciences = $3000.
Supplies for Anthro/Geog = $700.
Brochure printing for Honors Program = $1060.
Supplies for Social Sciences = $550.
Supplies for English (printers/toners) = $5000.
Editing software for animation = $24,000.
Musical instruments for Music = $12,000.

Others
Student travel/conferences for Honors Program = $900.