

De Anza College
Spring 2012-APRU Language Arts: Dean's Summary

The most significant changes in the Language Arts Division since the comprehensive program review was done in 2008 are the loss of the Readiness Program, course and section reductions, and reduced funding for equipment and supplies, professional development, and special projects. Because of the loss of Readiness and reductions in other courses and sections, enrollment dropped by nearly 20% from 2009-2010 to 2010-2011 and WSCH fell approximately 10%. Total FTEF fell from 116 to 105, with the greatest loss taken in the FT FTEF, from 51 to 41. This significant reduction in full-time faculty has reduced the FT faculty ratio to 39%. The loss of faculty affected all departments in the division. Data regarding success rates in English, ESL, and Reading showed slight declines in the success rates of targeted populations; however, the restructuring of the curriculum and removal of the Readiness Program account for most if not all of those changes. These programs should now treat 2010-2011 as a baseline year from which to compare future data. Establishing this new benchmark will allow an "apples to apples" comparison to be made as we move forward. In spite of the difficulty in determining trends because of the variations in the data, the Language Arts Division has felt ever-increasing pressure on enrollment in core classes during peak hours. All of the departments noted the difficulty in finding sufficient and practical classroom space in which to schedule classes that are in high demand. Although much progress has been made in modernizing the L-Quad classrooms and equipping them with emerging multimedia technology, many of our sections are still offered in classrooms without multimedia or in rooms clearly designed for another purpose that are "borrowed" from other divisions. We continue to work to improve scheduling in the division and have achieved extraordinary fill capacities in almost all of our departments, yet we have reached a plateau because of insufficient space during peak hours. Having more dedicated modern classrooms available would allow us to maximize enrollment and productivity while simultaneously creating greater community among the students, a key tool in increasing retention, persistence and success.

All of the programs in the division are making progress in their SLO and PLO efforts. All departments in the division have embraced the PLO of critical thinking and begun developing tools for assessment or have already implemented assessment of it in their routine work. Cooperative programs like LinC, LART, Puente, SanKofa, FYE, and others continue to excel and feed into the success of all of students in all courses. Efforts in improving placement of incoming students, normalization of standards across all sections of a course, procedures for prerequisite clearances, and portfolio assessment have led to greater efficiency and understanding within and among departments. As was stated so eloquently in the Reading APRU, "All programs support targeted populations, and typically recruit from the lowest performing schools in the Bay area. Such programs focus to build community, support students through counseling, tutoring, mentoring using a culturally relevant pedagogical philosophy. Students become agents of their own change." These multidimensional approaches to literacy and engagement are key elements in the departmental efforts to close the equity gap. Continued cooperation with the Office of Outreach and Relations with Schools and efforts to engage new and incoming students through emerging technology are also included in the plans as means to close the equity gap.

Individually, the departments have various needs specific to their curriculum. The Speech Department recognizes the need for professional development aimed at broadening the

teaching skills of their part-time faculty and considers it essential to continue to implement emerging technology, digital recording and hybrid classes.

The English Department points to the need for enhanced learning environments, continued staff development to increase the number of faculty qualified to teach online and hybrid sections, funding to pay stipends to part-time faculty for attending department workshops and retreats, additional training for LinC and other cooperative efforts, mentoring for part-time faculty, and support or matching funds to bring quality speakers and to host readings and literature festivals on campus which have powerful lasting impact on students.

The Journalism Department, while waiting for specific direction from a full-time faculty member next year, recognizes the challenge of the rapidly changing field of media production and the necessity of maintaining close relationships with local media outlets through the Advisory Board and other means. The network of professions allows the program to place students in internships, gain valuable insight into trends in business and technology related to media, and create opportunities for students from targeted populations to apply for scholarships or to participate in minority journalism organizations. A keen challenge for Journalism in the coming years will be keeping abreast of rapid changes in production and emerging technology.

The ESL Department considers the refresh of smart classrooms to be a priority and has proposed designating space in the ATC for small meeting rooms in which students in groups of four to six can meet with instructors and have access to computers and smart room technology. ESL plans to continue to assess the standards in core courses and will pursue curriculum revision in ESL263, following up on the work already done to increase the amount of draft writing in the course, and focusing on writing as a process in order to promote meta-cognitive skills and critical thinking.

The Reading Department is working within the division and across the college on ways to increase the number of students who register immediately for a Reading course once they have placed into it. They are encouraged in their efforts by data that proves that for students who need reading instruction, taking it earlier rather than later increases the overall success rates of students. They plan to work with Institutional Research to gather more data that can help validate early enrollment in Reading courses. They are especially concerned about the students already in the system who need reading but are unable to register for the course because of severely limited sections.

All departments in the division recognize the devastating impact that ongoing cuts have had on enrollment, student success, and equity. Speech, ESL, Reading and English are deeply concerned about the need to replace full-time faculty that have retired. There is a distinct need for each of these departments to recruit and retain talented full-time faculty members who represent the complex diversity of the students we serve. Continued success in many of our programs depends directly on continued professional development for our current full- and part-time faculty and the ability to recruit and hire new full-time faculty who will add to the incredible diversity and talent we already have.