



# Los Rios CCD

## 2013-2014 PROGRAM REVIEW

### SUPPORT SERVICES

Unit: **Communications & Media Relations**

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# I. Program Review Purpose

## Definition of a Support Services Unit

For the purposes of this program review document, a support services unit is defined as a District department which is responsible for providing services throughout the District in a manner which creates and maintains an optimal learning environment for students and/or provides the necessary services to support the overall operation of the District and colleges.

## Program Review Purpose

The purpose of review is to evaluate the quality of the support services provided and to use the information from the evaluation to plan program improvements. Regular program reviews are required to meet regional accreditation requirements, state requirements, and best practices. ACCJC Accreditation Standard I.B states,

*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 process 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.*

Support services units are expected to undergo a full review every three years.

## Relationship of Program Review to Unit Plans

When completed, this Program Review document should provide the following to support your annual Unit Plan document:

- Unit mission statement
- Purpose statement that identifies how your unit supports creation and maintenance of an optimal student learning environment and/or provides the necessary services to support the overall operation of the District and colleges
- Findings to justify continuing or changing current operating procedures
- Justifications for requesting new resources

## Program Review Due Dates

All departments must be reviewed at least once every three years during the year cited on the LRCCD Support Services Program Review Cycle. Reviews are due by June 30<sup>th</sup> of the year in which they are reviewed. A copy of the review will be maintained in the unit and the Office of Education and Technology.

## II. Mission Statement

Provide your **unit's mission statement** below. Your statement must align with the District mission statement and should match your mission statement in your unit plan.

For reference, the following are LRCCD's Vision and Mission statements:

### *Vision Statement*

We, the Los Rios community colleges, provide outstanding programs and services so that all students meet and exceed their educational, career, personal and social goals. We meet the social and economic needs of the community.

### *Mission Statement*

Relying on their professional and organizational excellence, the Los Rios community colleges:

- Provide outstanding undergraduate education, offering programs that lead to certificates, associate degrees, and transfer;
- Provide excellent career and technical educational programs that prepare students for job entry and job advancement through improved skills and knowledge, including the demands of new technologies;
- Provide a comprehensive range of student development programs and services that support student success and enrich student life;
- Provide educational services that address needs in basic skills, English as a second language, and lifelong learning; and
- Promote the social and economic development of the region by educating the workforce and offering responsive programs such as service learning, business partnerships, workforce literacy, training, and economic development centers.

*Provide your unit's mission statement below:*

The mission of the LRCCD's Communications & Media Relations Unit is to support the Chancellor in his efforts to expand and enhance the District's reputation and to further the District's goals and objectives through marketing, social media and internal, community and media relations, including the strategic sharing of timely and accurate information with the Los Rios colleges and their constituents, community and governmental organizations, and other schools, colleges and universities. The Unit's mission is also to ensure the transmittal of timely and accurate District information to and from the Board of Trustees.

## III. Unit Responsibilities

List your unit's **primary assigned responsibilities**, including those related to creating and supporting an optimal student learning environment and/or the overall operation of the District and colleges. Also identify any major projects your unit is expected to support on a periodic basis (e.g. opening of new facilities, IT infrastructure upgrades, etc.).

- Coordinate districtwide marketing, communications and media relations efforts and advise colleges on strategic communications, through conversations with the Presidents and college communicators – through weekly executive staff meetings, monthly meetings of the Los Rios

Communications Council, regular emailing and phone conferencing. Keep Board of Trustees apprised of communications issues.

- Continue efforts to ensure that all internal and external Los Rios District and college communications – including electronic and print communications, new building plaques and strategic planning – share the same look, feel and messaging across the District and, in some instances, share and repurpose the same information to emphasize communication priorities.
- Operate and manage the Los Rios District’s social media channels, including the Facebook page, Twitter feed and YouTube channel, as well as manage the District’s website; explore other opportunities for expanding and enhancing the Chancellor and the District’s presence on social media.
- Meet on a regular basis with student trustee and campus student body presidents to gather student insights into District/college communications strategies and policies.
- Collaborate with AVC Student Services, college VPs of Student Services and IT team on improvements to websites to make vital academic and student services info more accessible to students.
- Provide fresh content for the News/Events “stack” of the District homepage, and systematically update and revise home site pages.
- Distribute the biweekly “In the News” electronic newsletter to Los Rios management that contains up-to-date news articles about Los Rios/higher education matters. Create and distribute press releases electronically to keep media and community informed about Los Rios matters.
- Expand and enhance development communications, in coordination with college communicators, college advancement officers and the Office of Resource & Economic Development.
- Update District brochures, flyers, stationery and internal communication publications.
- Serve as first media contact for questions, emails and phone calls regarding District, colleges and programs. Frequently provide direction/referrals to appropriate District and college departments.
- Collaborate with IT staff on the planning, investment in and implementation of a new Content Management System (CMS) for the Los Rios District website. For economies of scale (cost savings) and ease of IT support, possible coordination and implementation of the same CMS at one or more Los Rios colleges.
- Plan and implement an integrated, strategic marketing campaign designed to help increase student enrollment for fall 2014 at the Los Rios colleges, including video, social media and advertising, and internal, community and media relations.

- Create a Style Guide designed to support and strengthen the Los Rios brand and give all Los Rios graphics and marketing materials a consistent and professional look and feel.

**Future unit responsibilities:**

- Collaborate with Los Rios faculty to establish for-credit student social media/marketing/communications internships at the District Office to support the Communications & Media Relations Unit.
- Co-sponsor (with media partners) and lead planning for, organize and execute a high-profile political debate at the Harris Center, to draw broader regional attention to the District's high-quality facilities; most likely event would be a debate of the two leading candidates for the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District seat, with the Harris Center centrally located in that District. In addition, an educational debate-watching seminar would be organized with Los Rios faculty on the panel to add an important educational element to the effort (and seats would be reserved for students in the debate hall).
- In partnership with the Los Rios Foundation, the District's Office of Resource and Economic Development and the advancement officers at the four colleges, organize and execute an inaugural 5k "Run for Los Rios" at the Folsom Lake College cross-country course to raise money for the Student Emergency Fund.

List those **district and college** operating units your unit must interact with on a regular basis in order to complete the primary responsibilities of your unit. Briefly describe the types of interaction you have with the listed units.

- College Public Information Offices and President's Offices – Give information and advice on marketing, strategic communications, recruitments, events and media relations.
- Chancellor's Office – Keep Chancellor apprised of communications issues affecting the District and/or colleges. Support with strategic communications, District messaging and branding.
- Board of Trustees – Keep Board apprised of District communications efforts and issues. Write talking points for Trustees and perform other strategic communications assignments as needed.
- Student Trustee and Student Advisory Committee – Gather student insights into district/college communications strategies and policies.
- Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Services – Collaboration to make improvements to student services communications, including changes to website and creating informational flyers. Collaboration on student trustee elections website.
- Office of Resource and Economic Development – Coordination of expanding and enhancing development communications.
- Information Technology – Collaborate with IT staff on the planning, investment in and implementation of a new Content Management System (CMS); expanding and enhancing the

current District website; distributing communications to staff and students; collaboration with IT Help Desk with support on student inquiries.

- General Counsel – Work with General Counsel regarding legal issues affecting communications and social media.
- Faculty – Collaborate with Los Rios faculty to establish for-credit student social media/marketing/communications internships at the District Office, and discuss with them new ideas and efforts to enroll and engage students.
- General Services/Printing – Collaboration on printing District communications and publications. Working with Accounting Operations to ensure payments of our unit's invoices.
- Fiscal Services – Periodic interaction with Fiscal Services regarding our unit's budget and financial obligations, and offer advice and collaboration on how the District prepares and communicates its budget to internal and external audiences.
- Education & Technology – Collaborate on publicizing internally and externally newly proposed teaching and student service programs and technologies.

## IV. Relevancy

Briefly describe why your unit's work is **relevant to the institution** with respect to how it supports an optimal student learning environment and/or overall operation of the District and colleges. State the reasons you expect the need for this program to continue.

- Districtwide marketing, communications and media relations efforts help drive student enrollment and expand and enhance the District's reputation among the voters and taxpayers of the District.
- District communications through our website, publications and social media keep students, community, Board of Trustees, staff and administrators apprised of programs, student success efforts, changes in student services/educational policy, and general information regarding the District and/or colleges.
- District coordination of all marketing and communications among the District and four colleges ensures that all internal and external information share the same professional look and feel.
- Coordination with Office of Resource & Economic Development helps drive fundraising, elevates the culture of philanthropy and keeps public officials and the broader community informed of development opportunities and the positive impact of philanthropy.
- Coordination with IT Department helps keep website up-to-date and relevant to and effective for students, staff and community regarding our District, colleges, registration information and student services.

## V. Currency

Describe the ways in which your unit is **current** (e.g. technology use, equipment, approaches and methodologies), or what you need to do to become and remain current over the next three years.

- In the past year (2013-14), Communications & Media Relations has launched the District into the age of social media with the creation of its first-ever District Facebook page, Twitter feed and YouTube channel. In addition, the Unit, in cooperation with a video production team, produced a video enrollment campaign of 10 videos that has garnered a statewide award, and the Unit also has directed a spring enrollment marketing campaign and will soon launch a fall campaign.
- Our Adobe Design Suite software package is currently up-to-date and useful in creating advertisements, publications and flyers.
- Efficient computer workstations with large monitors are current.
- The implementation of a new Los Rios District CMS would require considerable initial investment (approx. \$40,000-\$50,000) in software, licensing and equipment, some initial training costs and ongoing licensing costs.
- The implementation of a new Los Rios District CMS would require at least a .5 FTE who would be responsible for training CMS users throughout the District.
- Creating a student communications internship program would involve the recruitment of student interns who would work for credit. Might need additional computer stations at the empty desk(s)/work area(s) for communications student interns.
- Teri Winkley, administrative assistant in the Communications Unit, would benefit greatly by classes in Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign.
- Mitchel Benson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications & Media Relations, would benefit from classes/seminars in video storytelling and managing branding/marketing/advertising campaigns, and would benefit from discussions of best practices by attending conferences sponsored by such groups as CASE, CCPro and NCMPR.

## VI. Effectiveness

1. List the types of data/information you will use to **assess how effective** your unit is in completing **each** of its primary responsibilities (e.g. student/client satisfaction surveys, audits, safety inspections, facility use information, product quality and timeliness, etc.).
  - Our marketing firm, 3-Fold Communications, will attempt to track how effective our marketing campaign will be by monitoring how many “clicks” on Los Rios ads and, if possible, track how many people who see Los Rios ads actually have submitted applications.



- All internal and external District and college communications, marketing, publications and informational flyers will have the same consistent look and feel. The Los Rios Style Guide, when completed, will also support the consistency of our documents/publications and help staff with guidelines.
  - Our Facebook page monitors how many viewers and likes we receive. The Facebook page has grown to 569 likes in six months, since its launch in November 2013, and our top 10 most popular posts have reached more than 350 individuals (and our top post 716). Our Twitter feed has 437 followers since its launch last November 2013. We frequently also receive feedback from readers on Facebook and Twitter posts.
  - Feedback is given at all meetings attended regarding communications issues. Mitchel Benson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications & Media Relations frequently follows up with this feedback and shares with Communicators and the Executive Staff.
  - IT Department and Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Services monitor usefulness and success of Student Success website. Any feedback is accessed and used for enhancements, if necessary.
  - Comments that come in through our website regarding website improvements are used for enhancements if deemed necessary. Numbers of phone calls received are also used to determine what needs to be added/changed to our website. Website effectiveness will also be achieved and monitored through a new Content Management System (CMS).
  - The biweekly “In the News” newsletters have an “opt-out” option for anyone who feels information is no longer relevant/important to their position. The list of subscribers has grown to 132 in the past year, and the number of internal subscribers to our “Get News” news release distribution list has grown to 33.
  - District brochures, flyers and publications are monitored for their usefulness by how many are requested from colleges/departments.
  - Development communications effectiveness will be monitored by fundraising results.
2. Comment on how the results of your assessments (listed in #1) **provide evidence** of your unit’s effectiveness.
- Changes to our website so far have been well received by staff.
  - District flyers and publications are consistently requested, telling us the information is useful.
  - Since making enhancements to our website that direct more calls and emails to the colleges, the number of calls and emails to the District Office for information on our District/colleges, registration and student services has dropped significantly.
  - We have not received any “opt out” requests for our “In the News” newsletter.

- AVC Mitchel Benson voluntarily launched a face-to-face assessment of his unit's performance after he had served here for six months, including meeting with all four Presidents, colleagues, the Chancellor and all members of the interview committee that participated in his recruitment.
- AVC Benson intends to conduct a similar review on his one-year anniversary.

3. Identify any areas you believe **need improvement now**.

- Collaborate with IT staff on the planning, investment in and implementation of a new Content Management System (CMS) for the Los Rios District website. For economies of scale (cost savings) and ease of IT support, possible coordination and implementation of the same CMS at one or more Los Rios colleges.

4. Identify any areas you believe will need improvement **to respond to expected changes** in your unit's future primary responsibilities or overall unit workload (e.g. changes created by increased enrollment, state budget allocations, additional facilities, new technologies, etc.)

- More collaborations with AVC Student Services, college VPs of Student Services and IT team on improvements to websites to make vital academic and student services info more accessible to students with regarding to the Student Success Initiative.
- Collaborate with Los Rios faculty to establish for-credit student social media/marketing/communications internships at the District Office to support the Communications Unit.
- Co-sponsor (with media partners) and lead planning for, organize and execute a high-profile political debate at the Harris Center, to draw broader regional attention to the District's high-quality facilities; most likely event would be a debate of the two leading candidates for the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District seat, with the Harris Center centrally located in that District. In addition, an educational debate-watching seminar would be organized with Los Rios faculty on the panel to add an important educational element to the effort (and seats would be reserved for students in the debate hall).
- In partnership with the Los Rios Foundation, the District's Office of Resource and Economic Development and the advancement officers at the four colleges, organize and execute an inaugural 5k "Run for Los Rios" at the Folsom Lake College cross-country course to raise money for the Student Emergency Fund.
- Updates on Adobe design software to keep current with technology improvements.
- Frequent updates and enhancements on the Los Rios Style Guide to keep up with branding issues.

## VII. Institutional Support for Unit Effectiveness

Based on your findings regarding your unit's effectiveness in meeting its primary responsibilities identify **how the District can better support** you in your improvement efforts.

- The implementation of a new Los Rios District CMS would require considerable initial investment (approx. \$40,000-\$50,000) in software, licensing and equipment, some initial training costs and ongoing licensing costs.
- Might need additional computer stations at the empty desk(s)/work area(s) for communications student interns. May also need minor alterations to the work areas for the interns.
- The implementation of a new Los Rios District CMS would require at least a .5 FTE who would be responsible for training CMS users throughout the District.
- Creating a student communications internship program would involve the recruitment of student interns who would work for credit.
- Teri Winkley, administrative assistant in the Communications Unit, would benefit greatly by classes in Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign.
- Mitchel Benson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications & Media Relations, would benefit from classes/seminars in video storytelling and managing branding/marketing/advertising campaigns, and would benefit from discussions of best practices by attending conferences sponsored by such groups as CASE, CCPro and NCMPR.

## VIII. Resources Required to Improve Unit Effectiveness

Briefly summarize current resources available to your unit (e.g. staff, facilities, equipment, professional development, research data, etc.) to carry out your primary responsibilities. Identify new **resources needed** to meet or maintain program effectiveness, maintain currency, and meet anticipated growth needs. Include evidence to support your conclusions.

The Communications Office currently consists of Mitchel Benson, Associate Vice Chancellor of Communications & Media Relations, and Teri Winkley, Administrative Assistant. We currently have efficient computers, office equipment and software. Teri Winkley has completed both Interest-Based Approach (IBA) classes and the Classified Leadership Academy. Teri also is a member of ACES (Action Coordinators for Emergency Survival) for emergency evacuations. Mitchel Benson has also attended IBA and ALERT training, and he has taken IBA Facilitator training and has already served as a faculty member in a subsequent IBA training session.

Resources Needed (as stated above):

- The implementation of a new Los Rios District CMS would require considerable initial investment (approx. \$40,000-\$50,000) in software, licensing and equipment, some initial training costs and ongoing licensing costs.

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## IX. Recommendations

1. Based on your program review findings, **list your recommendations** to improve your unit. (Cite appropriate section of this report for each recommendation.)

- Purchase and implement a new Los Rios District Content Management System (CMS).
- Hire a temporary CMS trainer/consultant to train CMS users throughout the District.
- Explore the creation of a student communications internship program that would involve the recruitment of student interns who would work for credit.
- Provide Teri Winkley, administrative assistant in the Communications Unit, with the opportunity to take classes in Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign.
- Provide Mitchel Benson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications & Media Relations, with the opportunity to take classes/seminars in video storytelling and managing branding/marketing/advertising campaigns, and attend conferences sponsored by such groups as CASE, CCPro and NCMPR.

2. Suggestions for Improving the Program Review Process

Please provide any constructive **feedback** aimed at improving LRCCD's Program Review process, including ways in which it may be more effectively aligned with other processes at the District and colleges (strategic plan, other planning, resource allocation, etc.).

- The DO managers could engage in a mini-retreat where each manager makes a brief presentation on his/her Program Review, highlighting the intersections with other managers/units and then open it up for discussion to build consensus among units.

## **X. Appendix**

1. List the **sources** you used to support this Program Review document.

- Los Rios's "Get News" and "In the News" databases.
- Los Rios' Facebook "Insights" metrics
- Los Rios' Twitter metrics
- Google analytics for the website
- 3Fold Communications' Spring 2014 Campaign Results Summary
- 3Fold Communications' Fall 2014 Enrollment Campaign

2. Identify here the **supporting documents** (e-copies) you intend to include with your program review submittal.

- 3Fold Communications' Spring 2014 Campaign Results Summary
- 3Fold Communications' Fall 2014 Enrollment Campaign