



Los Rios CCD
2013-2014 PROGRAM REVIEW

SUPPORT SERVICES

Unit: District Office, Institutional Research

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Approved for Submission: _____
Unit Administrator Date

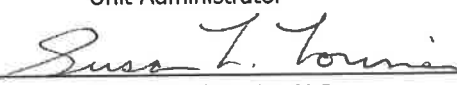
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Table of Contents

- I. Program Review Purpose
- II. Mission Statement
- III. Unit Responsibilities
- IV. Relevancy
- V. Currency
- VI. Effectiveness
- VII. Institutional Support for Unit Effectiveness
- VIII. Resources Required to Improve Unit Effectiveness
- IX. Recommendations
- X. Appendix

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 30th 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.

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:

Our mission is to provide exceptional research resources to our District and colleges to enhance student success and effective decision making at all levels of the organization. We support our institution by:

- **Enhancing data capability throughout the district to ensure access to data and research**
- **Providing ongoing intelligent data and analytics for planning and informed decision making**
- **Integrating accountability metrics into an overall framework focused on enhancing institutional effectiveness**
- **Maintaining research of the highest quality and usefulness**
- **Maintaining data of the highest integrity**
- **Interpreting research findings clearly and compellingly**
- **Serving as an ongoing research resource for district-wide constituency groups**
- **Supporting a "culture of evidence" environment where decisions are supported by data and research**

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.).

- **Maintain a research database on student enrollment, demographics, academic performances, transfers, and awards for district and colleges' ongoing planning and reporting needs**
- **Provide annual Trend Line Reports and Fall Profiles on student enrollment, demographics, persistence, transfer, student success, and completions, for planning and evaluation**
- **Serve on the District Accreditation Coordinating Committee**
- **Coordinate data gathering for accreditation evaluation reports**
- **Maintain a district-wide accreditation website for the 2015 site visits**
- **Coordinate and submit data to meet federal and state accountability and regulatory reporting requirements**
- **Conduct, analyze, and report on district-wide student and employee surveys**
- **Compile External Environmental Scan for strategic planning and accreditation reporting**
- **Provide data to support Educational Center applications and need studies**
- **Coordinate district-wide research projects**
- **Provide district-wide analytic reports including fall student profiles, transfers to four-year institutions, recent high school graduates, and studies on special student populations**
- **Manage projects and coordinate efforts of the District Research Council**
- **Serve on the District Research Council**
- **Maintain an Institutional Research website**
- **Provide data for district-wide grant applications and grant evaluations**
- **Enhance data resources and tools for district and college use**
- **Strengthen integrity of district-wide student data**
- **Work with regional researchers to standardize reporting definitions and develop new data gathering resources**
- **Respond to ad hoc requests for district data**
- **Facilitate review of analytic reports regarding district data provided by outside vendor to ensure accuracy and usability**

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.

- **District IT Department – work collaboratively on improving institutional data accuracy and state reporting, participate in system upgrades which affect the institutional data system and department research snapshots, and work collaboratively in implementing visual analytics and reporting tools;**
- **District Student Services (including district financial aid and CalWORKs office) – assist with data gathering and reporting on special populations such as veterans and CalWORKs**

participants, administer district-wide surveys, provide data analysis and reporting on their behalf; work collaboratively to accurately report and meet requirements of the federal Gainful Employment regulations and the state Student Success and Support regulations, upload enrollment and award data to the National Student Clearinghouse, the National Student Loan Database System, and to the California Student Aid Commission to meet financial aid accountability and reporting requirements;

- **District Finance** – work collaboratively to gather data to complete the annual IPEDS finance survey and provide student data as needed;
- **Human Resources** – work collaboratively to gather data to complete the annual IPEDS personnel survey and provide student data as needed;
- **Facilities Management** – work collaboratively to gather data for center needs studies and to generate enrollment projections for center applications;
- **Communications & Media Relations** – work collaboratively to provide student data to meet external requests or for district-wide publications;
- **Workforce and Economic Development** – assist with reviewing data for Perkins reporting and trouble-shooting as needed to resolve data discrepancies;
- **Resource Development/Foundation** – provide data for grants and participate in grant development activities;
- **College research offices** – work collaboratively to gather data on accreditation-related reporting needs, coordinate research projects, coordinate student surveys, provide research snapshots each semester, provide awards data, work collaboratively to review Student Success Scorecard data and trouble-shoot as needed to resolve data discrepancies, work collaboratively as part of the District Research Council to coordinate data gathering, data use, and respond to external requests for data and for research studies;
- **College instructional offices** – work collaboratively to gather data for educational center applications, to update information on programs and gateway courses for the federal Gainful Employment disclosure reporting requirement, to review data for the Student Success Scorecard, and to coordinate other data gathering activities as needed;
- **College financial aid offices** – work collaboratively to complete the federal Gainful Employment disclosure reporting requirement, on student data sent to the National Student Clearinghouse, to the U.S. Department of Education National Student Loan Database System, and to the California Student Aid Commission as part of accountability requirements;
- **College libraries** – work collaboratively to report on the annual IPEDS library survey;
- **College PIO** – work collaboratively to post Gainful Employment disclosures on college websites;

- **District Education-Technology Committee – regularly conduct Distance Education surveys on committee behalf;**
- **District Accreditation Coordinating Committee – regularly gather and validate data for accreditation reporting needs and maintain accreditation website on behalf of committee.**

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.

The unit's work is focused on supporting the overall operation of the District and colleges through the following activities:

- (a) Gathering required data to meet federal and state accountability reporting;**
- (b) Validating data for federal and state reporting, and for internal use in program improvement;**
- (c) Ensuring that student data are used appropriately to meet federal FERPA and IRB guidelines;**
- (d) Increasing district-wide understanding of student enrollment behavior, student outcomes, and student demography through research to optimize student learning;**
- (e) Increasing district-wide understanding of where students are transferring to after enrollment at our colleges;**
- (f) Increasing district-wide understanding of the high school graduates that enroll from our feeder school districts;**
- (g) Providing technical expertise in survey development and data analysis;**
- (h) Supporting financial aid offices in their federal and state accountability requirements;**
- (i) Regular monitoring and communication of new accountability requirements which the district and colleges need to address;**
- (j) Providing a consistently defined and broad perspective of student data at the district level with the necessary contextual framework;**
- (k) Serving as a district-wide central clearinghouse for student and other institutional data.**

The need for this program to continue is to ensure the following:

- (a) The district is in compliance with required state and federal reporting;**
- (b) The district is in compliance with state and federal regulations on data confidentiality and privacy;**
- (c) That data being used is validated and based on reliable and accurate sources;**
- (d) That data definitions have been scrutinized for appropriateness and are consistently followed in data gathering and reporting;**
- (e) That the district and colleges have a reliable source to go to for student and other institutional data at the district level;**
- (f) That the district and colleges have a reliable source to go to for technical assistance in research methodology, survey methodology, techniques in sampling and data analysis, and in following professional research standards;**
- (g) That there is a reliable and experienced source to coordinate data gathering across the district;**
- (h) That there is a central source at the district to coordinate and guide the implementation and use of new data-related tools for research and reporting.**

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.

The unit has stayed current in research and data gathering approaches and methodologies through attending conferences and the Regional RP meetings, as well as seminars and webinars provided by the Association for Institutional Research and by the State Chancellor's office. In addition, research articles are shared within the unit and discussed for possible relevance.

The unit has participated in the following professional development: in spring 2013, the IT analyst attended a week-long training on data warehouse development and business intelligence systems; in fall 2013, the research analyst participated in the Association for Institutional Research's training called "Data and Decisions Academy" consisting of two online courses (data management and longitudinal tracking); and during the year, the director has participated in several workshops provided by the Department of Finance on national data sources such as the Census and the American Community Survey. Staff development for the coming year will consist of attendance at a regional or national conference to learn of promising practices being utilized by institutions across the country or regionally and attendance at the next level of training on data warehouse structures and dimensional modeling.

The unit has followed a three year cycle of computer replacements and a five year cycle of replacements for printers. Software updates have been purchased on an annual basis. For the coming year, the department server needs to be replaced as it is near the end of its lifecycle and especially with the accreditation visits scheduled in one year, it is important to ensure the stability of the server.

With respect to technology use, members of the unit are learning how to use SAS Visual Analytics. This new tool will enhance data presentations district-wide as well as allow more interactivity with institutional data.

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.).
 - **Ongoing input and recommendations from college research offices through the District Research Council meetings and from individual requests/consultations;**
 - **Follow up with individuals/offices requesting ad hoc requests for data/research;**
 - **Gather emails sent by offices/departments that have received data/research assistance and provided comments on the support provided;**
 - **Review of department website containing data tables and reports;**
 - **Review of accreditation website for 2015 as compared with previous website for content and scope;**
 - **Review of IR activity logs for each member in the unit;**
 - **Review of past unit plans and program reviews to see if recommendations have been followed through;**
 - **Conduct a satisfaction survey of District Research Council members and district offices on services provided (summer 2014)**
2. Comment on how the results of your assessments (listed in #1) **provide evidence** of your unit's effectiveness.
 - **Met all deadlines for state and federal mandated reports despite limited resources and often very short timelines;**
 - **Improved coordination with college financial aid offices and college PIOs in responding to Gainful Employment disclosure requirements;**
 - **Improved coordination with college research offices in standardizing data collection for accreditation reporting;**
 - **Improved communication with the district IT team in resolving data issues and processes;**
 - **Better understanding of data issues at the campus level which affects data accuracy.**

Once the satisfaction survey has been completed, this section of the Program Review will be updated with the results.

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

- **increase access and usability of the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker data for college researchers to study transfer students and their progress at four-year institutions;**
- **increase administrators' access to customized data sets for planning and decision-making;**
- **improve coordination and prioritization of district-wide surveys;**

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.)

The need for an additional staff member in order to keep pace in a timely manner with widening scope of federal and state accountability mandates. These mandates include student tracking, submittal of additional student data, and increases in the frequency of required accountability reporting cycles.

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.

(a) Approval of a new classified position such as a Research Technician to work on the following tasks:

Assist with routine preparation of databases; prepare and format data tables and reports; assist with survey preparation and administration; assist with gathering external data for environmental scan; and assist in maintaining the websites;

(b) Approval to purchase a new department server to replace the current aging server and to upgrade the accreditation web server.

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.

Current resources available:

- **Current staff consists of a director, a research analyst, and an IT analyst; up until 2012, there was also an Administrative Assistant funded in the budget, however, the position was not filled when the Administrative Assistant at that time retired in summer 2012 and there was a need for budget cuts to be made;**
- **Facilities consist of three individual offices, a small cubicle for a work station, and a workroom/library;**
- **Equipment: One portable color printer, one portable black and white laser printer, one new laptop, and four computer work stations, desks and chairs;**
- **Professional development: cost of attending conferences and specialized training is included in the unit's annual budget;**
- **Research data: access to institutional data, research snapshots of fourth-week student data, research snapshots of end-of-semester student data, and research snapshots of award data**

New resources needed:

- **Addition of one new staff member to assist with increased workload in accountability reporting**
- **Replacement of aging department server and upgrading of the accreditation web server**

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.)

- **Increase access and usability of the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker data for college researchers to study transfer students and their progress at four-year institutions (Section VI.3);**
- **Expand administrators' access to customized data sets for planning and decision-making (Section VI.3);**
- **Improve coordination and prioritization of district-wide surveys (Section VI.3);**
- **Addition of one new staff member to assist with increased workload in accountability reporting (Section VII.a and Section VIII)**
- **Replacement of aging department server and upgrading of the accreditation web server (Section VII.b and Section VIII)**

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.).

- (a) It would be helpful in the future for district support units to be informed of the individual college planning processes and the specific goals/priorities or initiatives each college has decided upon so that district support units can better plan and align their priorities going forward;**
- (b) In addition to better linkages of college priorities and district units' priorities, it would be helpful also to clarify and expand on how the district support units can better communicate and coordinate their priorities with each other so as to develop synergies toward a common goal rather than operating sometimes in silos.**

X. Appendix

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

Data tables and analytic reports provided on the Institutional Research website and on the accreditation website;

Meeting notes from the District Research Council;

Committee meeting notes;

Unit meeting notes;

Email feedback from district and college offices/departments;

Unit activity logs;

District Research Agenda

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

No supporting documents at this time, however, when the results of the satisfaction survey on department services are available, they will be posted with this program review.