

Los Rios CCD
2015-2016 UNIT PLAN
SUPPORT SERVICES

Unit: **Communications & Media Relations**

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I. Unit Plan

Definition of a Support Services Department/Unit

For purposes of this planning 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 services necessary to support the overall operation of the District and colleges.

Unit Plan Purpose

Unit plans are annual documents created and used by District units to develop and maintain high quality services to support student learning and District and college operations. This operational plan allows the department/unit to appropriately implement its specific responsibilities to support accreditation standards, the LRCCD Vision/Mission/Values Statement, the LRCCD Strategic Directions document, changes to federal and state laws that impact the colleges and District, annual LRCCD executive staff goals, and other major district plans. Plan implementation is supported by allocations provided in the annual District Budget. Together these documents make up a major portion of the ongoing institutional planning, implementation, and evaluation cycle necessary to ensure continuous program and service improvement. The Accrediting Commission's Standard 1.B.3-4 states:

The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement of institutional effectiveness in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation. Evaluation is based on analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data.

The institution provides evidence that the planning process is broad-based, offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies, allocates necessary resources, and leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness.

The Role of Unit Plans in the Overall Institutional Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement Cycle
LRCCD supports the concept of evaluating current services to determine opportunities for improvement. Unit plans are used by units to identify growth and improvement needs at the operational level, and then provide information to the appropriate administrative and governance levels about the resources and activities required to meet the identified needs.

The District recognizes that its current rate of change, increased enrollment demand, unstable state budget allocations, ongoing facility expansion, changing technology requirements and the rapid growth and demographic changes in its surrounding communities require both short-term and long-term planning efforts. Therefore, unit plans focus on a 1-year time frame directly linked to resource allocations, while also encouraging departments/units to reference or append long-term plans where appropriate.

Plan Due Date

Unit plans are required to be updated annually by June 1 of each year and use this template. 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's mission statement.

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.

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.

III. Unit Responsibilities and Projects

List your unit's primary assigned responsibilities including those related to creating and/or supporting an effective learning environment. Also, identify any expected changes in responsibilities or major new projects (e.g. opening of new facilities, IT infrastructure upgrades, etc.) for the next academic year (summer, fall, spring). Please reference any LRCCD Strategic Plan strategies, accreditation standards or policies, or changes to state or federal laws that are informing your changes in primary responsibilities or new projects.

List your unit's primary responsibilities (ongoing):

- 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 and advise and support Trustees on communications.
- Continue efforts to ensure that all internal and external Los Rios District and college communications – including electronic and print communications, marketing efforts, 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, YouTube channel and Instagram page, 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, and to inform student leaders about the District’s marketing and communications initiatives.
- Help coordinate District outreach efforts and sponsorships designed to market and expand student enrollment and retention, while working with VPs and Deans of Student Services, Outreach Specialists, Presidents and other college and District staff.
- Collaborate with AVC Student Services, college VPs of Student Services and Instruction 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 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 Development.
- Update District brochures, flyers, folders, stationery and internal communication publications.
- Serve as first contact for questions, emails and phone calls regarding District, colleges and programs. Frequently provide direction/referrals to appropriate District and college departments.

List any new or expected changes in primary responsibilities this year (ongoing):

- Collaborate with IT staff on the implementation of the new pilot Content Management System (CMS) for the Los Rios District website. Specifically, the pilot implementation will focus on the Trustees page, the Chancellor’s page and Student Services. For economies of scale (cost savings) and ease of IT support, pilot project includes a Folsom Lake College intranet site and American River College home site.
- 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.

List any new projects your unit expects to implement this year (one-time only):

- Collaborate with Los Rios faculty and students on a contest to redesign the District’s logo and the Chancellor’s 2015 holiday card.
- In coordination with the Office of Resource Development, develop a logo for the 50th anniversary gala on Oct. 23.
- Co-sponsor (with media and other higher education 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 and elevate the importance of community colleges to our regional workforce and economy. The most likely event would be an October 2016 debate of the two leading candidates for California’s U.S. Senate seat, with a Los Rios student on the journalist panel. 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 Development and the advancement officers at the four colleges, organize and execute an inaugural 5k “Run for Los Rios” – preferably at the Folsom Lake College cross-country course – to raise money for the Student Emergency Fund.
- Plan and implement an integrated, strategic marketing campaign designed to help increase student enrollment for summer/fall 2015 at the Los Rios Colleges, including video, social media and advertising, sponsorships, and internal, community and media relations.
- Complete and publish 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.

IV. Unit Plans

Based on your unit’s listed responsibilities and projects, most recent Program Review, and any additional information provided by the appropriate administrator and/or DIR, use the following question prompts and linked forms to document how your unit will complete your assigned responsibilities and projects. State your unit’s plans to:

- A. Identify appropriate **equipment, software, supplies** needed to support new projects, expanded responsibilities, and necessary upgrades.

- The implementation of the 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.
- B. Identify appropriate **staffing** needed to support new projects or expanded responsibilities.
- 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.
- C. Identify **new buildings or major renovations** needed to support the completion of unit responsibilities.
- N/A
- D. Identify **minor remodels or alterations** needed to support the completion of unit responsibilities.
- Might need minor alterations to work stations in DO for student communications interns.
- E. Identify **professional development** activities that help unit members stay current with their job requirements. Please list expected individual and department requests for professional development activities.
- Teri Winkley, administrative assistant in the Communications Unit, would benefit greatly by classes in Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign.
 - Mitchel Benson, Associate Vice Chancellor of Communications and 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, CCLC and NCMPR.
- F. Ensure required **safety and information security procedures** are followed to create and maintain a safe work environment. If individuals in your unit require training, please refer to the LRCCD Human Resources online safety and information security training opportunities.
- One or more members of our unit regularly attend safety and security programs sponsored by HR and the Los Rios Police Department.
 - AVC Mitchel Benson intends to pursue regular refresher training in the District's ALERT emergency notification system, and he has attended and completed a POST-certified Media Relations Program for law enforcement (December 2014).
 - Teri Winkley, administrative assistant, is a building coordinator for the Los Rios ACES (Action Coordinators for Emergency Survival) team and attends periodic training/refresher classes.

- G. Ensure unit members participate, and provide **leadership** to the district, in their areas of expertise.
- One or both members of our unit regularly attend leadership training programs sponsored by HR, and both plan and attend the monthly meetings of the Los Rios Communications Council.
- H. Ensure that the results from **assessments on quality and satisfaction** are used to improve services. Briefly describe the techniques/assessments currently used to ensure quality or required external standards (e.g., audits, inspections). Also, describe techniques/assessments being developed for use next fiscal year.
- 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 two-year anniversary (June 2015).
- I. Ensure unit members know where and how to **refer employees or members of the public** needing support assistance not provided by your unit. Briefly describe what is being done in this regard.
- The Communications & Media Relations Unit is the unit that receives the bulk of these sorts of calls and emails and so has developed particular expertise in such referral practices. When we do not know an answer, we ask questions of those who do.
- J. State how your department/unit encourages participation in **individual service activities** and volunteerism supporting students (e.g., access/success, e-recycling, presentations, leading workshops, district committees, etc.).
- This unit regularly volunteers at the information table at one or more colleges during the first days of each semester.
 - This unit regularly proposes initiatives, programs and activities at the District and colleges in support of students, including the proposed Run for Los Rios; helping to organize an authors' event at SCC for Black History Month; recruiting students to advise on the marketing campaign specifically targeted at recruiting more students, etc.
- K. State your unit's plans to develop and implement **any special or long term projects**, including those identified in your most recent Program Review (if applicable) and the LRCCD Strategic Plan (if applicable). If project plan(s) are contained in another document, list each plan below and attach a copy to your unit plan. For all other project plans, briefly describe projects and indicate implementation timelines below
- As stated above, this unit is interested in three special or long-term projects that are very much in the preliminary idea stage, even pre-planning stage:
 - a. Implementation of a District CMS to make it easier for students and others to find and identify important information in a more intuitive and less stressful manner.
 - b. Co-sponsorship of a political debate (likely California's U.S. Senate seat) at the Harris Center, along with an educational seminar for students on what to watch for in the debate. The unit

was a lead co-sponsor, organizer and producer of a KVIE-TV debate last October for the 7th C.D. seat.

- c. Organization of The Race for Los Rios fundraiser, a 5K at Folsom Lake College to raise money for the student emergency fund.

- L. Please provide any **suggestions for improving** the District's unit plan process, including how to more effectively align with other District and college processes (strategic plan, other planning, resource allocation, etc.).

N/A

V. Appendix

List your unit's accomplishments based on completion of last year's unit plan.

- Launched and completed a successful 2014 summer/fall districtwide marketing campaign – in coordination with the four Los Rios Colleges – that helped Los Rios recover its enrollment from previous years and resulted in fall 2015 enrollment that was flat with the previous fall 2014 semester.
- Successfully contracted with Hannon Hill and implemented its Cascade Server CMS for a pilot project aimed at improving the quality and look of the District's website.
- In the past year, AVC Benson has taken on several roles to represent the District in the greater Sacramento community and the California community college community through positions on the following boards: Sacramento Convention and Visitors Bureau (member); Sacramento Sports Commission (vice-chair); Sacramento Educational Cable Consortium (secretary); CCPRO (Northern California representative) and IEPI Advisory Committee (CCPRO representative).
- The unit was a lead co-sponsor, organizer and producer of a KVIE-TV debate last October for the 7th C.D. seat that included a Folsom Lake College student on the journalist panel and included an educational seminar for students on what to watch for in the debate and a fact-check team that analyzed the candidates' statements in real time.

List sources you used to support your unit plan statements.

N/A

Attach supporting documents (Supporting Data from the DIR, etc.) following this page, identifying those you have attached in the text box, below.

N/A