

Program Performance Review 2018-2019
Departmental Response to the External Reviewers' Report
3/22/2019

The Department of Liberal Studies wishes to express its thanks to the team of external reviewers—Dr. Jiansheng Guo, California State University, East Bay; Dr. Donna Redman, University of La Verne; and Dr. Leila Zenderland, California State University, Fullerton—for visiting the department on February 21st, 2019 and creating their thoughtful report.

We are naturally pleased to receive the review team's multifold "Commendations" on our accomplishments. They speak for themselves and require no further comment.

We would like to make the following comments with regard to the review team's "Recommendations," which arise from its analysis of our "Challenges and Opportunities."

1. Attracting More Students to the Elementary Education Emphasis

a. CSET Waiver Pathway. We will continue our effort to receive approval of our CSET Waiver Pathway from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing in order to remain competitive with other Liberal Studies departments that already offer this waiver. (CSET stands for California Subject Examination for Teachers, which all of our students currently have to pass to be admitted to a teaching credential program.) We heard that our proposal is still awaiting its first review due to a lack of qualified reviewers. Subsequent to this first review, some requests for revisions will probably be made by the Commission. Hence, actually offering the CSET Waiver Pathway to students might well take until 2020.

b. Minor Reciprocity. We have an agreement with the Department of Child and Adolescent Studies to mutually recommend each other's minor. To this end, we are about to create a new minor, to be called Minor in Liberal Studies for Elementary Education, which will be geared toward effectively preparing Child and Adolescent Studies students for the CSET. We hope to get our proposal into the Fall 2019 review cycle, which would allow us to actually offer the new minor by Fall 2020.

c. ITEP. An Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) would allow students to earn both a B.A. in Liberal Studies and a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential in four years. To remain competitive, we hope to institute such an ITEP together with the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education, which runs the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential program. However, the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education has thus far not responded positively to our proposal, due to a concern about its attractiveness to students. However, we just heard that the College of Education would consider our proposal more favorably if the recently established ITEP between Child and Adolescent Studies and the Special Education Credential program becomes a success. Realization of a Liberal Studies ITEP, which most other CSU Liberal Studies programs already have or are in the process of establishing, will thus remain a contingent matter for some time to come.

2. Attracting More Students to the Interdisciplinary Thematic Emphasis

The review team proposes to change and diversify the name of our Interdisciplinary Thematic Emphasis to a variety of terms that would show up on diplomas and that would be meaningful to potential employers.

However, there is a significant practical problem that speaks against this idea: emphases don't show up reliably on transcripts and not at all on diplomas. Hence, their signal value is limited. (Note that a UPS change is in the works that might turn our emphases into concentrations that would show up on transcripts, but still not on diplomas.)

Further, regarding the idea to create an "Emphasis in Science, Medicine, and Society," the department is currently developing a minor in this area, which we believe to be a more fruitful way to employ and advertise the expertise that our faculty possesses in this area.

3. Increasing Enrollment in GE Courses

a. New Courses in G.E. Category B.5. We are currently engaged in the effort to move LBST 337 Science, Technology, and Society from G.E. category E to category B.5. The earliest period in which we could offer this course in the new category will be Fall 2020. Further, LBST 325 Cross Cultural History of Medicine has been approved as a new course, and we intend to submit it for GE category B.5 soon, with the earliest offering being Fall 2020 as well.

b. Offering LBST 100 and LBST 101 Online. Mostly due to double counting, the enrollment in our LBST 100 Introduction to the Humanities (GE C.2) and LBST 101 Introduction to the Social Sciences (GE D.1) has declined rather dramatically in Fall 2019. The review team suggests to increase enrollment by offering such courses online. These courses are already certified to be taught online. Part-time lecturers Lisa Iyer and Jawad Ali, who are qualified to teach LBST 100, have expressed interest in teaching them. Their teaching online course would, however, require a change in the departmental policy that limits online and hybrid teaching to full-time faculty.

4, 5, and 6. New Hire in Arts and Humanities

It has been a longstanding request of the department to hire a tenure-track faculty member in the arts and humanities, as we currently have only one full-time faculty member in this area. Such a new hire would also improve tiered succession in the department, as there are currently only tenured faculty members. However, this request has not been granted by the Dean's Office due to a limitation in funds and higher hiring priorities in other departments.

The review team thus suggests that we request not simply a tenure-track position in Arts and Humanities but a position dedicated to "Ethnicity in the Arts and Humanities." The department views this suggestion favorably. However, it prefers the broader term "Diversity in the Arts and Humanities," which would also dovetail with the wish of the Dean's Office for greater diversity among the faculty.

7. Increasing Travel Funding Through Course Match

Course Match is a CSU-wide program whereby a number of seats in online courses are reserved from students from other CSUs. If such students register, the department is rewarded with significant amounts of extra funds, which could be used for faculty research and travel. The department would like to explore this possibility in connection with the likely effort to offer LBST 100 and LBST 101 online.