

**Peer Review Team report**

# **Language Arts Division**

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The peer team followed the Program Review Process by first reading the Language Arts Self Study document, then developed questions and interviewed the Division Dean, Faculty and Classified Staff. This report deals with the observations of the self-study and interviews.

It was the consensus of the peer review team that the faculty had the opportunity to participate in the development of the self-study within their discipline. Some of the faculty participated in committee groups in collecting data and writing of the report. However, a divisional self-study report was not written. All recommendations and conclusions were only based on the discipline's report. This made it difficult to find agreement on Divisional recommendations.

Most faculty members have not read the entire self-study report for the division and are only familiar with their respective departments. This was true of new faculty, as well as those who have been around for numerous years and through prior program reviews.

The faculty agreed with the report as it pertained to their respective department, and not the division as a whole, they all agreed with the self-study report for their respective disciplines. No one had any disputes with the assertions or data, nor did they feel that anything important had been omitted.

The peer review team would like to commend the Language Arts Division's faculty for their involvement in Shared Governance and campus committee involvement.

## Curriculum

Without a Divisional Report it is difficult for the peer team to determine the priorities of the Language Arts Division. However, through interviewing the faculty, it was felt that the highest priority was the development of AA degrees in English and in Foreign Language. It was also noted that the offering of second year or advanced courses needs to be coordinated between programs and faculty. Some classes needed be to offered regularly in each discipline regardless of whether the minimum number of students is met. Not offering these courses

seriously jeopardizes student's ability to complete the program in a timely manner and may prevent a student from even taking the major.

## Student Support and Development

The peer review team noted from the interviews that the comments made included:

- The need for more tutors and the faculty need more training to work with basic skills students.
- The need for instructional aides.
- Smaller class sizes could help with retention.
- The campus needs to promote a basic skills culture on campus so students understand what it takes to succeed.
- Assessment test should include a writing component

Some of these comments are mentioned in the Language Arts self-study, however without supporting documentation and planning it is difficult for the peer team to rate the comments as to "if" or "how" they should be implemented.

## Student Outcomes

The peer review team noted from the interviews that the Student Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcome are in the process of being completed, with most already completed. A few interviewees noted that they work very hard at complying with rules and standards and play a crucial part in achieving the Institutional Learning Outcomes.

Faculty interviewed also noted that they feel that their teaching is very effective, as they have received a lot of positive feedback from students regarding their ability to succeed after taking basic reading, writing and communications courses.

## Personnel & Support Services

The peer review team noted the most common theme in personal & student services was the difficulty of not having stable leadership in the dean's position. Another common theme was the English composition coordinator position also needed to receive an increased re-assignment due to the increased number of English composition sections.

Most of the faculty interviewed felt that the Language Arts Division is strong, as it is growing and in demand. Several noted that the faculty themselves, with their diverse perspectives and broad backgrounds are a strength. They said that they were strong enough to make it through numerous years without the consistent guidance of a dean, and that is a reflection of good faculty members.

Most of the faculty interviewed cited that the most crucial need of their department was to have more full-time faculty so that they can have more course offerings available for students.

## Facilities and Equipment

The most common discussion during the interview process dealt with facilities. The need for more and better classroom facilities, equipped with basic technology on a consistent and reliable basis. It was an ongoing frustration for faculty to find audio visual equipment missing or not working and not having the same equipment available in every classroom. Faculty were also concerned about stated the classrooms being heated or cooled to an appropriate temperature and that some of the rooms need better soundproofing in order not to be disturbed by adjacent classes.

It was also noted by the peer review team that either dedicated classrooms or multi-purpose classrooms are needed within the division. Some faculty wanted tables and chairs to facilitate group activities. The inability to rearrange a classroom to meet teaching styles and/or classroom teaching needs was a common problem.

## Fiscal Support

Some faculty noted that there was a lack of planning for long-term budgeting and it just seemed that funds were used on a first-come, first-serve basis, while other faculty needed to know what the budget is and how to access funding. Overall, it seemed that most of the faculty had similar comments, which were generally consistent with the written self-study report.

## Community Outreach

During the interview process little was mentioned about community outreach. The only comment related to the need for having promotional materials to advertise foreign language courses and the need to upgrade the college Web site with all of the information.

## State and Federal Compliance

Nothing was mentioned during the interview process.

## Conclusions

Overall, the perception of the self-study report is that it accurately reflects the views of the division faculty. The report itself is lacking in the area of defining specific priorities for improvement for the division.

The report is rather thorough and each department within the division seems to be fairly represented. In the process of interviewing the faculty and discussing the self-study, the peer team did not have any findings contrary to the report of each discipline. The self-study report as a whole did not come to any definite conclusion regarding the priorities of the division in

unison in terms of addressing areas of weakness. While many of the faculty could only comment on their own department, there were some common themes among their responses.

- It seems obvious that consistent leadership from a full-time permanent dean would be very helpful to the division and unifying the division and faculty in their long-term goals.
- Proper long-term budgeting, that is transparent to the faculty so that they have an understanding of what is happening.
- The need of the Language Arts Division to have more full-time faculty so that the division can have more course offerings available for students.
- The need for more and better classroom facilities, equipped with basic technology on a consistent and reliable basis, and heated or cooled to an appropriate temperature.

Additional information that needs to be added to the Language Arts Self-study (in the future):

- Divisional prioritizing needs to occur in order to complete the reports for the Institutional Planning.