

Peer Review Report
Health Sciences Division
Spring 2010

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Peer Review Team Report
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Area 1: Mission

Findings:

The mission of the Health Sciences Division is, “We provide healthcare, child and family education, and wellness education that empower students to meet their goals of workforce participation, personal development, and community service.”

The peer review team finds that the Health Sciences Division works hard within current budget constraints to meet the goals of its mission statement in offering strong certificate and degree programs that meet student needs to develop skills for employment and workforce advancement and strengthen our community.

Area 2: History

Findings:

The division has changed since 2006 in that the pre-existing Child Development Center was added to the division in 2007. A new degree program in Radiation Technology has been developed and is now being offered. New courses were added in Culinary Arts but made obsolete in spring 2010

The environment in which the division operates has also changed. There are now five competing private programs offering healthcare and health-related programs in the Antelope Valley. In addition to competing for students, the students of these other programs compete for internship and practicum positions in local healthcare organizations. The long lead-times for building new health-care facilities indicate that this situation is unlikely to change in the near future. As a result AVC healthcare students have decreased access to hands-on experience and are increasingly reliant on simulation experiences and the technology which the simulation exercises require.

The peer review team found that the Health Sciences Division has had to reduce enrollment in some programs, offer fewer classes, discontinue some classes, and cut some services, particularly in the Child Development Center, due to budget constraints.

In spite of cuts in the funds available from the district, the Health Sciences Division has been successful in securing additional “soft money” in the form of grants and gifts. Using largely/entirely these non-district funds, the division has added a Radiology Technology program and additional direct student support through adding a Success Advisor to support students in the nursing program.

The division faculty has developed PLOs for most programs and SLOs for all courses. It assesses the programs’ support of institutional outcomes annually. The PLOs have a high correlation with and are an indicator for student success in passing licensure and certification requirements.

The division is in the pre-construction phase of designing a new building. This new building will provide much-needed classrooms and faculty offices.

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Area 3: Curriculum

Findings:

The Health Science Division offers degrees in Child and Family Education; Family and Consumer Education; Medical Assisting; Radiologic Technology; Registered Nursing; and Respiratory Care; and certificates in: Child and Family Education; Medical Assisting; School-Aged Child Care; EMT; Nurse Aide; Home Health aide; and Vocational Nursing. In addition the division offers a Foster and Kinship Care Education program. The division will utilize the new building and equipment in order to add prerequisite courses which will be transferable toward a four-year Dietician program at CSU Northridge.

The CORs are current.

There are a number of issues regarding development of programs and the ability to meet enrollment demand which have been exacerbated by the current budget crisis.

1. The hiring freeze for full-time faculty members is affecting the accreditation of the clinical medical assisting program. It cannot be accredited without a full-time faculty member and a medical director. This affects the ability of graduates to take the certification in a timely manner and affects their competitiveness in the job market.
2. The Radiologic Technology program has only one full-time faculty member which limits its growth and means that the one full-time faculty member is responsible for all of the discipline's development and reporting requirements.
3. Unavailability of prerequisite and general education course requirements offered by other divisions delay entry into and completion of some Health Sciences programs. These delays make it more difficult for some programs to meet state requirements. For example, the RN program requires successful completion of Sociology 101; however, a number of nursing students have been unable to enroll in the Sociology 101 class due to a general unavailability of classes at AVC. This causes a delay in the students' graduation, which is considered attrition according to standards set in California Education Code (Ca. Ed. Code), which defines attrition as not completing the RN program within four semesters. The current attrition rate of the RN program is 32%. The Ca. Ed. Code mandates that a maximum attrition rate of 15% be reached. The unavailability of required courses must be addressed for that goal to be attained.
4. While there is increasing demand for the health sciences classes, the current budget constraints have resulted in a reduction in number of students admitted to the nursing programs.
5. The clinical medical office assisting program cannot be accredited because there is no full-time faculty member or medical director. These legally mandated personnel cannot be hired due to the hiring freeze at the college.

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Area 4: Student Support and Development

Findings:

The division offers supplemental instruction to nursing and nutrition students when funding is available. Student surveys confirm that these services are highly utilized and helpful to the students.

The division implemented a student success mentoring program for health sciences students. A student success counselor was hired using funding through a grant that expires in June 2010.

The division is addressing the high attrition rate in the EMT program by considering alternatives such as prerequisites to strengthen student skills and supplemental instruction for students enrolled in the EMT program.

Due to legislative change, all California community colleges lost the ability to teach zero-unit labs. For Health Sciences students this has meant the loss of an important method of supplemental instruction. As a short-term solution the dean was able to temporarily allocate non-district funds to pay for the program; however, a long-term solution will have to be found if the division wants to maintain the program.

The Child Development Center provides student support through providing affordable, low-cost, and no-cost child care to students. Due to funding issues, the Infant and Toddler program was put on hiatus.

Health Sciences students also utilize common resources such as the Learning Center and AVC library.

The division identified issues regarding the need for additional ITS support.

1. Additional computer lab space is needed for simulation of certification exams.
2. Wireless service in the new building will benefit students who use their own PDAs and laptop computers.
3. Upgrade and/or replace old equipment.

Area 5: Data Analysis and Environmental Scan

Findings:

The division analyzes its student population using a variety of demographic attributes, passage rates of certification/licensure examinations, and attrition rates.

Overall the division attrition and passage rates have remained stable. The inability to enroll in required classes outside the division has prevented the reduction of the attrition rate for nursing students because the state includes those students who cannot finish the

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program within four semesters even if they are completing the program in a longer time period.

The EMT program has a high attrition rate. The faculty and administrator are examining possible causes and exploring alternatives to lower the attrition rate. Some of the solutions under consideration are implementing prerequisites, supplemental instruction, and splitting the curriculum into two classes.

Licensure rates for the RN program are, and have consistently been, above the state and national averages. The VN program results are also high. Respiratory Care students have done well. EMT students have average results on the EMT Certification exam.

The division conducts validation studies on its programs.

Area 6: Student and Program Learning Outcomes Assessment

Findings:

All courses and programs have up-to-date SLOs and PLOs, except for the Family and Consumer Education degree. Both full-time and Adjunct faculty are involved in writing and assessing SLOs in coordination with the dean and lead faculty for the discipline.

The proposed Family and Consumer Education degree curriculum was not accepted by the Academic Senate in May. The Family and Consumer Education faculty and Health Sciences Dean are working with the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee to revise the proposed curriculum.

Area 7: Collaboration with other Programs

Findings:

The Health Sciences division collaborates with other divisions and utilizes on-campus resources such as the Learning Center, Disabled Student Services, Library, and Counseling.

The faculty and dean collaborate with outside agencies and professional organizations.

There are also strong ties to outside health care organizations which provide clinical experience for health care students. Due to the increase in the number of proprietary health care programs in the Antelope Valley, there are fewer opportunities for AVC students to participate in these outside programs. There will not be a new hospital built in the valley until Kaiser opens its planned facility in 2020.

The Child Development Center has multi-division ties because students from multiple disciplines must take classes that involve the Center. Its faculty also participate in the California Mentor Teacher program, as well as participating in the state and local advisory committees. The Center has collaborative relationships with the Dept. of Social

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Services, the Child Care Resource Center and the Children's Center of the Antelope Valley.

Area 8: Outreach Activities

Findings:

The division lists many outreach programs in which members of each discipline participate to educate members the community. The excellent reputation of the division's programs mean that in most cases the demand for them exceeds the ability of the division to meet it.

The division also has strong ties to the Advisory Committees for each discipline.

Area 9: Goals and Objectives

Findings:

Funding for programs and new faculty members is the most pressing issue for the division at this time.

The division has set goals for increased student success and retention which include timetables for specific actions.

The CDC has set goals for increasing parent involvement and improving the learning outcomes of the children enrolled at the center. It is seeking to reopen its Infant and Toddler program to meet the needs of AVC students whose programs require experience with that age group for completion of their majors. The CDC is also considering adding a full-day kindergarten program to meet the needs of parents.

The division is seeking funding for faculty positions so that disciplines can meet/maintain the minimum standards set by state law.

The division wants to add additional on-line classes and utilize additional technology in the classroom to improve student outcomes and to replace that portion of hands-on clinical experience that is being reduced by more limited access to clinical health care facilities. It is also considering offering some programs through Corporate and Community Services, offering more classes at the Palmdale site, and updating the Consumer Education concentration of the Family and Consumer Education major.

Area 10: Long-Term Resource Planning

Findings:

The division explains the need for specific faculty and staff hires to meet the staffing needs of various disciplines. These include the need to attain/maintain state minimum requirements prescribed in the Ed. Code. and/or by licensing/certifying agencies.

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There is a detailed, substantiated list of facility improvement requirements within the next four years.

The division identifies the need for additional outside funding and its likely sources.

Area 11: Recommendations and Comments

Findings:

1. As soon as the budget allows, full-time faculty and staff need to be hired to meet program requirements and needs. Additional Adjunct faculty are also needed.
2. As soon as the budget allows purchase equipment for the radiation technology program lab.
3. As soon as the budget allows, replace/update old equipment and software to meet student needs.
4. Coordinate the nursing program with the schedules of other divisions to address the need to ensure that nursing students can be enrolled in required classes outside the division within the four-semester requirement of the program.
5. Continue to review, assess, and utilize SLOs and PLOs to improve student learning.
6. The Family and Consumer Education faculty and Health Sciences Dean need to complete their work with the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee to revise the proposed curriculum for acceptance by the Academic Senate and Chancellor's Office.
7. Consider assessing the Child Development Center in its own Program Review. Its mission is clearly different from the other in that it has an operational focus in addition to meeting the student education needs from four outside divisions.