

The Instructional Program Review Narrative Report

1. **College:** Merritt

Discipline, Department or Program: Business & Economics

Date: February 13, 2010

Members of the Instructional Program Review Team: Anita M. Black

2. **Narrative Description of the Discipline, Department or Program:**

Please provide a general statement of primary goals and objectives of the discipline, department or program. Include any unique characteristics, degrees and certificates the program or department currently offers, concerns or trends affecting the discipline, department or program, and any significant changes or needs anticipated in the next three years.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

The Business Department is designed to provide a foundation for students planning to transfer to four-year institutions and/or seeking skills for employment.

Mission Statement

The Merritt College Business Department is a comprehensive, multi-cultural, public, open-access institution with a mission to develop and sustain effective partnerships with business, governmental, and community agencies to foster economic development and workforce preparation for its students. The department offers degree and certificate programs, i.e. Accounting, Administrative Assistant, Administrative Office Systems & Applications, Business Administration, Business Information Processing, and General Business.

Vision

The Business Program at Merritt College strives to be a model for career and transfer education by fostering student success, transforming lives, and strengthening the diverse community it serves.

Values

The Business Program at Merritt College values instructional excellence, quality student support services, a caring and inclusive environment, and the ability to model best practices for career and transfer education via a variety of academic and business community partnerships.

ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT

The Economics Department is designed to prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions; to enter the business world with knowledge of economic trends and conditions; or to provide training for such positions as market analyst, sales analyst, or stockbroker.

3. Curriculum:

- **Is the curriculum current and effective?**

Business:

With the exception of Accounting and Business Administration, all other degrees and certificates need revision. Most courses are relevant, but certain courses are not attracting enrollment via face-to-face or online, such as, Keyboarding, Filing & Records Management, Office Procedures and Practices, Business Communications, Business Mathematics, and Word Processing.

Have course outlines been updated within the last three years? If not, what plans are in place to remedy this?

Business:

The following courses need updating—1A, 1B, 2, 10, 20, 50 74, 205, 501.

The following courses are current—5, 51, 52, 54, 70, 230, 244A.

New course – 800 Entrepreneurship Training

The following courses need to be deactivated—201, 221A-C, 244C, 253A-D, 248NA, 248NP.

Approximately half of the Business Department's outlines were updated within the last three years. However, the other course outlines must be updated by teaching faculty this academic year.

Economics:

Economic curriculum is current. All Economic course outlines were updated Fall 2009.

- **Has your department conducted a curriculum review of course outlines? If not, what are the plans to remedy this?**

Business:

The Business Department must conduct a curriculum review for course outlines. This will take place Spring 2010.

Economics:

This department is current.

- **What are the department's plans for curriculum improvement (i.e., courses to be developed, updated, enhanced, or deactivated)?**

Business:

The following courses need to be deactivated—201, 221A-C, 244C, 253A-D, 248NA, 248NP. The department can consider retooling 221A-C into a hybrid/virtual office administrative course.

Based on the McKinsey Economic Report and 2009 Federal Stimulus Workforce target areas, the Business Department needs to development, update and strengthen curriculum, i.e. Accounting (tax preparation, small business financial literacy), Business Administration (personal financial literacy, Human Resource Management, Entrepreneurship, small business advertising & marketing, etc.), Information Processing (Health Technology, small business—virtual assisting, legal assisting, etc.).

Economics: Updated courses fall 2009 for articulation agreements to four year institutions.

Have prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories been validated? Is the date of validation on the course outline?

Business: With the exception of BUS 1B Managerial Accounting, the department does not have courses with pre- or co-requisites and advisories. BUS 1B is the second course in a series of 2 courses for principles and practices in accounting. A student must take BUS 1A prior to enrollment in BUS 1B.

Economics: Both Econ 1 & 2 were validated via the articulation process with the CSU and UC system in order to maintain transfer credit agreements.

- **What steps has the department taken to incorporate student learning outcomes in the curriculum? Are outcomes set for each course? If not, which courses do not have outcomes?**

Since Spring 2009, all courses submitted to the College Instruction Committee for creation and updates have incorporated Student Learning Outcomes. Therefore approximately 10% of all Business courses include SLOs. Both Economics Department courses incorporate SLOs

The following Business Department courses need SLOs: BUS 1A, 1B, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 54, 70, 74, 205, 230, 244A. The department must establish a cycle of completion.

- **Describe the efforts to develop outcomes at the program level. In which ways do these outcomes align with the institutional outcomes?**

Business:

The Business Department held several meetings to develop program level outcomes and complete program mapping for degree/certificates. These outcomes directly align with institutional outcomes, especially the communications institutional outcome.

Business needs to conduct the assessment phase for the program level outcome of communication which correlates back to a course level outcome for all business courses.

Economics:

The Economic Department has not identified program level outcomes, but in fact could utilize similar program level outcomes developed by the Business department.

- **Recommendations and priorities.**

1. Complete Program Level mapping and SLOs for all Business Department degree/certificate programs by the end of Spring 2010. Determine which programs need to be reconfigured and/or dissolved during the mapping process.
2. Complete course outline revisions with SLOs for each course.
3. Re-activate Human Resource Management courses and establish a less than 18 unit certificate with additional emphasis under the Business Administration and/or General Business Degree patterns.
4. Create Health Information Technology curriculum pattern.
5. Create an online QuickBooks course.

6. Create a Personal Financial Literacy course.
 7. Create an Individual Tax Preparation course.
 8. Create a series of short term courses to support small business, i.e. finance, information processing, and advertising/marketing.
 9. Revise and/or create additional courses to strengthen Administrative Office Systems & Applications Degree, Business Information Processing Degree with emphasis on Virtual Administrative and Information Processing.
 10. Re-work the Business Management Certificate with core classes and 2 options— Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management.
 11. Re-establish a college keyboarding course as a hybrid for 1 unit. Investigate; determine equipment/software need to offer a voice recognition keyboarding course.
 12. Hire full time instructor to strengthen Accounting/Economics Program.
 13. Identify more adjunct faculty to deliver specialized training, i.e. small business, entrepreneurship, and online courses.
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4. Instruction:

- **Describe effective and innovative strategies used by faculty to involve students in the learning process. How has new technology been used by the department to improve student learning?**

Some Business and Economics faculty have taken several staff development courses and other activities, such as the Annual Consortium Conference for Student Learning Communities, Introduction to Online Technology courses, Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Workshops, and best practices to strengthen the learning process for students. The recently received and installed Walk 'N Talk interactive whiteboard with multi functionality (touch sensitive, collaboration, Internet connectivity, video projection, etc.) will support improvement in student learning. Formalized training is pending for Spring 2010.

- **How does the department maintain the integrity and consistency of academic standards within the discipline?**

Both departments maintain integrity and consistency of academic standards via periodic meetings to discuss pertinent matters, such as, Unit Plan, SLOs, share workshop and conference findings, program mapping, faculty and student evaluations, student retention and completion rates, etc.

- **Discuss the enrollment trends of your department. What is the student demand for specific courses? How do you know? What do you think are the salient trends affecting enrollments?**

Based on the data provided by the PCCD Office of Research & Planning, student demand for business courses, especially transfer and workforce preparation are growing— especially for hybrid and online courses. Students gravitate toward instructional delivery that extends 24/7 access opportunities. Almost from their inception, distance education courses have filled and closed before the semester begins

Fall 2009 showed an increase in enrollments, productivity and student retention. Hybrid courses (combination of f2f and online) are needed for some courses. As technology costs lower, student access will increase supporting collaboration via the web and

enhancing student learning. Some beginning students will require more personal contact to solidify their confidence in learning via technology instructional delivery systems, especially being intrinsically motivated and successful. Online tutorial will support this trend.

As the CSU and UC systems tighten their budgets, transfer courses, such as BUS 1A, 1B, 2, 10, ECON 1 and 2 will continue to grow. These courses are required for most baccalaureate programs.

**Are courses scheduled in a manner that meets student needs and demand?
How do you know?**

The data provided by the PCCD Office of Research & Planning is inconclusive. The departments cannot determine a major difference between morning and afternoon. Evening classes have fewer students, but hybrid and online classes have grown dramatically.

The department schedules courses which meet college and department requirements. We have noted numerous student requests for classes which close prior to the semester and have attempted to add extra sections when feasible. We use the volume and tenor of student-emails and enrollments as a measurement.

- **Recommendations and priorities.**

Continue to expand hybrid and online courses in so far as possible in the face of continued loss of state funding and a decrease in our permanent staffing of the past few years. Create new classes as outlined above in the Program Review Curriculum section. Hire one more full-time and part-time staff members to allow the department to better implement items number 1-4 above.

5. Student Success:

- **Describe student retention and program completion (degrees, certificates, persistence Rates ASK ANIKA about persistence rates 252, 201) trends in the department. What initiatives can the department take to improve retention and completion rates?**

Based on the College Average as identified by the PCCD Office of Research & Planning, the Business & Economics Departments student retention and completion rates are at or slightly above the College Average. There are a few exceptions, i.e. completion rates in Economics for females and Hispanic/Latino; Native Americans in Business.

Few students are obtaining degrees in both Business and Economics. This is probably due to the fact that this discipline is transfer to the baccalaureate level. In terms of certificates, the Business Department needs to revamp and enhance the workforce development certificate programs.

- **What are the key needs of students that affect their learning? What services are needed for these students to improve their learning? Describe the department's efforts to access these services. What are your department's instructional support needs?**

Key needs that affect student learning include access to relevant developmental education support courses, tutorial services, and career planning & placement services.

Faculty are involved in various campus and discipline initiatives, i.e. Title III Grant, SLOAC activities, Student Learning Communities, peer tutoring, etc.

- **Describe the department's effort to assess student learning at the course level. Describe the efforts to assess student learning at the program level. In which ways has the department used student learning assessment results for improvement?**

The Business Department, under the guidance of the College Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Committee, established a course and program level assessment goal. The department created an assessment activity and a rubric to implement—target assessment implementation Spring 2010.

- **Recommendations and priorities.**

1. Seek coordination with Learning Center for tutorial services.
2. Establish Student Learning Communities with English and Mathematics Departments for Business and Economic Students.
3. Advocate for a College Career Advising and Placement Center.
4. Implement the SLO Assessment plan developed by Fall 2009 for the communications institutional, program and course level outcome.

6. Human and Physical Resources (including equipment and facilities)

- **Describe your current level of staff, including full-time and part-time faculty, classified staff, and other categories of employment.**

Within the next 4 years, the Business and Economics Departments will need additional full-time faculty. Fall 2009 the department included 2 full time and 3 part time faculty members. The Accounting and Economics disciplines are functioning with adjunct faculty. It is projected that 1 out 2 full-time Business faculty will retire. At least one new full-time faculty member must be hired within the next 2 years. If more classes are offered, additional part-time faculty must be identified to deliver instruction.

- **Describe your current utilization of facilities and equipment.**

Unfortunately, faculty equipment continues to be stolen (laptops, camera, etc.). These need to be replaced. We recently acquired a new projection unit (Walk N Talk). In conjunction with the CIS department, the computer lab is being equipped with additional workstations. However, the electrical power panel is still an issue and must be increased.

One of the main lecture rooms was recently painted. New desks are needed. In the lower level of P building, the open lobby needs to be cleared and wireless computer access provided for students along with chairs and tables. The existing support offices, recently relocated to this is area, must be moved and reassigned to room2, i.e. P112 or P104.

- **Are the human and physical resources, including equipment and location, adequate for all the courses offered by your department (or program)? What are your key staffing and facilities needs for the next three years? Why?**

Building P is old. Second (2nd) level restrooms are inadequate (toilets do not flush, HVAC does not work). Second level classrooms have limited connectivity and no projection capability. New student and faculty furniture are needed in classrooms and offices.

Faculty offices are inadequate—lack of book shelves, definition of personal space, etc.

- **Recommendations and priorities.**
 1. Hire faculty as recommended in this section above.
 2. Request and order furniture via Measure A.
 3. Continue to request the renovation of the female and male restrooms on the second level of P building.
 4. Business/Economics is slated to move into the new Science & Technology Building—5 to 6 years.

7. Community Outreach and Articulation

For vocational programs:

- **Describe the department's connection with industry. Is there an Advisory Board or Advisory Committee for the program? If so, how often does it meet? Is the program adequately preparing students for careers in the field? How do you know?**

The departments must re-establish industry connections. An advisory committee has not met within 3 years. Currently the college is working towards a college wide Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee. The program needs to assess whether or not degrees/certificate programs are adequately preparing students for careers and to utilize the new college wide CTE Advisory Committee or build back a Business/Economics Advisory Committee.

- **Have students completing the program attained a foundation of technical and career skills? How do you know? What are the completion rates in your program?**

Based on data provided to the department, completion rates are good, but a follow up assessment is needed to ascertain the validity of technical and career skills achieved through the degree/certificate programs.

- **What are the employment placement rates? Include a description of job titles and salaries. What is the relationship between completion rates and employment rates?**

This is another area where data is insufficient. Program completion follow-up is null and void, especially as it relates to employment rates for program completers.

- **What industry trends are most critical for the future viability of the program? How do you know? What are the implications of these trends for curriculum development and improvement?**

Based on the McKinsey Economic Report, 2009 Federal Stimulus Workforce target areas and State of California EDD Labor Market Information, the department knows curriculum adjustments and alignment is needed. Trends include recommendations and priorities as outlined in the Curriculum and Instruction sections of this program review report, such Health Information Technology, Small Business Management, Entrepreneurship, Human Resource Management, etc.

For transfer programs:

- **Describe the department's efforts in meeting with and collaborating with local 4-year institutions. Is the program adequately preparing students for upper division course work? How do you know?**

Department faculty were previously involved in The Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum (IMPAC) project originated in the Intersegmental Committee of Statewide Academic Senates (ICAS) of the California Community College (CCC), University of California (UC), and California State University (CSU) systems. IMPAC is a unique faculty-designed, faculty-run project designed to assist the student transfer process from the community colleges to the UC and CSU systems for the baccalaureate degree.

Fall 2009, Merritt's Articulation Officer counseled the Economics Department about ECON 1 & 2—the need to update course outlines to reflect new pre-requisites required to maintain agreements with CSUs and UCs. Both courses now include Intermediate Algebra as pre-requisites, validated by the articulation agreements with the CSU and UC systems.

For all instructional programs:

- **Describe the department's effort to ensure that the curriculum responds to the needs of the constituencies that it serves.**

The Business Department is seeking to be part of the new Health Information Technology Curriculum—multi department curriculum. A summary proposal concept paper with labor market information and sample curriculum developed to respond to grant opportunities was given to administrative staff here at the college and PCCD to assist with these efforts. These efforts would afford curriculum development opportunities allowing departments to work towards a joint articulated program/certificates.

- **Recommendations and priorities.**

Seek and apply for funding sources to support faculty efforts to develop new programs and meet workforce trends.

Definitions

Department/Program: For the purpose of the Instructional Program Review, a department/program is defined as a course or series of courses which share a common Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) number at the four digit level of specificity. TOP is a classification system for academic programs in the California Community Colleges.

FTEF (Full Time Equivalent Faculty): Also known as load equivalency. A full-time instructor teaching 15 lecture hours per week = 1.0 FTEF. One lecture hour = 50 minute instructional period. One lab hour = .8 of one lecture hour equivalent.

FTES (Full Time Equivalent Student): This unit is used as the basis for computation of state support for California Community Colleges. One student attending 15 hours a week for 35 weeks (one academic year) generates 1 FTES.

To approximate the FTES generated by a 17.5 week semester class use the formula:

$$\text{WSCH (Weekly Student Contact Hours from the census)} / 525 \times 17.5 = \text{FTES}$$

The WSCH of "contact hour" is the basic unit of attendance for computing FTES. It is a period of not less than 50 minutes of scheduled instruction.

For example, a class of 40 students meeting 3 hours per week generates 120 WSCH. To figure the FTES for the class, the formula yields:

$$120 / 525 \times 17.5 = 4.0 \text{ FTES}$$

FTES/FTEF: The ratio of full-time equivalent students to full-time equivalent instructors.

Persistence: The percent of students who attend one semester and then attend the subsequent semester (fall and spring semesters).

Retention: After the first census, the percent of students earning any grade but a "W" in a course or series of courses. To figure retention for a class, subtract the "W"s from the total enrollment and divide the number by the total enrollment.

Student Learning Outcomes: The desired knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitude that a student attains as a result of engagement in a particular set of collegiate/academic experiences.

Appendices

**Instructional Program Review
Resource Needs Reporting Template**

Division: Business & Technology		Department/Program: Business & Economics		Contact: Anita M. Black	
Item Identified in Program Review (justification)	Human Resources (Staffing)	Physical Resources (Facilities)	Technology and/or Equipment	Supplies Budget	Curriculum
	Hire 2 Faculty in next 3 years—areas of Accounting/Economics Business Continue to hire at least 1 Student Instructional Assistant	2 nd Level Building P restrooms Electrical Power computer lab	Desk & Chairs		Accounting, Business Admin. Information Processing Join Health Information Technology Team Human Resource Management Entrepreneurship

Integrated Planning Template

Division:		Department/Program:			Contact:	
Strategic Direction __:						
Institutional Goal ____:						
Objective:					Priority:	
Activities/Tasks	Responsibility Lead person(s)	Resources	Timeline	Comments	College Planning Link(s) *	
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

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*College Planning Links:

Budget Committee

Facilities Committee

Technology Committee

Curriculum Committee

Learning Assessment (SLO) Committee

**Student Learning Outcomes Reporting Template
(Course Level Outcomes)**

Division: Business & Technology		Department/Program: Business & Economics		Course:		Contact:
Student Learning Outcome	Outcome Measure	Definition of Data (Sample/Population)	Method of Data Collection & Source	Expected Level of Performance	Actual Level of Performance	Plan of Action

**Student Learning Outcomes Reporting Template
(Program Level Outcomes)**

Division:		Department/Program:		Contact:		
Student Learning Outcome	Outcome Measure	Definition of Data (Sample/Population)	Method of Data Collection & Source	Expected Level of Performance	Actual Level of Performance	Plan of Action