What are the strengths of your area?: The Earth Sciences course is a required course for the Liberal Studies Transfer program to Fresno State University. Students who complete the prerequisites for this degree enter Fresno State as juniors in their Teacher’s Preparation Program. Since this is a primarily adjunct faculty staffed class, program issues are generally addressed by the Division Chair and the Dean of the Division. Enrollments in the class have traditionally been strong and pass rates are well within an acceptable range. All adjuncts staffing the course work closely with Dr. Hetherington to ensure that the resources of the geology program are available to the instructors of this course. This course has also been used by the TRiO program to introduce students to important concepts in earth sciences. Reports from Mr. Marmolejo indicate that the course was a great success and that students felt the course was both interesting and engaging. Successful course completion has fluctuated since 2010/11. Successful completion rates for the ESCI course over the past few years are as follows; 2010/11 had an 81% success rate, 2011/12 had a 92% success rate and 2012/13 had a 74% success rate. Fluctuations in success rates may be explained by the fact that the one adjunct instructor, who regularly taught the ESCI course, was replaced with a new ESCI adjunct instructor. Overall, successful course completion is relatively high in this course since it meets and exceeds that of the other physical sciences.

What improvements are needed?: The Earth Science course would benefit from a budget that was directly associated with this course. Because the topics covered by earth science are broad and involve a wide range of disciplines, instructors need to scramble to find suitable materials in astronomy, meteorology, volcanology and seismology. By developing a small budget, the instructor can begin purchasing suitable equipment to better address these disparate topics.

Describe any external opportunities or challenges.: It is imperative that the person teaching this course be involved in the Liberal Studies Advisory Board and Liberal Studies Conference at Fresno State University. This board and conference gather together all the local community colleges that feed into the Fresno State K-6 teacher’s program. The conference usually brings together all the instructors in the same discipline to discuss teaching strategies, course content and transfer efficacy. Because our instructors are adjuncts we should consider compensating them for participation in the conference and board meeting.

Overall Outcome Achievement: For the first round of Learning Outcomes assessment, students designed and presented a primary school level earth science lesson. Three quarters of the class were expected to score 70% or higher on their presentation. The results of the assessment indicate that 17/21 (81%) of the students score better than 70%. Because the results were very positive, there were no additional action plans made for this particular outcome.

Changes based on outcome achievement: Because the results were very positive, there were no additional action plans made for this particular outcome.

Outcome cycle evaluation: There is no need to modify this schedule since it allows for regular assessment of at least one Learning Outcome each semester the course is taught.

Action: Establish budget for ESCI

Provide a Budget for Earth Science. Working closely with the Division chair and the Department Dean, identify the needs of the program and agree on an adequate amount to provide equipment and supplies.


Start Date: 08/11/2014
Completion Date: 05/21/2015
Status: New Action

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Jesse Wilcoxson and Robert Urtecho

Rationale (With supporting data):

Priority: Low
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No