Comprehensive Program Review Report (Narrative)
College of the Sequoias
Program Review - Geography

Prepared by: David Howell

What are the strengths of your area?: The Geography program continues to be one of the most popular offerings in the science and social science divisions. Students use Geography 001 and Geography 001L to meet their requirements for transfer since it can be used as a physical science. Additionally, Geography 002 is offered to assist students in strengthening their understanding of geopolitical, cultural and biologic distributions. Based on enrollment trends, Geography 001 and 002 currently (2014) generate 44.3 FTES. This is a considerable increase from the 31.3 FTES generated in 2012. Student success rates in GEOG 001 have been in the low 80% over the past three years. GEOG 002 has lower success rates that hover in the mid 60%.

What improvements are needed?: One of the obvious areas that could be improved is the success rates in GEOG 002. Because of the nature of the course, students need access to regularly changing information. One of the strategies to improve student success is to exchange study guides between the instructors to ensure that we are all teaching the same material. We also plan on sharing resources such as fillable maps, charts and videos that cover the curriculum.

Describe any external opportunities or challenges.: For meteorology and geomorphology sections we have been permitted to use the maps, charts and equipment from the geology department. We are also aware of funding opportunities through grants that may increase the number and quality of maps on campus. We will work closely with our Dean to create a replacement schedule for old maps and to continually update the equipment.

Overall Outcome Achievement: Using student outcomes we have established baseline data. Hopefully our trend analysis will become more sophisticated over time as we gather more information on our core strengths. Additionally, changes in enrollment might have impacted some of our numbers. Students show between a 70% to an 85% satisfactory achievement on the Learning outcomes established for geography. This more than adequately meets our standard of 70%. We will continue using the current strategies for the next cycle of assessments and determine if the success continues at the same rates. Our proposed improvements should continue to increase the number of students who successfully achieve our standards.

Changes based on outcome: We haven't made significant changes in the geography program. Like many areas we have been impacted by course reductions, particularly at night. We have decided to increase student use of the World Atlas. Several exercises were developed that increase student understanding of geopolitical and geomorphological features of the earth. With these strategies in place, we expect to approach 90% achievement of the learning outcomes.

Outcome cycle evaluation: We are up to date in all of our assessment cycles as of last year. This year we will work on Geography 2 and Meteorology. The following year we will complete the cycle for Geography 1 L. Our unit is meeting the schedule we gave ourselves. While we do have some communication between full time instructors and adjunct we could improve in this area. We plan on more effectively using the dialogue days.

Action: Maps

Create a replacement plan for major continental maps.

Implementation Timeline: 2015 - 2016
Start Date: 10/30/2014
Status: New Action

Identify related course/program outcomes:
Demonstrate an ability to read maps and identify numerous locations on the surface of the earth.

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):
Dave Howell

Rationale (With supporting data):
We need to remain current on all geopolitical events such as the recent annexation of the Crimea by Russia.

Priority: Medium
Safety Issue: No
External Mandate: No