

Spring, 2012 Annual Program Review: IIS DEAN'S SUMMARY

The 2011-2012 academic year was a milestone for the Intercultural and International Studies Division as it was the first full year that the division operated out of the renovated Multicultural Center (MCC). With the MCC infrastructure in place and the new organizational structure nearly completed, the IIS division has established itself as a vital home base for its full and part-time faculty, for active student and community organizations, and as a center for collaborative enterprises with groups and programs from across the campus. Our programs, including the Asian Pacific American Leadership Institute (APALI), Latina/o Empowerment at De Anza (¡LEAD!), and IMPACT/AAPI support our target and non-target students in a variety of ways by providing opportunities for leadership, mentoring, and community engagement that have a demonstrable impact on student academic and personal success. Our curricular program is comprised of Intercultural Studies (including African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicano Studies, and Native American Studies), International (Global) Studies with its wide array of offerings, World Languages (Cantonese, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Persian, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese), and Women's Studies. Reflecting De Anza College's historical and deeply held commitment to critical awareness and valuing of diverse histories, experiences, and world views, our Intercultural Studies (ICS) department has the distinction of being required study for students seeking to fulfill the Transfer General Education requirement for CSUs and for an A. A. degree.

However, like many divisions and programs across the campus, our division has suffered significant losses with the complete elimination of five World Languages (two of which are being phased out this year) and the non-replacement of a full-time faculty retirement in one of our most high-demand subjects (Spanish). Still, division-wide our Retention rates are equal to that of the campus overall (89%), our Success rate (77%) is above that of the college's (75%), and our division enrollment rate has been roughly parallel to that of the campus. In recent years we have experienced a drop in enrollment in some of our Native American Studies department courses relative to the number of course offerings, and we are working to understand and know how to best address this. Related to this, a Main Area of Improvement that faculty have worked on this year is that of advertising the benefits of our curriculum. For example, one faculty member has conducted student surveys and been active in steam-lining our Global Studies Certificate program to make it more doable and attractive to students. We anticipate that this reconfiguration of the Global Studies certificate program, along with greater advertising, will result in much greater student participation and completion. We will replicate this procedure with other existing certificate programs in our division. Similarly, another faculty member in our World Languages area has recently developed and received approval for certificate programs in Mandarin that will serve as a model for other language areas, and we anticipate significant student participation.

A major challenge and question that persists in our division is that of the equity gap. While the campus as a whole saw an increase of 1% in the equity gap, our division's gap grew by 6% last year. While the size of this increase was an aberration of what has been a relatively consistent gap, it is something we are discussing internally and actively seeking to understand and address. Some of this may be due to a 2% increase in our 'Targeted' student population. For while the course content and pedagogical practices in ICS and International Studies (INTL) are quite 'culturally relevant' and 'culturally congruent', perhaps much more so than across the campus, our guess (to be confirmed or refuted through institutional research) is that we are attracting students who do not reflect the college norm in terms of 'college readiness'. Even as our ICS courses are a curricular requirements for GE and for an A.A. degree, these courses do not have prerequisites (such as EWRT 1A), only 'Advisory' course recommendations, and as a result, our faculty report having a disproportionate number of students enrolled who are still at the 'basic skills' level. As transfer-level, articulated courses, the ICS and International Studies (INTL) course requirements that students must successfully complete involve a significant amount of reading and writing. Anecdotal evidence suggests a general misperception among students (and perhaps some faculty and advisors) that these courses that may be inherently interesting to certain students are somehow less rigorous than other transfer-level courses. Our instructors observe that it is not uncommon for 20-25% of students in their classes to report not having completed basic skills level writing courses, and that even when instructors are confident that students understand core concepts, they do not always perform well on assessments that involve writing. Again, further investigation of this issue will be pursued with the help of the Institutional Research office as part of our division-wide 'cycle-of-inquiry' process to develop our understanding of this dynamic and suggest potential intervention strategies. Indeed, we continue to move toward fully establishing a cycle-of-inquiry process at division and department meetings where we look at student performance data, collaboratively reflect on our instructional and assessment practices, and refine existing practices or develop new strategies for achieving our desired outcomes.

World Languages

While they currently appear in the college catalog and in the TradDat system, the following language areas have been eliminated prior to this academic year or are slated to be eliminated and phased out this year: Arabic (phasing out), Hebrew (eliminated), Hindi (eliminated), Italian (phasing out), Urdu (eliminated). These language areas are not included in this year's APRU. Furthermore, the World Language areas that do not have any full-time faculty have historically been aggregated into a single reporting instrument; this has been the past practice for these small language areas. The new TracDat system is not currently set up to capture this configuration, so 2010-2011 information from all of the language areas with no full-time faculty (with the exception of Cantonese) are summarized here:

[LEGEND: Full Time = FT; PT=Part Time; Enrollment=ENRL; Target Enrollment=TE; Retention Rate %= RETN; Success Rate%=SUCCESS; Equity Gap in Success Rate=EG]

GERMAN: FT FTEF=.17, PT FTEF=.83; ENRL= 301 (down from 355); TE= 30;
RETN=88; SUCCESS=81; EG=9%

HINDI: PT FTEF = .333; ENRL= 98 (down from 127); TE= 2; RETN=95%;
SUCCESS=95%; EG= +5

JAPANESE: PT FTEF=3.33; ENRL=1,016 (down from 1,079); TE=123; RETN=90%;
SUCCESS=80%; EG=10%

KOREAN: PT FTEF=1.22; ENRL=433 (up from 366); TE=61; RETN=87%;
SUCCESS=79%; EG= 13%

PERSIAN: PT FTEF= .56; ENRL=172 (down from 225); TE= 5; RETN= 93%;
SUCCESS=97%; EG=28%

RUSSIAN: PT FTEF= .44; ENRL =105 (up from 87); TE=11; RETN=90%;
SUCCESS=82%; EG=41%

VIETNAMESE: PT FTEF = .89; ENRL = 312 (up from 285); TE=17; RETN=92%;
SUCCESS=89%; EG=32%

[Note: Cantonese, French, Mandarin, and Spanish each have their own APRU reports.]

Division Needs

Our Division office is also home to the Multicultural Center where, as noted, a wide range of student, faculty, staff, and community events take place, including ongoing meetings of various kinds. As such, the extraordinary volume of foot traffic that comes through the MCC requires, at minimum, a part-time receptionist/facilities coordinator.

Having someone dedicated to attending to this stream of traffic and corresponding questions will allow the division's administrative assistant to attend to the bona fide responsibilities of this role. However, this is a good problem to have as it demonstrates the extent to which the MCC has continued to be an important center for collaborative work for students, faculty, and staff from across the campus, as well as local community organizations.

