

PROGRAM REVIEW 2008-2011

Division: Social Sciences / Humanities

Department: Philosophy

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I. Description and Mission of the Program

This program addresses: Basic Skills Transfer

- A. Our department offers a wide variety of general education classes. All of our classes are transferable. We offer two critical thinking classes, one that is CSU transferable, and one that counts toward the I.G.E.C.T. transfer pattern. Our goal is to help students learn about Philosophy, and through that to become better thinkers, better writers, and more self-reflective as people. All of our classes take multicultural approaches to their subject matter, and most of our faculty use collaborative and students centered approaches to learning.
- B. We have some very qualified and engaged faculty members. Our department is able to offer one of the broadest ranges of classes of any community college Philosophy Department.
- C. Our main area in need of improvement is progress toward closing the achievement gap. In the past three years, our achievement data, looking at success and retention, have not improved, either for target or for non-target group students.
- D. We expect students taking our classes to have improved critical thinking and analytical skills, to be better readers and better writers. Most of our students are on a transfer path, and quite a few are majors.

II. Retention and Growth

- A. We have been involved in our division's C.A.R. process (Conversation, Application, and Reflection). We have hoped that through that process we would be making progress toward those goals, but so far, that has not happened.
- B. Through the C.A.R. process, we have had discussion among a few members of our department about those issues. Possibly as a result of the small numbers participating in that process, our numbers have not changed.
- C. Many of our faculty members take seriously their role as helping students develop their reading and writing skills.

III. Student Equity

- A. Our percent success rates have remained virtually unchanged over the past 3 years. Our success rates are as follows:

	Targeted	Not targeted
2007/8	65	74
2006/7	62	71
2005/6	65	75

- B. Members of our faculty who have been involved in the C.A.R. project have agreed to look at their individual equity numbers, and together we will do an analysis of where the problems lie, and what interventions are likely to lead to improvement.
- C. Our biggest challenge is that many of our faculty members are not engaged in our conversation around making a change and that we have not yet identified effective strategies to close the achievement gap.

IV. **Budget Limitations**

- A. Funding has not been the source of our problems. Our dean has provided ample resources to support our equity work.
- B. It would be very difficult for students to fulfill their Critical Thinking Requirement without a Philosophy department. Students wanting to major in Philosophy would not have an opportunity to fulfill their lower division requirements, and they would be deprived of a rewarding, often life-changing experience.

V. **Additional Comments:**

- **Strategic Planning Initiatives (Community Collaborations, Cultural Competency, Outreach, and Individualized Attention for Retention):**
One of our faculty members has been involved with service learning, which is a part of the Community Collaborations SPI. Our department has benefited from its involvement with the C.A.R. project, which is a part of the Cultural Competency SPI.