



DATE: April 12, 2007

TO: Kim Knowles-Yanez
Chair, Liberal Studies

FROM: Gabriela Sonntag and Camille Schuster
Co-Chairs, Program Assessment Committee

Tom Bennett
Associate Vice President for Strategic Planning and Assessment

SUBJECT: **Notification of Academic Program Review**

According to the schedule for program review established by the Academic Senate's Program Assessment Committee (PAC) in mid-2003, the degree program for the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies is scheduled to begin the Program Evaluation and Planning (PEP) process this Spring. Although program review can be a demanding and time-consuming task, we believe the process can give rise to program renewal and rewarding collegial discussions about important pedagogical issues.

We are in the process of modifying the PEP so that it can have a greater impact on program improvement and so that the faculty time spent will be meaningful and worthwhile. For example, the program review process has been adjusted to allow departments to strengthen their degree programs by focusing on student learning outcomes and use an annual assessment report process that will allow programs to systematically assess one or two of these outcomes in key areas.

This new direction is also consistent with WASC's expectations for how programs assess student learning and how faculty use this information on student learning to improve their programs. More specifically, as part of the Educational Effectiveness Review Process scheduled for Spring 2009, WASC will require that we provide evidence

The institution's expectations for learning and student attainment are developed and widely shared among its members (including faculty, students, staff, and where appropriate, external stakeholders). The institution's faculty takes collective responsibility for establishing, reviewing, fostering, and demonstrating the attainment of these expectations (*WASC Handbook of Accreditation, Standard 2 – Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions – Criterion for Review 2.4*).

The California State University

The Program Assessment Committee will have some funding available through the Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment to support the assessment of your program. Assessment options might include projects (e.g., an approach used by Psychology), standardized national exams (e.g., an approach used by Chemistry), or a holistic blind read of student papers (e.g., an approach used by Literature and Writing Studies). Your department might also consider support for sending you and/or other members of your Department to an assessment conference; the WASC annual conference, or a meeting of a disciplinary organization that might be more appropriate in helping to develop an assessment plan for your degree program. Additionally, the CSU Information Competency Initiative will again be making some funds available to academic departments for the purpose of integrating and assessing information competence into the learning outcomes of their programs. For more information please contact Gabriela Sonntag (x4356, gsg@csusm.edu).

Attached is the draft Program Review Guidelines that the Program Assessment Committee has been developing over the past year and a half. A second attachment outlines specific tasks for this first semester of the process. To ensure that all members of the department have an understanding of the upcoming review process, and to further support the efforts of your department, the Program Assessment Committee would like to schedule a time to meet with members of the department. We ask that you contact Susan O'Connor (ext. 8823 or soconnor@csusm.edu) to arrange a meeting time and location.

Attachments: Spring Semester Process (see attached)
 Draft Program Review Guidelines (available on Assessment website)
 Student Learning Outcomes statement (available on Assessment website)

Where relevant and available:

Program Strengths and Weaknesses from the previous PEP cycle
Program Planning Report from the previous PEP cycle
Program Assessment Committee report from the previous PEP cycle

cc: (w/o attachments): Emily Cutrer, Provost
 Program Assessment Committee

Vicki Golich, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Michael McDuffie, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences