



PROGRAM COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

2023-2024

Program Review (P) - Life Sciences

General Information

Briefly describe your program.

Our program offers a mix of courses that serve biology majors, pre-allied health students, and students seeking general education courses in Life Sciences.

How does your program support VC's mission?

We produce degrees in biology and health sciences, provide GE courses, and feed the nursing program, as well as other allied health programs, on this and other campuses.

Which disciplines are included in your program?

We support the following four-digit disciplines. ANAT, ANPH, BIOL, MICR, and PHSO

SWOT Analysis: What are the strengths of your program?

In addition to possessing biology-specific knowledge to support biology and health science students, many of our faculty have extensive training in culturally responsive teaching.

SWOT Analysis: What are the weaknesses of your program?

We have difficulty finding part-time faculty because of our location, low pay, and unequal lab pay.

SWOT Analysis: What are some opportunities for your program?

Our program had expanded into East Campus and should soon have a new biology lab space. The addition of space will allow us greater flexibility in scheduling labs that will meet our students' needs.

SWOT Analysis: What are some threats to your program?

The generally low pay in the VCCCD relative to institutions in our region and the payment of labs at a rate below lecture compensation ensure that we will be canceling classes that we are able to fill but unable to staff. The district is well aware of this threat but has not made it a priority, so we have the added threat that existing faculty may leave or become disillusioned/disgruntled as a result of this continuing unfair treatment. We lost an excellent full-time faculty member last year for this reason.

Enrollment & Demographics

Enrollment & Demographics: General Observations

Our enrollment has remained relatively stable, though we have a slight decline in 2022 because of a return to campus. We had many part-time instructors during the pandemic who lived remotely and could only teach online.

Over the past five years, what was the trend in your program's enrollment?

Remained Constant

Has there been a substantial decrease in any of your program's disciplines?

No

Are student gender demographics similar between your program and the college?

No

Are student ethnic demographics similar between your program and the college?

No

Program Planning

Please describe any areas where your program's demographics vary from the college.

Our program serves more female students (67.1% in 2022-2023 as compared to the college 56.4%). While we have more women than the college in all disciplines, the primary driver of this large differences in our allied health courses (ANAT, PHSO, and MICR). We serve a slightly higher percentage of Hispanic students as compared to the college (70.4% vs 61.8%) and a slightly lower percentage of white students (18.4% vs 24.2%). As with gender, this difference occurs in all disciplines except ANPH.

Course Success Rate

Was the most recent year's course success rate higher than the college standard of 66.7%?

Yes

Was the most recent year's course success rate higher than the overall college average?

Yes

Has your course success rate increased, decreased, or remained constant over the past 5 years?

Remained Constant

Click the "Disciplines" tab - Describe any differences between the disciplines in your program.

We tend to have higher success in allied health courses than in BIOL courses, but not by a large margin. Our lowest course success rates are in BIOL V10, a course we do not staff (ESRM does). We should staff this course.

Click the "Ethnicity" Report on the right - Are there gaps in your course success rate by ethnicity?

Yes

Ethnicity: How have these gaps changed over the past five years?

Decreased

Click the "Gender" Report on the right - Are there gaps in your course success rate by gender?

No

Gender: How have these gaps changed over the past five years?

Decreased

Describe what your program has done over the past 3 years to close equity gaps in course success.

A majority of our full-time faculty have completed the Humanizing Stem program. Our faculty provide high-quality Canvas shells not only for their online courses but also their on-campus courses and regularly engage in robust discussions of how to better serve students. We have seen a steady increase in success for black students over the past five years. We have narrowed the gap between male and female students in recent years, though the gap (males slightly lower) was never particularly large.

Student Completion

Does your program offer a degree or certificate of achievement?

Yes

Within the past five years, what is the trend for your program's degree/certificates awarded?

We have had good success with our Pre-Allied Health Certificate, generally offering hundreds of certificates each year. In our first year (2022-2023) we awarded 98 Health Science AS degrees, more than three times the number of biology AST degrees.

Are any of the degrees/certificates in your program on the program warning list?

No

Program Planning

Click the "Award Ethnicity" Report on the right – Are there equity gaps by ethnicity?

Yes

Equity Gaps by Ethnicity: If yes, please describe.

There is a small (6%) gap between the percent of Hispanic students and the percentage of Hispanic students. This is likely a reflection of the small equity gap in student success, but we will hopefully turn this around with our work at East Campus and new full-time faculty.

Click the "Award Gender" Report on the right – Are there equity gaps by gender?

Yes

Equity Gaps by Gender: If yes, please describe.

There is a large gap between male students (31.2%) and male students who complete degrees (17.0%). This looks very worrisome, but we have a degrees and a certificate in allied health, a field primarily filled by females (except paramedics, but we don't offer that degree, we simply teach ANPH). We would need to know if this data is being collected in a way that is helpful, or if we are seeing the impact of teaching nearly as many male GE students but mostly females in our degree programs.

Click the "CSU/UC Transfers" Report on the right - How has the number of CSU Transfers changed over the past 5 years?

Remained Constant

Click the "CSU/UC Transfers" Report on the right - How has the number of UC Transfers changed over the past 5 years?

Increased

Click the "Transfer Ethnicity" Report on the right – Are there equity gaps by ethnicity?

No

Equity Gaps by Ethnicity-Transfer: If yes, please describe.

CSU transfers data seems to fluctuate widely from year to year, but on average we do not seem to have gaps.

Click the "Transfer Gender" Report on the right – Are there equity gaps by gender?

No

Equity Gaps by Gender-Transfer: If yes, please describe.

CSU transfers data seems to fluctuate widely from year to year, but on average we do not seem to have gaps.

Course Offerings

Course Offerings: General Observations

Our courses have very high fill rates and our faculty typically carry extra hourly classes in addition to their full-time load. We typically have difficulty staffing enough classes to meet demand.

Are there any disciplines in which 30% or more of classes haven't been offered in the past 5 years?

No

CSLOs

Briefly summarize the results of your Course SLOs.

Students generally do well on our SLOs.

Which SLO initiatives had the greatest impact on student learning in your program?

We have focused on initiatives that support the college goals of reducing equity gaps and increasing degrees and certificates.

Program Planning

PSLOs

Briefly summarize the results of your Program SLOs.

Our pre-allied health students typically do well at achieving SLOs.

Which PSLO initiatives had the greatest impact on student learning in your program?

We have focused on initiatives that support the college goals of reducing equity gaps and increasing degrees and certificates.

Labor Market Data - CE Only

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Close Equity Gaps

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The first year, we will analyze our data and discuss better ways to close equity gaps. We currently have gaps in both ethnicity and gender, even though our overall success rate has increased. We will come up with resources to help with pedagogy that would decrease these gaps as well as resources that would help close the gap. In the next two years, we will implement the changes.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 2: First-Term to Second-Term Persistence, Goal 4: Transfer, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion

Review Type

Mini

Program Review Cycle

2017 - 2020, 2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

05/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

Our biggest two focus in this mini program review was Closing Equity Gaps. We've put in for a FT faculty, large enough screens for labs so students can see in labs, podium for sci 315 so our microscope and computer can be off a carts and onto a professional lecture podium, and a modular anatomy building so we can serve the demand we currently have, specific in anatomy and physiology

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

We hope that the items we have move up the list for faculty and equipment so we can purchase what is needed. Its a challenge that our screens and podium were not purchased when the rotation for the labs came in. Now we have to wait.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

Life Sciences overall course success rates have risen above the VC overall during the pandemic, perhaps due to the the nature of the online modality and the strong online teaching skills of our faculty. While impacted by low sample sizes, we appear to have seen a large increase in success among black students since 2020. We will continue to monitor this and hope it is a positive outcome from a supportive instructional approach during the pandemic and training in culturally responsive teaching. We saw a decline in success among Hispanic students in many of our labs while they were being taught online and recognize the need to bring labs back on campus so that students may benefit from working with proper supplies and equipment as well as from the presence of the instructor. For this reason, we do not intend to offer more than a handful of general education labs online starting in Fall 2023. 2021-2022 is the only school year in the past 5 that show a higher success rate for males than females. This difference is small, but may indicate the end of a trend of low male success rates and an indication that we are serving our students equally in regard to sex.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Many of our requests for resources remain unanswered. Some of these requests affect our BIOL V01L room, SCI 315. BIOL V01L serves general education students and BIOL courses tend to have a lower success rate as a result. During the pandemic BIOL V01L saw a dramatic decline in success particularly among Hispanic students, resulting in widening our equity gaps. This course needs to return to in-person instruction, though we need to properly equip the room with a screen that works with the previously installed, new projector and with a proper instructors podium. This course requires significant introductions of concepts and lab techniques and that effort is hampered if we lack the proper equipment. BIOL V01L often shows an equity gap for Hispanic students who may benefit from seeing instructions on the screen as well as hearing them, but the current screens may limit the effectiveness of this technique.

We are concerned that items that improve class instruction or assist us in better doing the jobs we are already doing are not in vogue, but we believe that equity based concerns are often related to our ability to perform the normal tasks of teaching in a way that is able to reach all students effectively. Policies that encourage zero cost textbooks, or other practices that reduce the financial burden on those least able to pay, and practices such as presenting material in multiple formats (written, visual, and verbal) are effective, cost-efficient ways of ensuring our instruction reaches all students, be they those who need little assistance from us or those who need our best efforts. Properly equipped classrooms are a necessary component of this and depriving GE students of properly equipped classrooms is antithetical to our DEIA goals.

Year 4: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective.

The Biology department at Ventura College has proven its commitment to addressing equity gaps. Seven of the fourteen faculty who have completed Humanizing Stem at Ventura College are biology faculty (this does not include Kamelia Algiers who completed this program before it was available faculty cohorts and serves as the Professional Development Coordinator of the S:AIL in STEM program or Erica Mullins who completed the program prior to hire at VC). Our faculty regularly discuss how to address equity gaps and ensure that students learn in ways that will support their success beyond our classrooms. However, the available equity data is not adequate to really know how successful we are.

Students success data continues to be difficult to interpret, not because of an inability to analyze data but because there appears to be a high degree of variance in the data that prevents us from picking up useful signals. Examples of this include the fluctuation of female and male success rates, though the consistent shifting of success rank does suggest that there is probably no significant difference in success rate between female and male students. Ethnic data is a bit more difficult to interpret. Despite large sample sizes, Hispanic and white success rates fluctuate significantly from semester to semester and year to year (e.g., student success in BIOL V01L in Spring 2023 was 76.2% for Hispanic students and 77.8% for white students. In Fall 2022 the success rates were 70.9% for Hispanic students and 77.4% for white students. While it is possible to pick out trends in such data over a period of years, that is generally not what we are seeing. This may in part be compounded by shifts in course modality as we return to a new normal after the pandemic as well as by both shifts in student populations beyond ethnic background (e.g., age or sex) and changes in course staffing. One trend that has held up over the years, including an increase in 2022-2023 is course success in black students at the department level, with an increase from 58.4% to 76.8% over the period for which data has been provided. While we believe this trend is related to the efforts our faculty have made to humanize their courses and adopt methods that promote equity, we cannot be completely confident in this data due to relatively low sample sizes.

Year 4: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Our challenges include lack of changes to facilities, data quality, and challenges due to course modality. We continue to desire changes to our lab facilities. We are waiting on the construction of new lab facilities for human anatomy that will allow us more flexibility in scheduling classes to meet students' needs. The hiring of additional faculty has been both a blessing and a burden given our lack of adequate lab facilities, particularly in relation to ANAT and PHSO. The existence of the new lab at East Campus has allowed us to maintain the high number of ANAT sections we had during the pandemic, even as we return them to an in-person modality, but we still have difficulty meeting student demand due to both facility limitations and staffing limitations. In particular, East Campus lacks large lecture classrooms so we must offer some sections as hybrids (with online lecture and in-person labs). We have been able to upgrade the audiovisual equipment in some labs, but await improvements in SCI 316 and 318 (approved last year). Additionally, if we are to return more courses (e.g., ANAT lectures) to in-person instruction we will need access to large rooms on the Ventura Campus (e.g., ASC 130, 140, and 150) so that we can offer large numbers of lab sections with limited faculty.

It is difficult to meaningfully pursue the closing of equity gaps with the data we have. Sample size is certainly one issue we face, but we see a lot of fluctuation in data even when we have relatively large samples. The inability to look at multiple factors at once, aside from gender and ethnicity, may limit our ability to see some of the reasons for the fluctuations that prevent us from seeing trends. Of course some of this may be due to sample size. For example, in the previously discussed BIOL V01L data, Hispanic student data and n values for male and female Hispanic students were similar in the two years, but the male and female white students shifted rank where female white students had lower success in Fall 2022 and higher success in Spring 2023, data points that are difficult to interpret given that the n value for male white students dropped from 30 (relative to 28 female) in Fall 2022 to 18 (relative to 34 female) in Spring 2023.

It is also important to call into question the value of student success data taken as the passing of a course. Naturally, we understand that students must succeed in classes in order to be able to complete degrees. However, we also understand that passing a course and successfully achieving the learning outcomes from a course are not necessarily the same thing, meaning that passing a class is an imperfect measure of success for the student and society. Changes in course modality seem to underscore this point. Success rates are often higher in online courses as compared to in-person courses (e.g., Spring 2023 BIOL V01 Online = 78.5%, InPerson = 65.9%). There are multiple ways to interpret these numbers. It is possible that online courses are more equitable and the increase in students success represents an increase in learning. It is possible, as is often confirmed by students, that online classes are easier and allow cheating, suggesting that the success rates are smoke and mirrors. We currently lack a mechanism (e.g. standardized assessment, data on success rates in follow up classes or after transfer) by which to compare in-person and online classes. A couple of experiments with mixing online classes and in-person assessments suggest that students used to taking online classes are not initially well equipped for in-person assessment but that they can learn necessary skills to succeed in the in-person modality if assessed in this manner. In light of the apparent impact of modality on success rate and concerns of grade inflation (e.g., Forbes Sept 2023, Grade Inflation is not a Victimless Crime), it may be prudent to add information to Tableau that allows us to analyze grades (A,B,C,D,F) and GPA (as a factor in success alongside demographics) in addition to the currently available data. This is particularly sensible given that, although they are all considered a measure of success in Tableau data, for students in our largest degree awarding program (Health Sciences AS) grades A,B, and C are not considered equal when considered for entry into programs like nursing school. Therefore, success data does not give a clear picture of equity for this group.

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

BIO2301

Description of Resource Request

13 Dissecting Microscopes to complete a class set

Estimated Cost

\$38,500

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No

Type

Equipment

New/Replacement

New

Priority

03

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Ty Gardner

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Pirate's Code

Bandolier

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

Students in our majors biology courses, BIOL V03 and V04, regularly utilize dissecting microscopes to view objects that are small, but too large to view using compound light microscopes. We currently have enough microscopes for one less than half of a class (11 students), but learning to utilize microscopes, as well as collecting data while using them, are important outcomes for the class. The students utilize the microscopes in multiple labs but individual students may be left out if they do not have access to their own scope, particularly when students are initially instructed on how to utilize the scopes. Furthermore, when we can't have every student taking part in an experiment or data collection event, some student will get less from the class or feel left out, and the range of observations and data collection opportunities will be limited by the lack of equipment. We plan to purchase 13 microscopes to complete a class set.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

We offer 2 lab sections of BIOL V03 and BIOL V04 each semester, serving 24 students per lab for a total of 98 students per semester. In Spring 2023, 69% of students enrolled in BIOL V03 identified as Hispanic, slightly above the college average of 65% based on course enrollments in Tableau. These students are pursuing STEM degrees (pre-med, environmental science) that generally lead to high-demand, well-paying jobs.

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

Dissecting microscopes require limited maintenance, most of which would be conducted by our laboratory technicians.

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

We already provide for microscope maintenance.

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

Students will have more hands-on experience which creates memorable learning experiences. This request ensures that all students will have access to training in microscope use and data collection.

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

BIO2302

Description of Resource Request

12 Micro-incinerators to increase health, safety, and modernity of microbiology labs

Estimated Cost

\$8,700

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

no

Type

Equipment
New/Replacement

New

Priority

02

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Ty Gardner

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Pirate's Code

Voyage

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

Maintenance of aseptic conditions is essential to the practice and instruction of microbiology. Historically, microbiology classes have utilized Bunsen burners to sterilize loops, needles, or other equipment used in the manipulation of microorganisms. Today, micro-incinerators are replacing Bunsen burners for multiple reasons. First, Bunsen burners may aerosolize microorganisms taken from a liquid suspension. Additionally, Bunsen burners, like gas appliances that the state and federal government are seeking to have replaced by electrical appliances, burn natural gas and contributed to indoor air pollution. Finally, Bunsen burners work by producing an open flame, creating a safety hazard for the individual and building that can be reduced, but not eliminated, by following rigid safety protocols such as those use in our well-regulated microbiology labs. Micro-incinerators remove these risks and produce a safer, more-productive environment and are essential to ensuring that our instruction reflects the modern standards students will find as they continue their education or enter the workplace.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

We generally offer 8 sections of microbiology per semester, serving up to 192 students in Spring or Fall in addition to up to 72 students in summer. These students will be heading towards well-paying jobs in fields such as nursing. Our microbiology student demographics generally match those of the college.

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

none

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

no

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

Micro-incinerators will provide students with up-to-date technology they will encounter in the workplace and will increase student safety.

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

BIO2303

Description of Resource Request

28 Compound Light Microscopes for a Full Class Set

Estimated Cost

\$73,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

no

Type

Equipment

New/Replacement

New

Priority

01

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Ty Gardner

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request**Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request****Pirate's Code**

Bilge

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

Microscopes are utilized in all of our laboratory classes and are an essential component of training (allied health and biology majors) or exploring the living world (non-majors). Microscopes are therefore an item that, despite regular maintenance and careful instruction in use, see a good deal of wear and tear resulting in finite lifespans. We currently have a number of scopes from our existing class sets in three lab rooms (315, 316, and 318) that are in disrepair and which, in some cases, cannot be repaired because parts are no longer available. Our goal is to purchase a single classroom set, allowing one classroom to have a full set of new scopes (that will be similar to but not directly match the existing model that is no longer available). This will allow us to take the working scopes from that room and use them to replace the non-functional scopes in the other rooms and to maintain a small number of scopes in reserve for parts and to replace scopes that cannot be repaired. By purchasing a classroom set at this time, we should be able to maintain the other rooms for years to come.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

In Fall 2023 the three laboratory rooms impacted by this request held 34 lab sections, serving up to 816 students (they are generally at or near full capacity).

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

New scopes should lessen our current need for microscope maintenance/repair.

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

We currently cover basic microscope maintenance

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

All students will have access to a functioning microscope to ensure training that will result in success in future courses and careers or to help them explore microscopic living organism in their general education life science course. Without a new set of scopes multiple courses will be compromised, with more students impacted each semester as our old scopes continue to degrade.

Resource Requests**Resource Request Status**

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

BIOL2304

Description of Resource Request

Anatomical Models to Ensure Student Access

Estimated Cost

\$29,400 total (\$9800 for a set of full body AS1/1, upper limb NS15, and lower limb NS10 models) 3 sets requested

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

no

Type

Equipment

New/Replacement

New

Priority

04

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Ty Gardner

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Pirate's Code

Warp

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

Human anatomy courses are the entry point to our allied health fields. In its first year, students earned 98 Health Science AS degrees. Access to this degree, and the promise of nursing school or other allied health programs, is an essential way in which Ventura College can provide equitable access to well-paying jobs to members of our community. We have been working to expand our offerings to ensure that all interested students have a human anatomy course to enroll in, be it at our Ventura campus or the new lab facility at East Campus. Thankfully, our new lab at East Campus is able to provide students with sufficient access to models due through the HSI-STEM grant. At this same time, our Ventura facility has not seen significant funding for the improvement of its lab resources. We understand that it is not possible to simply replicate the resources at East Campus, so we seek a path to a continual improvement of our Ventura facilities beginning with a request that will help ensure that students get a solid start in lab. This request will support our certificate and AS as well as assist us in addressing equity gaps in ANAT and PHSO.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

Our Ventura Campus offered 8 ANAT and 9 PHSO sections in Fall 2023 which serves 408 students. Enrollment is similar in Spring and we offer ANAT in both summer sessions.

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

None

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

No

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

Our human anatomy labs begin with instruction in the skeletal and muscular systems. We have a good set of real bones and adequate artificial, disarticulated skeletons to serve all of the students in a lab. We lack sufficient resources to give all of our students good access to muscle models which are used over a period of two weeks near the beginning of the semester. This section of the course is particularly helpful in cementing study skills and class unity because learning muscle movements allows for a high degree of class participation. We seek to increase model access so that each lab table can have the resources it needs. Furthermore, many of our existing models are decades old and in disrepair. Many have needed to be glued together such that they can't provide the entire experience they could when new (e.g. access to deep muscles or nerves). Additionally, the models requested can be used to supplement instruction in the nervous and cardiovascular systems in ANAT V01 and PHSO V01.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Increase in Certificate Awards with new Pre-Health Professions Certificate

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Award a pre-health professions certificate

This certificate features a curriculum that prepares students to meet the eligibility requirements for admission to programs in nursing, physical therapy, x-ray tech, etc. In addition to offering students a tangible benefit to completing their health program prerequisites, this certificate will allow us to track students who are taking courses within the department (Biology, Anatomy, Microbiology) but who are not currently counted in our awards and certificates totals.

Year 1 : This program review cycle we are going to perfect our method for making sure students know about and sign up for the certificate.

Year 2 : Students are now contacted by counselors for their degrees. So more are getting them. We should work on gender equity and recruiting more males.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs, Goal 2: Increase our community's access to transfer, workforce preparation, and basic skills education, Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion

Review Type

Annual

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

08/01/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

We've increased our allied health certificate from last year, 19 awarded, to this year, 366 awarded. We worked closely with our counselors to make sure there was a good process in place. All other degrees have increased as well (Bio AS-T from 19 to 35, Bio Certificate from 4 to 7, and Bio AA from 5 to 10. Interestingly, Hispanic students were far more likely to get degrees than white or other students (65% vs 20%). More females received degrees than males, probably due to more females going into nursing

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

We've done well. We should work on recruitment of more males into nursing and biology.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

We have established ANAT lecture and lab courses at the Santa Paula (East Campus). This should allow us to continue offering a large number of ANAT V01 sections to fuel our Pre-Allied Health Certificate and Health Sciences AS, even as we return to in-person labs that will better promote sustained learning and demonstration of hands-on skills. ANAT V01 is the entry course into these programs and leads to enrollment in PHSO V01 and MICR V01.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

We don't have enough faculty. We lost one faculty member to retirement and another to a leave of absence. Other faculty have release time for various aspects of shared governance. However, we have never had enough full-time faculty in the department and have historically relied on a large number of part-time faculty. Part-time faculty are difficult to come by as our department teaches a large number of sections in classes that require rare skill sets (human dissection, microbiology) in our modestly sized community. Furthermore, we lose good part-time faculty to full-time positions once they have been trained and gained experience. We are not competitive for faculty, hires full-time or part-time, because of low pay and inequitable lab pay. It is not unusual to have part-time faculty tell us they cannot accept an assignment until they've heard from other college districts that pay more and provide 1:1 pay for labs. We are unable to staff our classes and have had to cancel full classes during a time of decreased enrollment. It is unclear if Ventura College will be able to sustain a nursing program and the sciences that provide the pre-requisites for nursing if they cannot solve the underlying pay issues.

Year 4: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective.

98 Health Science AS awards were awarded in 2022-2023 (first year of the award) along with 205 Pre-Allied Health Certificates. While the latter has declined, the former amounts to more than three times the number of Biology AS degrees awarded. We have hired a new FT instructor in human biology (Manuel Flores) who has picked up the load of a human biology instructor left Ventura College at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year (Preston Pipal). We are currently offering 6 sections of ANAT V01 lab at East Campus (2 tied to an in-person lecture, 4 tied to a DE lecture). Degree completion is by ethnicity closely matches the % of students enrolled, but is a little lower in Hispanic and white students, suggesting that we may wish to increase communication about the AS to students in our pre-allied health courses.

Year 4: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

We lost a FT faculty member who primarily taught ANAT V01, the introductory course for Allied Health students in 2022-2023, primarily due to low salaries and lower pay for lab courses relative to lecture courses. While we have hired a replacement faculty member, and have good coverage in most other sub-disciplines, we still have some difficulty staffing ANAT V01 given the high demand for this course. We may need to look for more PT faculty to teach this course when the new anatomy lab is constructed at the Ventura Campus, but we continue to have difficulty hiring PT faculty because they can earn more in other districts.

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

BIO2305

Description of Resource Request

Make Lab Pay Equal to Lecture Pay.

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No.

Type

Other (Not Prioritized)

New/Replacement

New

Priority

05

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Ty Gardner

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Please provide a detailed justification as to why this position is needed.

This is not a position, but it relates directly to funding of faculty and the service of students by faculty. This request is more important than hiring an additional person in any one position on campus: It relates to the hiring and retention of all full-time and part-time faculty in the sciences. We have lost full-time and part-time faculty because of the generally low faculty pay in the VCCCD relative to many institutions in the state and our region. Many of these faculty have chosen positions, either full-time or part-time, at other institutions specifically because those other institutions pay labs the same as lectures on an hourly basis. What this means is that a 1 unit lab (2hrs 50min in class) pays the same (provides the same load factor for FT faculty) as a lecture of 3 units (2.5 hrs in class per week) at many competing institutions while in the VCCCD, the lab was paid at a factor of 75% of lecture pay until the 2022-2023 school year where this factor went up to 85%. Science faculty, who prepare presentations, supplementary materials, and extensive Canvas shells for their labs, and who grade quizzes, exams, and lab reports on a regular basis, are treated as if they are less of a person than faculty in other disciplines. According to a May Article in Inside Higher Ed referencing the U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard, STEM majors achieve higher lifetime earnings than majors in the humanities and liberal arts. The article further recognizes that associates degrees in fields such as nursing lead to higher median earnings than the majority of four-year degrees. Why then do we intentionally pay science instructors less for their work than we pay instructors in other disciplines? It is possible that this is, in part, the result of a lack of representation of former science faculty in management positions within the District. Unfortunately the price for this discrepancy is paid by students who are less likely to receive the support they need because existing science faculty are overworked (teaching 6 classes while their colleagues may be teaching 5) and under-appreciated and because these students may see classes canceled, or unscheduled, due to a lack of staff because part-time faculty prioritize assignments at neighboring institutions over assignments at Ventura College. If we are to provide students in our service area with the high demand classes that have an increased likelihood of leading to high-paying careers that allow them to stay and raise families in our high-cost region, we must pay instructors of these classes fairly as, according to a study conducted by the AFT and District, most surrounding institutions already do.

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request