Cañada College

Program Review - Instructional Program Plan

Program Title: Paralegal 2014-2015 Bi-Annual Review

Lead Contact Person: Michael Habeeb

Writing Team: Dario De Ghetaldi and Michael Habeeb

Executive Summary

Please summarize your program's strengths, opportunities/challenges, and action plans. This information will be presented to the Board of Trustees. (1000 word limit)

The Paralegal Program (LEGL) at Cañada College was developed in cooperation with the San Mateo County Bar Association to train personnel to assist attorneys in both civil and criminal matters. Instruction focuses on assisting the attorney in interviewing clients and preparing for court appearances, as well as completing legal research and preparing legal documents.

The program offers a quality paralegal program that leads to a Career Technical Education career as a paralegal, by employing a supportive faculty/student teaching and learning relationship that contributes to personal growth and success for students, by celebrating the entire community's rich cultural diversity, by working cooperatively with business, industry, labor, and public service agencies, while also providing a lower division program to enable students to transfer to baccalaureate institutions.

Some graduates of the Program may decide to practice as independent paralegals. A variety of substantive and procedural law-related courses are offered to prepare paralegals for employment in the legal field. We believe students should be taught communications skills, computer applications used in the legal offices, and legal concepts to become well-trained professionals and provide legal services in such law-related environments as law offices, corporate legal departments, governmental entities, and other law-related occupations. We continue to believe that the Program's instructional delivery faculty should be a mixture of practicing paralegals and attorneys.

Program Strengths:

The Paralegal program contributes to the mission of the College and District by:

1. Providing a quality Paralegal program that leads to a Career Technical Education career as a Paralegal and is in cooperation with business, industry, labor, and public service agencies.

2. Providing a supportive faculty/student teaching and learning relationship that contributes to personal growth and success for students.

3. Providing a lower division program to enable students to transfer to baccalaureate institutions.

4. Celebrating the community's rich cultural diversity.

Our faculty members are our best asset. The LEGL program consists of six adjunct faculty members who work full time in the legal profession as lawyers or paralegals. Our faculty are high caliber professors teaching the most up-to-date information about their subjects and infusing technology and forms into classroom lectures.

Additional strengths of the program include Cooperative Education credit for students who presently work in legal environments and Cooperative Education internships for students who are not presently in the workforce.

Program Challenges:

1. We are experiencing an enrollment decline.
   A possible contribution to this issue is that some students do not develop an education plan (SEP) and will sometimes take longer to obtain their certificate or degree. One possible option would be to require the SEP before a student begins the program, requiring submission of the plan to the department for review and approval, perhaps also including a meeting with each student to discuss the plan's viability.

   The faculty continually strives to strengthen our relationship with high school counselors and provide them with information about the program to share with their students.

2. Faculty participation in professional development, Flex Day, activities has been minimal, usually one adjunct attending, despite the generous stipend offer. Our hope is that more department adjunct will attend these activities or that the college will devise another way, perhaps through video-recording, so that the adjunct faculty can receive this important information online.

3. Lack of a coordinator. We will continue to request a 7.5 hours-per-week part-time coordinator as the numerous program tasks necessary and required to complete may be extremely difficult or if not impossible to meet if some or all of this work is expected to be completed on a voluntary basis by a busy adjunct faculty, all of whom work full-time, demanding day jobs and teach at most two classes per academic year at night.

Program Context

1. Mission: Please identify how your program aligns with the college's mission by selecting the appropriate check box(es):

   ✓Career Technical   ☐Basic Skills   ☐Transfer   ☐Lifelong Learning
   If your program has a mission statement, include it here.

Mission

It is the mission of the Paralegal Program of Cañada College to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to achieve their educational goals by providing quality instruction in paralegal studies, and activities that foster students' personal development and academic success. The Paralegal Program of Cañada College places a high priority on supportive faculty/staff/student teaching and learning relationships, responsive support services, and an environment that contributes to personal growth and success for students. The Paralegal Program is committed to the students and the community to fulfill this mission.

Vision

The Paralegal Program at Cañada College ensures student success through personalized, flexible, and innovative instruction. The faculty and staff of the Paralegal Program infuses essential skills and competencies throughout the curriculum and assesses student learning and institutional effectiveness to make continuous improvement. The faculty and staff of the Paralegal Program responds to the changing needs of the people it serves by being involved in and responsive to the community, developing new programs and partnerships and incorporating new technologies and methodologies into its programs and services.

2. Articulation: Describe how your program's articulation may be impacted by changes in curriculum and degree requirements at high schools and 4-year institutions. Describe your efforts to accommodate these changes.

> Currently, the Paralegal (LEGL) courses are not part of A-G requirements at our local high schools and we do not have an articulation agreement with the high schools for any of the LEGL courses. The college has programs allowing high students to take courses including LEGL while they are still in high school. Any changes in the LEGL program and the course outlines will not impact the high school enrollment since the courses are degree applicable and transferrable to CSU campuses.

> The articulation with CSU campuses has not changed; all LEGL courses are transferrable to CSU campuses as electives.

> If there are any changes to any LEGL course outlines in the future, we will work with the Articulation Officer to identify the course equivalent at 4-year institutions, and to ensure that the course outlines meet the CSU course objectives in order to keep the transferability.

3. Community and Labor Needs: Describe how changes in community needs, employment needs, technology, licensing, or accreditation affect your program. CTE programs should identify the dates of their advisory group meetings.

> In a world in which technology is advancing and impacting every aspect of our society we cannot and should not ignore its impact in the area of law. We recognize the move from book to online research at law firms and we have adjusted our curriculum to address this change. We recognize people's advanced skills and ability to use the computer and the internet. Our District has provided us with tools to provide assignments, documents, and data through WebAccess, for example. We realize, from talking to professional in the legal field, how important technical skills are in performing paralegal work and we are planning to bolster our Certificate and Degree programs by offering/requiring more technological expertise through course such as Microsoft Excel.

> Advisory Meetings:
> April 20, 2015
> October 20, 2014
> April 17, 2014

Looking Back

4. Curricular Changes: List any significant changes that have occurred in your program's curricular offerings, scheduling, or mode of delivery. Explain the rationale for these changes.

Over the last five years our program has remained consistent in the courses offered and when they have been offered. Our success and retention rates have been very good to excellent over that period of time. We continued to offer new and topical selectives (Immigration Law) to our course offerings. We are not aware of any new competition in the area of paralegal education, nor have we received an inordinate amount of complaints from students about the program or the professors. Essentially, we are left scratching our heads and concluding what many in academia believe, which we assume is supported by underlying evidence, and

that is the following: When the country's, state's, county's economy is not doing well and there is higher un-employment, enrollment in community colleges is higher than when the economy is health and more people are employed. We will continue to strive to improve the program and increase the numbers. One potential group may be students from ages 18-30 years old. Presently, that group makes up 40% of our program students. We can possibly step-up our recruitment efforts at job and career events for high school students. Perhaps we can strengthen our relationship with high school counselors by meeting with them and /or providing them with more information about the program. We can also step-up recruitment efforts to new college graduates who would like to augment their degrees with a certificate to make themselves more employable. That may require target marketing but, with funds at a minimum, this avenue of recruitment may be limited. Another possibility to bolster numbers and attract students to our program is to offer something better than the other colleges and institutions. We have been aggressively attempting to establish strong ties to the local legal community to pave the way for job opportunities for our graduates. If we can be the number one college to successfully find jobs for students, we believe that this is an important program feature that will draw students. We also understand that communication and marketing are keys to success. We are in the process of updating our brochure which will be an additional tool to help inform the public of our program. Our website includes an overview of the program and a web link to job leads through the college career center. Lastly, we have noted that for a large segment of our students English is their second language. We continue to work with the Learning Center to support a tutoring program for students who need additional assistance with learning. Our faculty will select outstanding and bilingual students in his/her class and refer them to the Learning Center for training and a paying tutorial job. We believe this can be a win-win situation.

5. Progress Report: Provide your responses to all recommendations received on your last program review and report on progress made on previous action plans and toward your strategic goals.
   Link: 2013-2014 Program Plan and Feedback forms

   At the time of this submission, feedback from our last program review is not available. A review document is not on the college Annual Plan/Program Review Process website, on file in the division office, or with the parleagal coordinator.

6. Impact of resource allocations: Describe the impact to-date that each new resource (staff, non-instructional assignment, equipment, facilities, research, funding) has had on your program and measures of student success.

   We continue to request a 7.5 hours-per-week part-time coordinator as the tasks necessary and required to complete (annual program reviews, annual program SLO assessments, ensure course SLO assessment completion, update the program's website, coordinate faculty and advisory committee meetings, recruit new faculty and advisory committee member as necessary, answer and address questions about the program via email and through other means of communication, make presentations to groups on and off campus about the program, and cultivate job leads for students, etc.) may be extremely difficult or if not impossible to meet if some or all of this work is expected to be completed on a voluntary basis by a busy staff of adjunct faculty, all of whom work full-time, demanding day jobs and teach at most two classes per academic year at night.

Current State of the Program

7. Connection & Entry:
    A. Observation: Describe trends in program and course enrollments, FTES, LOAD and Fill Rates. Cite quantitative data and specific tables from the data packets.

Productivity 2008/09 – 2013/14 per the PRIE data					
5-yr Average	**FTES**	**Load**	**Fill Rate**	**Coordinator**	**FT faculty**
HMSV	36.43	422.2	78.14%	0	0
CBOT	83.98	483.0	70.48%	1	1
ECE	182.1	540.4	80.02%	2	2
FASH	98.77	523.4	72.44%	1	2
INTD	67.96	374.4	67.86%	1	1
MEDA	72.23	426.4	80.50%	1	2
LEGL	26.79	448.4	62.68%	0	0

    B. Evaluation: What changes could be implemented, including changes to course scheduling (times/days/duration/delivery mode/number of sections), marketing, and articulation that may improve these trends?

    By comparing the Productivity Data for all the CTE programs in the Business Division, we can see that the LEGL program has very similar data. One can also see that all the other programs, with the exception of HMSV and LEGL, have a coordinator and full time faculty. We believe that this improves productivity, student success, and retention, and strengthens the program. Cañada is the only campus in our district that offers a LEGL program and we feel that with additional support that this program can grow to be an asset to the district and our community.

8. Progress & Completion:
    A. Observation: Describe trends in student success and retention disaggregated by: ethnicity, gender, age, enrollment status, day/evening. Cite quantitative data and specific tables from the data packets.

5-year Percentage Average: Success and Retention 2009/10 through 2013/14 per PRIE

	Success Rate	Retention Rate	Comments
College Goal	70.0	84.0	
LEGL	80.0	90.0	LEGL exceeds the college goal

Ethnicity	**Success Rate**	**Retention Rate**	**Comments**
African Am.	76.4	85.0	
Asian	74.8	83.2	
Filipino	71.2	77.6	
Hispanic	78.2	74.8	
Native Am.	79.4	89.6	
Unknown	83.5	100.0	
White	82.6	90.2	

Gender	Success Rate	Retention Rate	Comments
Female	80.0	89.2	
Male	77.6	90.6	

Age	Success Rate	Retention Rate	Comments
Under 18	89.4	98.4	
18-22	65.6	80.8	
23-28	82.0	90.0	
29-39	76.8	88.4	
40-49	84.8	92.8	
50-59	81.8	90.4	
60+	90.6	93.2	

Enrollment Status	Success Rate	Retention Rate	Comments
Continuing Student	81.4	89.4	
First Time Student	70.6	95.0	
First Time Transfer Student	81.2	94.6	
Returning Student	76.4	85.8	
Returning Transfer Student	67.6	86.4	

Day/Evening	Success Rate	Retention Rate	Comments
Day/Evening	74.0	86.0	
Evening	80.4	90.2	

B. Observation: For online courses describe any significant differences in the success and retention of students who are taking online courses compared to face-to-face courses.

No online coures at this time.

C. Evaluation: Based on these trends, what do you feel are significant factors or barriers influencing student success in your courses and program? What changes (e.g. in curriculum, pedagogy, scheduling, modality) could be implemented to improve these trends?

Students, with a good education plan (SEP), can finish the paralegal certificate and A.S. degree in an two to five semesters as there are enough core and selective courses offered each semester, including summer sessions, to accomplish this task. We review course offerings a number of times, including at our advisory committee meetings, to ensure our course cycle is viable and also relevant. Our curriculum strength centers on the high caliber of legal professionals/professors teaching in the paralegal program and their ability to provide the most up-to-date information about their subjects and infusing technology and forms into classroom lectures. A possible issue is that some students do not develop a SEP and will sometimes take longer to obtain their certificate or A.S. One possible solution is for the SEP to be required before a student starts the program, requiring submission of the plan to the department for review and approval, perhaps also including a meeting with each student to discuss the plan's viability. We are constantly discussing what paralegal courses would be most relevant in today's legal world by consulting with professionals in the legal field and monitoring legal trends. We also explore alternative ways of teaching or instruction, such as online courses. We are still in the discussion phases of a possible

launch into online learning in this area. We are discussing a hybrid model (e.g., eight in-class meetings and eight online meetings) as a possible offering, providing our predominantly working-during-the-day-and-taking-classes-at-night students more flexibility in their busy schedules and relief of not having to trek to the college for half of a semester.

9. SLO Assessment:
   https://smccd.sharepoint.com/sites/can/CANSLOAC/default.aspx

   A. Are all course SLOs being systematically assessed at least once/4 years? Describe the coordination of SLO assessment across sections and over time.
      Click here to enter text.
      The LEGL SLOs are evaluated each time the coures is offered.

   B. Summarize the dialogue that has resulted from these assessments. What are some improvements in your courses that have been implemented through SLO assessment? How has student learning been improved by changes in teaching? Cite specific examples.
      Click here to enter text.
      The faculty discuss the SLOs each spring to evaluate the process. As a result, the SLO are more specific and more helpful with our program evaluation.

10. PLO Assessment:
    PLO Assessment link https://smccd.sharepoint.com/sites/can/prie/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/

    A. Describe your program's Program Learning Outcomes assessment plans and results of direct and indirect assessments.
       Click here to enter text.
       Last year we began developing methods on how to assess our program SLO's. We developed an "exit" interview/exam to assess the effectiveness of SLO 1. Details of the assessment, including the results, are in TracDat. We hope to develop and implement assessment tools/methods for the other three SLO's this 2014-15 academic year. Our goal is to design and use methods that will allow us to measure whether graduates possess the knowledge and skill level required to perform as a paralegal.

    B. Summarize the major findings of your program's PLO assessments. What are some improvements that have been, or can be, implemented as a result of PLO assessment?

       The results of our PSLO 1 assessment revealed that the cohort of students participating did possess the skills necessary to perform the tasks listed in the SLO by answering, with confidence and accuracy, numerous and varied relevant queries. We deemed that the quality of our program, at least in regards to this SLO, was high and that our program successful. We also looked to our program's success rate in the core class (Legal Research & Writing/average of more than 90% from 2010-12) as evidence of our program meeting this SLO.

Looking Ahead

11. Strategic goal & action plans:

How will you address the opportunities for improvement that you identified above in Articulation, Community & Labor Needs, Connection & Entry, Progress & Completion and PLO Assessment? Identify timelines for implementation, responsible party, and resource requirements.

Action Plan	Timeline	Responsible party	Resources Required
Review SLO evaluation procedures to ensure that we are gathering the most relevant information.	2015-16	Dario De Ghetaldi, Dennis Durkin, Colleen Duffy-Smith, Althea Kippes, Michael Habeeb, Alisa Young	Time
Review the current SLOs for each course and update as needed to reflect current job market trends and skills required.	2015-16	Dario De Ghetaldi, Dennis Durkin, Colleen Duffy-Smith, Althea Kippes, Michael Habeeb, Alisa Young	Time
Curriculum Review: review all LEGL courses to update information where needed to better reflect our teaching methods, materials, and the current job market and skills required to ensure that the students are well prepared.	2015-16	Dario De Ghetaldi, Dennis Durkin, Colleen Duffy-Smith, Althea Kippes, Michael Habeeb, Alisa Young	Time
Strive to strengthen our relationship with high school counselors and career center to provide them with more information about the program so that they can share this information with interested students.	2015-16	Dario De Ghetaldi, Dennis Durkin, Colleen Duffy-Smith, Althea Kippes, Michael Habeeb, Alisa Young	Time
Stress the importance of students meeting with a college counselor before they begin the program. The desire is to ensure the best SEP plan for the student that will enable them to receive their certificate or degree in the least amount of time.	2015-16	Dario De Ghetaldi, Dennis Durkin, Colleen Duffy-Smith, Althea Kippes, Michael Habeeb, Alisa Young, Karen Olesen	Time and persistence

We believe that if we can be the number one college to successfully find jobs for LEGL students, that this feature alone will set us apart from other programs and will be a huge draw for students to join our program. We already have a quality program, quality professors and staff; this would be an additional plus. Communicating information about and marketing are keys always to success.

We will continue to look to the Office of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness for reports on an ongoing basis to see if our efforts are improving the declining numbers over the past two years. We will try to institute some method of determining how are successes are being achieved—whether through communication and marketing improvement, successfully establishing our special, set-apart feature, etc., as scientifically as possible.

Complete the Resource Request form to request instructional equipment, IT equipment, facilities, professional development, research, or funding (if needed) and submit with this form to your Division Dean.
Link to resource request form http://www.canadacollege.edu/programreview/instruction-forms.php

No requests at this time.