

 Dept - (SSH) Geography > Department > Program Review

▼  Dept - (SSH) Geography



For 2017-18 Submitted by:: Purba Fernandez

APRU Complete for: 2017-18

Program Mission Statement: The Geography department offers lower division introductory college courses in various subfields within the discipline that meet De Anza G.E. requirements and are CSU and UC transferable. Students are able to hone their basic skills, they also develop critical thinking and analytical skills and they learn to synthesize knowledge from many disciplines as they become more geographically informed.

I.A.1 What is the Primary Focus of Your Program?: Transfer

I.A.2 Choose a Secondary Focus of Your Program?: Basic skills

I.B.1 Number Certificates of Achievement Awarded:

I.B.2 Number Certif of Achievement-Advanced Awarded:

I.B.3 #ADTs (Associate Degrees for Transfer) Awarded:

I.B.4 # AA and/or AS Degrees Awarded:

I.C.1. CTE Programs: Impact of External Trends: N.A.

I.C.2 CTE Programs: Advisory Board Input: N.A.

I.D.1 Academic Services & Learning Resources: #Faculty served:

I.D.2 Academic Services & Learning Resources: #Students served:

I.D.3 Academic Services & Learning Resources: #Staff Served:

I.E.1 Full time faculty (FTEF): 3.2

I.E.2 #Student Employees:

I.E.3 % Full-time : 10.6%

I.E.4 #Staff Employees:

I.E.5 Changes in Employees/Resources:

II.A Enrollment Trends: The census enrollment figure for Geography in 2016-17 was 1,341 in comparison to 1,265 students in 2015-16 which is an increase of 76 students or 6%. Enrollment shows a 5.4% increase during a 5 year period between 2012-13 to 2016-17. This increase occurred while the campus-wide enrollment recorded an 11.2% decline and the Social Science Division enrollment decreased by 11.9%. The 2016-17 WSCH figure for Geography is 5,370, which reflects an increase of 5.8% since the corresponding figure for 2015-16 was 5,073.

II.B.1 Overall Success Rate: The overall success rate was 82% in 2015-16. This figure has increased by 6% since the corresponding rate for the 2015-16 was 76%. There was a big

improvement in the student success rate between 2012-13 to 2013-14, from 65% to 77%, and for the following two years it stayed at 76%. The 2015-16 increase is significant and slightly above the Division average of 79%.

II.B.2 Plan if Success Rate of Program is Below 60%: The overall success rate for Geography students is 82% for 2016-17.

II.C Changes Imposed by Internal/External Regulations: Early class cancellation dates for low enrolled classes is negatively impacting our ability to serve a larger number of students. Many students are unaware of the existence of Geography as a discipline; most enroll in Geography after they have enrolled in their majors or areas of interest. Some students come across Geography only as they search the listings of GE classes. Our department has one full-time member, the rest are adjunct faculty. Class cancellations are having a negative impact on newer adjunct faculty who lose the opportunity to teach and thereby establish a reputation on this campus. This is adversely impacting our ability to hold on to talented adjunct faculty who are forced to pick up teaching jobs at other campuses because of the uncertainties of getting assignments here.

The shrinking to disappearing print budget is continuing to have a damaging effect on our most vulnerable students. Even though instructors post readings, assignments etc. online, students facing financial challenges who have limited income do not always print out the worksheets or discussion questions and bring them to class. Students try to use their phones to access e-books and web content and the screen size is too small to display maps, graphs and text. Quality of group work suffers.

III.A Growth and Decline of Targeted Student Populations: In the Geography department, the total number of students in the targeted group decreased by 47, from 441 in 2015-16, to 394 in 2016-17, which is a 10.7% decrease. Latino/a students decreased by 47, while Filipino student enrollment stood at 72 compared to 77 the previous year. The African American student enrollment increased marginally by 5 students, while the number of Pacific Islander students increased from 6 to 11 and Native American students dropped from 6 to 1.

III.B Closing the Student Equity Gap: The success rate for non-targeted groups stands at 86% in 2016-17, while the overall success rate is 82%, but the success rate for targeted groups is 70% leaving an equity gap of 16%. The non-success rates for the targeted group is 14% while the corresponding rate for not-targeted group is much lower at 7% with the rate for all students being 9%.

Not much has changed since our last program review. As we have reported in our previous program reviews, many of our students have had fairly limited encounters with Geography as a part of Social Studies in their K-12 curriculum. The equity gaps reflect not just gaps in content analysis and understanding, but also the level of college readiness such as reading, comprehension, completing writing assignments and taking exams. The Physical Geography class content is often a surprise to students who enroll in the class expecting to learn about countries, capitals and river names, despite the fact that the catalog description emphasizes physical elements such as weather, climate and landforms.





1. During the first week of the quarter, faculty are carefully explaining and reiterating the course objectives and discussing the syllabus so that students have a realistic expectation of the workload for each class.

2. Faculty members participate in conferences, workshops and talks related to professional growth and staff development activities about new research in the discipline and varied teaching pedagogies.

3. The Geography department continues to participate in the Adjunct Skills Program in the Student Tutorial Center and we recruit and work with student tutors (supplemental instructors or SIs) who work with small groups of students to improve study skills, comprehension and writing, specific to the Geography course.

4. Faculty continue to collaborate with other departments, programs, and events on campus (including the California History Center, the Euphrat Museum, the Visiting Speaker series, Heritage month events, VIDA sponsored activities and presentations), to expose students to other perspectives and creative expression formats.

III.C Plan if Success Rate of Targeted Group(s) is Below 60%: Success rate of Targeted groups is 70%.

III.D Departmental Equity Planning and Progress: The department participates in the Social Sciences and Humanities Division Equity Plan. We have consistently participated in the Conversation, Application and Reflection (C.A.R.) Project in the Social Sciences and Humanities Division. We continued our work with the Social Scientist Spotlight (following former Biology Instructor, Jeff Schinske's 'Scientist Spotlight' project), where we had our students read about and reflect on contributions of Geographers of diverse ethnic origins.

IV.A Cycle 2 PLOAC Summary (since June 30, 2014): 100% of PLO assessments for Geography department courses have been administered and completed.

IV.B Cycle 2 SLOAC Summary (since June 30, 2014): 100% of the SLO assessments for Geography department courses have been administered and completed.

V.A Budget Trends: Refer to Dean's Summary

V.B Funding Impact on Enrollment Trends: Refer to Dean's Summary

V.C.1 Faculty Position(s) Needed: Growth

V.C.2 Justification for Faculty Position(s): Geography shows a 6% increase in student enrollment (76 students) over last year at a time when the college has experienced an 11% decline in student enrollment.

During the prior comprehensive review cycles, the Geography department had 1 full-time faculty member (Purba Fernandez), one former full-time faculty member on Article 19 (Mick Sullivan), and adjunct faculty members. Since Mick Sullivan retired, there has been a single full-time faculty member, with 4-5 adjunct faculty members in our department.

The full time faculty % figure for 2016-17 is only 31.3%. The Geography department would like to expand our curricular offerings with computer lab-based Geographic



Information Systems (GIS) classes on mapping and remote sensing so that we can offer a Geography 'major' in our discipline. The department would like to hire a GIS specialist/Geographer to develop the curricula in these areas of the discipline and teach those classes. The job market in the field of GIS is strong and students who have course work in these areas would have a highly desirable and marketable skill set in Silicon Valley.

V.D.1 Staff Position(s) Needed:

V.D.2 Justification for Staff Position(s)::

V.E.1 Equipment Requests: Under \$1,000

V.E.2 Equipment Title, Description, and Quantity: 1. Dimmer switches in L23 to control lighting, for slides and films

2. Bulletin Board , 48" X 72" to mount large, flat, Plate Tectonics and Earthquake map in classroom.

3. Set of wall maps to replace existing set that is outdated and has broken rollers.

4. A set of 50 atlases for students to use while in class.

5. Documentary film DVDs to supplement our collection.

V.E.3 Equipment Justification: 1. Dimmer switches in L23 to control lighting, for slides and films

There are large banks of lights in the room which makes the viewing of slides and films in the class difficult. The classroom has no windows, so there is no natural light in the room unless the doors are left open. If the instructor turns off all the lights, it is impossible for students to take notes while viewing a film or slides. If the instructor leaves any of the lights on, the projected image is not clearly visible.

2. Bulletin Board (cork board) to display a map of plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes for the Physical Geography class. Framing this large map is far more expensive so pinning it on the cork board allows us to save money and yet have the map on display.

3. Set of wall maps to replace existing set.

Two of the wall map sets on rollers are mounted above the whiteboard. They are aging and need to be replaced with newer map sets. The stops on the rollers no longer work so when the instructor pulls a wall map down, it has to be tied down with bungee cords to a nearby piece of furniture to keep it down since the roller is broken.

4. A set of 50 atlases for students to use while in class.

Many of our students are unable to buy an atlas in addition to the text or reader, but atlases help facilitate group learning and hands-on-learning. If we had a stockpile of atlases, all Geography instructors could use them in their classes as and when needed. We could use the same set for several years.



5. Films provide an alternative medium to delve into the issues we discuss in class. They add another dimension to our learning.

V.F.1 Facility Request: A Social Sciences and Humanities computer lab

V.F.2 Facility Justification: As we have reported in our previous program reviews, at present, the Social Sciences and Humanities faculty members have no way of reserving a Computer lab on campus for students taking classes in the Division. In Geography, we use interactive maps and graphs (such as satellite images and Census maps) and we work with data sets (e.g. Census data) to understand how to use, interpret and analyze visuals and data. We do not have a way to reserve a lab for a class period at any time in the quarter. This form of learning is best accomplished if the students are able to use the computer themselves with guidance from the faculty in the lab. This is central to the mission of our college as we seek to educate and train the next generation of tech-savvy critical thinkers for our workforce.

This is also crucial in light of the fact that internet research is becoming ever more important and some of our students lack the broadband access that is a necessity for electronic document analysis. Given that our college mission is student equity, this request is about reducing the digital divide by improving access to a computer lab facility for our most disadvantaged students.

Finally, the Geography department would like to expand our curricular offerings to include Geographic Information Systems (GIS) classes and courses on mapping. We cannot offer those classes until we have computer lab space with computers loaded with GIS software.

V.G Equity Planning and Support:

V.H.1 Other Needed Resources:

V.H.2 Other Needed Resources Justification:

V.J. "B" Budget Augmentation: Make provisions to replenish the B budget for our Division so that departments are able to make photocopies when needed. Faculty are posting course materials on Canvas and other accessible sites online but we still serve students who are unable to print materials at their own expense. Some of our students lack the resources to be able to afford those options consistently. They are also the students who try to use their phones to read their electronic texts or class materials posted online. They do not have tablets or laptops and even though they try to use their phones for these tasks, the screen size is simply inadequate to deal with these tasks. The most disadvantaged students are the ones who suffer as they cannot fully participate in group discussions or complete their readings or assignments. Student equity is a core mission; we need to step up our efforts to provide basic course materials to all our students.

V.K.1 Staff Development Needs: Ongoing staff development opportunities in the Division and on campus to engage all adjunct and full-time faculty in discussions around teaching pedagogies. We need to organize group sessions to allow department members



to investigate and analyze data collected by the Office of Institutional Research, about our students basic-skills needs, levels of preparedness, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, schools from which they graduate etc. so that faculty can serve our students by being better informed and prepared.

V.K.2 Staff Development Needs Justification: Equity gaps continue between targeted and not-targeted groups and faculty continue to benefit from staff development workshops which expose us to new ideas or offer refresher courses on how to reach out to our students and be better teachers.

V.L Closing the Loop: The department will continue to monitor student success and retention, equity gaps and faculty plan on continuing to take part in campus and teaching-related professional development opportunities.

For 2016-17 Submitted by: Purba Fernandez, fernandezpurba@fhda.edu, (408)-864-8845

Last Updated: 03/21/2018

#SLO STATEMENTS Archived from ECMS: 6