



LANEY COLLEGE RESTRUCTURE AND REORGANIZATION EFFORTS OF 2010-11 (Implementation Academic Year 2011-12)

August 8, 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Laney College is reorganizing its administrative structure and operational systems in order to meet the strategic goals and educational priorities outlined in its Educational Master Plan, which was approved by the Peralta Board of Trustees in Spring 2010. The primary impetus of this effort remained to strengthen Laney's capacity to improve student engagement, learning and academic achievement. When the college community engaged in the process of developing the Educational Maser Plan, perhaps the most significant guiding force was the adoption of a new mission statement, which was:

"Laney College, located in downtown Oakland, California, is a diverse, urban community college committed to student learning. Our learner-centered college provides quality transfer and career-technical education, foundation skills and support services. These educational opportunities respond to the cultural, economic, social, and workforce needs of the greater Bay Area and increase community partnerships and global awareness."

Most notable in the new mission statement is greater emphasis and focus on student learning and the notion of a "learner-centered college." This educational philosophy defines Laney College as a "learning institution" where all programs, units, departments, employees, and students are continuously learning and growing. Ultimately, we expect to transform Laney College into a "living lab" where curriculum, professional development, and assessment is fully contextualized to render the educational experience for the entire Laney community as meaningful as possible in order to consistently improve the effectiveness of the institution.

Overall, the reorganization is expected to ensure greater efficiencies in the use of resources to address the fiscal and other budget constraints of the State and District. The transformation of Laney is based on the analysis of student access, retention, persistence, and success data as well as the assessment of the efficacy of operations, functions, and systems in the college. In short, Laney's newly developed re-organizational approach is designed to improve the experiences and outcomes of learners—including students and the Laney professionals—so that a minimum of 90% of Laney students achieve their career, technical, degree, graduation and transfer related educational goals. These changes are also essential to elevate the standards and protocols of the institution to reflect improvements being made in the quality of all of its programs and services. This new administrative model requires all deans, faculty, classified staff and senior administrators to collaborate—to work, learn, and assess the efficacy of their efforts together.¹

Office of Academic and Student Affairs. This new Office of the college has one lead, the Executive Vice President, and five Academic and Student Affairs Deans. It reflects the reduction from nine (9) administrative leads to six (6), and assures that all deans work across both academic and student affairs offices to accomplish college-wide educational, shared governance, and resource

¹ Everyone is aware of the long history of working in silos, and most expressed the desire to move into a more collaborative mode of operating, which aligns with the Peralta Community College District's strategic collaborative efforts. The integration of academic and student affairs best facilitates this priority. The choice to change the language and organization used helps to trigger individuals' efficiently change towards the desired behaviors that facilitate student engagement, learning and success.

development leadership functions. (See Attachments A and C.)

Administrative/Business Services. This new designed Office of college reveals the actual demands that have been unmet due to the historic insufficiencies in the business services structure and its assigned resources. By 2013-14, the College seeks to secure a Vice President to lead this unit and the necessary staffing using diverse funding options—general and non-general funds. (See Attachment C, the 2013-14 Laney College Re-organization Chart. During 2011-12, the College will maintain its current business services structure, with minor changes, in part to manage the change required as reflected on Attachment B, the 2011-12 Laney College Reorganization chart.)

BRIEF SUMMARY OF LANEY COLLEGE RE-ORGANIZATION EFFORTS, SPRING 2010 – SPRING 2011

Laney devoted Spring 2010 – Spring 2011 to rigorous efforts to review and recommend structural changes to the college. The leadership among the faculty, staff and administrators began with the assessment and analysis of quantitative and qualitative research and review of the college’s institutional effectiveness. Predominantly led by the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) committee and the various resource planning committees the community extensively examined program reviews, district institutional research reports, ARCC reports, various state and national reports, as well as best practices of community colleges that were comparable to Laney. These analyses informed the college's budget planning and prioritization efforts to create greater efficiencies in the use of all of its resources including fiscal, human, technology, and facilities. By Fall 2010, the college had determined that the national scan of research data strongly suggested that without fundamental structural changes to the institution, student performance would not improve significantly if at all. By mid-Spring 2011, much insight had been learned by the IE Committee and others among faculty, staff, administrators and some student leaders. The results of these shared governance efforts were the proposed budget for the college with reductions reflected in a new organization for the college akin to the current administrative restructuring proposal and the development of the college resource priorities.

Concurrently, the College elevated its college-wide discussion about the re-organization of the College using the Laney-FAS, town hall meetings, shared governance groups, Faculty Senate/Classified Senate/ASLC meetings with the College President in addition to website postings, on-line surveys and anonymous *suggestions*, to elicit at least as many responses as there are employees and students at Laney. On average, each of the town hall meetings witnessed approximately 150-200 attendees and another nearly 200 persons provided verbal and written text via various forms. The central result of these efforts is the new re-organization proposal along with more salient priorities to ensure that educational excellence permeates the college.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

The following text briefly discusses reconstructing organizational systems and defines the integration of Student Services and Instruction into a single Academic and Student Affairs Office with a complement of administrative and business services as essential structural supports.

Systematic Approach - As the college engages in change, its stakeholders have given much consideration to how Laney is currently hardwired, they identified a path for sound transformation, and now are building our new systems. In doing so, we understand the necessity to “build a self-organizing system capable of dealing with unforeseen challenges; able to adjust, correct, and augment its own capabilities to meet the needs of new environments” (Dove, 1997). As a learning institution, we rely on our capacity to be adaptable and flexible.

Using a systems approach to re-organizing, the College identified clear criteria, defined its functions and operational systems. The functions have been defined by specific actions performed within a unit (i.e. EOPS, Computer Lab, Library, classroom, etc.). On the other hand, the systems have consisted of multiple units organized to achieve a common outcome. In essence, we are developing a new structure that supports institutional functions to act cohesively as a whole, and to move towards addressing the needs of our students and community—the common outcome. Our effectiveness is only possible with the integration of Student Services and Instruction, as they must co-lead the learning and development of our students.

Side Note: *While unit function is quantifiable (can be reduced to numbers), systems affect the quality of organizational processes and conditions such as creating an integrated approach to building class schedules that are in line with the academic educational plans of our students. Then to impact the condition, Laney College must also determine its pedagogical principles and framework to be implemented college-wide.*

Integration – The discourse on Student Services and Instructional integration is far from new and is currently practiced by many community colleges within and outside of California. Laney College’s effort also intends to progress the integration discourse from theory to practice.

The integration of student services and instruction into a unified organization of academic and student affairs is best defined by synergy in actions and transactions among those offices working collaboratively toward the common student-learning centered goal. At the core, the transactions among the new A/SA Office shall include shared planning and priority setting, implementation of operational strategies and division procedures, and systematic assessment and on-going improvement efforts to address the needs of students. Achievement of this alignment is assured through college-wide discourse and input, sharing the efficient and effective practices that should continue as well as the marginal or ineffective practices to be eliminated in order to strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the college. The task to develop integrated systems calls on all partners and community members interested in improving our efforts and outcomes with students to join in this journey. When we raise our standards, we as a community rise along with it.

REFERENCES

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