Assessment Report

Yuba Community College District

YC - Business and Computer Applications Program Recommendations

Year of Review: 2013-2014

Type of Review: Self-Study (4-year review)

Executive Summary (Include a list of team members): BCA is an evolving program that has emerged from an extensive history of vendor driven curriculum. It is currently addressing some important pedagogical issues related to student engagement and academic success. With high retention rates (around 90%) student success is currently measured at 71%. Averaging over 120 FTES each year this program generates over $660,000 utilizing 3.02 FTEF at Yuba College and 1.23 FTEF (for 2011-2012) at the Clear Lake Campus. Several sections are taught through DE each semester, as well.

Clear Lake's BCA program is very strong and has awarded most all of the BCA Certificates issued by the college in the last several years. The success of the program at Lake is dependent on face-to-face coursework with ample guided lab assignments, allowing students to practice their skills using campus equipment and internet connections. Lake believes our BCA retention and success rates are better than the college average, but without separate statistics for Clear Lake and the Yuba College campus in the Program Review reports, this is difficult to determine.

There are some problems associated with CurricUNET since there appears to be several courses listed that still appear to be Active but still have repeatablity listed in the course description. Some examples include BCA-23R Microsoft Outlook, BCA-26R Microsoft PowerPoint. These need to be removed and a clean list be available so our catalog will be in line with our new course outlines. It appears about ten courses need to be removed from CurricUNET for this very reason.

Program Description : Business Computer Applications offers both an AS degree and an advanced Certificate. In addition, many of the BCA classes are required for a variety of other Business degrees and certificates in accounting, business administration, and general business management, as well as fulfilling GE requirements.

CTE agreements are in place with local high schools, allowing students to earn college credits in the BCA program concurrently with their high school studies.

A1. Do students have access to curriculum-specific and/or program-specific support services? If so, describe this service(s). If not, explain why.

On the Clear Lake Campus, students have access to aided labs, called “Open Labs” at various times and on-site locations through the week. Tutors/lab aides are available to assist learners in completing homework, make-up assignments, practicing computer skills and accessing student email and portal information. The Open Labs are very popular with BCA students. Clear Lake lab aides are chosen from qualified student workers who have successfully completed multiple BCA courses. In addition, individualized assistance is available during the day from our full-time Instructional Aide, Tracy Williams.

A2. If services are available, how do they demonstrate an increase in student success?

Clear Lake’s “Open Labs” have proven very helpful in supporting student success, providing access to computers, software and internet connections that are often unavailable to our students off campus. During especially busy Open Lab periods, instructors see an increase in work completed outside class hours, and students report that lab aide assistance has been very helpful. Informal reports from the aides provide instructors with details on how this time is used and the areas in which students are having difficulties.

It’s been determined that many BCA students who have completed their courses, might not have been as successful without access to Clear Lake’s Open Labs.

Open labs at Yuba College are also available to students and lead to more time students can exercise their skills in these BCA courses.

B3. How is current and previous program review data used to refine and improve program or department practices?
Clear Lake Business faculty, adjuncts and staff meet monthly (in addition to Division meetings with Marysville) to review BCA procedures, success and retention figures, course delivery and department policies. Strengths and weaknesses are discussed. This year, the focus at Clear Lake has been on updating CORs for BCA classes in CurricuNET and designing a workable 2-year cycle to support students’ efficient completion of a BCA Certificate or degree.

Industry Trends and Program Data Analysis :

C4. How do program or department goals align with the education, diversity, demographic, and workforce needs of local communities?
Clear Lake’s Business Advisory Committee has indicated that strong computer skills are lacking in job applicants. The goal of the Clear Lake BCA program is to provide computer training for technological illiterates as well as the opportunity to improve skills among those currently employed.

Sadly, Lake County has always lagged behind in access to technology in K-12. Being a less wealthy county, the notion of a computer in most households is still far from being realized. We are only now beginning to see access to broadband connections available in the county. This all translates to adult learners who have not had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with current technologies, much less become comfortable with them. A lack of technical sophistication will continue to limit Lake County’s financial growth.

C5. How is your program or department direction driven by empirical data?
At Clear Lake, BCA classes have evolved over the years based on several types of empirical data. The most useful of these is a survey of each class asking for student input into teaching methodologies, curriculum organization, and assignments that were most/least helpful. This survey is conducted both half-way through the semester, and then again during finals. Students comments have been very thoughtful and their reasoning helpful in restructuring materials for higher success rates.

Clear Lake has been unable to obtain dis-aggregate data for our program’s retention and success figures, despite frequent requests to the district researcher. The data we've managed to hobble together seems to indicate that the program is more successful on the Clear Lake campus than the college-wide statistics indicate.

Clear Lake also gauges its success by the number of BCA students hired each semester in campus offices, for temporary (and sometimes permanent) positions such as EOP&S, CalWorks, Library, Learning Center student aids/tutors/graders and Peer counseling—due, in part, to their extensive computer skills.

Curriculum & SLO Assessment Summary :

D6. What has your program or department done to improve completion of degrees, certificates, or transfers? What are your future plans?
Our degree and certificate completion in BCA at Clear Lake has been quite high—above the overall college average. Additionally,

statistics compiled by Erik Cooper in Spring of 2012 indicated that more certificates were issued in BCA at Clear Lake than at main campus over the past several years.

However, Clear Lake is of the opinion that getting rid of “stair-stepped” certificates this year was a disservice to students. We were out-numbered and summarily outvoted by the main campus division members on this issue—but are still hopeful that a possible alignment with Woodland will allow us the site-specific certificates that we require to serve the needs of our business community.

At convocation this year, a keynote speaker discussed “stackable” certificates and shared that they have been proven very successful in Florida. This model offers stair-stepped certificates to give students intermediary goals and accomplishments, encouraging them to further success. The BCA program had both a smaller certificate and a more advanced one leading to the Associates for BCA… until this was reduced to a single certificate by a vote of the college’s business division members. Students were, indeed, encouraged by their achieving the first certificate… and motivated to raise the bar they’d set for themselves as they continue to broaden their education and deepen their subject knowledge.

Clear Lake’s future plans include continuing to rally support for site-specific certificates. We have been assured that site-specific certificates are allowable under district policies; however it has been a struggle to retain those we’d like to offer “on the books” and not allow them to be inactivated in CurricuNET, due to “majority rule”. It is our hope that future program-wide curriculum decisions can be made keeping in mind Clear Lake's unique demographics and community needs.

D7. Do you have any courses, certificates, or degrees that should be in-activated or expanded? If yes, please identify and justify your recommendations with data.
Inactive courses in BCA were removed this year, during the Business Division’s campaign to “clean up” course offerings. A certificate and a degree were also eliminated.

Discussions are ongoing regarding expanding other course offerings in the BCA program.

D8. Do all of your courses have current CORs? If not, what steps are you taking to ensure compliance?
All BCA courses have current, updated CORs. However, due to difficulties with CurricuNET, not all updates have been reflected in class schedules, catalog and current certificate/degree requirements.

D9. If applicable, how are teaching methodologies in your program or department assessed?
Clear Lake performs regular and timely faculty and adjunct evaluations and holds monthly department meetings (separate from college division meetings) in which teaching methodologies are discussed and tweaked to improve student outcomes. Consultation between Clear Lake’s full-time faculty and the adjuncts teaching in this program is extensive and well-timed. Full- and part-time business instructors at Clear Lake are invited into each other’s classrooms for observation throughout the year.

D10. If applicable, how are the results of the assessment used to support, improve, and/or expand your current teaching methodologies?
Clear Lake is completing SLO assessments in each course, every semester and is actively analyzing the data generated through SLO assessments. This has resulted in changes to the order of materials delivered in some courses. For instance: coordinating the introduction of new Excel skills with parallel lessons in Accounting. This helped students understand how the techniques might be used in the workplace, as well as improving test results for that unit.

D11. If your program or department uses a DE modality to support instruction, how are you evaluating the effectiveness of that instruction?
Funding for DE courses originating out of Clear Lake's BCA program has been unavailable, to date. We hope this will soon change.

D12. If your department offers DE courses, what support services does it provide for DE students? What can be done to improve support services for these students?

D13. How is your program or department applying sound principles of learning and teaching theory to its curriculum?

D14. Which CSLOs (course student learning outcomes) and PLOs (Program learning outcomes) were assessed within the last year?
Clear Lake's BCA program has successfully assessed CSLOs for every class and section in both semesters for the past two years. The results have been entered into TracDat and discussed at Clear Lake's monthly department meetings. CSLOs assessed include: Computation, Technological Awareness, Communication, Technology Competency, Critical Thinking and Information Competency.

D15. For each of the above, how did the assessment data influence program, department and/or course improvement?
SLO assessment data assisted Clear Lake faculty in fine-tuning BCA curriculum for this year's updated CORs. This data also provided Clear Lake with insights into the reasons some students were retained— but failed to successfully complete— their BCA courses. One finding was that Clear Lake's "Open Lab" times are essential for slower students and for those without computers at home.

Another example is Clear Lake's re-structuring of the first several BCA-15 class meetings. Due to delays in financial aid, shortages in the bookstore, delayed EOP&S qualification and students adding the course the second or third week into the semester… using the text in the first few weeks is very challenging. Some re-arranging of the introductory materials has made this unit more successful for students.

Future Goals and Program Direction: Assessing the curricular changes for higher retention and student success rates will be the goal over the next two years. Reducing the cost of textbooks for students in all BCA courses is an additional goal for this program.

Based on Program Review, what are your plans for future department/program improvements?

Clear Lake is attempting to strengthen the BCA program on this campus, in response to student needs and community input. We are prepared to do what is necessary to keep the program robust and well-targeted to the requirements of Lake County's business community. Although our demographics vary significantly from those in the valley, we are invested in providing Clear Lake students with the job skills they need to compete and succeed in our local job market.

New technologies that will soon become main-stream are not represented in our course offerings—and should be. Although it seems a tenuous time to introduce new curriculum (given the CurricuNET backlog), the program needs to remain relevant in a quickly-

evolving field.

Changes in Financial Aid student funding have moved Clear Lake to propose exploring a re-write of the one-unit beginning/advanced BCA classes (Excel and Access) into 2-unit, graded, full semester courses that will be a better fit to the new Financial Aid specifications.

Clear Lake also needs to offer an introductory class— for students in other disciplines who have very little (if any) previous computer experience. Alongside general computer terminology and simple application skills, this would ideally include skills necessary to access student resources such as email, the portal and college websites, SkyDrive and WebApps.

Lastly, Clear Lake's BCA program is excited about the planned move toward paperless assignments and using the new Canvas LMS for hybrid and "flipped" classroom curriculum.

Course Content and Statistical Analysis: ...

Are you ready to submit your final program review?: Yes

Feedback (Validation Team Use ONLY) : ...

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
Clear Lake is diligently developing, documenting and evaluating SLO assessments to gauge student success. Clear Lake is demonstrating excellent student retention and success statistics in its BCA courses. We have argued for the preservation of courses, certificates and degrees that will support our students in competing in the Lake County job market. We have participated significantly in the re-working of CORs this year, and their timely entry and follow-up in the CurricuNET system. Clear Lake is developing relationships with the other local community college (Mendocino) and with a newcomer in our area, Marymount College. We have CTE agreements for BCA in place with high schools in Lake County.				

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Vocational training at Clear Lake is tailored to the unique needs of our business community, as expressed through Business Department Advisory Committee meetings, surveys and other empirical data. CTE agreements are in place with local high schools, and many of our learners are concurrently-enrolled high school students, working to complete their college certificates and/or degrees. "Job skills update" is frequently cited as the reason our students take BCA courses at Clear Lake, while others train for entry positions in the job market or seek new careers. Results of our last Advisory Committee meeting show Microsoft Office applications are used by all but one of our member businesses/agencies, and that strong computer skills are both desired of— and often lacking in— job candidates' resumes. Soft skills are also commonly cited as training essential. Course offerings and materials are also reviewed at Clear Lake to assure that students in other programs are being well-served by BCA classes. We receive frequent comments from faculty, indicating computer skills are important to their program's success: While I have seen some improvement in recent semesters, sometimes nearly half to two thirds of my Eng. 105 students are computer illiterate, especially re-entry students. About a third of Eng. 51 and 1A students struggle with headers, tables, page number insertion and other document features. Peggy Alexander (Professor of English, Clear Lake) The ECE department requires				

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PowerPoint presentations and multiple research papers, including documents with charts, such as menu plans. The computer courses at Yuba College facilitate student success. There is a remarkable difference between students who have taken computer courses and those who have not. Dr. Laurie Daly, Ed.D. (ECE, Clear Lake) Since BCA courses are not required of students in other disciplines, Clear Lake attempts to schedule supportive classes at times that don't interfere with other program's core				