

The College of Southern Nevada
School of Education, Behavioral and Social Sciences
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Three-Year Program Review: Dean's Overview and Report, 2013 -2015

Description of Program Reviewed

The Associate of Arts are intended as transfer degrees into 4-year bachelor degree programs for those students wanting to transfer to Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) sister institutions such as UNR, UNLV, NSC and GBC as well as into others outside of NSHE. There are AAs with emphasis and without emphasis. The A.A. degrees without emphasis offer greater flexibility to students who are unsure of intending majors or transfer students who may change majors, while A.A. with emphasis are more structured and would guide students with declared major on the path to a particular bachelor's degree field. On the other hand, our Associate of Applied Science degrees in Education and Mental Health Services (and various iterations of it) are geared to para-professional degrees and workforce upon graduation.

The School of Education, Behavioral and Social Sciences, henceforth, SEBSS, is comprised of three departments. They are the Department of Education, Department of Human Behavior and the Department of Social Sciences. These departments collectively provide educational services to a significant number of CSN students annually. It is important to also note that our faculty members have at least a graduate degree in their field of instruction and a significant number of them have doctorate degrees in their subject area from regionally accredited colleges and universities. The majority of the students we serve take courses from our School to meet the graduation requirements for other programs outside SEBSS. At the same time, some students are opting to take majors in some of the disciplines offered in our School.

Part A: Enrollment Summary

The SEBSS duplicated headcount for Fall 2013 stood at 22,165 with traditional Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of 4,487.9. About one third of the FTE came from online enrollment. The School has no developmental FTE. We observed some variability in the duplicated headcounts within the departments and School between Fall 2013 and Fall 2015. (See Table 1 below). Only Fall to Fall data are provided in this Table:

Table 1**ENROLLMENT, FTE AND AVERAGE CLASS SIZE: FALL TO FALL**

SEM/YEAR	DEPARTMENTS:	Enrollment	FTE	Aver. Class Size
Fall '13	Education	1,702	309.3	18.5
	Human Behavior	11,236	2,213.4	29.8
	Social Sciences	9,227	1,965.1	30.8
	SEBSS	22,165	4,487.9	28.8
Fall '14	Education	1,998	350.8	20.6
	Human Behavior	11,496	2,256.5	29.2
	Social Sciences	9,033	1,922.9	29.5
	SEBSS	22,527	4,530.2	28.3
Fall '15	Education	1,988	354.41	19.5
	Human Behavior	10,868	2,129.13	27.0
	Social Sciences	9,209	1,969.0	30.2
	SEBSS	22,065	4,452.54	27.2

* To obtain the Average Class Size, divide Enrollment by the number of Sections

Parts B & C - Courses and Sections

In Fall Semester '15, SEBSS offered a total of different courses in 810 sections. The bulk of courses we offered had online sections to better serve those students who could not take the regular or traditional courses. While this is commendable, we plan further improvement on these numbers in the years ahead. Of the 810 Moreover, 81% of these sections are General Education eligible sections.

The total number of sections of courses offered with the School peaked in Fall semester 2011 at 840 sections with Human Behavior leading the pack at 393 sections and Psychology courses took approximately 40% of the sections offered with that department. While History sections constituted the bulk of the sections offered in the Social Sciences Department. Education courses dominated the sections offered in the Education Department. Even as the total offered sections fluctuated, the ratio of sections taken up by the most heavily offered discipline did not vary by more than 3-percentage point.

Part D: Section Size/Fullness <=>Efficiency

The section size and fullness of the sections represent the measure of efficiency of facility use. The data below showed fullness. Since our classes are lecture, our average section size is equivalent to our lecture size. Our average section size is about 27 students. This represents judicious and efficient resource use. Furthermore, unduplicated enrollment stood at 22,065 with FTE of 4,452.54 and class size of 27.2 in Fall 2015. While these numbers are great, there is still room for improvement.

There were changes in the departments' Section Fullness Indices See the Tables 2 below:

Table 2

SECTION FULLNESS INDEX: SPR. SEMESTER TO SPR. SEMESTER

	SPRING '13	SPRING'14	SPRING '15
Education	68%	74%	83%
Human Behavior	75%	76%	80%
Social Sciences	92%	90%	90%
School: SEBSS	82%	82%	84%

SECTION FULLNESS INDEX: FALL. SEMESTER TO FALL SEMESTER

	FALL'13	FALL'14	FALL '15
Education	72%	80%	86%
Human Behavior	85%	85%	83%
Social Sciences	93%	90%	90%
School: SEBSS	87%	86%	87%

Part E: Student Success

Course Retention and Course Success are two of the measures employed to gauge student success. Available data from our Department of Education showed that the students enrolled in their generally performed best in Hybrid classes followed by traditional classes and performed the least in straight online courses. Of these completers, sixty-four percent earned a passing grade which is defined to include grades A through C as well P or pass. So, generally, more students complete their courses and pass in the traditional courses than those in the online sections in this department. This does not in any way indicate that traditional classes are better for students than the online. Many factors may be at work in explaining this apparent difference including, but not limited to, lack of familiarity with online modality and incorrect expectation of the amount of work required to succeed on an online platform.

In the Human Behavior department, data revealed that course completion is slightly higher (95%) in the traditional sections than in purely online sections (91%).and course success is also higher in the traditional sections than on online. Overall, Sixty-seven percent of the students who enrolled in Human Behavior courses in Fall 2015 completed their courses successfully (with grades of A through C, and Pass) with students enrolled in Psychology courses

registering the highest success rate at 70%. And finally in the Social Sciences department Seventy Three percent successfully completed with economics enrollees having the highest success rate at Seventy-Seven percent.

Addressing the Online and Traditional (Face-to-Face) Courses Success disparities

Many studies have been done to isolate and address student performance differences in online and face-to-face courses. While the reasons are many, solutions are few, far and in-between. At the onset, it has to be said that online teaching is not for everyone just as online instruction is not for every student. In July-September, 2016 issue of the Journal of Political Science Education, pp. 302-317, Toby Bolsen et al “offered four different approaches to teaching Introduction to American Government.” The traditional face-to-face, 50% face-to-face and small group, blended – an interactive online with face-to-face class meeting, and last but not the least, all online. As one would expect, performance varied.

They found out that although drop-out rates were higher in traditional online sections, those who completed the course were more likely to “express interest in discussing and participating in politics.” It was also discovered that students in online only and blended formats “demonstrated significantly higher levels of objective political knowledge relative to students taking the course in more traditional format.”

Our own internal data mirror these results very closely. Our object is to eliminate the differences in our student performance between the traditional face-to-face enrollees and those in exclusively online sections. These steps are now under in the departments. As an example, Phil 101, Introduction to Philosophy, will not be offered online in Spring 2017 as students’ performance in the online format has been poor. On the other hand, many students excelled in the online format of Phil 102 – Critical Thinking. As a result, the department is putting up more online sections of this course for Spring 2017.

Part F: Estimated Staffing

In Fall 2015, Department of Human Behavior had a total faculty of 125 members. About 60 percent of this number is part-time. The number is not any better in the Social Sciences department, where the percentage of part-time faculty is very close to Seventy percent. Education department is in the same situation. This lop-sided figure has a negative impact on the students we serve as the part-time instructors do not have the same level of obligation to students as the full-timers do, especially in being available to students outside of the classroom including maintaining office hours. Even so, there are such disciplines as philosophy, anthropology and economics where it continues to be difficult to identify and recruit qualified part-time instructors. Such areas would benefit from the recruitment of full-time and probably tenure-track instructors. I say probably as there may be those who may prefer to be hired as “Market Hire” and give up tenure consideration. To be fair, SEBSS has benefitted from CSN’s commitment to increasing the full-time/part-time faculty ratio and hopes to continue to improve on this ratio with the next round of hiring.

The School has benefitted from the embedding of Academic Counselors within its programs. We currently have three such counselors with one on B contract. Many faculty members have volunteered their time as faculty advisors to assist in providing academic advising to our students. While some Schools have taken the position that their academic counselors would advise only those students who have declared majors in disciplines within their schools, the School of Education, Behavioral and Social Sciences has taken the position that any student who seeks counseling in SEBSS will be provided such regardless of major, although priority will to students with declared major in our School. Stated differently, no student is turned away.

Degrees and Certificates

Between 2013 and 2015, SEBSS awarded 898 degrees and certificates, with about 50% awarded to students with emphasis in education and psychology. The number of students declaring majors in one or more of the disciplines found in SEBSS continues to grow. Between Fall 2013 and Fall 2015, the number grew by 45%. However, over the same period, the degrees and certificates awarded by our School grew by 27% while the overall college awards grew by 9.6%. The enrollment dip experienced in recent years translated also into a correspondent a slight decline in the certificates and degrees awarded by the School. We do expect this trend to change as the impact of the initiatives taken within the college and within our school spreads.

Changes are provided in Table 3 below:

Table 3

YEARS	<u>2013/14</u>	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>
Total AA Degrees	246	293	274
Total AAS Degrees	11	6	9
Total AA Certificates	31	6	2
All Degrees & Certs.	288	305	285

Table 4.

	<u>Total Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Departments</u>		
Departments:			
Education	117	144	133
Human Behavior	134	126	123
Social. Sciences	37	35	29
Total SEBSS	288	305	285

Emerging Discipline/Program Specific Concerns:

Department of Human Behavior

Psychology and Sociology:

The most recent data show that in Spring Semester 2015, there were 1,035 declared majors in Psychology and, the three-year graduation numbers indicate that there were 296 awarded degrees in Psychology. The number of declared major in Spring 2015 increased. The main concern is how to meet the needs of these students for effective advising, while maintaining a high level of quality in instruction and extra-curricular activities and opportunities for students. The same concern is expressed in Sociology where there were 197 declared majors with 62 degrees awarded over the same period.

Anthropology:

In Anthropology, there were 78 declared majors in Spring Semester 2015, but the three-year graduation numbers were 4 below the 20 graduates mandated by the NSHE Board of Regents. It has been reported by some students, though anecdotally, that they have been told by advisors not to major in Anthropology because there are no jobs out there for graduates in this disciplines. Part of the remediation efforts will be to provide more career information to students, advisors and counselors.

Mental Health Services:

The most recent data show that in Spring Semester 2015 there were 130 declared majors in Mental Health Services and 30 declared for the Certificate of Completion (CoC). The three-year graduation numbers stood at 12 AAS's and 4 CoC's. The main concern is increasing the numbers of graduates with the CoC and AAS degree to provide skilled workers for the State of Nevada and private mental health services providers while maintaining a high level of quality. Between year F13 and F14, duplicated enrollment increased by 33% and the fullness changed experienced 15% increase. A targeted advising and assistance in providing job-leads are two ways, among others, to address this. We will increase our efforts to match our students with job opening and will starting posting job openings and salary information where our students congregate.

Department of Social Sciences:

Economics:

Economics is offered at AA degree level and the graduates generally transfer into a four-year program to complete a bachelor's degree in the field. The program contributes to the college vision to produce a skilled work force by emphasizing critical thinking and marketable skills such as data collection, analysis and presentation. It also provides courses to other programs, particularly the cognate field of business. The program has two-track module: straight AA transfer degree and AA in Applied Financial Economics. The AFE emphasis is uniquely offered at CSN and prepares the graduates for a career in the financial services industry. A

Certificate of Achievement in financial services has gotten the initial internal approval and is part of the future Academic Plan.

Among the challenges have been increasing the number of graduates in the discipline without compromising on the rigor for which the discipline is known and maintaining a good pool of qualified part-time faculty. Between year F13 and F14, duplicated enrollment declined by 10%. The faculty, in consultation with the Chair, is making some programmatic changes to reverse the trend.

The Economics program awarded fourteen (17) degrees in the three year period leading up to this program review, only six shy of the threshold for low yield. There were only eight (8) graduates in the period covering the prior program review, thus demonstrating that our Economics program is a growing program. If it picks up an equal number of new graduates over the next three years, it will surpass the low-yield threshold. Liberal arts programs in general tend to have great difficulty producing graduates even when they have a lot of majors. Many liberal arts majors transfer to four-year institutions, most notably UNLV, instead of graduating with a two-year degree from CSN. The CSN Economics degree is generally designed to facilitate transfer to UNLV. Notwithstanding that phenomenon, the CSN program contributes significantly to a college's missions as described in this year's Program Review report. It shows that the program falls under one or more exemptions to "official" (or final) designation as a low yield program.

In addition, CSN is undergoing great change with various initiatives intended to increase completions and the awarding of certificates and degrees, such as the Achieve the Dream, Mandatory Matriculation, a Guided Pathways initiative, and others. The early numbers, while yet immature, suggest that these initiatives are making a positive difference at the college as a whole and hold the potential to boost the numbers for Economics, Philosophy and other programs within the Social Sciences department in particular. The Applied Financial Economics track, which graduates a significant percent of the total Economics program graduates, meets a demonstrated workforce or service need of the geographical region. Students graduating from this program complete an internship in one of a lengthy list of area brokerage, financial advising or other financial institutions. A healthy number of them work or have later secured jobs in the broader financial services fields. We should expect continued growth in these areas as part of an ongoing trend toward individual responsibility for retirement and other important financial planning. CSN should be a part of the effort to service that need.

Political Science:

Political Science is offered at AA degree level and graduates generally transfer into four-year program to complete a bachelor's degree in the field. The program aims to teach students how the U.S. government works as well as the constitutional underpinning of the United States democracy. It also offers courses which allow the declared majors to learn through lectures and guided research about other forms of governments and political philosophies. The program provides CSN students with one of the options used to satisfy the U.S. and Nevada Constitutions requirement mandated by the NSHE Board of Regents. While the number of graduates currently meets the 3-year minimum, 22 graduates, the department is putting in place changes in the program to further increase the number of graduates. An adjunct to this degree is a newly designed degree in Political Campaign Management.

Certificate of Achievement (COA) in Applied Politics/Political Management

A certificate of Achievement (COA) in *Applied Politics/Political Management* was developed and first appeared in the CSN catalog's 2015-2016 edition. Accordingly, as a new certificate and being less than ten (10) years old, it is exempt from designation as a low yield program.

History:

History is offered at AA degree level and graduates generally transfer into four-year program to complete a bachelor's degree in the field. The program aims to give students the understanding of the U.S. history and democracy. It also offers courses that allow the declared majors to learn through lectures and guided research about uniqueness of U.S. history. The program provides CSN students with one of the options used to satisfy the U.S. and Nevada Constitutions requirement mandated by the NSHE Board of Regents. While the number of graduates currently meets the 3-year minimum, 50 graduates, the department is discussing ways to further increase the number of graduates.

Philosophy:

Philosophy is offered at AA degree level and graduates generally transfer into four-year program to complete a bachelor's degree in the field. The program aims to provide the CSN students with transferable tools of reading comprehension, critical analysis of arguments and evaluating claims with logic and evidence. In Fall Semester 2014, the program had a duplicated enrollment of 2586 students with 54 declared majors. The major concern is that the program is currently not meeting the 3-year minimum number of graduates as mandated by NSHE Board of regents. To change this, department is putting in place a pre-law track in consonance with what obtains at our main receiving NSHE institution – UNLV. Under Board of Regents policy it is considered a low yield program. It does, however, fit within one or more exemptions to the low yield policy as described in more detail in the Program Review report.

In addition, CSN is undergoing great change with various initiatives intended to increase completions and the awarding of certificates and degrees, such as the Achieve the Dream, Mandatory Matriculation, a Guided Pathways initiative, and others. The early numbers, while yet immature, suggest that these initiatives are making a positive difference at the college as a whole and hold the potential to boost the numbers for Economics, Philosophy and other programs within the Social Sciences department.

CSN's Philosophy program helps to fulfill nearly all aspects of CSN's identity, its mission, and core set of values. CSN markets and promotes the number and diversity of its programs. On the CSN webpage ("About Us" tab) CSN asserts that "Students can choose from 150 degree and certificate options in more than 90 areas of study, including over 25 degree and certificate

programs available entirely online.” CSN’s Mission Statement reads: “The College of Southern Nevada creates opportunities and changes lives through access to quality teaching, services, and experiences that enrich our diverse community.” Enriching a community goes beyond merely providing narrow technical skills that are in demand. It includes culture, critical thinking and other intangibles that broaden the utility of technical skills. Critical thinking and reasoning puts CSN graduates as a whole in a position to seek and obtain promotions beyond entry level or line level jobs. A philosophy degree acknowledges an ability to reason and solve problems, and these abilities are highly desired by employers, especially in the higher-paying knowledge based industries. Being able to write computer programs is one thing, but companies that do that are managed by people who know how to solve problems. A degree in philosophy is evidence of the ability to solve problems that can be used by employers (any employers) when making hiring and promotion decisions.

CSN’s philosophy faculty members are developing a certificate (“Certificate in Problem Solving”) that focuses on critical thinking and decision making. The way the certificate program would serve to meet a demonstrated workforce or service need of the state or region served by the institution is that it will provide a new and unique route to professional development for line-level employees and lower/middle level managers in private companies, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and non-governmental organizations. An example would be a firefighter seeking a promotion to a higher supervisory level position. The certificate could give earners of the certificate an advantage when seeking a job or promotion, creating further demand for the certificate at CSN.

Underrepresented groups tend to come from low socio-economic status populations, although that is not a pre-condition for being included as a member of an underrepresented group. For these reasons, they may be pressured, when choosing major or career, to avoid fields like philosophy. Underrepresented student and community groups have to deal with negative stereotypes that are by definition false, but damaging nonetheless. These stereotypes hamper underrepresented groups in their ability to gain respect, obtain jobs, get promoted, and generally share in the American dream. That is, they have historically been seen as less capable than other groups. They are often not exposed to academic areas of study such as philosophy until they arrive at a college. The total number of CSN Philosophy graduates in any year (or three year period) may be small in number, but having any number of such graduates within underrepresented groups puts them out in their communities where, along with others, these underrepresented groups can gain exposure through one of their own as to what philosophy represents and can do for them over the long term. This clearly is not the same as what a more “applied program” like Culinary Arts or a Fire Technology program can do (which may be a more direct route to a specific job than a philosophy degree), but underrepresented groups need to also have available to them a more “cerebral” degree so that its graduates can undermine negative stereotypes that permeate their populations.

Women Studies:

Women Studies is offered at AA degree level and graduates generally transfer into four-year program to complete a bachelor’s degree in the field or allied disciplines. It is a gateway degree for those students who are interested in the historical and contemporary issues relating to gender locally, nationally and internationally. This program first appeared in the CSN

Catalog's 2008 – 2009. It explores how different societies and cultures have addressed issues affecting women and hence families. The duplicated enrollment dropped by 19% between F13 and F14 academic year. The newness of the program at CSN provides it with temporary exemption from the NSHE mandated three-year minimum degrees even as the faculty and department work to increase the number of graduates in the field.

Global Studies:

Global Studies is offered at AA degree level and graduates generally transfer into four-year program to complete a bachelor's degree in the field or allied disciplines. The Global Studies program first appeared in the CSN Catalog's 2007-2008 Edition. This program is less than ten years old. Thus, it is exempt from designation as a low yield program per Board of Regents policy. It is a gateway degree for those students who are interested in the historical and contemporary global issues relating to politics, economics, history and terrorism, etc. It is also aimed at increasing the skill and knowledge of the graduates in an increasingly globalized society and workforce. The newness of the program at CSN provides it with temporary exemption from the NSHE mandated three-year minimum degrees even as the faculty and department work to increase the number of graduates in the field.

Department of Education:

This department offers Associate Degrees designed to provide students with the first two years of a bachelor's degree in education. The Associate Degrees are either Associate of Arts in Education provides pathways to transfer into a four-year degree program in education. While the AAS in such areas as Early Childhood Education with Teacher-Aide, Preschool Education, Infant-Toddler are emphases that lead into workforce. Certificates are also offered in the outlined areas. In addition the department has made in-roads in the community with partnerships with course-offerings which support para-professionals in education. This department is a major producer of degrees and certificates in the School with the three-year total of 412 degrees and certificates.

One of the concerns has been a three-year to three-year decrease of 3.06%. The department is exploring ways to reverse the trend. The biggest concern is increasing the number of students expressing interest in majoring in Education

Concluding Remarks

The School of Education, Behavioral and Social Sciences (SEBSS), while not spared from the overall college enrollment decline, it remains a major force in offering quality and timely educational services to our students and our community at large. It has done so most efficiently with judicious use of the resources at our disposal. It has scheduled and offered courses in such a way that would allow a conscientious student who is willing and able to use the increasing supporting resources such as Student Lingo, advising and counselling opportunities to graduate or achieve their educational objectives in good time and although our full-time/part-time faculty ratio is far from ideal, we are making progress.

The School is evaluating ways of minimizing the number of high-enrollment cum low-success. And some courses deemed as not in consonance or meeting with our academic goals

and objectives will be discontinued. Some have already been deactivated at department's urging. With the assistance from the faculty and departments, program and course impacts are constantly reevaluated with the aim of making them more effective and beneficial to our students and the greater community we serve.