

Instructional Program Review Report

Sierra College, Fall 2011

Department/Program Name: Library Science

Date Submitted: 15 November 2011

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Ideally, the writing of a Program Review Report should be a collaborative process of full-time and part time faculty as well as the appropriate educational administrator, instructional assistants, classified staff members and students who have an interest in the present and future vision of the program at all sites throughout the district. The Program Review Committee needs as much information as possible concerning the present and future of the program to assess and recommend the resources needed to keep the program viable and robust. Complete and concise responses to the prompts are most appreciated. Please limit your responses to 100 words or fewer, unless otherwise directed. Refer to the detailed instructions (see Program Review webpage) when completing this form.

Please attach your Department Statistics Report and your ePar Report when sending in your Program Review.

To provide context for the information that follows, describe the basic functions of your program.

The certificate program in Library Science leads to preparation for entry level work as an LMT – Library Media Technician – in a variety of settings: public and academic libraries, business settings, and organizations of all types working with the collection and dissemination of information. Specialized training prepares the LMT to select, catalog, and make available print and non-print materials in a professional manner. Research is especially emphasized in the certificate curriculum. A unique feature of our program is a course utilizing the equipment and facilities of the distance learning program, which prepares LMTs to provide support to distance learning students. A second course in the core program offers online cataloging practice under the direction of our cataloging librarian. The third core course offers training in various library services applicable to all full-service libraries. The beginning reference courses are open to all SC students, provides hands-on instruction and skill-development in locating and evaluating print, non-print, and Internet resources. Our culminating class also serves as in-service for local LMTs.

1) Effectiveness: This section assesses the effectiveness of the program in light of traditional measurements.

1a) Retention and Success: Identify and explain the trends in your program's data. Address separately the data for on ground and on-line course. Comment on the significance of the trends as well as the challenges experienced within the program. If you see a need to improve the statistical trends, outline a plan that will achieve the changes you are seeking. Please refer specifically to the data in your Department Statistics Report, as supplied by the Research and Planning Office, in supplying your answer.

The program provides courses for all students – not just those seeking the Library Media Tech certificate. The first two courses in the sequence (Libs. 10A *Information Literacy & Lifelong Learning* and Libs. 10B *The Library Research Process*) are open to all students and develop lifelong skills to assist them with information research and evaluation discrimination of research results. Many students return and express their pleasure at the time they have saved in research for subsequent classes. By focusing on online and print resources, the students improve their abilities to locate quality research materials and use other forms of information storage they will encounter in the future. Both courses focus on principles of research and evaluation of materials. 10B, especially, teaches shortcuts to research, i.e. how to select and identify search strategies, and how to compose more effective search arguments.

Utilizing the OCLC tutorials and practice databases adds a real-life component to the core cataloging course, Libs. 30. Similar systems would enrich the Library Services course, Libs. 20, allowing practice in directing Interlibrary Loan searches and transfers. Currently, we are seeking OCLC quotes to provide similar access for Libs. 20.

We have developed the structure for spreadsheets to document the history of Libs. 95 Internships for certificate students. By recording the libraries and supervisors, and the types of internships completed, it will be possible to locate the best placements for interns' needs and requests.

One difficulty limiting our growth is a problem with textbooks for online and on-ground students. This email at the request of an SCFS subcommittee will explain:

An on-going concern of the Library Media Tech program is the number of textbooks ordered. I have spoken with the bookstore on several occasions during the past semesters. Our enrollment numbers continue to grow – as much as 29 for some sections – but they refuse to order any more books than students from the last semester. What happens is that 25+ enroll in the course and maybe 15 books were ordered. Because the on-ground course meets once a week and many students wait until the first class to see about textbooks, many do not go to the bookstore until the second week of school. Our students often do not have other classes on campus and may only be on campus one day a week. Most of our classes are taught online: again causing delays in the purchase of texts until the second week. Well, the students buy up the 12-15 books in the store during the first week. The policy of the bookstore is to overnight books the first week, but use standard delivery thereafter. This could mean a delay of a week or two for the other 10-20 students who were unable to get their books the first week. Thus, they drop the class. The class then finishes with the 12-15 students who were lucky enough to buy the books first, proving to the bookstore that our enrollments are only 12 -15 per class. This self-fulfilling prophecy has occurred every semester. As many as half of our students drop when they are unable to purchase a book. We are unable to persuade the managers that we need 20 to 25 books on the shelves by the first week of school. Even when our pre-school enrollment numbers show a full class, the store will not order before the students come in to request a copy. I would appreciate your help in finding a win-win situation for the bookstore and our program.

Overall, our program continues to grow and offer career opportunities for our students. Many students find positions while working as interns. Our success rate with placements is high, but not substantiated by records. In order to document our anecdotal findings, Dean Haley has funded 60 hours of student assistance the last two summers to provide a volunteer staff member with assistance in developing a computerized recording method to gather supporting data. This generous donation in a time of restricted budgets will help us monitor the success of our students in the LMT certificate program. We hope to begin entering data summer of 2012.

For documentation, please see the following attachments at the end of the report.

Department Statistics Report 2011

An example of statistics generated by a Sierra College LMT Program graduate

Learning Resource Center – Library Science – ePAR Report 2011

The department's 3 Year Retention and Success Percentage Trend (see attachments) show an increase in success overall and with specific groups of African American and Hispanic students: all three groups moved from a 55% success rate in fall 2006 to a 78% success rate in Spring 2009. This 23% growth may be due to the recruitment and outreach we have done through district and county libraries and librarians. Our teachers do their best to meet the learning styles of students and provide support for their needs. In addition, most students in online instruction receive a welcome letter with information about the class and resources, such as the tutorials for distance learning. Students are encouraged to take the three week course, "How to be a Successful Online Student" to better prepare for the learning experience.

1b) Enrollment Trends: Identify and explain the enrollment trends in your program's data. Address separately the data for on ground, on-line, and enrollment at the various centers. Comment on the significance of the trends as well as the challenges experienced within the program. If you see a need to improve the statistical trends, outline a plan that will achieve the changes you are seeking. If applicable, comment on both the past performance and the future direction of the program as a whole as well as by location and mode of delivery. Please refer specifically to the data in your Department Statistics Report, as provided by the Research and Planning Office, in supplying your answer.

More students are seeking the LMT certificate and successfully completing the 17 units of course work and internships. Our students find work. The spreadsheets we are developing show more students are hired in local public, school, and private libraries after completing the LMT certificate. The trend in our local communities is to give preference to applicants who possess the certificate and have successfully completed one or more internships through the program. We receive very positive feedback from employers who hire our graduates.

Our students add FTE numbers to district totals without significant costs. The majority of our courses are taught by librarians as part of their regular work load. The flexibility of having most courses in our certificate program available online makes it possible for students who otherwise could not participate, able to complete our classes.

1c) Productivity: Comment on how the program contributes to overall district productivity. Comment on the significance of the trends as well as the challenges experienced within the program. If you believe the statistical trends need improvement, outline a plan that will achieve the changes you are seeking.

Presently, our department fills courses during open enrollment, even reaching numbers as high as 29 students. Due to the problem caused by textbook difficulties, (please see details in section 1a) our numbers are reduced each semester. We are addressing this issue through the SCFS subcommittee gathering information on bookstore concerns and with the help of our Dean, Brian Haley. We are optimistic that a solution can be found to meet the needs both groups.

In our service area, many face severe budgetary problems. Students from the LMT program have been able to find full-time and part-time work in public and academic libraries, businesses, and with private concerns. The hiring practices in some areas have been affected by the quality of our graduates; those with the certificate are given an advantage by selection committees. Most of the libraries in a nearby K-12 district are staffed by graduates of the LMT program. The district also pays the tuition and books for their employees without the certificate to complete the program.

1d) Analysis and Planning: Referring to your ePar Report of Goals, Strategies, and Actions, comment on how your program plans to maintain or increase its effectiveness and whether it has taken actions to do so.

To improve the on-ground instruction in the LMT program, our lab/classroom needs to be updated with computers able to handle the large databases at faster speeds. The instructor's station in the room is very slow and does not have sufficient memory to complete demonstrations for instruction. If this room were upgraded, we could acquire tutorials and practice databases through OCLC to improve instruction in circulation and research activities. We use these products in our cataloging course, one of three core areas, to provide realistic training and experience for students. This is unavailable in any other LMT program in our area. The instruction and practice modules are available for ILL and other parts of core courses if we had computers equipped with sufficient RAM and storage. Having such realistic experience in cataloging has prepared several of our graduates to accept jobs offers in the field from their experience in class. It is necessary to provide comparable opportunities for students in other core courses to give them the same "edge" after graduation.

1e) Optional Additional Data: Enter additional data here that you believe to be an indicator of your program's effectiveness and explain why.

The department instructors work to maintain and increase their knowledge through readings, conferences, and regular participation in current issues and committees in the area. One of our instructors is a member of the CTE Committee, which gives us support on issues related to vocational education. Our work continues to prepare a comprehensive record of our students, their placements, internships, and success after achieving the certificate. The Library Advisory Committee is extremely supportive of our program and is assisting us in developing an enrichment program for our students. The first presentations are scheduled for spring 2012. The efforts to provide online practice in the library services course, using the professional services of OCLC, a company managing the holdings of more than 33 million volumes worldwide, will greatly add to the skills of our students. This hands-on practice will give our graduates a distinct advantage when applying for jobs, just as the real-life modules in cataloging and instruction in distance learning have increased the success of those who complete our program.

2) Relevancy: This section assesses the program's significance to its students, the college, and the community.

2a) How does your program fit within the district mission, as quoted below?

"Sierra College provides a challenging and supportive learning environment for students having diverse goals, abilities, and needs interested in transfer, career and technical training, and life long learning. The College's programs and services encourage students to identify and to expand their potential. Sierra College students will develop the knowledge, skills and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community."

The LMT program and the library science classes provide skills. Those not working toward the certificate, but complete the classes in research, learn to work with information in its various forms, as well as to develop skills in evaluating the results. Critical thinking skills are needed to understand the methodology of cataloging. While they practice providing distance learning support to students, LMTs learn how to use equipment found in film and television studios, and even to produce public service spots. This training expands their potential and confidence when they compete with other LMT applicants. For those re-entering school after a long absence, our classes offer a supportive environment and provide practice in an area designed to build upon successes. LMT courses support the curriculum, giving tools to help students succeed in other departments, and the skills to continue lifelong learning.

2b) Program fulfills the following categories (check all that apply):

Transfer

Career Technical Education

Basic Skills

Personal Development/Enrichment

Lifelong Learning

2c) Degrees, Certificates, Licenses, Transfer: Please address any of the following that apply to your program:

- **The number of degrees, certificates, and/or licenses your department has generated**
- **The alignment of these awards with the district's mission and/or strategic goals. (See the district "Awards Data File, available from Research and Planning, for your numbers).**
- **Job placement or labor market information for your program's awards and licenses.**
- **The contribution your program makes to student transfer.**

In all of the past three years, the LMT certification has been awarded to graduates at every graduation ceremony. These students have been able to find full-time and part-time positions in school libraries, business settings, and public libraries in our area as well as Southern California and other states. The supervisors of these graduates have highly praised their abilities and accomplishments. All of the courses in our program are transferable credits. Several of our beginning students express a desire to earn the M.L.S. (Masters of Library & Information Science) degree eventually, and many have done so. They are successfully employed and serving patrons where they live.

2d) Optional Additional Data: Comment on any other relevance to district goals, mission, values, strategies, etc., that your program provides that are not incorporated in the answers above. Consider, for example, contributions to diversity, campus climate, cultural enrichment, community ties, partnerships and service, etc. Include specific data and examples.

Our students keep us apprised of their success in the job market after completing the LMT certificate. We hear wonderful stories of how they were hired to work in many library settings. So far, our numbers are anecdotal. The past two summers, one instructor has volunteered to help one of our certificate holders develop Excel records to document our graduates' success. Many of these people work in our local K-12 and public library systems, serving our community. Those in our program also do well after completing the introductory courses in research and evaluation of materials. They tell stories of how much easier and faster it is to complete their assignments in other departments. The professors also report the quality of their work is above that of students without this training.

3) Currency: This category assesses the currency of program curricula as dictated by Title 5 and the currency of efforts in meeting accreditation standards as well as improving pedagogy and engaging in professional development.

3a) Curriculum: Considering the information provided on your Department Statistics Report (DSR), comment on the currency of your program's curricula. If your course currency is below 100%, describe why this is and your department's specific plans to remedy this problem.

The Library DSR lists the currency of our program's curricula at 100%. We also review course content with the Library Advisory Committee to hear their suggestions for improvements and modifications of our classes. It is important to us to keep our students up to date and ready to enter the work force. For this reason, we often question our former students to see what they were prepared to do when they began LMT work, and what, if anything, we need to add to our curriculum to have them ready to start at their new job.

3b) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Considering the information provided on your Department Statistics Report (DSR), comment on your program's progress in assessment of SLOs, analysis of results, and improvements/changes made to the program.

The majority of our classes replace a final exam with a final project that requires the student to draw upon what they have learned during the semester. Other courses have a comprehensive exam to measure the mastery of the skills and knowledge presented in their classes. With this emphasis on being able to demonstrate proficiency, we can assess the effectiveness of instruction and see where we might need to strength our program.

3c) Professional development: Describe how your department’s planned activities and professional development efforts serve to improve teaching, learning and scholarship. Please be sure to include flex activities, departmental meetings and activities, conferences, and the like.

Our semi-annual Library Advisory Committee meetings bring together professional librarians and LMTs from many types of libraries, graduates of our certificate program, and instructors from the library faculty. Dean Brian Haley updates us on the legislative and local issues our graduates will face. We also focus on a current topic, discussing the problem and looking for a solution. One of these discussions led to the creation of an enrichment program of speakers and activities to be presented at various library sites in our area. Members volunteered to host and participate; students will have opportunities to learn beyond our curricula.

Instructors regularly attend conferences, FLEX activities, and informal discussions to improve their teaching skills and familiarity with the computer software, especially Blackboard and online databases.

3d) Optional Additional Data: Enter additional data here that you believe to be an indicator of your program’s effectiveness and explain why.

Every year, comments from instructors in other departments come to us regarding the ability of students, who have completed our introductory courses, to acquire and evaluate information effectively.

Those who complete the certificate have readily found jobs in our local area and are recognized as skilled, well-trained workers. We also serve as in-service support for local LMTs. This cooperation keeps us in touch with the needs of employers, and reciprocal efforts that give our students excellent internship opportunities and resources to enhance their preparation.

Employed LMTs in our area often take classes as part of their in-service requirements. We also work closely with librarians and LMTs from the region and discuss their observations on our graduates and take recommendations from the Library Advisory Committee to improve our program.

4) Resources: This category assesses the adequacy of current resources available to the program and describes and justifies the resources required to achieve planning goals.

The Sierra College Library and local public libraries provide collections used in class activities and assignments. OCLC, a worldwide system available online, provides additional resources to give our students access to functions performed daily in cataloging departments. The program would greatly benefit from other OCLC tutorials and practice databases available for several other classes. Students would be able to develop skills using products found in libraries throughout the country, better preparing them for entry level jobs. This valuable training will give them an edge in the job market.

To provide the OCLC modules to classes not currently using these “real life” training systems, and to continue supporting the OCLC database for the cataloging course, we need to upgrade our lab. IT said it will have to be replaced; the present computers cannot do the job. Investing in equipment able to meet these needs will not only improve the preparation of LMT certificate holders, but allow FLEX classes and others who have been unable to run their software in the room a platform for training staff.

4a) Please describe the future direction and goals of your program in terms of sustaining or improving program effectiveness, relevance, and currency.

- a) Suzanne Davenport’s class, *How to be a Successful Online Student*, has increased success for students in our online courses, thus improving our retention and allowing instructors to spend more time on course content. My classes are able to focus on the subject the first week of class, rather than be delayed by the unprepared students who need instruction in computers and working online.
- b) We interview librarians in our area regularly to identify what they seek in LMTs and how our students are meeting those expectations. The LAC also contributes suggestions on course content. Graduates of the program also contribute regular feedback.
- c) We need to continue to gather statistics on students in our program. In the previous two summers, we have begun the creation of a recording system, but more time and resources are needed to complete this project.
- d) Extend the enrichment program under development by the Library Advisory Committee to offer more opportunities to our students in the LMT program.

4b) Equipment and Technology: Comment on the adequacy of the program’s equipment and technology funding level for the District as well as specific sites. Include a projection of equipment and technology needs for the next three years as well as a justification for needs.

Our on-ground classroom has been unable to handle the computing needs for some demonstrations. The cataloging course uses tutorials and databases. Other classes could benefit from online database support. IT said the room’s computers are not adequate to meet our needs and the entire lab would need to be changed, including the instructor’s computer. I see this as our greatest need and expense in the coming years. We are investigating the cost of new database tutorials and access for students in the program. It is no longer sufficient to know how to stamp a card for circulation or call a neighboring library to borrow a book. Automated library systems manage circulation and patron records, place Interlibrary Loans, and process references services using specialized databases. In order to prepare our graduates to work in these settings, students in the LMT program need access to the computerized systems used in modern libraries. OCLC offers tutorials and instructional databases to train LMTs to do essential work in ILL, Circulation, Research, and Collection Maintenance. It is critical to prepare them for the competitive job market.

4c) Staffing: Comment on the adequacy of your program’s faculty, classified, and student help staffing levels for the overall District as well as specific sites. Include a projection of staffing needs for the next three years and justification for any increases.

The LMT program faculty includes members with advanced degrees in Library & Information Science and Media & Distance Learning technology. All have experience in a variety of public, private, K-12, government and university library settings and keep current by interacting with other librarians and directors in their specialties. There are no classified staff assigned exclusively to the Instructional Program, but our needs are met by the exceptional Tina Siler, Administrative Assistant to Dean Brian Haley. No student help is assigned to our program, but Dean Haley has paid for 60 hours of summer help from one of our graduates. She is working with a member of the faculty to create a recording system for students in our program. To provide a broader curriculum, we would need a full-time faculty librarian. Presently, we teach as part of our work load. With the demand for LMTs increasing and the success of our students in finding jobs, we could add sections to our program and repeat courses taught once a year with the help of a full-time instructor.

4d) Facilities: Comment on the program’s fill rate and the adequacy of the facilities for the District as well as specific sites. Include a projection of facility needs for the next three years as well as a justification for any increases.

When the text book issue and other impediments to the growth of the LMT Certificate Program are resolved, enrollment will create a new problem. Classes in the on-ground portion are taught in a classroom with only 20 computers. To have 25 students in a room, we need more space or better designed furniture to allow for additional computer stations. At the beginning of each semester, the room is used for library orientations, evicting library science courses, sometimes for several weeks. In the original plans, there was a library science classroom and a room for orientations. The classroom has been lost to other departments. Even without growth, we need two instructional areas at certain times of each semester.

5) Summary/Closing

5a) Evaluate the program’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. (Limit responses to 250 words or fewer.)

The emphasis on lifelong learning implies the ability to continue one's education after traditional formal instruction ends. To achieve this, students need skills to access and deal with information. The same skills are required to succeed in transfer or vocational courses, and some students may lack this training or have weaknesses in their background. Information Literacy has become as important today as the ability to read was in past decades. Completion of courses from the Library Science curriculum prepares students to excel in personal and academic endeavors throughout their lives.

While all students benefit from 10A and 10B, the research component in our program, the LMT certificate provides vocational training that leads to employment. Many of our interns have given exceptional service to the K-12 systems and public libraries in our region. Students volunteered hundreds of hours to one local library facing severe budget cuts. The director told the City Council that they would have been unable to keep the doors open without the help of the Sierra College student volunteers. In addition, most of these students already had completed the two units of Internship 95 for the LMT certificate; this outreach continues today.

LMT classes offer training and in-service opportunities for staff in school and public libraries in our district. Our willingness to help gives us access to people who support our efforts to prepare qualified LMTs for the future. Our challenge is to be on the cutting edge of technology to open employment opportunities for our graduates and enrichment for our community.

5b) Please provide any other information the Program Review Committee should consider that was not expressed in questions above.

Enter additional information here...

5c) How has the author of this report integrated the views and perspectives of those who have interests in the future of this program, e.g. full time and part time faculty, educational administrators, instructional assistants, classified staff, and students at Rocklin, Roseville Gateway, NCC and/or Tahoe Truckee?

The Library Advisory Committee, which includes Sierra College students and staff, contribute to the evaluation of our program's results. Students, who take our research classes, have prompted many faculty to comment on the quality of research and the ability of these students to evaluate sources of information. Such feedback, coupled with the reports from local employers, interviews with full-time and part-time faculty, provided the framework of information used for this report. The assistance of the Research Department and the support of Dr. Barry Abrams were invaluable.