#5

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Page 1: I. Program Overview and Update

Q1

I.1. Department(s) Reviewed:

Paralegal Studies

Q2

I.2. Lead Author:

Joan Rettinger, Esq.

Q3

I.3. Collaborator(s) - list of any person that participated in the preparation of this report:

Brandon Baker, Eddie Sturgeon, Harold Rucker, David Britton, John Hafner, PARA graduates completing the ABA graduate surveys, Paralegal Advisory Committee; Cuyamaca Association of Paralegal Studies Officers.

Q4

I.4. Dean/Manager(s):

Larry McLemore

Q5

Initial Collaboration Date with Manager/Dean:

Enter the initial date you met **11/19/2021** with your dean to discuss your program review using this format: MM/DD/YYYY

Q6

I.5. Program Update (Required): Please summarize the changes, additions, and achievements that have occurred in your program since your last program review was submitted. To access your Spring 2021 program review, visit the Program Review webpage.

Since our last program review, we have began preparation for the ABA Re-Approval Report. Mary Sessom, previous director of Paralegal Studies, has turned delivered most of the data required and the new Director Joan Rettinger has worked with department faculty to develop a Google Drive to organize information in preparation for future virtual site visits.The ABA has released the template for the Re-Approval Report and the new director has begun drafting keeping in mind the report is due in April 2022.

In April of 2021 Cuyamaca and National University were able to reach an articulation agreement to support our PARA students as they continue on to earn a BA in Paralegal Studies.

Cuyamaca Paralegal Studies Department has also started participating in CCC Online Paralegal Course Page to help advertise our specialty Paralegal Courses to all Paralegal Students at the California Community College level.

Page 2: II. Assessment and Student Achievement

Q7

II.A.1. Describe the progress your program has made in your 4-year assessment cycle. Include any assessment results your department has found and changes you have made as a result. If your assessment plan has changed, please upload this new plan as well.

Business and Professional Studies has decided on 3 unified PLOs for the overall department.

Our 4-year assessment cycle for SLOs has been updated.

The program has undergone significant changes in the past few years as courses were reconfigured into smaller unit courses. Since then, PARA 145 was assessed in SP 20. PARA 146, and PARA 150 were assessed in Fall 2020. In Fall 2021 we are planning to assess PARA 120, 135, and PARA 175. PARA 120 had yet to be assessed since dividing the course into PARA 120 and PARA 121, so that was being addressed this semester. PARA 175 also required SLO assessment as it has not been done before. This was accomplished in FA 21. The Program plans to be consistently assessing SLOs as we move forward. Our assessments since the last report show all courses had their assessment success rates in the program's accepted rate of 70% as a minimum. For these courses the assessed since the previous report success rates ranged from 79% to 100% for the course SLOs, all exceeding the 70% minimum significantly.

Q8

OPTIONAL: You may upload a copy of your SLO assessment plan here. If you have an Excel sheet, please convert it to one of the supported files listed below before submission.

F21 PARA SLO Assessment Plan .pdf (35.3KB)

Page 3: II. Assessment and Student Achievement

Q9

II.B.1. What progress has been made in your program to address the institutional goals set around student success and equity? {2019 Equity Plan} If qualitative or quantitative data is available, please summarize any findings.

The program serves a diverse community. If one looks at a snapshot of the data from SP21, one can see that the program had 68% female students and the college 59%. FA20, shows the program had 80% female students and the college 58%.The program had 7% of its students from the African-American community while the College was at 6%. Hispanic/Latino/a students stood at 44% for the program and 35% for the college. However we were once again low with Asian community as the program had 0% and the College was at 5%. Middle Eastern students were enrolled in the program at 5% whereas they represent 11% of the College. Multiple Races communities were enrolled at 1% whereas campus represented 6%.

The 2019 Equity Plan indicates a desire to continue and expand equity- minded Professional Development. The PARA faculty is actively engaged in professional development. This training is essential for instructors to learn new techniques and philosophies in the teaching profession. Additionally, the ABA requires that each faculty member report, on a yearly basis, the training that individual has done for their profession as well as for their teaching. Professional Development workshops are only part of the way of meeting this priority.

Several faculty members attended various American Association for Paralegal Educators conference workshops which focus on how to improve teaching in the classroom. Many of these workshops dealt with equity issues. For example, one such workshop, held in San Diego in March 2019, was devoted exclusively to the appropriate use of pronouns when working with students of differing demographics. This was further emphasized in department meeting training to ensure that all faculty were aware of this concern and made it a priority for our students to feel seen, honored, and respected in the classroom environment.

Additionally, 50% of the PARA faculty have taken equity training from @One, the Strong Workforce Institute, or the college's EMTL courses. Additional training for the other remaining faculty is being pursued. This investment seems to be taking hold as students in our program in several groups impacted by equity gaps are doing slightly better than in college wide data.

The 2019 Student Equity Report indicates connecting students with learning assistance is a priority during the first-year experience. The PARA program has fully embraced this and makes use of embedded tutoring for our difficult courses, has the PARA tutor introduce themselves early on during the course that grants entry to the program, sends messages encouraging use, and embraces support services having students actively identify a student support service that can best serve a specific need during their first term in the program.

The 2019 Student Equity Report also indicated a goal of enhancing existing program maps. In 2021 the new program director participated in the Degree Map Workshop held by Cuyamaca and helped develop 2 maps for our program taking into consideration the unique paths required depending on which term PARA students entered the program.
Yet another goal of the 2019 Student Equity Plan was to launch a Career Services Center. PARA has been a strong supporter of the Career Services Center since its inception. Regularly Career Services is invited into PARA courses to introduce their services and present relevant information of their expertise (resume writing workshops, soft skill development). The program is regularly contacted by potential employers of PARA students. With every contact employers are informed about the Career Services Jobs board and a member of Career Services is looped into contact with the potential employer.

Lastly, the 2019 Student Equity Plan indicates a goal of creating clear pathways for Transfer. The PARA program has developed an articulation agreement with National University in April 2021 for PARA students who may want to pursue a BA in Paralegal Studies beyond the AS offered by Cuyamaca.

The college Values are reflected in many of the initiatives and actions the program has taken from constantly working to maintain approval by the American Bar Association (ABA), supporting the PARA student organization, and ensuring that the program is meeting the needs of the legal community through its advisory committee and various information gathering tools such as focus groups.

Paralegal does have equity gaps when looking at the data from FA 20 and SP 21. The program needs to continue to improve its

service to several communities including: African Americans, Asian, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Multiple Races. The program is clearly growing in service to these communities as some identified equity gaps are more historic with the Asian community in 2016, or multiple races in 2017 and 2019. In 2020 and 2021, individual equity gaps in the program were not present for Asian, Middle Eastern. The program in comparison to the college is doing a better job serving several groups, while both have room for improvement. When looking at the Hispanic community success rate for FA 20 the program maintained at 69% success rate, whereas the college wide rate was only 66%. The African American community has been showing growth within the program, from FA 2019 to FA 2020 regarding success rate growing from 54% in 2019 to 79% in FA 2020. This is significantly better than the college wide success rate for this group 62%.

Q10

II.B.2. In light of the goals set in your program review, what are your plans to improve equitable student outcomes (success, retention, persistence, graduation, etc.) in the coming year?

Goals in program review included- (1) prepare re-approval report and for ABA site visit, (2) identify funds and faculty to strengthen equity training, and (3) hire FT PARA Faculty. Two of these goals are key to planning and improving equitable student outcomes. We achieved the goal of hiring a FT PARA Faculty, which means they are now available to identify and support all part time PARA faculty in completing additional equity training. Cuyamaca has made this a goal as an institution and has made identifying this training generally easier for faculty through email notifications and the VRC. More PARA specific equity training still needs to be identified. Once more training has been completed, we will hopefully further develop tools like those being implemented now, including welcome letters, caring and supportive syllabi, more frequent and caring messages on Canvas, and additional office hours over Zoom. Instructors are able to provide personal support, facilitating communication so students can be connected to additional student services and tutoring to further support their success.

Q11

II.B.3. What did your program learn from the transition to remote teaching and operations over the past year? How can this be used to improve the student experience in the future?

The program learned how to connect with students in a deeper manner in an online environment and found affirmation that not every subject is easily comprehendible in this modality. Instructors have revamped their syllabi and other critical documents to give more supportive and caring messages. This more relatable approach will help students feel connected and supported as they face obstacles in future terms improving equitable student outcomes.

There is now extensive use of Zoom. Even online instructors have used Zoom for extra office hours. It is foreseeable that Zoom will become a larger component of online classes as a way to better connect with students. Students being able to see and interact with their instructors truly helps the online learning process. Recorded videos and Zoom office hours may be key in increasing 100% Online student success in future terms. This more interactive student experience should also lead to more equitable student outcomes.

Q12

Yes

II.B.4. Is your program a career education program (e.g., does it prepare students to directly enter the workforce)?

Page 4: II. Assessment and Student Achievement continued

Q13

II.B.5. Please share your observations about the employment rate for your program over the past several years.

More of our students appear to be continuing their education rather than immediately entering the workforce. The strong push at Cuyamaca for students to continue on to 4 year programs is being taken on by many graduating PARA students as they are considering a BA to support negotiating higher salaries as Paralegals. Over the last 4 years our employment rate has been generally on an upward trend outperforming the 8 year average.

Q14

II.B.6. What is the institution-set standard for your program's employment rate? The institution set standard is what you would consider the lowest acceptable employment rate for your program (or "floor").

The institution-set standard for PARA's employment rate is 60% based on the Perkins Core Indicator Reports when reviewing the past 8 years, this was the low and our adopted current floor. Given the interesting mass resignation happening in the U.S. in the post COVID environment, and the increased demand for Paralegals, it's reasonable to expect that the floor may not drop below 2015 rates while expecting greater success.

Q15

II.B.7. What would you like your program's employment rate to be, ideally (stretch goal)?

Ideally, PARA's employment rate would be 84% as the demand for Paralegals continues to rise. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, California employed 36,500 paralegals in March 2021, at an annual mean wage of $62,768. The field is expected to grow by 13.7% (much faster than average) in the next 7 years.
The California Employment Development Department estimates a 12.7% job growth by 2028 for paralegals in San Diego County. 35% of employers require 1-12 months of experience which confirms the importance of the PARA Internship course, which is an elective. Encouraging student enrollment in these courses and developing ties to the legal community we should be able to slightly raise our employment rate given the increasing demand.

Page 5: II. Assessment and Student Achievement continued

Q16   **Yes**

Does your department offer classes that are approved distance education courses excluding emergency remote teaching in 2020-21 (classes that would have been taught in person if not for the pandemic)?

Page 6: II. Assessment and Student Achievement

Q17

II.C.1. If there were differences in success rates for distance education (online) versus in-person sections of program courses in your last comprehensive program review, what has the department done to address these disparities? If online and in-person sections had comparable success rates, please describe what the program did to achieve that.

The program has been taught 100% online through DE since SP 20 due to COVID and the need for emergency remote teaching. FA 20 shows data that reflects On-Campus, 100% Online, and Less Than 50% Online. This is clearly not accurate since all instruction occurred 100% online for the PARA department. I believe the data is based on the original offering of the courses, so with that in mind, I will compare the FA20 success rates and SP 21 success rates with the idea that the course was originally designed to be offered online or was adapting. Additionally, dataset numbers dropped significantly once COVID occurred. This shows burn out and lack of enrollment given COVID, as students seeking tradition On-Campus course were not really offered but forced into online adaptations. Previous student numbers in prior years were significantly higher, we successfully served 44% fewer students in Sp 21 than SP 17, and 66% fewer students in On-Campus courses in FA 20 than FA 16. Given that additional context, there are differences in our success rates when looking at online and in-person courses. We have very limited course offerings so individual courses are only offered in one modality.

There are no courses in PARA that are offered in multiple sections over different modalities for genuine comparison of the nature requested by this question, rather review was done of success in types of course offerings.

FA 20 PARA courses, On-Campus had a success rate of 80% when taught online, 100% Online courses had a 71% success rate in their intended modality, and Less Than 50% Online had a 68% success rate. This shows a hybrid approach is particularly unsuccessful and that there is an equity gap with Online courses a 9% difference. In relation to previous years, the variation does not appear significant change for On Campus, but does show improvement for hybrid course success. 100% online course data is only available for one other term FA18, so there is not enough data to have meaningful comparison.

In SP 21, On-Campus had a success rate of 75% when taught online, 100% Online courses had a 58% success rate in their intended modality, and Less Than 50% Online had a 67% success rate. In relation to previous 5 year average, this has shown a decrease in success for On-Campus courses, 8% and 4% from the previous year. This makes sense given these students and courses are planned and seeking face to face instruction and being forced to settle for online instruction with Zoom while dealing with the challenges of the COVID pandemic. There was a bit of a drop in SP20 as those courses switched to fully online at the onset of COVID. 100% Online Courses only have post pandemic data to review. This shows a very high retention rate 95%, but a reduced success rate. More data over time would improve the evaluation of this modality. Less than 50% online Spring success rates have been fairly consistent and improving since the COVID and SP 20, showing an increase in success from 48% in SP19 to 68% and 67% in 20 and 21, a 20% increase.

Overall, On-Campus students being taught online are the most successful in the fully online COVID environment. These courses are being taught with designated meeting times and lectures by the instructors over Zoom. This is great insight for potentially improving our 100% Online course success rate in the Spring semesters as there may be a significant difference in the success rate of On-Campus vs 100% Online courses in SP semesters is 20% lower than in Fall, which shows no noticeable difference.

The @One online equity training was phenomenal for experiencing tools and strategies to support student success. Many of the tools have been implemented such as introduction letters before a class starts to the use of a liquid syllabus. Strategies include more interactive, low risk work such as word gardens, and more instructor notes placed in Canvas.

One instructor has already implemented a liquid syllabus in their Canvas class. Others have revamped their syllabi and other critical documents to give more supportive and caring messages.

There is now extensive use of Zoom. Even online instructors have used Zoom for extra office hours. It is foreseeable that Zoom will become a larger component of online classes as a way to better connect with students. When looking at On-Campus being taught online, we see that students are more successful online, likely due to the extensive use of Zoom. Students being able to see and interact with their instructors truly helps the online learning process. Recorded videos and Zoom office hours may be key in increasing 100% Online student success in future terms.

Page 7: III. Previous Goals: Update

Q18

1. Previous Goal 1:

Prepare for the ABA Re-Approval Report, Subsequent Site Visit, In Order to Retain ABA Approval

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Q19

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Guided Student Pathways

Q20

3. Goal Status

In Progress - will carry this goal forward into next year

Page 8: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q21

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

Respondent skipped this question

Q22

Do you have another goal to update?

Respondent skipped this question

Page 9: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q23

Action Steps for the Next Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new laptop computers).

The next Re-Approval Report to the ABA is due in April, 2022. The program has started working on the report as the ABA has given direction, in late October 2021.

Q24

Do you have another goal to update?

Yes

Page 10: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q25

1. Previous Goal 2:

Identify funds and faculty to strengthen Equity training

Q26

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Student Validation and Engagement

Q27

3. Goal Status

In Progress-will carry this goal forward into next year

Page 11: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q28

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

Respondent skipped this question

Q29

Do you have another goal to update?

Respondent skipped this question

Page 12: III. Previous Goals: Update (If Applicable) continued

Q30

Action Steps for the Next Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new laptop computers).

This goal is not about implementation but about identification. In a subsequent program review, if the training can be implemented, then the data should show if it is successful. But this is not the goal for this year as FT faculty was only just hired in August 2021 to take on both the program management and implementing new actions. This goal should be invested in with additional research in the Spring 2022 semester so that implementation can be considered in the upcoming year.

Q31

Do you have another goal to update?

Yes

Page 13: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q32

1. Previous Goal 3:

Hire FT PARA Faculty to replace sole FT Faculty due to retirement

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Q33

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Organizational Health

Q34

3. Goal Status

Completed

Page 14: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q35

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

FT PARA Faculty has been hired. Goal Completed. The PARA program is well positioned to retain ABA approval in this aspect, maintaining the strength of the degree for graduates seeking employment.

Q36

Do you have another goal to update?

No

Page 15: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q37

Action Steps for the Next Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new laptop computers).

Respondent skipped this question

Q38

Do you have another goal to update?

Respondent skipped this question

Page 16: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q39

1. Previous Goal 4:

Respondent skipped this question

Q40

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Respondent skipped this question

Q41

3. Goal Status

Respondent skipped this question

Page 17: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q42

Please describe the results or explain the reason for deletion/completion of the goal:

Respondent skipped this question

Page 18: III. Previous Goals: Update continued

Q43

Action Steps for the Next Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new laptop computers).

Respondent skipped this question

Page 19: IV. New Goals

Q44

Would you like to propose any new goal(s)?

Yes

Page 20: IV. New Goals continued

Q45

1. New Goal 1:

Implement a more robust Equity training with faculty

Q46

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Student Validation and Engagement

Q47

3. Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal(s) identified above.

Student Validation & Engagement has as one of its activities "Providing robust professional development opportunities focused on culturally competent curriculum and cultural awareness". This program goal seeks to meet this college goal by giving faculty the opportunities to learn about aspects of equity and how to incorporate activities into their courses that advance equity.

The data (PR, SWI, EMTLI) show that the program has some equity gaps. Lessening or eliminating these equity gaps, especially in the Hispanic/Latino/a demographic, is beneficial for the students, staff, faculty, and thus the organization.

Q48

4. Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcomes) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcomes) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

This goal was informed by the faculty who have completed the various types of Equity training, incorporated tools and techniques into their courses, and surveyed the results. It is all qualitative data.

The data from PR, the SWI, and the EMTLI show that there are some equity gaps in this program in terms of retention and success. This has already been discussed. This is one proposed solution.

The program also looks to the ABA for positions on various issues. The ABA's Diversity Committee takes the lead on equity issues relating to the legal workplace as well as providing training. An example:

August 27, 2020 Articles
Summer Spotlight on Diversity and Inclusion: Heather Lonian
The chair of Stone Pigman's diversity committee has spoken to several prominent media outlets in the New Orleans area about promoting antiracism and inclusivity in the workplace.
By Fritz Metzinger
(Stone Pigman is a large law firm)

This is in line with the college's equity goals and its current anti-racism efforts. The program will continue to engage in activities and training that support the college's policies.

Q49   **Respondent skipped this question**

5. Action Steps for this Year: If you are requesting
resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them
below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g.,
submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Q50

6. How will this goal be evaluated?

If the training can be implemented, then the data should show if it is successful. I'd like to plan on one year to implement the training opportunities being identified this year and then give faculty an additional year to fully incorporate what they've learned. At that time we could evaluate data and compare to 2021 and before to see how we have progressed at shrinking equity gaps.

Q51   **No**

Do you have another New Goal?

Page 21: IV. New Goals continued

Q52   **Respondent skipped this question**

1. New Goal 2:

Q53

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Respondent skipped this question

Q54

3. Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal(s) identified above.

Respondent skipped this question

Q55

4. Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcomes) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcomes) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

Respondent skipped this question

Q56

5. Action Steps for this Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Respondent skipped this question

Q57

6. How will this goal be evaluated?

Respondent skipped this question

Q58

Do you have another New Goal?

Respondent skipped this question

Page 22: IV. New Goals continued

Q59

1. New Goal 3:

Respondent skipped this question

Q60

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Respondent skipped this question

Q61

3. Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal(s) identified above.

Respondent skipped this question

Q62

4. Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcomes) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcomes) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

Respondent skipped this question

Q63

5. Action Steps for this Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Respondent skipped this question

Q64

6. How will this goal be evaluated?

Respondent skipped this question

Q65

Do you have another New Goal?

Respondent skipped this question

Page 23: IV. New Goals continued

Q66

1. New Goal 4:

Respondent skipped this question

Q67

2. Which College Strategic Goal does this department goal most directly support? (Check only one)

Respondent skipped this question

Q68

3. Please describe how this goal advances the college strategic goal(s) identified above.

Respondent skipped this question

Q69

4. Please indicate how this goal was informed by SLO (student learning outcomes) assessment results, PLO (program learning outcomes) assessment results, student achievement data, or other qualitative or quantitative data (from any source):

Respondent skipped this question

Q70

5. Action Steps for this Year: If you are requesting resources in order to achieve this goal, please list them below as action steps and specify the type of request (e.g., submit technology request for new computer hardware).

Respondent skipped this question

Q71

6. How will this goal be evaluated?

Respondent skipped this question

Page 24: Resources Needed to Achieve Program Goal(s)

Q72

What resources is your program requesting this year to achieve the program's goals? (Check all that apply)

My program is not requesting any resources at this time

Page 26: Final Check

Q73

Are you ready to submit your program review?If you would like to go back and review a section, select a section a click "Next."

I am ready to submit my program review