

Fall 2008 Comprehensive Program Review

Name of Program:	Bookstore
Name of Unit:	Bookstore
Name of Area:	Administrative Services
Date Completed:	11/07/2008

Program's Mission Statement

Los Angeles City College Bookstore is committed to providing students, faculty, staff and the community with the materials and resources requisite for student success in all of LACC's course offerings and enhances the college experience of all customers.

Program Outcomes

The LACC Bookstore provides goods and services of the type and quality that meet the expectations and needs of the students, faculty and community consumer such as:

1. Provide online sales of textbooks, general supplies and spirit items as a fast and convenient way for students to obtain needed materials and enhance their college experience. Online sales also help to alleviate lines in the store during the first 2 weeks of the semester.
2. Provide textbooks on time and at lowest price to ensure students ability to obtain materials.
3. The bookstore offers buyback during the first week of classes and during finals week. This gives the students a chance to receive some return on their investment and in "recycling" these books helps the next group of students save money by purchasing used books.
4. Receive faculty adoptions promptly to increase sales of used books.
 - a. Use online or email requisitioning
 - b. Encouraging faculty to consider the following when making their text choices
 - i. Pricing
 - ii. Bundling- all parts needed or just text.
 - iii. Use in class
5. Offer product selections in store that meet customer expectations
 - a. Required, optional and recommended textbooks
 - b. General and Study Help items and books

- c. Required Supplies such as Art, Dental, Bluebooks, Scantrons, etc
- d. General Supplies such as paper, folders and writing instruments
- e. Impulse items such as candy, jewelry and greeting cards
- f. Spirit items such as clothing, imprinted binders and mugs

6. The bookstore supports and provides materials to specialty programs on campus such as EOPS, Financial Aide, Office of Special Services and Workforce which help students to purchase books and succeed in special programs.

Program's Characteristics, Performance, and Trends

1. The bookstore is currently the main source for study material, textbooks, school supplies, emblematic gifts and snacks.

2. There is currently 7 permanent full time classified staff: Manager, Assistant Manager, Stock Control Assistant, Stock Control Aide (unfilled), Buyer, Senior Cashier, and 4 cashiers (2 unfilled). In the slowest parts of the year the Bookstore relies on 120-150 hours per week of student worker help. Many of our staff including full time, part time and student workers are multi-lingual which helps us to address the diversity of the student body.

3. The Bookstore provides service to students, staff, faculty and the outside community. The store provides approximately 1300 titles, chosen by almost 700 faculty members for more than 1700 credit courses. The bookstore takes pride in our ability to process and provide services to more than 16,000 students per term and the largest EOPS program in California and many Rehab and Veteran students.

4. The Bookstore product mix ebbs along with the campus. Over the last 5 years our sales have increased along with enrollment. We have improved our product mix to meet the desires of the campus community including a broad range of emblematic giftware and clothing.

5. With the recent installation of Win Prism which is a complete Inventory Control system and POS system (including online sales) the Bookstore operation will be more efficient and productive.

- *Ability to process orders more quickly, thus having books in store on time

- *Ability to send want lists more easily and earlier to get more used books

- *Ability to track and process receivables and payables in a timely manner

6. Start a Bookstore taskforce to work on communication with students and faculty to improve the bookstore performance and ability to provide the best services.

Program's Strengths and Weaknesses

The following are supported by internal employee surveys, campus climate and student surveys.

Strengths:

1. The cultural environment in the store is good. According to the Staff Survey of 2008 the staff feel well trained and that they provide an important service and that their work is valuable. This contributes to good customer service and as can be seen in the fact that our satisfaction scores improved from the 2005 Student Survey to the 2007 Student Survey.

2. The bookstore is available to students and customers when needed. According to the Student Surveys we are succeeding in being available to the campus when compared to other services.

a. Open extended hours during beginning of sessions to accommodate increased customer flow and allow students to get materials on time for start of class.

b. Installed test materials vending machine for availability when store is closed.

3. Hard-working staff that enjoy their job and servicing the community. They are constantly learning and coming up with new and better ways to make sure the customers are serviced exceptionally.

4. Ability to work with multiple departments on campus to improve student success.

a. EOPS

b. Workforce

c. OSS

d. Financial Aide

e. Department of Rehabilitation

5. Ability to generate a positive fiscal position while maintaining a high level of service and functionality.

Weaknesses:

1. For the last 3 years the store lacked adequate and appropriate equipment which contributes to long lines and repeat visits to the store to purchase materials.

a. The Bookstore recently acquired a new Point of Sale system

i. All registers in working order

ii. More registers available

b. The Bookstore recently acquired a new Inventory Control system

i. Allow for expedient order request entry

ii. Allow for expedient ordering of out of stock items

iii. Allow for correct inventory tracking

c. The Bookstore recently acquired software to make online sales available.

i. Allow for fewer lines

ii. Allow for students to acquire materials without visiting the campus.

2. According to the 2007 Student Survey LACC Bookstore has the highest (11%) number of students who stated they were not satisfied with bookstore services

Program's Opportunities and Challenges

A. Demand for low price textbooks

Challenges:

•Instructors not the Bookstore choose the titles used for courses

•Instructors have ability to negotiate cost price with publishers bookstore does not.

•Inflation- "Textbook prices are increasing at more than four times the inflation rate for all finished goods, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index."

•EOPS voucher students demand new books to spend all of voucher

Opportunities:

- Make books available in other formats such as iChapters.
- Work with instructors and ASO to promote early requisitions and increase buyback.
- Inform instructors of how their decisions affect book pricing and availability of used books via website, academic senate and ASO
- Work with other departments by accepting vouchers (EOPS, Financial Aid, etc) and have them encourage students to purchase used books when available.
- Work with publishers and instructors to offer solutions that do not eliminate used books (non-bundled, custom titles).
- Acquire on-line requisitioning software to get faculty adoptions more promptly.
- Work with staff development and orientation to increase communication with faculty and students to help make their experience in the store a positive, fulfilling experience.
 - Hand out bookstore information at orientation for example how store is set up, how to find books, web-site information, maps and contact information
 - Flex day seminars providing information about publishers, choosing books, pros & cons of bundles & custom etc.

B. Off-Campus Competition both On-line and Bricks-N-Mortar

Challenges:

- Competition has low overhead and no requirements to have enough books for all students
- On-line book swaps-students sell to each other and by-pass bookstore this has a negative effect on students with vouchers (fewer used books on shelves).

Opportunities:

- Bookstore My Space page – disperses information in a culture students are a part of
- Give ASO information and work with them to disperse the pros of supporting the On-Campus Bookstore (Bookstore Profits support campus functions such as IT, Custodial etc)
- Having online websites and services opens ability to have more communication with students and faculty in forms of email and surveys.
- Ability to compete in other areas of service such as return policy, availability of texts, and guarantee of receiving correct text.

C. Low Income Students

Challenges:

- Obtaining enough used textbooks
- Offering books in other forms such as iChapters and eBooks

Opportunities:

- Partnerships with specially funded programs such as EOPS and Workforce
- Partnerships with Library to keep books on reserve
- Partnerships and communication with faculty regarding pricing of books and other options such as used books, custom and the need of all parts in bundles.

D. Store location formatted for Cafeteria

Challenges:

- No room for queuing during busy times of year.
- Not disability compliant due to space issues when busy

- Not enough storage space textbooks and supply overstock

Opportunities:

- Passage of Prop J opportunity to move into a new space in the future with better storage and room adjacencies within the store.

E. Campus Budget Crisis

Challenges:

- Understaffed due to Hiring Freeze/Staff out on Leave
- Redistribution of duties assigned to missing personnel
- Fewer staff to distribute new duties to such as web sales
- Availability to campus during late and weekend classes
- Non-Bookstore personnel on Bookstore Budget
- Campus Departments not paying Payables due to Bookstore

Opportunities:

- Staff is cross trained and able to step in when other staff is missing
- Prepares staff for promotion because they have knowledge of other positions duties
- Bookstore can help campus

F. Availability to Campus late Hours and Weekends

Challenges:

- Being open during late hours and weekends due to staffing

Opportunities:

- Installed new Scranton/Bluebook vending machine
- Online sales will allow students to shop when store not open

Evaluation of Program's Performance

The store has had a few years (2004-2006) where it has fallen short of it's mission. Having hired a new manager in 2005 the communication with faculty, students and the campus community have been re-established and bookstore procedures have been evaluated and adjusted for better performance.

With the acquisition of a new computer system in 2008 and maximizing of space available over the last couple of years the store has been closer to meeting it's mission as can be seen through campus climate surveys and student surveys.

With the addition of online sales and partnerships with other areas on campus the bookstore is viable, profitable and a fluent contributor to the campus both monetarily and in services provided. Although the Bookstores profit and loss has fluctuated from year to year, the year's it has ended in a loss had been due to the change in accounting procedures in 2005 and due to Campus contributions through salary expenditures such as in 2008.

Improvements still needed include remodeling or a new facility, hiring of unfilled full time positions and continuing education for full time staff.

Program's 3-5 Year Strategic Directions

A. Over the next 3-5 years the demand should increase

a. This can be seen through enrollment trends over the last 3 years (2006-16,119, 2007-16,686, 2008-17,478) as seen in the Census Credit Enrollment Report on the LACCD Research page (<http://research.laccd.edu/enrollment-trends/census-credit-enrollment.htm>)

b. "The California Community Colleges Board of Governors (1995) examined changes that were taking place in the country because of population shifts, growth, and workforce needs. Projected trends were: (1) the labor force would incorporate more women, minorities, and older workers; (2) continuing developments in technology requiring on-going education; and that (3) the community college role in retraining would continue to be substantial (<http://www.ericdigests.org/2004-1/trends.htm>).

c. Due to the economic recession "Many people who've been working at a job for 20 or 30 years are suddenly finding themselves unemployed without the ability to get a new job. Many more part time workers can't find full time work. Now more of those people are going back to school just to remain competitive in the job market. (<http://www.kolnkgin.com/home/headlines/35694154.html>)

B. With the new store computer system there is the ability and possibility of automating payables by interfacing with the District system. According to Nebraska Book Company there are other schools interfacing SAP and Win Prism.

a. This would eliminate excess paper usage as it would eliminate making copies and sending them to the District.

b. This would also eliminate the double work incurred by entering information into Win Prism and then accounting entering it into SAP.

C. With new Win Prism system there is the ability to automating parts of our receivables such as EOPS.

a. Will decrease processing time and shorten lines.

b. It may also be possible to accept EOPS as payment for online sales which would eliminate the necessity for students to come to the store.

D. Ability to "charge" cub cards and use to pay for services in bookstore and in other areas of the campus.

a. Will allow parents to "charge" cards with funding for student purchases in lieu of gift certificates and/or giving their child a credit card or personal check

b. Students will only need one card when on campus or doing campus business

Goal #1 Long term (2-5 years)

Status: in progress

Store Design and Procedure Review: Most of the changes that would truly benefit the store, campus and customers all fall under these categories. Included in store design are changes in merchandise,

merchandising, security, signage and remodeling projects. Included in procedure review include order processes, information dissemination, customer service, selling processes (eg. online sales).

Most of these objectives are in some point of progress at this time and will be ever changing but many should be accomplished within 5 years. When these goals are accomplished there will be better communication between staff, faculty, students and the Bookstore which will allow the store to provide better service and pricing to customers.

Evaluation of Goal

The goals will allow the program to provide better service and tools to the consumers and allow the consumer to have a more pleasant, fulfilling experience in the store.

Objective #1.1

Status: in progress

Online Services:

With the purchase of our new system we have started on-line sales and reservations. This will help alleviate lines in the store during rush periods and have a one stop source of store information for faculty and students.

Another service will be faculty adoptions on-line. This will allow faculty to input their orders on-line where they will have access to more information regarding past orders and new editions. Faculty early adoption is they key to more books, lower prices (through used books), speedy student ordering and reservations.

Objective #1.2

Status: in progress

Store remodel:

New textbook shelving to maximize available space.

Remodel Register area and queuing to allow more customers in que and take less space which will have less impact on customers still shopping.

Replace carpet with stained concrete or new carpet. This will make the store more pleasing to the eye and the consumer.

Impact of Objective on Other Programs, Units, and/or Areas

Impact on the Unit: Facilities

Due to budget constraints some of these construction type items will require the assistance of the carpenters and electricians.

Objective #1.3

Status: in progress

Signage:

Signage throughout the store will help customers find merchandise more easily.

Signage for advertising will promote sales and drive customers to the bookstore website...the source for purchasing and information

Signage outside stores so customers can find store and know where to sell books, return books and enter.

Posted return policy will allow customers to understand dates and deadlines.

Existing Resources

Computers

Objective #1.4

Status: in progress

Security:

The store needs security to protect merchandise and customers. Purchase a camera system to back up any prosecution of theft and/or help with student complaints (eg. they cut in line).

Theft can have an impact on students' ability to acquire certain titles or merchandise and has a direct impact on the store's profit or loss.

Objective #1.5

Status: in progress

Customer Service:

Give staff (full time and part time) the tools and information needed to assist customers to get needed merchandise and tools to succeed in courses. This may be accomplished through training courses and meetings.

Goal #2 Short term (1 year)

Status: in progress

Hire staff in unfilled positions.

Evaluation of Goal

This goal will help the store staff to spread out the work load and be more efficient at each of their assigned duties

Objective #2.1

Status: in progress

Change stock control Aide position to a buyer position and go out for hire. Work with administration to eliminate Stock Control Aide and add Buyer to Bookstore Budget.

Resources Needed: Additional Personnel

Position Classification: Classified Staff

Position Description:

Bookstore Buyer

Estimated Cost: \$ 46000

Supporting Rationale:

The stock control Aide position is not necessary in the store since we have a stock control Assistant. This position should be changed to a buyer who can concentrate on ordering, inventorying and returning supply items. This would make the store more efficient and progressive in its purchases and less likely to run out or low on necessary items. At this time the job is split into many parts each performed by a different staff member. This model is inefficient and can lead to errors and miscommunications.

Objective #2.2

Status: in progress

Hire two cashier positions which are currently unfilled. The Bookstore will need to show a couple of years of profit in order to justify filling these positions.

Resources Needed: Additional Personnel

Position Classification: Classified Staff

Position Description:

Cashier- two positions

Estimated Cost: \$ 76000

Supporting Rationale:

Permanent cashiers would eliminate need for part time staff at slow times of the year and would be able to assist in other store functions such as processing paperwork, purchasing a select group of merchandise and merchandising the store.

Individuals Who Participated in Developing this Plan

1. O'Connor, Christi