

Crafton Hills College

ESL Program Viability Study/Proposal

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NOTE: This document has been prepared at the direction of the CHC Academic Senate in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the CHC Program Viability Process. It has not yet been approved by the Academic Senate, and thus should be regarded as an unapproved draft. It is provided per request of the Vice President of Instruction.

Introduction/Framing Questions:

- Crafton Hills College faculty and administrators have articulated a desire to explore the creation of a new program in English as a Second Language (ESL). Discussions have taken place in several contexts suggesting that the current conditions warrant the introduction of such a program. The conditions include the following:
 - Environmental scan that demonstrate continuing shifts in local demographics.
 - Educational outcomes among Basic Skills students that suggest such a program might address critical learning gaps.
 - A plan to initiate an International Student Program at Crafton, for which a vital component would be the assessing and meeting the English Language needs of incoming international students.
 - Workforce needs of the local community, where English proficiency is a key skill for success.
- The purpose of this Viability Study Document are the following:
 - Provide information that can help determine the need for an ESL program.
 - How such a program would serve the college mission and connect with the educational master plan.
 - Assess the impact on the values and goals of the instructional mission of the college, as well as access and equity for students.
 - Consider relevant qualitative and quantitative indicators in establishing program viability.

1. Environmental Conditions that Warrant the exploration of an ESL Program:

Demographic conditions:

Southern California remains one of the most culturally, economically and ethnically diverse regions of the United States, and the Inland Empire reflects this diversity. Communities across our region have grown as a result of the promise of a better future and economic opportunity that attracts people to the Inland Empire from around the world. Crafton Hills College, as part of the San Bernardino Community College District, is located in a region that lags behind neighboring regions in terms of household income and educational attainment, but serves a community as diverse as any in Southern California. (SBCCD Scan, 2013) A 2013 Environmental Scan undertaken by SBCCD characterized the service area served by CHC as two major neighborhood profiles: Espaniola (44%) and Urban Cliff-Climber (22%). The Espaniola profile describes predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods with numerous complicated subsegments. The median age of these residents range from the 20s to 40s, with some high school and little to no college education. They hold primarily blue-collar jobs, some rely on various levels of public assistance. Many households are married with children, which a high number of single-parent households. The Urban cliff-climber profile describes young working class adults who strive to pursue individual dreams while holding blue- and white-collar jobs, in pursuit of a comfortable middle-class urban lifestyle. It should be pointed out that the scan is 4 years old, and it is likely that the quantitative data reported is out of date.

Educational Outcomes:

The outcomes that an ESL program would address would take two broad pathways: The first pathway would be to prepare an English Language Learner to successfully transition to college-level coursework, and ultimately to succeed in attaining their post-secondary educational goals. The second pathway would be to provide working adults with workplace language and literacy skills to enable them to succeed in a variety of career and vocational settings. An examination of existing ESL programs at neighboring colleges indicate that both pathways are served through offering credit- as well as not-for-credit ESL course offerings.

In examining historical documents at Crafton Hills College, references to the need for ESL courses (and ancillary support services) have appeared for well over a decade. However, a proper needs assessment has not occurred, presumably based on the fact that we have never identified English Language Learners as a disproportionately-disadvantaged target group at Crafton (Equity Plan – 2015).

In 2009, the Office of Research and Planning carried out a feasibility study to assess the possible student demand for an ESL program at CHC. Using data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the report determined that approximately 12% of respondents indicated that they had taken an ESL course during their educational experience, or expressed

interest in taking ESL at Crafton. The study also reported data on the number of English Language Learners (ELLs) from the top six feeder high schools in the CHC service area, census data on the proportion of households where a language other than English is spoken at home, and the percentage of students who took the Accuplacer assessment who have been taught in a language other than English at some point in their life (16%), or who primarily speak a language other than English (4%). These latter two values are less an indicator of demand, as much as they might indicate that in 2009, the extent to which Crafton was underserving this segment of the service area population. At present, no institutional documents are available to provide data on the number of ESL-eligible students we currently enroll at Crafton, or how many ESL students reside in our service area that travel to Valley College or neighboring districts to receive the support that they need. A replication of the feasibility study carried out by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research & Planning could give Crafton a better indicator of the need in the community, as well as the current demand on campus.

Workforce conditions

Within the past year, Crafton Hills College has partnered with EDCT to offer a pilot program in workforce readiness, a component of which includes Vocational ESL courses that are offered on a non-credit basis. The goal of the Workforce Readiness Credential was to serve economically disadvantaged segments of the population (Adult, dislocated worker, older youth (18-24 y.o.), and economically disadvantaged job seekers) access to noncredit community college courses and training to facilitate success in developing retention skills in the workplace. The Noncredit ESL component involves a 36-hour course in Review of Basic English, or a 54-hour course in Vocational English as a Second Language. To date, the status of the Workplace Readiness Credential is not known.

2. The Impact of a prospective ESL Program on Student Success:
 1. **The impact on students and student success:** The most compelling and urgent impact of a prospective ESL program on student success is found in the areas of access. The populations of students who would most clearly benefit from ESL instruction and related academic support encounter significant barriers to success in college. Courses that are required for a degree or transfer assume a college-level fluency in written and spoken English. Like many communities in Southern California, Crafton serves a rapidly evolving population for whom language fluency represents opportunities to prosper. Historically, Crafton's unwillingness or inability to serve this need has meant that residents in our service area have had to seek those services elsewhere. For students who are seeking to transfer, as well as for international students in Crafton's planned International Student Program, the goal of completing the ESL sequence would be to address deficits in understanding written and spoken English, equip students with effective skills and strategies that will allow them to succeed in a college classroom, and to ultimately eliminate barriers to success and acquire life-long language skills. Additionally, target populations of English Language Learners also include adults who are currently not engaged in the workforce, adults without a high school diploma, and others who are in

need of English skills in order to succeed in the workplace. The State of California has recognized the need for greater investment in workforce development, and consequently, Assembly Bill 86 was introduced to provide development and implementation funds to better serve the educational needs of working adults in California. A component of these resources are provided to address the English Language needs of California's workers.

- 2. The impact on the comprehensiveness and balance of offerings across the college curriculum:** Coupled with the need for access, the ESL curricular offerings must address the full-range of English Language learners, from those who possess no fluency in the language, to those who need specific, targeted instruction to address individual areas of struggle in order to succeed. An examination of current ESL course offerings at neighboring Community Colleges reflect a continuous pathway that addresses the needs of language learners at every point in the spectrum, from beginners to those who are near college-ready.

One consideration in the program design and curricular structure is the question of non-credit vs. for-credit course offerings. Two area colleges, Riverside City College and Chaffey College, have adopted a structure for which Non-credit offerings are designed with the beginning English learner in mind. These courses provide both a "survival" level of English functionality, as well as serve as an on-ramp to the for-credit sequence in ESL with an eye toward cultivating proficiency in college-level English. In both cases, the completion of the ESL sequence transitions the student into Credit-level English and Reading courses. (See Course Sequence diagrams for RCC and Chaffey)

- 3. The impacts on the Educational and budget planning processes used at the institution.** Currently, Crafton has been facing shortages in meeting enrollment goals and productivity targets, and has projected a budget deficit in the near term as a result. This places the college in a challenging circumstance – how to grow the college in order to meet the current enrollment and budget shortages, while leveraging existing resources to initiate new programs that could attract new populations of students, leading to sustained growth over the long-term. In the past year, Crafton has been exploring a number of new initiatives, including the Initiation of an International Student Program, the Offering of Non-credit courses, and a partnership in a Middle College High School. The College has elected to pursue both the International Program and Non-credit program, while deciding to pass on the Middle College proposal. However, the current fiscal situation has created uncertainty around all such initiatives, and the current college leadership has yet to decide on a path forward. In this context, an ESL program would potentially engage a large pool of new students from our local service community who have been disenfranchised in the past, opening up new opportunities to develop new educational and support programs for this new external as well as internal target market, creating a sustainable stream of enrollment and revenue.
- 4. The positive and/or negative impact on transfer to four-year colleges and Universities:** The prospect of an integrated ESL program that is linked to college readiness and successful college outcomes has a potential to greatly expand access to opportunities for transfer to populations of disenfranchised students. Indeed, the existing structures

at other community college districts demonstrate that this is a commonly-shared goal across our region. However, one significant challenge that could have impact on short- as well as long-term transfer success rates for ESL students involve the multiplicity of Basic Skills needs that these students may possess (for instance, an English Language Learner may also possess skills deficits in Math and other disciplines), and collectively, these challenges may negatively impact retention, persistence and completion rates. Similarly, students who begin the ESL sequence may see a prolonged time toward associate degree completion as well as transfer, when compared to non-ESL basic skills populations.

5. **Effects on of the program on local businesses and industries:** At present, the Inland Empire is experiencing economic growth in the area of logistics, manufacturing, healthcare technology and other high growth industry sectors. Common skill sets required across industries include basic computing, math and reading, interpersonal communication, customer service and time management, as essential for hiring and job retention. Non-credit as well as for-credit ESL courses represent opportunities to provide immediate short as well as long-term benefit to the local workforce. Additionally, local residents who pursue a pathway toward transfer will benefit the local economy by bringing advanced professional knowledge, training and skills to the local community, benefitting their communities as well allowing their families to prosper.
6. **Effects of a program on Faculty and Staff:** Given that Crafton does not currently possess an ESL program of any kind, there is an immediate need to recruit and employ qualified Faculty and support personnel to develop the curriculum, teach the courses and develop adequate support services. This equates to a significant investment of funds to develop and maintain faculty and staff positions. Additionally, there will be a need to offer professional development to faculty and staff of other disciplines to support the needs of a growing ESL population.
At present, the English Faculty have indicated their interest in ensuring that all personnel involved with the ESL program are qualified to work with Populations of English Language Learners.
7. **In the case of program discontinuance, provisions that can and should be made for students in progress to complete their educational goals.** Not Applicable.

Information Data Gathering:

1. **Applicable Qualitative Indicators:** As CHC has no internal data of its own relating to ELL populations currently enrolled or residing in one's service area, an examination of existing data from ESL programs offered at neighboring community college districts

yields some valuable information about the need for these services in our local community.

- a. **Riverside City College:** RCC's ESL program began as a part of the English and Speech Communication Department, becoming its own department in 2002 and eventually splitting into 3 separate programs in 2010 when RCC expanded into a 3-college district (Norco and Moreno Valley Colleges became independent colleges). ESL student enrollment expanded from 300 in the mid-1990's to over 2,900 in 2007 – a nearly 10-fold increase. Enrollment decreased to 2,442 in 2011, during the statewide budget crisis in the year prior to the passage on Proposition 30 in 2012. Nevertheless, the dramatic growth in the program underscores the significant demand for ESL services in support present in the community. Given the proximity of this program to Crafton Hills College, it is not unreasonable to presume that some of those students travel from our service area to seek those courses.
- b. **Chaffey College:** In 2007, Chaffey college reported an enrollment of 252 students in Basic Skills ESL Courses. The Chaffey adult school offers noncredit ESL and Citizenship courses.

Decision Considerations:

1. Relation of the Program to the College Mission

The establishment of an ESL Program is consistent with the college mission statement, which advances the goal “to advance the educational, career and personal success of our diverse campus community through engagement and learning.” Establishing an ESL Program at Crafton Hills would engage a segment of our diverse community that has long been underserved, and has sought such opportunities at neighboring institutions elsewhere in the Inland Empire.

2. Relation of the Program to the Educational Master Plan

The Establishment of an ESL Program aligns directly to the majority of Strategic directions articulated in the Educational Master Plan, and peripherally to some:

1. Promote Student Success

1.1: Support guide and empower every student to achieve their goals

Providing ESL courses for students who need them would provide critical support that would empower students toward achieving their educational, career and personal goals.

2. Build Campus Community

2.1: Promote inclusiveness and diversity.

An ESL program would attract a diverse population of students from the local service community, as well as International students seeking to achieve college-level proficiency in English.

2.2: Seek, respect and celebrate diversity.

English Language learners represent a mosaic of cultures, values and experiences, enriching our campus community.

3. Develop Teaching + Learning Practices

3.1 Develop a culture of mastery in teaching

The establishment of an ESL Program requires us to expand our pedagogical capacity to embrace and meet the needs of a greater range of learners. We will need to employ faculty and staff who bring the professional expertise to serve English Language Learners, and professionally develop other faculty and staff to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of ELLs.

3.2 Teach students to be great learners

In the context of mastering college level English, our charge is to facilitate and empower students to be great learners in the English Language.

4. Expand Access

4.1: Promote a college-going culture in the core service area

Given Crafton's historic deficit in its willingness to serve the ELL population, this strategic direction represents a sea-change in reaching out to embrace and empower this significant underserved population.

4.2: Increase college capacity to serve the core service area

As Crafton becomes more aware of the needs of residents of the local service area, it becomes imperative that we develop the capacity to meet the needs of the ELL population, empowering them to live successful and productive lives.

5. Enhance Value to the Surrounding Community

5.1: Be recognized as the college of choice in the communities we serve.

Offering a well-developed and effective ESL program would make us THE choice for ELLs in our local community, and stem the trend of students who travel to neighboring districts to access needed resources.

5.2: Expand the reputation of Crafton Hills College as an essential partner and valued asset. Partnerships and pathways developed with local schools, agencies and organizations build Crafton's stature as a community asset, and ensure sustainability for our programs and services, including an ESL program.

5.3: Distinguish Crafton Hills College as a respected source for local employers and the workplace. Resources such as the Strong Workforce Initiative provide ideal opportunities for Crafton to offer the services, training and resources needed by local employers and business to thrive and prosper.

6. Promote Effective Decision-Making

6.1: Value and Engage in Shared Governance

Crafton has established and reaffirmed the vital collaborative partnership between Faculty, staff and administration in the shared governance model of decision-making. Prospective programs such as an ESL Program shall be developed in collegial consultation with Faculty, whose primary function to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters are outlined in the 10+1.

6.2: Promote a culture of evidence-based decision-making

No program shall be implemented absent a comprehensive review of evidence that justifies the need for that program, in a shared-governance-driven process.

6.3: Implement college-wide integrated planning.

The implementation of a new program such as an ESL Program occurs in a process that takes into account the college-wide needs of the institution, and funding and resources for such new programs are allocated with consideration of college-wide needs.

7. Develop Programs and Services

7.1: Improve and expand services.

The implementation of an ESL Program will necessitate a corresponding need for expanding support services for those students. Specialized services consistent with the standards and norms for ESL services present in programs at neighboring campuses shall be developed in order to support the sustained growth and success of the ESL program.

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8. Support Employee Growth

8.1 Become an organization that embraces a culture of continuous learning.

A new ESL program will require the recruitment of professionally qualified ESL Instructors and support staff, and will require professional development for faculty, student services personnel and other support staff to foster the success of English Language Learners on our campus.

9. Optimize Resources

9.1: Plan for growth and align resources

A sensible plan for establishing and expanding the ESL program shall include sensible growth targets, and the efficient use of college resources.

9.2: Value the Crafton Hills College Environment

9.3: Support the implementation of streamlined resources.

A sensible plan for establishing and expanding the ESL program shall include sensible growth targets, and the efficient use of college resources. Such efforts shall not adversely affect the quality and efficacy of the services provided to students.