HHLPS Student Success and Retention Task Force

- Included in the 2018 HHLPS Program Review Modules
- Members: Michelle Lewis (History, Dept Chair), Rick Murray (History), Chris Nielsen (History), Anthony O'Regan (Political Science)

HHLPS Task Force Goal: To determine causes of low student success rates and retention, and to implement a department-wide strategy to encourage an increase in those rates.

To achieve this goal, the task force is engaged in three main endeavors:

1) Conduct a syllabi study

   Anthony O'Regan took on the task of contacting History and Political Science Department Chairs at UCLA, CSUN, and CSULA. He has created a database of course syllabi from those institutions for their US History Survey courses, and their Introduction to US Government Political Science courses. The Task Force had a fruitful in-person meeting with the CSULA Dept Chairs at LAVC. The next step is for the task force members to examine these syllabi and compare the rigor of these courses to our own.

   The task force will then conduct a syllabus comparison within our own department to examine rigor and workload.

2) Develop department best practices for embedding writing skills and study skills into course instruction

   The task force members determined that the areas that generally cause students to be unsuccessful in our courses are: 1) lack of writing and critical analysis skills, 2) lack of study and preparation skills, what we are referring to as "academic habits of mind". This is in alignment with current trends in the field. The American Historical Association is in the midst of a program (the AHA Tuning Project), which is looking to redesign survey level History courses to more directly focus on the skills associated with the practice of History, as opposed to solely content.

3) Explore low cost or zero cost textbook options for courses

   The logic behind exploring ZCT and LCT is that students who were attempting to get through our courses without buying the required textbooks (and thus failing or dropping), might fare better if texts were offered at zero or low cost.

   Several of the department faculty have completed the training for ZCT, and/or have been the recipient of the grants to develop ZCT. Others have developed sources and begun to implement them. The Department Chair organized and held an HHLPS Department Open Educational Resources workshop. This workshop was attended by Meghan Cason (Library and OER), and 12 HHLPS faculty. The department faculty are continuing to explore quality OER options for our courses.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	3 year average per award	3 year average per discipline
History AA	2	4	7	2	6	3	3	6	4.0	12.0
History AAT					2	6	8	10	8.0	
Political Science AA	4	5	2	0	3	4	6	3	4.3	13.3
Political Science AAT	4	5	2	0	3	4	6	17	9.0	
Humanities AA	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1.0	1.0