**MLEA MINUTES**



# LPC Mission Statement

Las Positas College provides an inclusive, learning-centered, equity-focused environment that offers educational opportunities and support for completion of students’ transfer, degree, and career-technical goals while promoting life-long learning.

# LPC Planning Priorities

* Establish a knowledge base and an appreciation for equity; create a sense of urgency about moving toward equity; institutionalize equity in decision-making, assessment, and accountability; and build capacity to resolve inequities.
* Increase student success and completion through change in college practices and processes: coordinating needed academic support, removing barriers, and supporting focused professional development across the campus.

# Committee Membership: 8 Quorum: 5

**Voting Members:**

Instructional Faculty (3)

Counseling Faculty (1)
Dean (2)
Tutoring Center Director or designee (1)
LPCSG Representative (1)

**Non-Voting Members:**

Chair
Director of Student Equity and Success
Director of DSP&S or designee (1)
Dean (1)
Acad. Services Classified Professional (1)
Assessment Specialist (1)

**Math And Language Equity & Achievement Committee**

October 26, 2021| 2:30-4:00pm | via ZOOM
Meeting ID: 926 3666 6532
Passcode: 957281

**Minutes**

1. **Call to Order: 2:34 pm**
2. **Review and Approval of Agenda**
	* Leslie Payne motioned, Jackie Carrillo seconded.
3. **Review and Approval of September 27 Minutes**
	* Gabriela Discua motioned, correction suggested, Leslie seconded
4. **News Item: November 1 webinar on “AB 705 Implementation Transition Plans” Now TBD**
	* Katie wondered why these transition plans were being delayed—is the Systems office feeling some trepidation due to pushback from some colleges?
	* Amy Mattern pointed the committee to the recent California Acceleration Project statement on how certain colleges are out of compliance: https://accelerationproject.org/Portals/0/Documents/CAPValidationReportAnalysisOct2021.pdf
	* Kristy Woods cited the RP group research in regards to high school students. The report looks at the throughput for students in relation to what coursework they had completed in high school and what coursework they started in at college. The report shows that for students who didn’t complete Algebra 2 in high school, their throughput for transfer-level math completion was only 8%. For students who didn’t complete Algebra 2 in high school but started in transfer-level math in college, their throughput was 37%. This indicates that we should be pushing more to start with transfer because “one shoe fits most of our students,” but one problem is that the Associate’s degree requires algebra 2 in high school, and we don’t get information about this when students register.
	* Katie Eagan asked how placement practices are affecting Black and Latinx students disproportionately.
	* Kristy reminded everyone that the GSP doesn’t place students. Katie was reminded of how sometimes the word “enrolled” is used when the Systems office is evaluating how many students are taking remedial coursework and sometimes “placed”—it’s confusing.
	* Rajinder Samra noted that the 37% number is not only about throughput but about success rates because there is just the one transfer-level course, statistics.
	* Rajinder and Katie discussed the prevailing notion that pre-transfer should not be offered because some students will choose it against their own interest, at least if the data indicate that adding even one remedial course substantially lessens the chances of completing English and math in one year. Yes, they are adults and should have choice; we don’t necessarily want to say that we “know better” and deprive students of that option. However, Katie gave the example of a student who wants to be super careful and do everything in order and thoroughly but is putting themselves at risk by starting with a remedial class. This is why English has been leery of a noncredit certificate.
	* Rajinder expressed an interest in research on what happens to students who fail their first math class—what is the emotional toll? He wondered if the 37% who do succeed may have an easier instructor. He wonders if these students are learning what they should. He wonders how students can be expected to succeed if they don’t have Algebra 2. Certainly, they may earn lower grades, but that may impact how well they do in the next course.
	* Katie suggested that while these are good questions, assuming that students are passing due to easier instructors or “social promotion” may be missing other factors. For example, she plans to present on equity in assessment to show how assumptions around instructors being easier may prevent us from seeing other factors that are enabling higher pass rates, for example different curricular decisions and different concepts of proficiency.
	* Kristy did reassert her happiness about these improved numbers but notes that some students were not included in this data because they left our colleges during the pandemic. She hopes that community college is for all students, and they can do more than they thought possible, but she also wants to keep doors open. Math is considering requiring concurrent enrollment for students in lower GPA bands.
	* Rajinder noted that the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services (at the state level) is concerned about students choosing to take classes below transfer when their goal is transfer. He feels that the goal post is being moved from encouraging students to take transfer to preventing them from taking pre-transfer.
	* Katie noted that there was always a requirement to statistically show there was a benefit to remedial courses, and Rajinder confirmed that students who started below transfer level had an equal or greater throughput, keeping those courses would be okay. Katie remains interested in taking grades into account when advising students—if they might earn a low grade by starting in transfer level, can they be apprised of pre-collegiate courses but also advised of data showing that starting below transfer has a risk?
	* Mike Sato wonders if the declines in student enrollments are not equally distributed. Are some of the students who aren’t coming students who might have previously taken basic skills? Datamart shows that students who have GEDs have not been coming in as high numbers, and this started prior to the pandemic. He wonders if these students are looking at the offerings and deciding not to come due to intimidation. How credible is the data about throughput, then, if the groups of students are different, if they have different characteristics? What if the students we are seeing since the passing of the law have more skills, more academic preparation?
	* Katie—we used to “hemorrhage” students along the way with the number of pre-transfer classes we had, but we often didn’t see it because we didn’t track where they went after passing a class. Are the low success rates in a class like 1AEX more painful because we’re actually seeing them not pass, where before they might have passed 104 but we never saw them again?
	* Leslie commented that we have different reasons for losing ESL students as well. The Trump administration had a lot to do with that for some students. (Some were even forbidden to come at a particular time.) Some international students left the U.S. because they were terrified of Americans not wanting to be vaccinated. And many don’t like online classes.
	* Kristy has certainly seen veterans do well in accelerated models, but she worries about implicitly telling students college is not for them. Maybe we can do more with Jams, more to help students feel that they can pay for college, do more to encourage the STEM path, but that implicit message may be hard to overcome.
5. **ESL and AB705: Beginning with an Introduction to ESL Students (Leslie)**
	* Leslie and Katie want to do more to pull ESL into our meeting discussions. ESL is starting their AB705 journey now, and they are being asked to maximize the probability that the student will enter and complete degree and transfer requirements in English **within three years**, or six semesters. That means that at least one semester must be removed from sequence if a student were to start at the lowest course with a goal of transfer.
	* ESL students tend to be older, female, and from more diverse backgrounds (fewer international students than before, who tend to be well-prepared and wealthy, undocumented, generation 1.5, residents, etc.); ESL immigrant students have families and responsibilities, multiple jobs. They have varying levels of education, and some students are illiterate in their first language. 70% are part-time. They are often providing for families and/or caregivers. 13% are doing noncredit. 35% have a college degree from their home countries. They have various purposes for taking ESL, e.g. improving their English for daily life, community involvement, job promotion.
	* ESL students have less vocabulary and are slower readers than native-speaking students. For example, an ESL adult has about 10,000 words whereas a native speaking adult has 30,000. Reading speed is lower as well. It takes students 3-5 times as long to read texts.
	* ESL program currently has six levels. Leslie went over the types of writing students do at each level and their reading grade level. ESL 25 is seen as reading at high school level, and they do a research paper. It’s exciting to think that students get to college level in three years. Students who complete all six semesters pass English 1A at 100% rate.
	* Some ESL students have different academic expectations, depending on their background, e.g. working in groups, sharing opinions, plagiarism, questioning the teacher, office hours, evaluation. Non-ESL faculty and staff can help ESL students if their needs are understood.
	* Anyone can help non-native speakers—one doesn’t need to know another language (ESL professors don’t!) to be an advocate and an ally. Be patient, ask questions, get to know them and their goals. Help them find campus resources.
	* Chris Crone thanked Leslie and brought in the DSPS angle. Students who learn English are sometimes misidentified as having a learning disability, but then sometimes schools swing the other way and don’t identify disabilities enough in this population. In addition, there is less comfort in some cultures in admitting disabilities and less knowledge of them. How can we better support these students?
	* Katie commented that it is often hard to recognize when a language learner has a disability because there is already a language barrier, and the origins of challenges in reading and writing are hard to identify. Chris recommended comparing performance of native speaking disabled students, language learning students, and language learning students who might have a disability. Chris recommends talking more openly about disabilities and promoting belonging. Leslie agrees that asking a student who is struggling what you can do for them, and the student is more likely to confide in you.
	* Rajinder commented that he was talking with Julia McGurk about her sabbatical proposal, and data from Livermore Unified confirm what Chris is saying--35% of ELLs are being identified as having a disability.
	* Katie thanked Chris again because we also want to center DSPS students in our AB705 conversations and review what data show about their performance in transfer-level classes.
	* Amy particularly appreciates demographic background of ESL students. She reminded us that we will never have someone who speaks the language of every student, but that doesn’t mean we can’t help them. We know that students who start at the lowest level of ESL will not complete transfer level in three years, but they have to start at that level. If they place themselves at the wrong level, they will drop out. It’s complicated to know how to serve these students as a result.
6. **RP Group’s “Mapping the Transfer Landscape for CLPCCD” (Rajinder)**
	* Rajinder will quickly go over the “Through the Gate” study from the RP group and reminded us that he will be offering two 50-minute sessions in the coming weeks to go over the data more closely.
	* Methodology: over 2M records, for LPC, from 2014-2020 (six years; a student who started in 2015 wasn’t counted), looked at 94,833 students. Students were identified by “behavioral intent,” in other words who earned at least 12 transferable units. For us, that was 9500 students, who were placed in 5 groups: transfer achievers, students at the gate, students near the gate, momentum students, and transfer explorers.
	* If we focus on students who are near the gate, we have 537 students. What are they missing? 175 are missing both math and English. 11% are only missing English. 50% are only missing math. If students meet this requirement in high school, that is not reflected in this data, however. If we look at this data by gender, 71% are missing math only, vs. 43% of male students missing math only. The disparity is large. Are female students submitting their transcripts at a higher rate? There is information that we just don’t have. For ethnicity, 70% of African-American students are just missing the math whereas 53% of white students are just missing the math. Also, this data was mostly from pre-AB705. We will be running data from this semester to see which of the 5 groups students are falling into.
	* Katie thanked Rajinder and said she was curious about transfer explorers, too.
7. **Equity in Assessment—Sharing Strategies (Katie)**
	* When a student passes or doesn’t pass a class, what does that mean? Katie is wanting to talk about equity in assessment in our meetings because Black and brown students have lower success rates. What will happen to success rates if we address linguistic justice? If we broaden our notion of English proficiency, our department hopes that success rates will improve even as students are well prepared for their future coursework.
	* Kisha and Michelle sent along a presentation called “‘Language So Rich, Why We Stiflin’? Linguistic Justice in the Classroom.” Michelle opened by talking about the CCC’s “Students Right to Their Own Language” from the 1970s and how this issue has come to the forefront again in the aftermath of 2020. Rusty Barrett, a linguist, was quoted as saying that “teacher attitudes toward the language(s) of their students is a critical determiner of academic success.” After quoting some students talking about their alienation from their own writing, Michelle and Kisha claimed that privileging white English ignores the fact that the larger world communicates in a diversity of ways and that people of color are becoming the majority. They provided examples of code-meshing on Oakland Airport billboards, so code-meshing can be happening more in the academic world.
	* Linguistic Justice classrooms value and foster all Englishes, reject the cold, detached, scholary voice as the only model for good writing, reject the idea that code-meshing “ain’t” scholarly, and prioritize ideas above all else. Kisha interrupted to ask what the implications for student success might be for students who bring different Englishes into the classroom.
	* Linguistic Justice classrooms acknowledge creativity as a form of critical thinking, encourage clarity through authentic voice, sentence variety, clarity, and grammar, encourage faculty to educate themselves about the grammars of various dialects and vernaculars, and reject the fallacious concerns about the “real world” demanding only one kind of English.
	* These values and acknowledgements do not mean invalidating the “Queen’s English” or allowing students to write whatever they want or doing away with grammar or standards.
	* Students have shown gratitude for being able to write in a way that reveals who they are. One student resented the implication that the “real world” was something “we have to earn our place in by becoming someone else while losing ourselves in the process.”
	* Katie thanked the committee for their attention and reiterated how proficiency has been seen through a particular lens historically. English is doing some hard thinking about our standards and a both/and approach to teaching grammar but allowing students to keep the Englishes they come with. This work is important in addition to anything we are told to do regarding placement.
	* Amy appreciated hearing the presentation and advocated sharing it out to other disciplines beyond a particular meeting or a Flex Day.
	* Katie said that we are also wondering what to do with ESL students who are coming into our classrooms—we want to ensure language acquisition but also honor their Englishes.
8. **Flex Day Sessions of Interest**
	* Linguistic justice in action, 2-2:50 pm (Kisha and Michelle)
	* OER/ZTC Hypothesis sessions, 10 am-12 pm (Katie, Kali, Kat, Maureen, Jennie, Nadiyah, Autumn Ottenad from Hypothesis.
9. **Good of the Order**
	* None.
10. **Meeting Adjournment**
	* 4:05 pm.