# LOS ANGELES SOUTHWEST COLLEGE

*Nursing Program Viability Review*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction/Background and Scope 1  
II. Committee 1  
III. Process and Research 1  
IV. Rationale 2  
  A. Relation of the program to the college mission 2  
  B. Relation of the program to the educational master plan 3  
  C. Recent program review recommendations 3  
  D. Measure of student demand; measure of labor market demand 3  
  E. Measures of demand in service area 4  
  F. Current program effectiveness 4  
  G. Opinion of outside expert 6  
  H. Projected impact on overall educational program, students, faculty, college budget and community 7  
    1. Justification that this is an essential element in maintaining the academic integrity of the instructional program  
    2. The wide-reaching implication for enrollment that extends throughout numerous disciplines  
    3. Funds to continue to maintain, enhance and upgrade the program  
V. Noticed Motion, *Preliminary Recommendation* 8  
VI. Cost Analysis 9  
VII. Final Recommendations 10  
VIII. Committee’s Concluding Statement 13  

### Appendix

A. Student Focus Groups, questions and results 15  
B. Nursing Student Survey Questionnaire and results 19  
C. Pre-Nursing Student Survey Questionnaire and results 25  
D. Nursing Faculty Oral Questions and summary 38  
E. Nursing Faculty Survey Questionnaire and results 44  
F. Phone Surveys of Former Students who Passed and Failed Out of the Program and summary 49  
G. Administrative Oral Questions 52  
H. Budget Reallocation, summary and narrative 53  
I. Community Forum, summary/overview of responses and statements 58
**Los Angeles Southwest College**

*Nursing Program Viability Review*

**Introduction/Background and Scope:** In Spring 2003, the President of Los Angeles Southwest College (LASC) requested a viability study of the R.N. Nursing Program due to “high cost/low productivity.” This review of the Nursing Program began in April 2004.

**Committee:** The following Viability Review Subcommittee of the Academic Senate was formed to follow up on this request: Todd J. Roberts, Ph.D., Faculty, Life/Physical Sciences, Health & Physical Education, and, Chair, Nursing Program Viability Review Committee; Rose Calderon, Faculty, Counselor and Matriculation Coordinator; Lurelean B. Gaines, Faculty, Chairperson, Department of Nursing, East Los Angeles College, and Outside Expert; Ron Haynes, Faculty, Counselor, G.A.I.N/CalWORKs; Patricia Lewis, Faculty, and Chairperson, Department of The Arts; Dr. Earnestine Thomas-Robertson, Dean, Academic Affairs; Linda Larson-Singer, Faculty, Counselor, Articulation Officer, and International Student Advisor; Celestine Tillman, Faculty, Life/Physical Sciences, Health & Physical Education; Dan Walden, Senior Research Analyst and consultant to the Committee.

**Process and Research:** During meetings from April 02, 2004 to May 24, 2004, the committee gathered and reviewed the following information:

1. NCLEX pass rates
2. Faculty staffing patterns for Fall 2002
3. Faculty written and oral surveys
4. Student written and oral surveys
5. Administrative oral survey
6. Labor market demands and outlook
7. Grant allocation and use
8. BRN and consultant reviews
9. Self-Study, LASC Nursing Department for the BRN
10. Community Forum
11. Enrollment patterns
12. Successful Course Completions
13. Retention Rates
14. Average Class Size
15. FTES
16. Labor Market Information
17. Financial/Budget Information
Rationale:
Program Viability Review is an Academic Senate-directed process designed to assure campus instructional resources are used in support of LASC’s Mission, its Educational Master Plan, the needs of the students, and the community it serves. Viability review involves a “special” process, one that is only invoked under “unusual” circumstances: it is not a part of the regular Program Review process, and it is not a process that should be applied to all departments, disciplines, or programs in a regular fashion. The term “program” as it relates to the review process includes all degree and vocational certificate instructional programs, all instructional disciplines, and all departments or other campus units offering instruction.

A. Relation of the program to the college mission
Recognizing that academic freedom is essential to excellence in education and the fulfillment of its mission, Los Angeles Southwest College seeks to offer high quality educational opportunities that promote individual development in life-long learning programs and that improve the overall quality of life.

In pursuit of this mission, the college will endeavor to maintain standards of academic achievement, provide an educational environment with support services that contributes to instructional effectiveness, and affirms to incorporate educational and financial resources.

In order to accomplish the mission, the goals of the college are to provide preparation for advanced study and sustain occupational/technical education for business, industry, and public service. These goals will be accomplished by providing a variety of comprehensive programs and services.

The overall goal of the RN Nursing Department at Los Angeles Southwest College is to prepare its graduates for the role and responsibilities of Registered Nursing upon successful completion of the program and passing the NCLEX-RN. Toward the accomplishment of this goal, the Nursing Department demands high levels of performance and proficiency in the field of nursing while effectively integrating general education courses with the basic Nursing theory and practice.

Reflecting on the way in which the department views man and society, nursing, health, education, and the roles of the learner and instructor, the department has developed a philosophy that incorporates the Nursing Process and concepts from Systems’ Theory, Self-Care Theory and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs as the conceptual framework and unifying theme for the entire curriculum.

The Associate Degree Nursing Program offers a broad health-based program in scope, and a thirty-unit option for licensed vocational nurses, which qualifies the graduate to take the NCLEX-RN test.

The Associate Degree Nursing Program at Los Angeles Southwest College assumes responsibility for three major areas: (1) competent health care providers;
(2) the profession and the community; and (3) the growth and development of the student who takes part in its curriculum.

B. Relation of the program to the educational master plan
The college’s educational master plan is in development.

C. Recent program review recommendations
The Nursing Department has not completed its college program review or its biennial vocational education review. However, it has been recommended by the Nursing Program Viability Review Committee that the department develop immediate timelines to complete both review processes.

From October 16 to 18, 2001, a consultant from the Board of Registered Nurses (BRN) evaluated the LASC Nursing Program. At that time the consultant identified three areas of non-compliance and made four recommendations. As of January 9, 2004, all areas of non-compliance and the recommendations had been addressed by the Nursing Department. The BRN will return in November 2004 to follow up on the areas of concern and to make a final recommendation.

The Nursing Department also hired an independent consultant to assist LASC Nursing faculty in developing the curriculum according to the guidelines specified by the BRN. This review was administered from January 21, 2003 through April 30, 2003. The consultant submitted her recommendations to the LA Southwest College on June 20, 2003. It appears as if the majority of the recommendations have been implemented or are in the process of development. The recommendations that have yet to be implemented have been addressed in the final recommendations submitted by the Viability Review Committee.

D. Measure of student demand, measure of labor market demand
The program currently has 167 students enrolled. Each semester approximately 170 students apply for admission to the LASC Nursing Program and only 48 are admitted. Some colleges have self-reported a wait of up to 2 years for admission into their nursing programs. “The current capacity of California’s education and training institutions to graduate RN’s does not meet California’s growing needs … over 50 percent of RN’s licensed in 2001-2002 come from other states or countries.” (EDD). Over the next 10 to 20 years California’s registered nursing shortage is expected to grow by 28.5%, a rate above the average for all other occupations in California (EDD). Within Los Angeles County, there were over 3,257 openings for RN’s, a projected shortage of 17,790 in 2008, and current employers expressed having a very difficult time finding experienced qualified applicants (City of LB, Workforce Development Bureau & EDD). The profession of RN provides a career ladder, with 82% of firms promoting employees who hold an RN license to higher-level positions. Furthermore, there are increasing collaborations being formed with Nursing programs and area hospitals to address the shortage of nurses (Future Nurse – Sp 2004).
With the current demand, there are increasing opportunities for student success and to positively impact the nursing profession. A consolidation/regionalization of LASC’s program would disrupt the integrity and performance of its students and faculty, disenfranchising students desiring to create a more palatable socio-economic status.

A proposal was considered to replace the RN program with an LVN program, with the assumption that that program would be more cost effective and would meet community needs. However, research regarding LVN programs reveals that there are numerous quality LVN programs already in the area that function in that capacity. They could further function as feeder programs into the LASC RN Nursing Program, to enhance, rather than replace or duplicate (and possibly saturate) services in this service area. Rather than creating another LVN program that would then have to compete for a share of the college budget, which could possibly disrupt and dismantle the current RN program at LASC, energies should be channeled into improving the R.N. program and providing students and the community with educational programs that are needed.

Students enrolled in courses designated as prerequisites for the RN nursing program were surveyed (See Appendix C). Of those students in prerequisite classes, 62.5% responded that they are Pre-Nursing majors. Forty-three percent (42.8%) of the students plan to apply to the Los Angeles Southwest College Nursing Program, either exclusively or in combination with applications to other programs.

E. Measures of demand in service area
The medical field is experiencing a shortage of qualified nurses, with an anticipated demand of 28.5% within the next 10 years. The 11 distinct prerequisite courses for the Nursing Program comprise a significant number of LASC classes. Dismantling or significantly reducing the RN program could critically impact the enrollment across the college.

F. Current program effectiveness
The Nursing Program has undergone a rather thorough and lengthy outside review process. The BRN reviewed the LASC Nursing Program and identified areas of non-compliance and made recommendations. As a result, an independent consultant was hired to assist Nursing faculty with curriculum review and development. The LASC Nursing faculty then met to review and address the findings.

To date, several changes have occurred within the Nursing Department. All of the non-compliance areas and recommendations have been addressed by the Nursing Department. Some of the changes include:

1. Implementing the ATI RN Comprehensive Predictor Examination
2. Incorporating English and math remediation
3. Revising/realigning the Nursing Curriculum
4. Repairing and updating Nursing Department computers
5. Initiating a $24,000 library book collection upgrade for Nursing students
6. Utilizing $14,000 to purchase new videos for various content areas and computer simulation programs and critical thinking software
7. Purchasing $8,500 of equipment and lab supplies
8. Continuing refinement, by the Nursing Department, of methods to help improve student success.

LA Southwest College must wait for the next BRN review, which will occur in November 2004. While the most pressing areas of concern have been addressed with proactive and tangible measures, the LASC Nursing program still has a way to go to in order to fully address all of the concerns that have been raised.

Several of the recommendations to the Nursing Department have yet to be implemented. The Nursing Viability Committee does recognize that it will take time to develop realistic timelines and schedules for complete implementation of the recommendations. To this end, we strongly encourage the Administration and Academic Senate to fully support the necessary changes.

In interviewing the Nursing Faculty, questions were asked relating to program effectiveness and ways to increase student performance. (See Appendix D.) Of stated concern to the faculty, was the issue of hiring a counselor with a Nursing background. They felt that obstacles to students’ success often include personal and social problems that distract their focus. A designated Nursing Counselor (preferably with a Nursing background) could facilitate increased student success by offering support and serving as a resource for students with academic and personal/social problems. Students also indicated such a need and felt that this would improve their overall performance. (See Appendix B.)

Nursing faculty stated that they felt that the lottery system for admission had increased the number of students needing remediation upon entrance into the program. They stated that this has created a difficult situation, in that students who are already low-academic performers are allowed to enter the program. Not only are the students academically under-prepared but also lack the appropriate reading level needed to remain competitive in the program. (See Appendix D.) Whether or not the lottery was the cause of inadequate preparation, the need for remediation exists. Therefore, the Nursing Program has instituted an interim remediation system, consisting of Nursing-based tutoring and the ATI, to assist students.

The faculty stated that they feel pressure from administration to maintain a higher than allowable student-to-faculty ratio in the hospital. The suggested ratio is 10:1, however, LASC often has a 12:1 ratio, decreasing the ability for proper student-faculty interaction and decreasing the students’ clinical readiness and ultimately affecting grades and performance on the board exam. Therefore, the 10:1 ratio
should be strictly adhered to and administration should not pressure faculty to increase the ratio, however small it may appear.

To the Committee’s dismay, faculty members did not appear to accept any of the personal responsibility of the shortcomings of the program. Until faculty admits that they could contribute to student success in the program, some situations will remain stagnant. The blame was put on everything and everyone else but themselves.

G. Opinion of outside expert, Lurelean B. Gaines
The hope for true equality for education in the Black Communities as envisioned by the US Supreme Court's ruling in Brown vs. Board of Education fifty years ago has yet to become a reality.

Closing the gap for minorities in all areas of our society, especially health care, requires commitment by schools, professionals and community.

In the schools, we must have accountability when educating our citizens -- otherwise we will perish as a society.

The Los Angeles Southwest College Nursing Program offers what many in the community might consider their last chance for “a piece of the pie.” “Too expensive,” continues to be the theme of discussion when identifying Nursing programs, when in fact, Nursing programs feed the college classes. Nursing students are locked into meeting certain requirements, which ensures viability for other departments on the college campuses.

Somewhere along the way, it appears that, administrators and faculty have not been held accountable and responsible for creating and maintaining such a valuable resource. Behaviors must change if Brown vs. the Board of Education is to ever become a reality! The college cannot afford to offer anything less than the best if we value education at all.

Consider the following for changes in the Nursing Program:

1. All Nursing faculty must be held accountable and responsible for both positive and negative outcomes.

2. Validate commitment of Nursing faculty to the survival of the program.

3. What is Nursing faculty willing to do to maintain the program?

4. Nursing Chairperson has to be held accountable for meeting BRN requirements. Administration must provide support to the chairperson and program.
5. There should be greater collaboration with other programs inside and outside of LACCD.

6. Establish community liaisons (hospitals, politicians) to ensure the registered nurse workforce needs are being met.

H. Projected impact on overall educational program, students, faculty, college budget and community

1. Justification that the Nursing Program is an essential element in maintaining the academic integrity of the instructional program

While some consider Nursing to be an expensive program, in light of the overall outcomes of the program, the benefits far exceed the expense. The high number of students enrolled in the Nursing prerequisite courses suggests that hundreds of these students attend LASC because of the Nursing Program, and that these students provide substantial WSCH and FTES for the college. Both Pre-Nursing and Nursing students, past and present, are responsible for having influenced hundreds of students to enroll at LASC. Additionally, of 18 International Students, 44.4% of them are enrolled as Pre-Nursing or Nursing majors. At least a third of all International Student inquiries are related to the Nursing Program. Therefore, one can easily understand the domino effect, which would be created by the elimination or reduction of the Nursing Program. For example, the loss of the only health-related professional degree program at LASC would surely lead to the loss of enrollment of students and faculty across disciplines. Finally, should the college close or greatly diminish the Nursing Program, it would not be hard to imagine that it would lead to the closure of many classes and perhaps entire disciplines, i.e., Physiology, Anatomy, and Biology.

2. The wide reaching implication for enrollment that extends throughout numerous disciplines

In consultation with Research Analyst, Dan Walden, a brief survey was developed to begin to capture the impact of the Nursing Program on the number of students enrolled in the total college program. There are eleven distinct prerequisite classes required before acceptance into the Nursing Program. They are: Biology 20, Anatomy 1, Physiology 1, Microbiology 1, English 101, Speech 101, Psychology 1 and 41, Sociology 1, Math 115 and Chemistry 51. A survey was taken in one randomly chosen class of each prerequisite (a total of eleven classes). A standard introduction was given in each class.

In the eleven classes, two hundred ninety-four (294) unduplicated responses were gathered. The average attendance in these classes, surveyed between May 7 and 12, 2004, was 33 students.
Of those students in prerequisite classes, 62.5% (184 students of 294) responded that they are Pre-Nursing majors and 37.8% (111 students of 294) responded that because of their influence, a median of two additional students (approximately 222) was enrolled. Forty-three percent (42.8%) of the students plan to apply to the Los Angeles Southwest College Nursing Program, either exclusively or in combination with applications to other programs. Thirty-one percent (31.3%) of the students (92 of 294) indicated that they are enrolled due to the recommendation of a Nursing student. The percentages mentioned above have implications for all the students enrolled in the fifty-four sections of Nursing prerequisite classes with a total of 1,786 enrollments. Based on this rationale, 11.5% of LASC total enrollments are in Nursing Prerequisites.

3. Funds to continue to maintain, enhance and upgrade the program

The Nursing Program Review Viability Committee (NPRVC) has developed a set of recommendations to help reconcile the Nursing Budget with respect to the college mission, in the context of achieving Nursing course objectives, and in pursuit of improved instructional program effectiveness and measurable student outcomes.

After careful deliberation, the NPRVC has achieved consensus that will yield "material savings" for 2004-2005 without decimating the academic and vocational integrity of the instructional program and its objectives.

Based on the 2003 – 2004 General Fund for Nursing, the college spent $1,310,238. In 2004 – 2005, the expected expenditure/cost for Nursing from the General Fund is $1,098,493. The difference is $211,754 in Program 100 savings compared to last year. Moreover, by redirecting legitimate costs without double-dipping or supplanting, up to $304,353 will be the possible savings to Program 100 for 2004 – 2005. (See Appendix H.)

**Noticed Motion:**

Nursing Program Viability Preliminary Recommendation

“The Nursing Program Viability Review Committee strongly supports the Registered Nursing Program of Los Angeles Southwest College and of this community. While the committee recognizes that the Registered Nursing Program has many challenges before it, as the only professional health-related degree program at this college, its existence is an essential element in maintaining the academic integrity of the instructional program. Also of great relevance are the

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1 The committee recognizes that English 101, Math 115, Speech 101, Psychology 1, and Sociology 101 are disproportionately represented in the sample because there are many more of these sections than, for example, Biology 20 or Physiology 1. However, because of the high percentages associated with Nursing in the sample viable inferences can still be made from the study. 9
wide-reaching implications for enrollment that extend throughout numerous disciplines. Therefore the Nursing Program Viability Review Committee is firm in its recommendation to maintain, enhance and upgrade the Registered Nursing Program.” (Approved, Academic Senate Meeting, April 13, 2004)

Cost Analysis:

In 2002-2003, 5.6% ($1,034,163/$18,406,474) of the College’s budget was allocated towards the Nursing Program (SAP Database). Currently, 6.9% ($1,310,238/$19,123,982) of the College’s budget is allocated toward the Nursing program. However, because of LASC’s small size in comparison to other colleges and the nature of Nursing Programs, this percentage is an inadequate method of approaching the budget issue. Costs for Nursing programs are static. A significant increase in the number of Nursing students cannot be actualized without an increase in Nursing faculty, whereas, at larger colleges the costs (of an increase in Nursing faculty) are offset by the larger student populations and therefore are lesser percentages of the total college budgets.

A more effective method of addressing this concern is to examine whether the number of students and the number of full-time faculty, with regards to the number of students serviced, are out of line with other colleges in the district. When Fall 2002 WSH trends and staffing patterns are considered, LASC’s FTE faculty are below the district average FTE faculty for Nursing programs within the district (11.8 vs. 13.7) based on similar WSCH. LASC (Fall 2002) had a WSCH of 3,043, resulting in a WSCH/FTE of 257, above the district average of 238. This indicates that LASC is on par (the second highest) with regards to the number of faculty being used to service students.

One may argue that a way to offset budgetary constraints is to decrease the number of full-time faculty. However, the importance of departmental continuity and cohesiveness outweighs any financial gain. Many adjunct faculty are "freeway flyers" and often divide responsibilities between several campuses and cannot commit to involvement in critical departmental activities. Full-time faculty have an obligation to participate on campus committees; adjunct faculty do not have the same obligations and as a result, the remaining full-time faculty could be stretched too thin and could become overly burdened. Consider, the analogy of an "inbreeding" result and a limitation on the "gene pool," because few faculty are making key decisions. Furthermore, the Legislature finds and declares that "...because the quality, quantity, and composition of full-time faculty have the most immediate and direct impact on the quality of instruction, overall reform cannot succeed without sufficient members of full-time faculty with sufficient opportunities for continued staff development, and with sufficient opportunity for participation in institutional governance.” (Section 70 of AB1725- Senate Rostrum, March 2004).
Another issue is the Cost per Pass (2002-2003). Due to a declining NCLEX pass rate, LASC’s cost per pass is $51,708 (Nursing Budget/actual number passed). This number is not a true and/or accurate representation of the actual cost that is associated with the education of a Nursing student. With an increase of the number of students passing the NCLEX to 35 the Cost per Pass will decrease to $29,547, in line with the district average of $32,242. The Committee recognizes that the failure rate is partially responsible for the high cost per pass and that the recommendations should dramatically increase the number of students who pass the NCLEX. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommends that the college maintain its current level of faculty support.

Final Recommendations:

A. Improve Student Success:

1. Dedicate resources (per budget recommendation) to develop and implement a plan to provide additional academic support to students who are having difficulty in meeting course objectives.
   a. Utilize a Reading and Math Specialist
   b. Provide Tutoring: ATI Seminars and Practice Series
2. Revitalize Nursing student participation on the Nursing Curriculum Committee.
3. Reestablish preceptorships (Nursing students paired in hospitals with licensed RNs).
4. Students will wear nursing attire on campus to improve program visibility and college image.
5. Develop an orientation/critical-thinking course (1 unit class) prior to entrance into the Nursing program.
   a. Encourage faculty to revisit incorporation of critical thinking skills into all courses, with special emphasis on prerequisite courses.
   b. Make mandates of program clear from the first day, i.e., only two low grades including W’s are allowable; students with two low grades may not transfer to any other Nursing program within the LACCD.
   c. Provide financial aid workshops.
6. Ensure that the clinical experience, course content and preparation for NCLEX are all parallel.
   a. Demonstrate how all clinical experiences are comparable within the same course.
   b. All course remediation and tutoring should follow the same format.
7. Prepare updated lectures and all new tests with questions relating to the new NCLEX format.
   a. Faculty lectures should be current within the subject matter.
   b. Tests will be verified for content and NCLEX consistency by Nursing faculty.
8. Implement program-wide use of progress reports to be given to all Nursing students no later than the third and fifth weeks during an eight-
week session. Note weaknesses, if any, and specify where students can go for remediation.
9. Increase grant funding to assist in financial aid for students.

B. Improve Program Effectiveness:
1. Assign a designated Nursing Counselor (.4 assignment), preferably with a Nursing background. Include career and advancement counseling to better prepare candidates for rigors of the profession. (See budget recommendations.)
2. Use/redirect VTEA, Earmark, and State Chancellor's funds to improve pass rates. (See budget recommendations.)
3. Direct Nursing faculty to maintain/upgrade all certifications as required. Consider cross-training as needed.
4. Initiate discussion with the BRN to avoid attributing the fail rate to the institution after the 2nd fail.
5. Apply for additional grants to directly fund a progressive and strong academic substructure with special attention given to tutoring, mentoring, and faculty and student orientations.
6. Increase administrative support for the Nursing Program.
   a. Establish a timeline for immediate program review.
   b. The dean shall ensure that the mandated biennial program review, as per Ed. Code, is consistently conducted.
   c. The Dean should take a more proactive approach in communicating with the Nursing Department in regards to availability of budget resources and following through with student concerns.
   d. All Administrators shall take a more proactive approach in acknowledging adverse situations and offering solutions before problems escalate.
7. The Nursing Chairperson should have direct management, with clerical support, of all Nursing grant funds, i.e., Earmark funds, State Chancellor’s grant.
8. Change the admissions ratio from 100% lottery to 50% G.P.A/point system and 50% lottery.
9. Change tests each semester to avoid perpetuation of cheating; duplicate tests in a secure area.
10. Revitalize and increase level of faculty participation and responsibility.
    a. Develop a time line for implementation of Program Evaluation Plan.
11. Increase level of awareness and student accessibility of the Department Chair.
    a. Department Chair will publish hours of availability.
    b. Department Chair will visit each class at the beginning of each session.
    c. Department Chair will arrange Nursing Curriculum Committee and Nursing Student Grievance Committee at times of students’ availability.
1. Department Chair will become more visible as a spokesperson for the program on campus and in the community.

12. The Nursing Chair, Nursing faculty, and Administration will build relationships with LVN programs in the area to become feeder clients for the LASC RN program.

13. Reduce the hourly faculty budget. (See budget recommendations.)

14. Develop a timeline to complete update of Nursing curriculum as per BRN review.

15. The committee recommends that the Vice President of Administrative Services budget the full cost for Nursing full-time faculty in the Operational Plan. It further recommends to budget the full $863,262 instead of $650,000. Not doing so gives the appearance that the college is funding Nursing at the same level as 1993, which dates back to the funding level of an eleven year old Educational Master Plan.

C. Improve the Professional Success of the Faculty and Program:

1. Pair new faculty with senior faculty.

2. Improve communication both internally and externally to the department.
   a. The Department Chair will seek increased faculty input.
   b. Nursing faculty will attend regularly scheduled Department meetings, as per the AFT contract, to ensure input in departmental and discipline decisions.
      1) The Department Chair will seek increased faculty input and review reports prior to submission of reports to the BRN.

3. Nursing faculty should review and provide input into the selection of the assessment instrument/test for Nursing students entering the program.

4. The Dean and Department Chair will establish criteria to identify and address potential underloads:
   1) If underloaded for lack of certification, faculty has one year to become certified while tutoring, administering the ATI or teaching.
   2) If underloaded because a class does not make, faculty shall be utilized to tutor, teach and/or administer the ATI.
   3) If underloaded, the faculty member may teach one of the electives recommended by the Nursing Department: Nursing 521, Pathophysiology (3 units); Nursing 523, Pharmacology (3 units); or Allied Health 33, Medical Terminology (3 units).

5. Any overload assignments shall be load-banked.

6. Faculty shall encourage students to do well and refrain from making degrading and derogatory statements to/about students in class.

7. The Department Chair shall ensure that the Office of Admissions and Records will process and submit completed student “packets” to the BRN within two weeks of receipt and/or posting of final grades.
D. Improve and Strengthen Leadership:

1. As in-service training, identify experts to conduct a series of workshops, i.e., test construction, as recommended by the outside consultant.
2. Rebuild and revitalize the Alumni Association.
3. Revisit the possibility of bringing back the Twilight Program.

Committee's Concluding Statement

The support of the RN Nursing Program by Los Angeles Southwest College represents the institution's commitment to quality academic education in the community it serves. The RN program is a viable resource for Los Angeles residents, offering lucrative career opportunities as well as opportunities to contribute to quality health care (and meet the nursing shortages) in urban communities. Although there are clear challenges associated with maintaining the program, the bottom line remains, "The commitment required to sustain and enhance the RN Program pales in comparison to the long-lasting negative social effects on the community should the program be eliminated and/or effectively not supported."

A per cost comparison of the LASC RN program to other RN programs within the LACCD quantifies and justifies the reasonableness of actual costs associated with operating a quality Nursing Program.

Additionally, recommendations are provided that should facilitate and foster a richer and more rewarding student experience, culminating in increased NCLEX pass rates.

The Nursing Program should continue to receive support at current, or increased, levels in order to remain an essential part of a comprehensive college. The committee's recommendation to reduce part-time faculty will hopefully address budgetary issues without compromising the integrity of the Nursing Program, which is at the center of offering comprehensive curricula and services.

"Things fall apart; the center cannot hold."--W.B. Yeats

In the realm of academe, the periphery and the center support one another; both must work for either to work. While the Nursing Program is viable in all areas examined, it must improve its service to the Nursing students. It is at the heart of the institution and its level of effectiveness is tied directly to and strongly affects academic programs of the entire college.

We are confident that these recommendations will help address budget appropriation issues, improve faculty and student communication and morale, as well as significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the program, pass rates, and facilitate student success. "Therefore the Nursing Program Viability Review Committee is firm in its recommendation to maintain, enhance and upgrade the Registered Nursing Program."
History:

Nursing Program Viability Review, Preliminary Recommendation; posted as Noticed Motion to Academic Senate, 3/30/04
Preliminary Recommendation approved, Academic Senate Meeting, 4/13/04
Minutes of 4/13/04 Senate Meeting approved, Academic Senate Meeting, 5/11/04
Draft, Final Recommendations; posted as Noticed Motion to the Academic Senate, 5/24/04
Accompanying documentation posted to Academic Senate, 5/26/04
Amended Recommendations, posted to Academic Senate, 5/26/04
Draft Document and Amended Recommendations unanimously approved with suggested modifications to be added, Academic Senate Meeting, 5/27/04
Draft, Minutes of 5/27/04 Senate Meeting, posted to Academic Senate, 6/3/04, at the request of the President
Final Report posted and hand-delivered to the President 06/07/04
Nursing Program Viability Review

Appendix A
Student Focus Group, questions and summary

Nursing Student Focus Group Questions

1. If you had your choice of R.N. Programs, which would you choose and why?

2. Why did you select Nursing as a career goal?

3. How do your needs as a Nursing student differ from those of a regular student?

4. What do you think the Nursing faculty at LASC can do to strengthen or improve the Nursing Program?

5. What do you think the Nursing students at LASC can do to strengthen or improve the Nursing Program?

6. Tell us how you are taught in Nursing classes (e.g., lecture, films, field trips, team-taught classes).

7. Do you feel the LASC R.N. Program prepares you well for the State Board Exams and a successful career as a nurse?

8. What do you like/dislike about the Nursing Program?

9. In your words describe the reputation of the R.N. Program.

10. Tell us something about the Nursing Program classes that you think is important that hasn't been asked earlier.

11. Is there any additional information you would like to offer?
Analysis of the Nursing Program Viability Focus Groups

There were two moderators that conducted the Nursing Program Viability Review Focus Group meetings on April 26, 2004. The first was Ron Haynes who is a counselor for the G.A.I.N./CalWORKs Program and the second was Professor Patricia Lewis, the Department Chair of the Arts. While the former interviewed a group of 10 first-year students, the latter spoke with 5 second-year Nursing students. Both Mr. Haynes and Ms. Lewis emphasized the importance of honesty and candor in responding to the questions to help capture the true experiences and realities of the students matriculated in the Nursing Program at Los Angeles Southwest College.

No delineation can be drawn between the opinions of the two focus group meetings. In both groups, students shared a commonality of the same level of concern regarding the teachers’ curriculum, perception, and overall structure of the Nursing Program.

The proximity of Los Angeles Southwest College to their homes is considered to be a primary factor in their decision-making process in choosing the Nursing Program. The working affiliation that Southwest has with Harbor, UCLA, and Vista Hospitals has also proven to be beneficial to the students.

The Nursing Program in Southwest has great economical value to the students in that the tuition fee is substantially lower than those being charged by private institutions. In addition, the availability and accessibility of the Nursing Program at Southwest have attracted students. Students are cognizant that other competing Nursing programs, such as El Camino’s, have over a 2-year waiting period for admission. Class schedules are also beneficial in that they do not interfere with students’ work schedules. Students indicated that the demographic profile of the student population has been an attractive feature. The fact that students are ethnically and culturally diverse contributes to the level of allure that Los Angeles Southwest College Nursing Program has to offer.

Students discussed myriad issues during the focus group sessions. One of the primary concerns of the students is the lack of continuity in the program. Classes taken from one semester to another do not seem to have any relevance with one another. Non-sequential design of the classes seems to be the proverbial problem in the Nursing Program. A student was quoted as saying, “…some of the transitions from one semester to the next semester is not smooth at all, it’s too choppy; they bounce things around.” This statement reflects the students’ understanding that each class should lay the foundation for the next. Knowledge attained from one semester should have relevance and applicability to subsequent classes. Yet, students are experiencing “disconnect” from the classes they have completed.

The protocols and guidelines in conducting clinical experiments lack standardization. This issue has also become a challenge for the students in that each professor has a unique set of standards in performing several clinical tasks. A student remarked, “One teacher will want the care plan; another teacher will want the care plan another way...All the teachers should have the same thing.” Clinical strategies that are taught by each
professor are mutually exclusive of one another. Protocols do not complement each other and sometimes even contradict one another. As a result, it has become a daunting task for students to determine which of the protocols to use.

Another issue posed by the students is the lack of applicability of the Mathematics course that is being taught. The math curriculum is outdated and has no usefulness in performing conversions necessary to complete the laboratory assignments.

Degradation of students by professors is pervasive in the Southwest Nursing Program. Students have stated that professors often address the whole class with derogatory remarks. Students have shared that professors often would say that the entire class lacks critical thinking skills. This type of gross generalization has led to students’ low morale and low self-esteem. Issues of empowerment emerged within the discussions. Students feel that professors are not being held accountable for their obligations and duties as teachers. According to the students, professors should be a source of guidance, support and positive reinforcement.

It would be of great interest to monitor the performance of these students who report that they have been subjugated to such treatment by professors. Research has shown that students’ performance historically has a high correlation and causation with a professor’s perception and treatment. Thus, a study on students’ academic performance compared with a teacher’s perception and treatment might be analyzed.

On a positive note, laboratory assistants were hailed as having a wealth of knowledge, and being helpful and cordial with students. This positive feeling will undoubtedly impact the students’ level of academic performance and also persistence in the Nursing Program.

Part of the dialogue revolved around the issue of incorporating clinical practices throughout hospital rotations. A student commented that this lack of rotation is translating into limited visibility at prominent hospitals. In several interview sessions, potential employers inquired why Southwest College does not conduct any rotations at their hospitals. Moreover, some employers had no knowledge of the existence of the Nursing Program in Southwest College.

Lack of reputation and prestige surrounding the Nursing Program is alarming to the students. The level of reputation of a program adds value to the type of employment students secure after graduating from the program.

Lastly, the rigor of the program has greatly impacted the lives of the Nursing students. It is deemed to be very demanding and stressful. “It is messing with my physical health,” a student commented. To add, she said, “But the structure is good, and I cannot say I am going to leave this program any worse. And I’m going to leave a better person. But it’s hard.”
Some students expressed that they took classes from two to three times before they actually understood the subject matter. They prefaced this statement by stating that they had studied most of the day and still failed the class. “Even if you are giving 100, 200, 1000 percent; even if you are studying 22 hours a day, you can still fail a class.” A tracking mechanism that monitors the grade point average was suggested to be implemented, especially with students whose grades seemed to be declining from one semester to another.

Overall, students were very open and articulated their experiences. It is their fervent hope that an improved Nursing Program will remain as part of the curriculum offered at Southwest College.
# Nursing Program Viability Review

## Appendix B

**Nursing Student Survey Questionnaire, summary and results**

**Student Nursing Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Basis for Opinion</th>
</tr>
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<td>1. In order to work problems out early, consistent student participation at Nursing Curriculum Committee Meetings is important.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The college should provide more tutoring and test preparation in the Nursing Program.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The Nursing Program would benefit significantly if there were a counselor designated to facilitate intake, evaluation, and transcripts review.</td>
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<td>4. Having Nursing Students serve on a Grievance Committee would help manage complaints.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Recent improvement in NCLEX test scores could be attributed to the ATI Exams and the specialized tutoring in math and English.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Nursing faculty meet their students in the classroom and the lab as required.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. New instructors might be more effective if mentored by senior professors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Nursing professors are available to confer with students outside of class.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Students enter the Nursing Program with sufficient academic preparation to succeed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Your entrance assessment test in reading and math was administered and scored by college faculty in the Learning Resource Center.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Students benefit from Nursing-specific Tutoring</td>
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<td>12. Chemistry, Biology, Micro, Anatomy, and Physiology prepared you to do well in the Nursing Program.</td>
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<td>13. Nursing students fear their grades will suffer if they make comments and/or complain.</td>
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<td>14. Faculty communicate well in the Nursing Program.</td>
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<td>15. Students communicate well within the Nursing Program.</td>
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<td>16. Students prefer permanent full-time faculty over part-time faculty.</td>
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<td>17. The Nursing Program would benefit significantly if there were a Counselor designated to facilitate academic, career, and personal/social issues.</td>
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<td>18. Additional Comments:</td>
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___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________
**Nursing Student Survey: Spring 2004, Results**

**Frequency Table**

In order to work problems out early, consistent student participation at Nursing Curriculum Committee Meeting is important.

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The college should provide more tutoring and test preparation in the Nursing Program.

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The Nursing Program would benefit significantly if there were a counselor designated to facilitate intake, evaluation, and transcripts review.

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Having Nursing students serve on a Grievance Committee would help manage complaints.

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Los Angeles Southwest College, Nursing Program Viability Review Committee,
Final Report

Recent improvement in NCLEX test scores could be attributed to the ATI exams and specialized tutoring in math and English.

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Nursing faculty meet their students in the classroom and the lab as required.

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New instructors might be more effective if mentored by senior professors.

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Nursing professors are available to confer with students outside of class.

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Students enter the Nursing Program with sufficient academic preparation to succeed.

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Your entrance assessment test in reading and math was administered and scored by college faculty in the Learning Resource Center.

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Students benefit from Nursing specific Tutoring.

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Chemistry, Biology, Micro, Anatomy, and Physiology prepared you to do well in the Nursing Program.

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Nursing students fear their grades will suffer if they make comments and/or complain.

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Faculty communicate well in the Nursing Program.

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Students communicate well in the Nursing Program.

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Students prefer permanent full-time faculty over part-time faculty.

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The Nursing Program would benefit significantly if there were a Counselor designated to facilitate academic, career, and personal/social issues.

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Nursing Program Viability Review

Appendix C
Pre-Nursing Student Survey, questionnaire, summary and results

Student Questionnaire

1. What is your current or intended major? _________________________
   If your major is Nursing, has anyone enrolled at Southwest College because of your
   influence (they came here because you came or came here because you recommended
   it, etc.)?
   ______ Yes  If yes, how many students? ___
   ______ No

2. If your major is Nursing, are you taking this class as a prerequisite for the Nursing
   program?
   ______ Yes
   ______ No

3. If your major is Nursing, to which college/s do you plan to apply for entrance into the
   Nursing Program?
   ____________________________ ________________________________
   ____________________________ ________________________________

4. Why are you enrolled in LA Southwest as opposed to another college?
   (Please check all that apply.)
   ______ It’s close to my home or work.
   ______ A friend or relative recommended the college.
   __________________________________________________________
   If you are here because a friend or relative recommended the college,
   are they or were they enrolled in the Southwest Nursing Program?
   ______ Yes
   ______ No
   ______ I didn’t do well in another college; this is a second chance.
   ______ Other

5. Have you taken this same survey in another class in the last few days?
   ______ Yes
   ______ No

Thank you for your time and information.
### Nursing Prerequisite Classes Survey: Spring 2004

#### Frequency Table

If your major is Nursing, has anyone enrolled at Southwest College because of your influence?

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2. If your major is Nursing, are you taking this class as a prerequisite for the Nursing Program?

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Enrolled at LASC because a friend or relative recommended the college.

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If you are here because of friend or relative, are they or were they enrolled in the Southwest Nursing Program?

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Enrolled at LASC because I didn't do well in another college; this is a second chance.

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Enrolled at LASC because other.

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5. Have you taken this same survey in another class in the last few days?

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Q5 = 1 (FILTER)
## Nursing Prerequisite Surveys: Alpha Answers

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5. Have you taken this same survey in another class in the last few days?

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Pre-req Nursing Question Q1b: If yes, how many students?

Statistics

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Mean: 3.84
Median: 2.00
Nursing Program Viability Review

Appendix D
Nursing Faculty Oral Questions and summary

Nursing Faculty Questions

I. Changes to Nursing Program that Nursing Faculty would like

1. If given the opportunity to change anything in the Nursing Program, what would you change? Please include in your response elements of the program you would add, delete and/or alter.

II. Factors determining success of students in the program, i.e., Board Exams

2. What external and/or internal forces impact your/students’ ability to enjoy greater success in the Nursing Program?
3. In reviewing the NCLEX Pass Rates (1997-2003), there has been a steady decline in pass rates over the past 5 years. Pass rates in 1997/1998 were at 72.97%, which steadily decreased to 36.21% in 2001/2002, while slightly rising in 2002/2003 to 51.28%. To what do you attribute the declining pass rates of Nursing students over this time span?

III. Support for students in program

4. What support can be given to students throughout the program to ensure greater success in each class?
5. What can you tell us about the assessment process which was overseen by the LRC?
6. Of late, students have been provided with specialized tutoring in math and English. Do you see an improvement in the classroom and clinical performance of your current students?

IV. Addressing problems within program

7. How would you characterize the communication lines currently existing between Nursing Faculty and Nursing Students?
8. What new or different mechanism can be used for students to air complaints/dissatisfactions before getting to the point of filing a grievance? Recently, grades for six students were thrown out as a result of the grievance process and actually erased from the record as if the students had not taken the class; money was refunded, partially due to the instructor having not taught the lab hours. Something is amiss within the classroom. It appears that in some cases administration knew, faculty knew and yet not much was done. How can this be remedied?
V. Factors within the department

9. What happens when there is a communication breakdown internally between or among Nursing faculty and has this internal communication affected Nursing students and the Nursing Program?
10. Was there sufficient faculty input in preparing the response/report to the BRN in 2001 and 2003?

VI. Other

11. What do you feel that you can do to improve the Nursing Program?
12. Is there any additional information you would like the committee to know?
Summary of Responses

I. Changes to Nursing Program that Nursing faculty would like

The following recommendations provide a general overview of the elements of the Nursing Program that the Nursing faculty believes would enhance and further develop the Nursing Program:

- Hire a full-time Counselor with a Nursing background to assist with admissions, academic and case management counseling, and provide support services and referrals to other support resources.

- Implement a reliable and accurate assessment of each student admitted into the Nursing Program. The assessment will be the measure used to provide academic remediation for students entering the program below the recommended grade level of proficiencies.

- Provide academic support through specially tailored remediation courses, designed specifically to enhance skills related to academic achievement in the Nursing Program. Students will receive tutoring to improve the rate of success in the program.

- Adjust the program course load to help facilitate student success. By requiring prerequisites, resequencing courses, and monitoring each student’s academic progress and/or deficiency, students would be provided with the support needed to successfully complete the program.

- Maintain integrity of teacher-to-student ratio. Adhering to 10:1 teacher/student ratio increases the faculty interaction with students, decreases the teacher’s workload, and reduces the number of students in the clinic, which helps to create a more conducive learning environment.

- Implement a faculty mentoring program. The purpose of the program would be to provide new teachers with additional skills needed to address difficulties confronted by students.

- Hire clerical staff to address administrative needs of the program. Re-allocate funds designated two years ago to pay staff to review transcripts, process admissions and assist with the day-to-day paperwork currently assigned to faculty.

- Maintain integrity of RN program. Remove the threat of competition for resources and duplication of services by rejecting the proposal of adding a LVN program. Enhance the RN program by funneling energy and any available funds into enhancing the program infrastructure and resources available to students.

- Establish methods to improve current Nursing faculty participation and accountability in the development of the Nursing Program.
II. Factors determining success of students in program, i.e., Board Exams

Nursing faculty in general felt that the forces that impact the students’ ability to enjoy greater success in the Nursing Program include solidifying external and internal support systems for the students. A lack of student support in the areas of financial aid, academic and personal counseling, as well as a lack of a process by which students can request assistance with other issues are key factors that may hinder success in the Nursing Program.

The external force that most impacts student success is their inability to dedicate more time studying because of their financial responsibilities. Compounded schedules requiring students to work more than 20 hours per week, and to cope with demands of other non-academic responsibilities are closely associated with lower success rates in the Nursing Program, increased drop out rates, and low board scores. Efforts to secure funding to offset students’ financial responsibilities would significantly increase student success rates because more time could be used to study and focus on the Nursing Program.

According to the Nursing faculty, two major influences contributed to the overall lower scores reported for the Nursing Program: 1) an increase in English as a Second Language students and 2) the use of the lottery system for admissions. The proficiency levels of students were incorrectly identified in various subject matters, thereby contaminating an accurate assessment and initial placement.

III. Support for students in program

Generally speaking, according to Nursing faculty, students from urban communities typically have to deal with obstacles that distract their energy and focus away from matriculating in the Nursing Program. Difficulties are coupled with the high rate of students entering the program at reading levels well below the required standard needed to succeed. A situation is created that demands a solid infrastructure that provides an enormous amount of student support in order to yield success. This support includes hiring a counselor to provide direction and additional resources; increasing laboratory hours and tutoring; administering effective assessment tests; and providing student representation on the Curriculum Committee.

An increase in the laboratory hours and additional assistance with tutoring would facilitate the learning process, and address the issue of over-crowding due to limited laboratory availability. This level of academic support for students is basic, yet crucial, as it relates to opportunities to practice and reinforce materials learned in lecture.

Administering effective entry assessment tests would provide Nursing administration with accurate indicators of students’ skills, abilities, and proficiency levels. This information is crucial in properly placing students in
courses that require acumen at specified proficiency levels. Proper placement will increase student success rates in the program and passing scores on the NCLEX exam. Ensuring accurate assessment of student proficiencies/deficiencies provides student support upon entrance into the program. It sets the pace for achievement versus inevitably feeling overwhelmed, falling behind, and with no other options but to drop out of the program.

Providing students with opportunities to voice their concerns collectively via a student representative on the curriculum committee would help Nursing administration take proactive steps to understanding and meeting the needs of Nursing students.

**Addressing problems within the program**

According to Nursing faculty, the best methods for resolving the major problems within the Nursing Program are: 1) to improve the communication between Nursing faculty and Nursing students, 2) to increase the accessibility to faculty and administration, and 3) to improve faculty accountability and the student grievance process.

The current ineffective student grievance process adds to the problems. College Administrative involvement coupled with bureaucratic red tape and unresponsiveness to the students’ concerns have all contributed to a bottleneck in the process. A streamlined grievance process, that includes and values student input, would address problems at the departmental level.

A sizeable portion of the miscommunication has already been alleviated. Proactive steps were implemented Spring 2004, i.e., Dean Jackson now formally introduces himself to students in the program, policies and procedures are explained to new students during the orientation meetings.

**Factors within the department**

The Committee notes that internal communication breakdowns among Nursing faculty yield no course of action. Developing an effective communication system would help to increase student success in the program, and facilitate a conducive work environment for every level of the department.

Nursing faculty believe that they communicate effectively. However, there was a mixed response as to if there was sufficient faculty input in preparing the report to the BRN in 2001 and 2003. An evident communication breakdown exists and it affects the Nursing students and the Nursing Program. Some faculty felt that if they had been called on to apply their expertise, their subject matter knowledge could have been added to the report to make it
stronger and improve the score. At the same time, the Chair had stated that she had sought input from all Nursing faculty, while only some responded.

VI. Other

A key question and concern was what individual faculty members themselves could do to improve the Nursing Program and the success of its students.

Nursing faculty see the Nursing Program as a valuable professional resource to this community and surrounding areas. It functions as a financial and educational tool to improve socio-economic conditions in the area. Graduates return back to the community, securing jobs at medical facilities that provide an additional tax base for the community, as well as lay the foundation to their careers. In many cases, Nursing careers break cycles of dependency on public assistance and act as springboards for the acquisition of Bachelor’s, Master’s and/or Doctorate degrees.
# Nursing Program Viability Review

## Appendix E
Nursing Faculty Survey; questionnaire and results

**Faculty Nursing Survey**

Please complete the survey and return by Wed. May 12, to Academic Affairs Research Office (c/o Dan Walden).

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<tr>
<td>2. Students enter the Nursing Program with skills required to do well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The Department Chair solicits faculty input.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Nursing faculty is committed to the success of the Nursing students.</td>
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<td>6. Student participation in Nursing Curriculum Committee Meetings is important.</td>
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<td>7. Having Nursing students serve on the Nursing Grievance Committee would help manage complaints.</td>
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<td>8. Recent improvement in NCLEX test scores is attributed to the preparation exams (ATI).</td>
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<td>9. Recent improvement in NCLEX test scores is attributed to specialized tutoring in Math and English.</td>
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<td>10. New instructors might be more effective if mentored by senior professors.</td>
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<td>11. Nursing faculty communicate effectively with each other.</td>
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<td>12. The recent entry assessment test is an adequate indicator of student skills.</td>
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<td>13. Nursing faculty could improve teaching skills</td>
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<td>14. Nursing faculty should be current with the latest literature in the field.</td>
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<td>15. An increase in part-time instructors would strengthen the Nursing Program.</td>
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<td>16. Nursing faculty communicate effectively with students.</td>
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17. Additional Comments:

_____________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Many thanks for your time

05.10.04
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2. Students enter the Nursing Program with skills required to do well.

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5. Nursing faculty is committed to the success of the Nursing students.

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6. Student participation in Nursing Curriculum Committee Meetings is important.

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7. Having Nursing students serve on the Nursing Grievance Committee would help manage complaints.

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8. Recent improvement in NCLEX test scores is attributed to the preparation exams (ATI).

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9. Recent improvement in NCLEX test scores is attributed to specialized tutoring in math and English.

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10. New instructors might be more effective if mentored by senior professors.

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11. Nursing faculty communicate effectively with each other.

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12. The recent entry assessment test is an adequate indicator of student skills.

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13. Nursing faculty could improve teaching skills.

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14. Nursing faculty should be current with the latest literature in the field.

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15. An increase in part-time instructors would strengthen the Nursing Program.

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16. Nursing faculty communicate effectively with students.

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Nursing Program Viability Review

Appendix F
Phone Surveys of Former Students who Passed and Failed Out of the Program

Phone Surveys of Former Students

For students who passed the Program and Boards: To be answered “Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree”

1. Nursing students should serve on the Nursing Grievance Committee. (After answer, did you know that one exists?)

2. Your classes and labs met at the scheduled times.

3. Nursing professors were available to confer with students outside of class time.

4. I had sufficient academic preparation (generally provided by the prerequisites to Nursing) to succeed in the Nursing Program.

For students who passed the Program and Boards: Open-ended answers

1. How many times did you take the Boards before you passed?

2. What are you doing now; what is your present employment?

3. What kinds of things did you find you needed to know on the job that you did not learn in the program?

4. Was there anything included in the program that was really not necessary?

5. How could we make the program better--what suggestions do you have?

6. Do you have anything else you would like to say?

For Students who Left the Program: To be answered “Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree”

1. Nursing students should serve on the Nursing Grievance Committee.

2. Your classes and labs met at the scheduled times.

3. Nursing professors were available to confer with students outside of class time.
4. I had sufficient academic preparation (generally provided by the prerequisites to Nursing) to succeed in the Nursing Program.

For students who left the program: Open-ended answers

1. Why did you leave the program?

2. How could we have helped you be more successful in the program; what suggestions do you have?

3. What are you doing now and what are your plans for the future?
Summary of Responses: Phone Surveys of Former Students who Passed and Failed Out of the Program

Department Chair, Jo Ann Williams, provided two lists of students who had recently passed the RN program and the Boards (30 students listed) and of students who had recently failed out of the program (56 students listed). After consultation with Research Analyst, Dan Walden, phone surveys were conducted; 48 calls were made in an attempt to contact students who passed the program; six students were interviewed. Twenty-two calls were made in an attempt to contact students who failed out of the program; five students were interviewed. Interviews averaged thirty minutes. Students were assured that information given would remain anonymous. Two students called back to give additional information; one student called back to find out the outcome of the review.

The six students who completed the Nursing Program and passed the Board exam are all employed in hospitals as R.N.’s. Of those who failed out, all are enrolled in El Camino or Cerritos Colleges or are taking additional courses and hoping to be admitted into those Nursing Programs.

Both passed and failed students agreed on the following points:

1. Lectures and labs need to be updated and coordinated with the NCLEX exam.
2. Clinical skills need to be first taught by the instructors, not lab techs.
3. Tests need to be updated and coordinated with the NCLEX exam; they need to reflect the lectures and need to be changed each session and kept secure to avoid cheating.
4. All hours of the clinical rotations need to be completed; classes cannot leave early.
5. Evaluations of students must be done objectively, showing no subjective favoritism.
6. Some strategies to encourage and help the students who are having problems need to be put into place before a student fails out of the program.
7. Tutoring and counseling are necessary as well as a more thorough orientation to the program.
8. There needs to be a student committee where students can speak up without fear and try to effect changes.
9. An atmosphere of respect for the student must to be established. “Teachers must care if students pass.”
Nursing Program Viability Review

Appendix G
Administrative Oral Questions

Questions to Administration

1. How would you characterize or describe or evaluate the Nursing Program in relation to the college as a whole?

2. What are the issues that most concern you about the Nursing Program and what are the most important improvements or changes that you think need to take place?

3. Why hasn't Administration taken a stronger stand against known problems in the past?

4. What has been done by Administration to address the budget deficit and the drop in NCLEX pass rates in the Nursing Department?

5. What do you feel that you have done to improve and strengthen the Nursing Program?

6. Would you ever consider dismantling the R.N. Nursing Program for budgetary and/or other reasons?

7. Other than Nursing, are there other individual programs (credit or non-credit) with outcomes not commensurate with the monetary investment?

8. When internal problems become common gossip, who is responsible to take the appropriate action to address the situation?

9. What is your perception of how the total college curriculum would be impacted by elimination (and/or reduction) of the total Nursing Program?

10. What follow-up actions have been taken regarding the grievance filed against one of the Nursing faculty? And what role does administration play in the student grievance process?

11. Is there any additional information you would like the committee to know?

12. What can you tell us about the Congressional Earmark Grant and the State Chancellor’s Grant for Nursing?

05.20.04
**Nursing Program Viability Review**

Appendix H

Budget Reallocation Summary and Narrative

*Nursing Viability Committee Budget Recommendations: 2004-2005; Summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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*Due to COLA adjustments and other variables, amounts are approximations.

Based on the 2003 - 2004 General Fund for Nursing, the college spent $1,310,238. In 2004-2005, the expected expenditure/cost for Nursing from the General Fund is $1,098,493. The difference is $211,745 in Program 100 savings compared to last year.

**Savings from current budget:**

**Up to** $173,950 Hrly

*Up to* $20,000 Hrly Benefits

*Up to* $29,000 2nd Clerical (now resigned)

*Up to* $222,950 Savings=Reduced charges to Prog. 100

**By redirecting legitimate costs without double-dipping or supplanting,** $304,353 will be the possible savings to Program 100 for 2004-2005.

- $222,950 **Possible** Savings=Reduced charges to Prog. 100
- $20,609 VTEA
- $41,153 Earmark
- $19,641 Chancellor's (Potential Program 100 Expense)
- $304,353 Total Possible Savings to Program 100

Note: See narrative regarding explanation of redirection of funds in compliance with SFP grants, goals and objectives.
**Narrative**

The Nursing Program Viability Review Committee (NPVRC) has developed a list of recommendations to help reconcile the Nursing Budget with respect to the college mission, in the context of achieving Nursing course objectives, and in pursuit of improved instructional program effectiveness and measurable student outcomes.

After careful deliberation, the NPVRC has achieved consensus that will yield "material savings" for 2004-2005 without decimating the academic and vocational integrity of the instructional program and its objectives. Thus, as a recommendation, this option requires that Nursing - Top Code 1203.00 do the following:

I. Program 100 - General Fund

(A) Reduce Hourly Faculty Budget up to $173,950
(B) Reduce the accompanying Employee Benefits for Hourly up to $20,000
   Scale course offerings (combine sections as appropriate) within the budget of Full-Time Faculty assignments.
(C) Redirect costs for visual aid materials, supplies, printing, maintenance equipment, maintenance for buildings and grounds, and equipment expense to VTEA, relieving Program 100-Nursing-1203 of $8,609
(D) Based on the fact that a second Clerical Support staff has since left/resigned from an assignment (above and beyond prior clerical support), the Committee recommends there be no replacement for budget line 2131. This saves Program 100 - Nursing 1203 approximately $29,000

**Total Savings to Program 100, up to $222,950**

II. Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (VATEA/VTEA)

(A) As VTEA allocations for 2004-2005 have not been finalized and the need for a solid academic support substructure is critical, by its very nature, to vocational Nursing, the Committee is firm in its recommendation that VTEA funds be allocated for Nursing-focused Tutoring in the amount of $12,000
   Redirected funds noted earlier for materials, printing, etc $8,609
   Total VTEA allocation to Nursing for 2004-2005 $20,609

III. Congressional Earmark Grant

Using the Congressional Earmark Grant, the Committee recommends:
(A) Reassign a regular Counseling Faculty (for a fraction of their assignment) to fulfill the grant duties of Nursing Counselor in the Non-Teaching grant capacity for one year. Nursing students have already been identified, based on the grant timelines and goals accomplished, a regular Counselor will work with the Nursing Chair, the Counseling Department, and a reassigned Nursing faculty member to conduct
NCLEX-RN Test Prep I, II, and III. No FTES earned or counted as double-dipping is disallowed. The personnel would be reassigned, as supplanting is disallowed. Further, utilizing the expertise of an under-loaded or reassigned full-time faculty member is ideal for a non-teaching assignment tailored to meet specific objectives of the grant.

Program 100 conserves………………………………………………..$ 14,000

(B) Since the Congressional Earmark Budget was reconstructed between May 14 and May 20, 2004, the Committee has modified the original budget line 1415 recommendation for Nursing 1203 as follows:

(1) Of the $22,400, use $7,200 to reassign under-loaded faculty to conduct NCLEX Workshops/Remediation to increase pass rates. This is a legitimate reassignment as no FTES will be collected or counted. The target cohorts have been identified…………………………………………….$ 7,200

(2) Purchase instructional materials………………………………...$ 6,398

(3) Develop and design marketing and imaging materials to promote the concept of an accelerated path for 18 LVN programs as feeders to the college Registered Nursing Program. …………………………………. $ 2,617

(4) Nursing specific Tutoring in the Learning Resources Center… $ 6,202

Because there is only one Clerical Support staff in Nursing, the Committee believes that the $3,048 will not be necessary for benefits of the Counselor or the under-loaded faculty reassigned to conduct NCLEX workshops/ATI/remediation. Those funds shall be used to cover over-time costs for the permanent Clerical staff working directly with the Counselor and NCLEX workshop/ATI/remediation personnel…………..…$ 3,248

Audio Visual Materials……………………………………………………...$ 1,488

Using the funds in this manner helps to increase savings to Program 100 and the College, while increasing program effectiveness and pass rates, which represent measurable student outcomes……………………………………………………...$ 41,153

**If the Earmark Grant is funded for $58,671, as in the past, the remaining $17,518 shall be used for on-going and consistent Tutoring for Nursing and across the Nursing prerequisite curricula. That would bring the Tutoring total to approximately $35,920 with no negative impact to Program 100, but focused on student outcomes and BRN success for the identified cohort, including the students who have failed the BRN twice. Each time a student fails, it is counted against the Nursing Program and the institution even though the student may have finished the program more than a year before. The program may have fewer enrollees than when that student matriculated, further causing a disproportionate negative reflection.

IV. State Chancellor's Grant – Accelerated Nursing Career Path Project

It is expected that the funding for 2004-2005 will be $59,701.

(A) Since Nursing Library Media Materials have been updated by nearly $18,000 in the last two years (from this grant); and the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee has allocated approximately $28,000 (Block Grant) for Nursing hardware and
software; and approximately $3,000 for the same from Program 100, and $5,000 for Books from VTEA, these particular grant objectives for the State Chancellor’s Accelerated Nursing Career Path Grant have, in effect, been met.

(B) Further, NCLEX review/ATI/remediation will continue to be fiscally and functionally addressed by the Congressional Earmark and State Chancellor’s Grants.

(C) The marketing objective will be accomplished in the Earmark by the presentation of “future ideas for the Nursing Department” (which may also, in the long or short term, include the reinstatement of the Twilight Program) to strengthen the program and help meet the Labor Market Demand simultaneously. Contracts for personal services funds have already been assigned to meet this objective. Thus, the Committee is firm in its recommendation that the Instructor Non-Teaching Hourly and Instructor Non-Teaching Extra Assignment from the Chancellor’s Grant be retained up to $35,000 for English and Math specialists. As the specialists’ funding for math and English requires approximately $35,000 of the $59,701 for the academic year, the Committee agrees that Nursing shall use $19,641 to purchase either a manikin or a bed for the classroom/lab as both are important pieces of equipment in the learning experience for Nursing students. The Nursing Department is to submit a request for the second manikin or bed in the Unit Plan that was due May 25, 2004 with the intent of funding it in 2005. This means that the Committee expects it to be funded from Block Grants in the next funding cycle of the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee.

The State Chancellor's Grant is essentially and primarily to be used for:

- English and math specialists in the amount of $35,000
- Manikin/hospital bed $19,641

(D) Membership as required $1,075
(E) Maintain benefits for math and Reading/English specialists $3,985

Total for Chancellor’s Accelerated Nursing Career Path $59,701

- The Committee recommends that the Nursing Department Chair/Director and the Nursing faculty manage current grants and future grants for Nursing. All personnel working under the grants need to be hired by the Nursing Department Chair and Nursing faculty under the administrative supervision of the Dean over Nursing.
- For any overload assignments, the Committee recommends that consideration be given to load-banking.
- The Committee recommends, per Ed. Code, a Nursing Biennial Vocational Education Review be done. It is the responsibility of the Dean to initiate it.
- It is imperative that college Program Review is administered for Nursing as with all instructional programs. No Program Reviews were prepared for Nursing during the last cycle of 1999-2000.
- The Committee recommends that the Vice President of Administrative Services budget the full cost for the Nursing Full-Time faculty in the Operational Plan. Budget the full $863,262 instead of $650,000. This avoids giving the appearance that the College is funding Nursing at the same level as it was funded in 1993 and basing funding on what is now an eleven-year old Educational Master Plan.
According to the 2003-2004 General Fund for the Nursing Program, the College spent $1,310,238. In 2004-2005, the expected expenditure/cost for Nursing from the General Fund is $1,098,493. **The possible difference is $211,745 in Program 100 savings when compared to last year.**

By redirecting legitimate costs without double-dipping or supplanting, up to $304,353 will be the savings to Program 100 for 2004-2005. (See Budget on page 2 of Appendix H.)

The budget recommendations herewith submitted by the Nursing Program Viability Review Committee are in line with the mission of the college, the emerging Educational Master Plan, the Nursing course rubric, the BRN emphasis on tutoring, ATI and NCLEX preparation, instructional program effectiveness, student learning outcomes that prepare students for the Board Exam, labor market demand, and the goal of the Employment Development Department to respond to the need for 620,000 nurses through 2012.

It must be noted that the Program earned (at minimum) $770,000 in 2002-2003. Figures for 2003-2004 are not available as yet. As soon as they are, minimum earnings for that period will be reported.
Appendix I

Community Forum

Summary/Overview of Responses and Statements

On Thursday, May 13, 2004, a forum was held on campus to address the concerns of the community. This event was well attended; more than 125 came. Many of those represented were students. The format for this event included a brief overview of the viability process, an introduction of Committee Members and Guests, and brief discussions of the faculty interviews and student focus groups. Information on Board exam scores was also shared. A rather significant amount of time was then allotted for questions and statements from the audience. The Nursing Program Viability Review Committee, representatives from the Administration, and faculty from the Nursing Department provided the responses.

Those in attendance were quite vocal about maintaining the RN Nursing Program on campus. Several LASC Nursing graduates attended and spoke highly of the program. Some current Nursing students provided suggestions to improve the program. Students in attendance stated that the issue of cheating appeared to be prevalent in many classes and want this problem addressed by faculty. Some community activists stressed the importance of maintaining this program within the community because LASC must continue to be responsible for graduating a higher percentage of African-American students as compared to other Nursing Programs.

Those requesting additional information left their contact information. A database will be developed and written follow-up will be sent.

Overall, the community forum was a very successful event. It provided the Nursing Viability Review Committee with additional information. More importantly, while some of the Nursing Program’s shortcomings were acknowledged, the Committee could sense just how vitally important this program is to the community at large.

History:
Nursing Program Viability Review, Preliminary Recommendation; posted as Noticed Motion to Academic Senate, 3/30/04
Preliminary Recommendation approved, Academic Senate Meeting, 4/13/04
Minutes of 4/13/04 Senate Meeting approved, Academic Senate Meeting, 5/11/04
Draft, Final Recommendations; posted as Noticed Motion to the Academic Senate, 5/24/04
Accompanying documentation posted to Academic Senate, 5/26/04
Amended Recommendations, posted to Academic Senate, 5/26/04
Draft Document and Amended Recommendations unanimously approved with suggested modifications to be added, Academic Senate Meeting, 5/27/04
Draft, Minutes of 5/27/04 Senate Meeting, posted to Academic Senate, 6/3/04, at the request of the President
Final Report posted and hand-delivered to the President, 06/07/04