Cañada College

**NEW FACULTY POSITION PROPOSAL**

*Click in the shaded fields and start typing your response.*

**DISCIPLINE: BIOLOGY**

**A. How does the proposed position align with specific objectives within the college's strategic plans and initiatives? http://www.canadacollege.edu/plans/index.php**

The Biological & Health Sciences program is proposing hiring a new fulltime biology faculty member who can focus on non-majors/GE courses and can augment existing fulltimers in teaching allied health subdisciplines (a.k.a. "pre-nursing courses" such as nutrition, anatomy, physiology, and/or microbiology).

Creating pathways that attract students to our college, more fully engage them in their studies and increase their completion rates is a goal that braids objectives within our Student Engagement Plan (Focussed - Every student who enrolls to pursue a certificate, degree, or who plans to transfer will work with college personnel to create a Student Success Pathway – A Roadmap to Completion.), Sustainability Plan (4.1.2 - Utilize different pathways to integrate sustainability in the curriculum.), and Educational Master Plan (2.4 - Improve entry by identifying clear student pathways for basic skills, career/technical, general transfer, specific majors, and courses/programs.) The GE Thematic Pathways project is one strategy for achieving this goal. The first themes to be offered in this project are sustainability and social justice. We have proposed offering our 100-level BIOL and HSCI courses with these themes integrated throughout the curriculum. Courses offered in this manner are specifically linked to individual instructors who have the relevant interest and expertise in the thematic area. In the fall 2009 through spring 2010 semesters we successfully offered a sustainbility-infused BIOL 100 course as a proof-of-concept. However since the instructor's primary teaching responsibilities lie in allied health courses, we have been unable to offer this customized course again. If this new faculty proposal is approved, we will have the faculty who can invest in the necessary curricular customization and consistently offer these courses.

The Honors Transfer Program is another strategy for providing students with a pathway to transfer. The HTP Advisory Committee has been encouraging the Science Division to offer more opportunities for non-science majors to take honors-level GE science courses. Given the additional work that honors level courses (contracts and dual-CRN courses) require of instructors, a new full-time faculty who focuses on non-majors would provide the human capital needed to provide this opportunity.

**B. How does the proposed position address the program's strategic action plans and long-term goals? Please refer to specific elements of the most recent program review.**

In our 2014-15 program review, we identified several long-term goals and action plans. Relevant to this proposal are the following: (a) to renovate our non-majors GE courses to attract and benefit more non-majors, (b) to develop honors addenda for non-majors GE courses, and (c) to address the inconsistent SLO analysis in courses that lack a dedicated fulltime faculty. We have already explained in part A of this proposal how a fulltime biology faculty would enable us to achieve goals (a) and (b). Goal (c) articulates the need for deeper and more consistent assessment of the teaching and learning that occurs in our non-majors courses. Such analyses permit for reflection and long-term planning, and often inspire faculty to experiment with new teaching methodologies. A full-time faculty member dedicated to non-majors/GE courses can experiment with curricular changes and/or alternative pedagogies that require longitudinal data to determine the optimal approaches to improving retention and success.

The vast majority of sections offered by the Biology department (24 of 26) are classified by grant-funding agencies as non-STEM courses; these are our non-majors/GE and allied health curricula. That means most of our courses receive only limited benefits from the many grant-funded activities of the STEM center. Instead

we must rely upon direct support of the department's full-time faculty to provide the mentoring, tutoring, and interventions that have proven so successful by our STEM counterparts. A new full-time faculty will provide additional support for these efforts as we model our academic support after the STEM program's success.

As of the 2015-2016 academic year, our department has 2 new approved Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs) - the A.S.-T in Biology and the A.S.-T in Nutrition & Dietetics - and we supply the majority of the core coursework for the existing A.A.-T in Kinesiology. Given the ongoing popularity of the A.A.-T in Kinesiology and our new ADTs we anticipate increased student interest in our courses, and a resulting increase in our enrollments. A new full-time faculty member would help support this increased work load.

**C. How does the proposed position support program vitality and viability?**

1. How far is the program from achieving the legislative goal of having 75% of instructional hours taught by full-time faculty?
    a. %CRNs that are taught by FT faculty: 40% previous semester 33% current semester ☐ not applicable

2. If this proposal is not funded, will there remain a minimum of one existing full-time faculty in the discipline? ☒ Yes ☐ No

**D. What is the evidence of student demand to justify the proposed position?**

1. Number (headcount) of full-time faculty in the discipline: 4 current semester

2. Total FTE of course offerings: 8.31 previous semester 8.48 current semester ☐ not applicable

3. Percent of "Total FTE of course offerings" comprised by FT faculty: 3.35 previous semester 3.26 current semester ☐ not applicable

4. Average departmental Fill Rate: 88% previous semester 86% current semester ☐ not applicable

5. Enrollment history – qualitatively and quantitatively describe student demand/course enrollments within this discipline, especially for those courses that will be assigned to the proposed faculty member.

    Note: The Biological & Health Sciences program offers courses in two disciplines: BIOL and HSCI. Since faculty with a master's degree in biology also meet the minimum qualifications for Health, the analysis and statistics provided here are a combination of both disciplines.

    In spring 2015 we experienced our lowest enrollment level in the past five years. We offered 20% fewer sections than our 5-year average. This fall semester, our FTEF is slightly higher (8.48 compared to 8.31 in spring). This is more than double the amount of course offerings needed to fully support our existing 4 fulltimers. These statistics suggest that, if we are near the low point of our current enrollment cycle, we still have ample FTEF to support additional investment in biology program faculty.

    Although total enrollments have declined, from a productivity and cost-effectiveness perspective, our fill rate, enrollments per section and load are comparable to or better than our 5-year average. In fact, our LOAD this semester is 545 in BIOL. These statistics show that investment in the biology program is cost-effective for the college.