



Annual Program Review 2011-2012 ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAMS

BAJA FIELD STUDIES

Authorization

Author/Manager: Maria Kretzmann and Javier Gago

Dean: Ron Harlan

Date Received by Program Review: November 1, 2011

Overview of the Program

Statement of Purpose – briefly describe in 1-3 sentences.

The Program aims to expose students to a valuable academic experience in a pristine and complex natural environment coupled with a unique experience in Mexican culture. An interdisciplinary program emphasizing field observations creates a community of learners in which the beauty and complexity of the human and natural worlds can be observed, studied and enjoyed.

Please list the **most significant achievement** accomplished since your last program review.

Completion of new field station 1.5 miles north of Bahia de los Angeles, located on the rocky intertidal shore of the Sea of Cortes. Facilities include a staff house, living and kitchen space, dormitory space, laboratory and classroom buildings, bathrooms/showers, and garage for boats and vehicles.

List the current major strengths of your program

1. Beautiful new facility for improved living and learning
2. Continuing student satisfaction and academic success
3. Successful fundraising effort in the last 2 years (approximately \$170,000)

List the current weaknesses of your program

1. Need to establish additional GCC course offerings to serve more students
2. Need to recruit additional users from other US institutions
3. Need to open field station to Mexican researchers

1.0. Trend Analysis

Use your data to indicate trends (e.g., steady, increasing, decreasing, etc.) for each of the following measures.

Service Area/Function	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Trends
Total # Students	57	98	83	129		Increasing numbers of students served
Bahia de los Angeles facility	rental	New station opening	New station completion	New station improved		Significant improvement in facilities
Course Offerings	Biol 146, 125/6, 131	Biol 146, 125/6, 131	Biol 125/6, 131	Biol 146, 125/6, 131	Ocean 115/6, Biol 125/6, 131	New course added from different discipline
Rental of Facilities	n/a	n/a	Waldorf	Waldorf Pierce	Waldorf, Pierce, UNBC	Additional users recruited
Student satisfaction	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high		Consistently very highly rated experience

STAFFING	Staff	RT Faculty Coordinators	Hourly employees	Other	
2008	Director, cook	n/a	15-20 hrs office student workers	1-2 TAs/course	
2009	Director, cook	30% total (2 co-directors)	15-20 hrs office student workers	1-2 TAs/course	
2010	Director, cook, manager/security	30% total (2 co-directors)	15-20 hrs office student workers	1-2 TAs/course	Addition of station manager/security
2011	Director, cook, manager/security	30% total (2 co-directors)	15-20 hrs office student workers	1-2 TAs/course	

1.1. Describe any trends and how this affects students/service recipients, the program, facility, or the district.

Significant improvements in facilities and a doubling in numbers of students served. Modest improvements in recruiting additional GCC course offerings and additional institutional users.

1.2. Is there other relevant quantitative/qualitative information that affects the evaluation of your service area?

Budget constraints have compelled the Baja program to become nearly 100% financially self-sufficient, but the new requirement to enroll a minimum of 24 students challenges our ability to safely supervise all students during field activities in marine and desert environments. Additional staffing and/or lower minimum class sizes may be required to meet this challenge. Several returning students have already indicated that the program has suffered from the increased minimum number of students. Other institutions teaching field programs in the natural sciences have set their minimum numbers at fewer than 20 (e.g., 15 for Pierce College). Due to increasing costs of transportation in particular, and the purchase of additional travel insurance for each student, our costs have increased, which means that additional scholarship support will be required to maximize student participation

2.0. Outcomes

Please provide the following information for each service function in this area.

Program Service/Function	Outcome Developed	Have outcomes been assessed? Yes or No	Has the assessment data been analyzed? Yes or No	Has the data been used for program improvement?
Enhanced academic experience	Students perform better in field based courses compared to the same course on GCC campus	no	no	
Student satisfaction	Students will report high levels of satisfaction with the Baja Program, both the on-campus and field components	no	no	

2.1. Please comment on your answers above. Include whether evidence from assessments shows that the program is improving and/or achieving desired outcomes.

Both outcomes will be assessed the during winter and summer 2012 sessions. Outcome #1 will be assessed in courses that are offered by the same instructor on campus and at the field station (in order to offer a valid comparison for student performance). We have recently redesigned a student questionnaire to address outcome #2 (see attached).

2.2 Briefly summarize any elements of your program/services that have been changed or will be changed as a result of assessments.

To be addressed after winter and summer 2012 assessments.

2.3 Based on the program assessment evidence you have gathered, please comment briefly on how far along your department/program is in the assessment process and your plans to continue progress.

Both outcomes are straightforward to assess and should result in support for particular resource requests that can be used to improve the program in the future.

3.0. Reflection and Action Plans

3.1 What recent activities, dialogues, discussions, etc. have occurred to improve program outcomes or processes?

Continued fundraising efforts are required to meet the increasing costs associated with our program. We are working on recruiting additional users for the station by frequent presentations to the campus community and program brochure mailings to educational institutions in the western US. We are also preparing a proposal to the primary Mexican research institution (CICESE) for use of our facilities during the months when GCC courses are not offered.

3.2 Using the weaknesses, trends and assessment outcomes listed on the previous pages as a basis for your comments, please briefly describe your plans and/or modifications for program improvements.

Plans or Modifications	Anticipated Improvements
Continuing fundraising efforts	Help to support student scholarships, additional staffing to ensure safety, improvements to existing facilities
Presentations to the campus community	Additional GCC course offerings proposed by GCC instructors in recent years include: Oceanography, Astronomy, Anthropology, English, Math, Spanish, Photography and Physical Education.
Brochure mailings and outreach activities	Recruit additional users of the station by other US institutions. We have recently added Pierce College and University of Northern British Columbia, and are in conversations with several other institutions.
Proposal to CICESE	Rental of the station to Mexican researchers would generate income during the months of the year when GCC courses are not using the station, and create an important international partnership.

Format Rev. 10.07.11

Note: No Resource Requests were submitted with this report