SUMMARY OF FIRST ANNUAL SLO AND ASSESSMENT SUMMIT
OCTOBER 11, 2013

To promote dialogue and to further assess how courses, programs, degrees, and certificates have led to improved student learning and the achievement of the College mission, LAMC held its first Annual Student Learning Outcome Summit on Friday, October 11, 2013. The purposes of the Summit were to improve pedagogy, curriculum, and approaches to teaching and learning; to improve the institution’s overall effectiveness; to set the foundation for the additional “Deep Dialogue Discussions” about assessment that would follow. The expected outcomes for the SLO Summit (Ref: SLO Summit Information Packet) were to

- Facilitate faculty and student dialogue about learning outcomes
- Share with other faculty and staff authentic assessments, what has been learned from them, and how the results have been used to improve student learning.
- Analyze course assessment results and assess at least one Program Learning Outcome (PLO).

The LAMC SLO Summit was an outgrowth of the District Academic Summit held two weeks before on September 20, 2013 (Ref: DAS Summit Agenda). The focus of the DAS Summit was on accreditation and student learning outcomes. Eighty-eight faculty, administrators, Student Services and Administrative Services staff attended LAMC’s SLO Summit. All participants were requested to bring a copy of an assessment they had done to share and discuss with others during the breakout roundtable discussion sessions. This Summit provided an venue for all constituent groups to engage in self-reflective dialog about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes.

After the outcomes for the day were introduced, presentations were given about SLO development and assessment best practices (Ref: SLO Summit PowerPoint), promoting SLO and assessment faculty dialogue, SLO awareness in the classroom, best practices for encouraging student and faculty dialogue about SLOs and assessment (Ref: SLO Summit Agenda and PowerPoint). Information was presented about what authentic assessment is, examples of LAMC authentic assessments, and the process for evaluating the results (Ref: SLO Summit Information Packet). These presentations were followed by interdisciplinary assessment discussion breakouts in which administrators, faculty, and staff from Student Services and Administrative Services areas shared authentic assessments they had done in their areas. Based on the post-summit evaluation (Re: Evaluation of SLO Summit) participants found this latter part of the Summit to be the most valuable. As one department chair stated in an e-mail to her faculty: “The best part of the day was the discussion we had within our English group. We were able to

- Examine and refine our Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (See attached SLO/PLO map).
- Match our PLOs with our course SLOs and map those matches on our PLO program matrix (See attached SLO Map)
• Check our rubrics for each SLO to make sure that there is also assessment of the corresponding PLOs
• Discuss our SLO assessment calendar.
• Decide where to go from here” (Ref: English Department Outcomes Assessment Summary – e-mail from Louise Barbato, October 14, 2013).

The afternoon session of the SLO Summit consisted of a Program Learning Outcomes Assessment activity in which disciplines and departments worked on reviewing previous assessments that aligned with their PLOs, discussing what had been learned from the assessments, and developing plans of action for improvement based on the assessment results. In addition, plans were made for completing assessment of any other PLOs that had not yet been assessed.

At the end of the Summit, participants were requested to complete an evaluation of the day. Sixty-eight participants completed the evaluation (Ref: SLO Summit Evaluation). The majority of the faculty and staff responded favorably to the Fall SLO Summit Survey Questions with Excellent to Poor, and Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree ratings. The most positive feedback on the questions was on the Interdisciplinary Breakout Session with 90 percent giving the rating of either excellent or very good with “excellent” being checked twice as often as “very good.” The lowest level of feedback was in response to Question #1 “Best Practices for Encouraging Student and Faculty Dialogue about SLOs and Assessment”; 75 percent of the respondents rated this presentation as either excellent or very good. The Program Learning Outcomes Assessment activity was rated as 88 percent either excellent or very good, and the Authentic Assessment presentation was rated as 85 percent either excellent or very good. Response to the Summit overall was very positive with 45.9% rating it as Excellent and 41% as Very Good (total 87%).

In the second group of questions regarding the Summit, question #6 regarding “facilitating dialogue about learning outcomes and gauging the effectiveness of the discussion” was the most positive with 94 percent either strongly agreeing or agreeing. Question #8 regarding “conducting a program outcome assessment” received the lowest ratings with a total of 80 percent either Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing.

The last questions on the evaluation form asked for participants to respond to several open-ended questions. Of most interest were the responses to the following question: “What aspects of the Summit did you find most interesting, valuable, and/or useful?” Fifty-eight people responded and, except for one individual, all comments were favorable. Some of the most frequently occurring comments emphasized the value of sharing ideas with others both within disciplines and interdisciplinary groups; the value of dialogue with peers was stressed numerous times. Respondents also found the information about authentic assessments and the presentation on how to incorporate ethics and critical thinking in a general education course particularly valuable, as well as the opportunity to work together as a department on program assessments.

In response to the question asking “What other activities would you suggest be included in future SLO Summits?” the following comment summarized well the general tenor of the comments: "More opportunities like this to discuss student learning, engagement and to share what we are all doing in support of student learning outcomes."
The last question asked, "How else could this Summit be improved in the future?"
Responses to this question varied widely. The most common response was that the faculty would prefer the Summit to be a half day rather than a full day; however, one individual wrote “One of the most effective and productive days I have had on this campus to date.”