

Bachelor of Science in Information Systems (BSIS) Program Review: Executive Summary 2023

Process

The Bachelor of Science in Information Systems program began at LAPU in 2017. The 2023 program review coincides with the beginning of the program's teach-out process. Courses will continue to be offered through 2026-2027; therefore, revisions and updates will be done on an as needed basis. The program review will help to identify improvements necessary to assure the mastery of program learning outcomes (PLOs) among the existing students.

The program review began in May 2023 with an initial committee comprising four adjunct faculty members, the Assistant Dean, and a representative from the Digital Learning Solutions team. As the project neared completion in Spring 2024, participation of adjunct faculty reduced by half. There was one external reviewer who provided a comprehensive and helpful perspective to the committee. The self-study report was finished in April 2024.

Summary

Program Quality

Students

The BSIS student demographics differ from the LAPU general population. The BSIS students are younger and predominantly male (73%). Instructor observations of students suggest the younger students have poor critical thinking and writing skills.

Strengths

The BSIS student makeup differs from the LAPU general population, and it shifts some of the university's data.

Areas for Improvement

Critical thinking skills and writing skills are areas in need of improvement.

Curriculum and Learning Environment

The BSIS program is consistent with the university mission and purpose in that it provides a Christ-centered education, and this focus creates a sense of hope in the future for its students.

The LAPU BSIS program is among only a few Christ-centered Information Systems programs offered. The information systems degree at each of these other institutions appears to be more focused on specific skill sets depending on the path and concentration. For example, students may experience program courses that offer a more in-depth and specialized study of topics rather than the broad and more general exposure students receive at LAPU. The benefit to the LAPU program is for students who enter the program possessing deeper technical skills and knowledge, but require a degree to have an opportunity to advance their career.

Overall, the BSIS curriculum aligns well with the WSCUC core competencies and General Education outcomes with two exceptions. The LAPU GE Outcomes—*Interpret human behavior in a manner that recognizes the influence of diverse worldviews and experiences on societal or interpersonal relationships* and *Demonstrate ability and commitment to work collaboratively across and within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim for the common good*—do not align with any of the BSIS PLOs. The program does not appear to have an emphasis on community and relationships. This area of lack may be attributed to the technical nature of the coursework.

Twelve of the eighteen core courses have been developed or revised in the past five years. Given the program's teach-out status, revisions have been designed to offer high impact with low effort to implement and communicate the change.

Strengths

The BSIS program provides a generalist degree for working professionals in need of a formal degree for career advancement.

Areas for Improvement

The BSIS program curriculum does not promote community and relationship building, but this may be attributed to the nature of the coursework.

Student Learning and Success

The most recent program learning outcome assessment had poor success rates. PLO 2 (Develop professional competencies in information systems, including an understanding of the various components of the field) had a success rate of 50% (4/8 passed) and PLO 6 (Demonstrate effective oral communication skills) had a success rate of 63% (5/8 passed). Suggested changes are related to the assignment instructions and fit with the PLO; therefore, they are likely to improve during the next round of assessment with the implemented modifications. Overall, BSIS students have a pass rate that is comparable to the general LAPU community, but the completion rate is lower than the university.

Strengths

Neither the instructors nor the PLO assessment results identified student learning strengths.

Areas for Improvement

The wording and assignments for PLO mastery assignments need to be adjusted to better align with the PLOs. The completion rate is low.

Faculty

Beginning in Fall 2017, 12 instructors have taught BSIS courses. Of these 12 individuals, 2 (17%) were female and 10 (83%) were male, 2 (17%) identified as Black or African American and 10 (83%) identified as White, and 4 (33%) had a terminal degree. Most recently, one of the female instructors taught 39% of the credits offered in the academic year. The program has not been large enough to justify a full-time faculty member.

Academic backgrounds in information systems, IT management, and business create a well-rounded faculty group. Additionally, the faculty members have professional experiences as project managers, chief information officers, and communications officers in civilian and military settings; these experiences, combined with numerous years of teaching college-level courses contribute to their ability to share valuable expertise with LAPU BSIS students.

Strengths

The BSIS faculty have diverse academic backgrounds and professional experiences.

Areas for Improvement

The program has not been large enough to justify a full-time faculty member.

Program Viability and Sustainability

The program's demand was not assessed because it is in the teach-out process.

Allocation of Resources

There are sufficient instructors and support staff for the BSIS students and program. The success coaches are working with the remaining students to create a path to graduation.

Strengths

There are sufficient instructors and support staff for the BSIS students and program.

Areas for Improvement

There are no evident areas for improvement.

Recommendations, Future Goals, and Implementation Schedule

Extensive feedback was provided by the external reviewer; however, expending effort on several of the recommendations is unjustified because of the program's teach-out status.

Recommendations

Courses will continue to be offered as needed through academic year 2026-27 to provide sufficient time for students to complete their degree requirements. Courses will continue to be refreshed as needed.

Future Goals

Future goals were not addressed because of the program's teach-out status.

Implementation Schedule (Recommendations and Planned Implementation Dates)

Not applicable

Conclusion/Final Comments

In summary, the BSIS program at Los Angeles Pacific University has several strengths but also areas that require attention for improvement, particularly in the alignment of course assignments and PLOs. Given that the program is sunsetting, the focus will likely be on ensuring that current and returning students can complete their degrees with the highest quality of education possible.