

BAL Program Review 2019



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Introduction/Context

The Bachelor of Arts in Leadership (BAL) program was launched in Fall 1, 2013. It is one of several bachelor's programs at Los Angeles Pacific University (LAPU) aimed at equipping students with business and leadership skills. Although students in the program are free to choose any concentration that LAPU offers, most BAL students choose the Organizational Sustainability concentration, followed by Organizational Dynamics.

BAL program statement from the *LAPU Undergraduate Catalog 2018-2019*:

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Leadership (BAL) program builds upon core management knowledge and seeks to synthesize leadership practice with organizational science theory, melding “best practices” with sound contemporary research. The curriculum challenges adult students to analyze organizational leadership paradigms, and evaluate historical and current models and theories of leadership while working to develop a personal leadership approach for use in their careers and organizations. The underlying assumption of the program rests on the premise that leadership is never static, but must be transformative, innovative, and dynamic. Leadership is evolutionary and revolutionary, bringing change to organizations. The leadership program provides leaders with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to advance their careers and bring innovative change to their industry and organizations.

The BAL program prepares students for service in a wide variety of public-and private-sector organizations to include mid-level management, governmental organizations, international institutions, ministry organizations, churches or firms seeking strong leadership skills and competencies. Students complete the leadership major to gain promotions, change careers, or prepare for master's-level studies. Graduates may also begin new ventures, operate small companies, develop new products, or become consultants.

Program Learning Outcomes

PLO 1: Demonstrate the ability to integrate biblical concepts and principles within the field and practice of leadership.

PLO 2: Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate leadership concepts through oral and written methods.

PLO 3: Identify and evaluate personal and organizational ethics and compare to a biblical worldview.

PLO 4: Apply quantitative methods, innovative technology and diverse information in developing strategic plans.

PLO 5: Identify and implement culturally diverse leadership strategies within a global context.

PLO 6: Critique the success of leadership initiatives within an organization and apply leadership theory and principles in developing a process of continuous improvement.

Program Quality

Students

The Bachelor in Leadership (BAL) program launched in Fall 2013, but in five full academic years only 117 students had enrolled. This contrasts to 398 students in the BA in Management (BAM) program during the same period and 892 enrollments in the BSOL during a four-year period (Fall 2014 through Summer 2018). The most likely reason for the low enrollment in this program was the introduction of the BS in Organizational Leadership (BSOL) program in Fall 2014, a program inherited from Azusa Pacific University (APU) through a merger between Azusa Pacific Online University (home of the BAL) and the Center for Adult and Professional Studies (CAPS) at APU, which had been the home of the BSOL program. The BSOL was a much larger program and, given its transfer-friendly structure, has remained a very popular program at Azusa Pacific University, University College / LAPU.

The BAL student body has demographics similar to other adult degree completion programs at LAPU. Students have an average age of 40, with a gender distribution of female 72% and male 28%. The program has a diverse population with the largest group being Hispanic. The primary ethnicity demographics include: Hispanic 34%, White 30%, Black 16% and Asian 6%. The program graduated only 21 students since inception through Summer 2018 with an average time to graduate of 3.2 years. An additional 15 students registered in the BAL completed another bachelor's degree program at LAPU, including 6 BSOL and 5 BAAS graduates. This means that 36 of the students registered in the BAL graduated with a bachelor's degree (31%), 20 were still enrolled in 2018 (17%), and 61 had discontinued their enrollment (52%).

Curriculum

Given the small and declining number of enrolled students in the BAL, the program has not participated in annual program learning outcome assessments. The sample sizes were deemed too small to make such analyses worthwhile. Course results for BAL students over the past several years were similar to the results for non-BAL students registered in the same courses, even though non-BAL students tended to be younger and had a higher percentage of male students. There are few courses that are exclusive to the BAL program (i.e., not required for another major or concentration): BUS 250 Business Communications, LEAD 300 Leadership Communication, LEAD 350 International Management, and LEAD 370 Cross-Cultural Communication. In calendar year 2018 these courses accounted for a total of 26 BAL enrollments and 18 enrollments from students taking them as electives. As indicated by the course titles, three of the four concern communications, suggesting an inordinate emphasis on this topic in the curriculum.

As noted above, the BSOL program has been a much more popular program since it was introduced at UC/LAPU in Fall 2014. The curricula of the BSOL and BAL programs both include emphases in communication, leadership theory, ethics, managing people, and organizational change. The BSOL program has an advantage of having fewer program requirements and more room for electives, which post-traditional students often find very attractive.

Viability

In light of the low enrollments and the high level of curricular overlap between the BAL and the much more popular BSOL program, LAPU academic administrators have determined that program demand for

the BAL is insufficient to consider it a viable and sustainable program. In October 2018 the Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee approved a proposal to sunset the BAL program (see [CAPC Meeting Minutes 2018-10-23](#)). In February 2019 a meeting was arranged by the Academic Dean and Assistant Dean responsible for the BAL to inform students in the program of a teach-out plan that will go into effect Fall 1 2019 (see [BAL Student Meeting](#)). Students were advised to reach out to their success coaches for academic advising and to ensure they completed any outstanding course requirements during the 2019-20 academic year. Most of the students still enrolled in the BAL program have junior or senior status. Those with less than junior status will be encouraged to register for the BSOL or one of the other LAPU bachelor's degrees.