

**Administrative Response to Discipline Review
Adult Basic Education (ABE/GED)
Prepared by Craig Kolins
On behalf of your Deans of Instruction
25 September 2010**

The Adult Basic Education (ABE/GED) Discipline Review was presented in the Spring of 2010. We thank you for your efforts to create, maintain, improve, and expand the high quality Adult Basic Skills program across the district. Those efforts serve the community well and we thank you for your continued efforts to make this program one about which the college in general and you in particular can take great pride.

This Administrative Response will address: A) items of note B) work still to be completed, and C) administrative response to the ABE/GED SAC's recommendations.

Items of Note

- Strong harmony between PCC's Core Outcomes and the ABE/GED SAC course content and objectives.
- Your presentation was outstanding; we learned a lot from the audience participation survey you used and appreciated the diverse perspectives students shared during the presentation.
- Desire to improve student success to students at all levels and willingness to research why some student levels do better than others.
- Wrap-around student support services for students, including Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills (OPABS) Transition to Education and Work Initiative, Bridge to Healthcare and Manufacturing with PCC's Career Pathways Programs and ongoing collaboration with PCC's Youth Empowered to Succeed (YES!) program.
- Development of a process to review and revise CCOGs for Fundamentals of Reading, Writing and Math courses in collaboration with the Developmental Education, ESOL, Math and Writing SACs.
- Involvement of some ABE/GED faculty members in internationalization efforts.

Work Still To Be Completed

An explanation of how assessment of outcomes leads to student success and program changes still needs to be provided. We found this only partially addressed in your program review. SACs have been asked to consider how the outcomes of assessments have led to course and program changes. We want to see documentation of learning assessment driven changes in your curriculum. In your program review, you did an excellent job outlining the reasons for developing the Fundamentals of Reading, Writing and Math classes in collaboration with the Developmental Education SAC.

Discipline review is an important vehicle for providing these kinds of evidence to external stakeholders, such as the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). In its April 2010 Interim Accreditation Report, NWCCU noted that PCC must document “progress in demonstrating, through regular and systematic assessment, that students who complete their programs have achieved the intended learning outcomes of degrees and certificates. Further, the college must begin to demonstrate, in a regular and systematic fashion, how the assessment of student learning leads to the improvement of teaching and learning.”

As stated above, the ABE/GED SAC has developed new courses in Fundamentals of Reading, Writing and Math. Have these new courses, and all the other ABE/GED courses, the SAC offers been successful in helping students bridge skills gaps between ABE/GED courses and DE reading and writing courses, Math 20 and Writing 115? Finally, how have assessments of student learning informed your process to continuously improve these courses? We expect that continued conversations with the ABE/GED and the DE, Math and Writing SACs about how to better prepare students in preceding courses—will help you describe how the assessment of student outcomes will allow you to continuously improve student learning.

We are confident that the ABE/GED SAC does, in fact, approach its discipline with this spirit of continuous improvement. Your discipline review refers to discussions and reflection among faculty, including thoughts on activities to undertake in the future. This kind of discussion is integral to continued improvement of your course offerings. It is vital that we document and provide evidence of how assessment and related improvement occurs within all ABE/GED courses.

The DOIs would appreciate receiving a written update from the ABE/GED SAC during the 10-11 academic year, no later than the end of Winter term in regards to this matter.

Administrative Response to the SAC’s Recommendations

Although you did not inquire about Non-Credit student ID cards in your recommendations, I had communicated this summer on August 17th with your campus ABE/GED Division Deans about where PCC is with this process. ABE/GED students do not need a PCC ID to access the GED Tri-Met Passes or ride the PCC Shuttle Bus.

All Non-Credit students at PCC will NOT get Student ID cards for the Fall.

- A group of non-credit stakeholders met at the end of Spring Term including representatives from ABE/GED, Bookstore, Bursar’s Office, Community Education, CLIMB Center for Advancement, Enrollment Services, ESOL, Library, PCC Prep and Transportation Services.
- With all stakeholders gathered together, it was determined that a fee would have to be charged to ALL non-credit students, not just those who want a student ID card, just as fee is charged to all PCC credit students. **A Non-Credit Student College Services Fee**, which would need to be approved by the PCC Board of Directors. There is likely that the Fee it would not be set at the same level as the College Services fee that is assessed to PCC Credit students, because some of

the services credit students pay for do not apply to non-credit students, e.g., technology fees, transcripts, etc.

- The amount of the Non-Credit College Services Fee has not been determined. At the Spring meeting, we did not achieve consensus that all PCC Non-Credit students want or need a Non-Credit ID card, especially if a fee assessed for all Non-Credit Students.
- As a result, a proposed fee will be brought back to the Non-Credit Stakeholder group Fall term. If the stakeholders recommend that a Non-Credit Fee should be charged to all non-credit students, a recommendation from the Non-Credit Stakeholder group will be brought to Cabinet.

Identify the areas in need of improvement and recommendations:

a. Close the gap between full and part-time faculty from our current 14.5% to the college average of 37%.

Response: Additional ABE/GED instructor positions will be considered along with other requests for full-time instructors as we prepare the next biennial budget. Make sure to make recommendations to your respective campus division dean.

b. Increase ABE General Fund: ABE general fund covers 80% of costs; 20% covered by YES! and Title II grants. These funding sources are unstable and change from year to year which creates challenges scheduling permanent and flexible classes.

Response: At a time of diminishing General Fund dollars and state funding uncertainty, we must continue to rely on alternative funding sources from state, federal grants and private foundations. The reality is that ABE/GED courses must rely on alternative funding since PCC does not generate tuition for these non-credit courses. In your presentation, there was some discussion about raising course fees, but we must be able to waive those course fees to continue to receive Title II funds. Even though Title II funding has declined in recent years, now more than ever, PCC will need to rely on Title II funding or seek alternative funding sources.

c. Designate pre-college academic advisors at Cascade and SE Center. This has also been recommended by a DE BSCC task force from Cascade.

Response: We encourage you to discuss this with your campus Division Dean and Dean of Student Development. Additional student services positions are being added to campus budgets based on the additional tuition dollars that campuses have received based on the significant increases in student enrollments.

d. Provide Resource Specialists at each campus for all students who don't qualify for YES! services.

Response: Perhaps these students could be served by the Pre-College Academic Advisors that are mentioned above. Please work with your campus Division Deans and Deans of Student Development.

e. Put ESOL/ABE student placement flowchart into wider use to better serve and provide options for appropriate ESOL students. (See Appendix A)

Response: We encourage the ABE/GED SAC to continue to collaborate with the ESOL SAC and look forward to hearing about how those conversations improve the transition of ESOL students based on their academic and career goals.

f. Research needed to assess how we can make improvements to meet the ABE Intermediate High state performance standards.

Response: We encourage you to examine best practices from other community colleges and community based alternative programs that meet state performance standards at the Intermediate High level.

g. Spanish GED:

- more part-time faculty positions to replace paid tutor positions
- expand classes in Washington County to meet the growing need
- integration into the ABE Department

Response: The DOIs applaud your efforts to expand Spanish GED instruction throughout the PCC district. Now that General Fund dollars have been dispersed at all four campuses, each campus will need to decide how to use existing funding to determine whether to dedicate limited financial resources to Spanish GED classes. You may want to work with the PCC Institutional Effectiveness Office to develop a survey that will be given during the in-take process, to assess if students would prefer Spanish GED courses. We realize that PCC Rock Creek Campus has been awarded the HEP grant, that will serve one segment of the student population that the Spanish GED services. We encourage the ABE/GED faculty to collaborate with the HEP program staff.

h. Institute ABE paid tutors in college campus Student Learning Centers at Rock Creek, Cascade and Sylvania.

Response: Your campus division deans would need to determine if they have campus dollars to fund paid tutors.

i. Revisit core outcomes for math- need to add writing outcome to Fundamentals of Math Curriculum.

Response: Explore the writing outcomes the Math SAC has incorporated into their CCOGs.

j. Research effectiveness of Fundamentals of Reading and Writing:

- How many DE students are we serving?
- Is 6 hours a week adequate instructional time to make progress? Do we need to combine the classes into one?
- What is happening to students who test into these classes but don't enter our program? What are the barriers for students? Could we serve them better if these classes were listed in the reading and writing sections of the schedule?
- How is this working for the DE Department?

Response: Excellent questions! The answers that you find to these questions will document, "how the assessment of student learning leads to the improvement of teaching and learning and that students who complete their programs have achieved the intended learning outcomes". We look forward to your written update.

k. Research the effectiveness of Fundamentals of Math:

- How many DE students are we serving?
- There seems to be a large gap between the number of DE students who test at this level and those entering our classes

- What steps can we take to increase the number of students we serve?
- How is this working for the DE Department?
- Evaluate how to instructionally work best with a multi-level classroom

Response: See response to Recommendation "j".

l. Continue working with Writing 115 and 121 instructors and Math 20 instructors to better understand the skills our students need to be successful as they transition.

Response: We encourage you to collaborate with WR and Math SACs as well as the DE SAC and to include RD/WR 80 and 90 and RD 115.

m. Develop strategies to increase participation in our College Success Cohorts.

Response: You may want to consider involving campus advisors and learning skills specialists to encourage ABE/GED students to enroll in these cohort courses.

n. Revisit and discuss our instructional and scheduling strategies for levels 1 and 2.

Response: Please work with your campus division deans on this to get their support. We encourage you to consider weekend courses (including Sundays) if classrooms are available on your campus.

o. Expand GED testing to Willow Creek.

Response: The Campus Presidents support the idea of expanding GED testing to Willow Creek. I am working with Financial Services, Jackie Sandquist, Manager of the Willow Creek Center to develop a funding model and testing schedule that will compliment the GED testing schedule that is offered at the Cascade Campus. We will keep you informed about future developments.

p. Reinstate the ABE Technology Committee to research new computer programs and provide updates on current software.

Response: We encourage you to work with your campus Division Deans and with Tanya Batazhan to determine if there are Course fees or Title II funds that you could provide funds to resurrect this Committee. It may be helpful to involved Distance Learning and Technology Solution Services staff as resources.

Closing

We want to thank the ABE/GED SAC for sharing the results of your program review with us. We look forward to supporting your on-going work on continuous program improvement.

Your Deans of Instruction:

Scott Huff, Cascade Campus

Julie Kopet, Interim DOI, Southeast Center & Extended Learning Campus

Birgitte Ryslinge, Rock Creek Campus

Jeff Triplett, Sylvania Campus